II: Viking-Period Chester

An Alternative Perspective

by T Austin MA

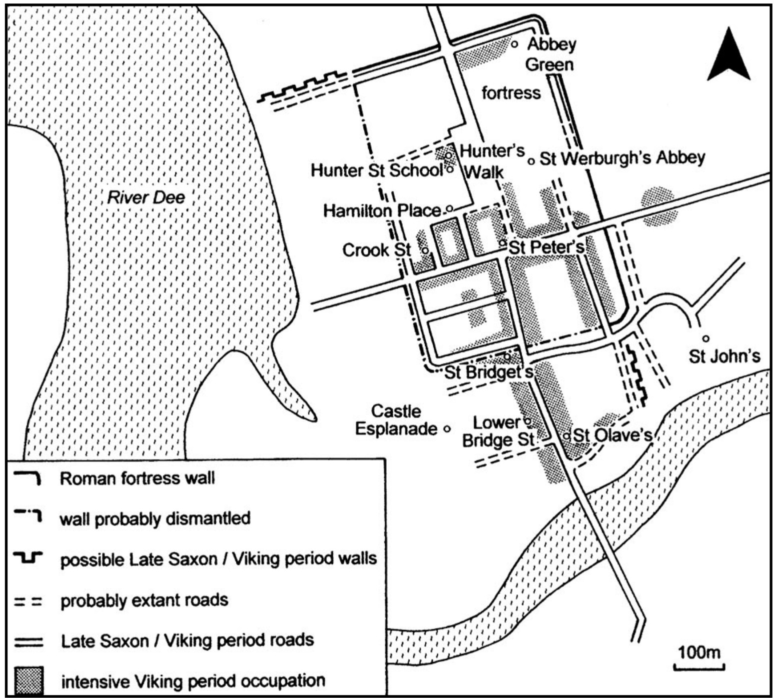
Introduction

In the footsteps of Henri Pirenne (1939) a number of models stressing the importance of trade have been put forward to explain the blossoming of urban activity and of state formation in northern and western Europe in the Viking age. Richard Hodges has developed one of the most widely published of these, arguing a Viking-led change from a socially embedded to a market economy, with resultant growth of trade underpinning other change (1982; 1988; 1989). Many would argue that Hodges fails to reach the real dynamic behind change in this period, namely the social process behind such change (eg, Roskams 1990). Using Chester as a test-case this paper develops an alternative historically specific and testable model. It argues that a kin-based monasticism dominated society within the environs of Chester into the ninth century. Viking raiding provided an incidental mechanism for the collapse of this structuring agent and allowed a feudal hierarchy to emerge. The self-interest of the new elite fuelled the regeneration of Chester in the Late Saxon or Viking period and was reflected in rural reorganisation.

British and Mercian Chester

> In the year of our lord six hundred and eighty-nine Ethelred, king of the Mercians, the uncle of S Werburgh, with the assistance of Wilfric, bishop of Chester, as Giraldus [Cambrensis] relates, founded a collegiate church in the suburbs of Chester in honour of S John the Baptist. (*Annales Cestrienses*: Christie ed 1886, 11)

The above reference, coupled with some archaeological misinterpretations, has largely been the basis of arguments for a continued administrative presence in Chester from the Roman through to the Viking period. A late seventh-century foundation of St John's is suggested as taking over parochial responsibilities from a proposed sub-Roman *matrix ecclesia* or mother church at Eccleston, some 5 km south of Chester (eg Thacker 1982, 199–200). Of the reference to St John's, J D Bu'lock (1972) states: 'there is neither need nor reason to doubt this'; however, the *Annales Cestrienses* as known appear to be a late fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century compilation (Christie ed 1886, viii) and specifically based on a lost work of Gerald of Wales. The reference, then, hardly seems to have the securest of pedigrees. Certainly it is not repeated elsewhere. For instance, the eleventh-century hagiography of St Werburgh by Goscelin the Monk (transl Munday 1973) makes no mention of it despite going into great detail about the worthiness of the saint's family.



Ill II.1 Viking-period Chester. (Scale 1/15,000)

Other arguments for early church foundations in Chester rely on dubious hagiographic references whose purpose is anything but historical or on dedications to early saints (eg Thacker 1982, 203), for which the problems of dating have been well discussed (eg Preston-Jones 1992, 109). Archaeologically there is, at present, no architecture or sculpture that might suggest a church foundation anywhere in Chester before the Viking period.

Until recently archaeological evidence for other activity in this period in Chester (Ill II.1) largely rested on the Abbey Green excavations by J McPeake in the 1970s (McPeake *et al* 1980). The analysis of the pottery assemblage recovered (*art cit*, 29) recorded the presence of 'Dark Age' sherds including 'D' and 'E' wares, which are usually ascribed fifth- to seventh-century dates (eg Alcock 1971, 201–5). On the strength of these identifications a Dark Age sequence was proposed for associated structures and activities (McPeake *et al* 1980, 21). Subsequently a sherd from 26–42 Lower Bridge Street was argued as Middle-Saxon red burnished ware by Richard Hodges on its apparent similarity to material at Hamwih (Davey & Rutter 1977, 18; Rutter 1985, 40). However, a re-interpretation of the material from the Abbey Green site has recently been published (Ward *et al* 1994, 69–93). The 'Dark Age' pottery assemblage has largely been re-assigned either to the late Roman or to the Late Saxon (Viking) period (Rutter 1994,

85–93). Hence, the structures and associated activity are also reassigned (Ward *et al* 1994, 69–84). Simon Ward, speaking generally of his reassessment of the pre-Viking (pre-*burh*) period occupation within the Roman fortress area states: 'the evidence for 'pre-*burh*' Mercian occupation is restricted to soil generation, which is interpreted as being the result of agricultural activity.' (*op cit*, 118).

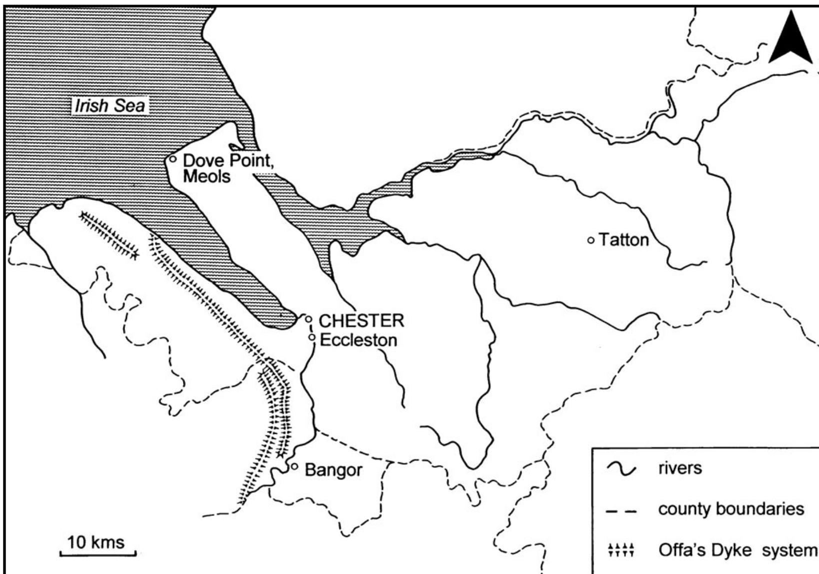
As well as at Abbey Green a number of other sites attest the build-up of a substantial deposit of soil in the period in question (*op cit*, 116). At the Hunter Street School site the analysis of this 'dark earth' led Richard MacPhail (1994, 68) to suggest that it was a dump for use as garden soil. A number of carbon 14 dates on samples of bone from this soil tends to confirm the chronology (Ward *et al* 1994, 58). This view is also supported outside the fortress walls, for instance, by the excavations in Lower Bridge Street where there was evidence for ploughing (Mason 1985, 2–6). A sunken-featured building was identified here which appears to have been demolished to make way for a tenth-century cellared building, suggesting that the former was of late ninth-century date. Recent excavations have identified some further structural activity: a clay floor has been discovered within the build-up of dark earth at 32–6 Foregate Street (Keith Matthews, pers comm), and a substantial wall cutting through late Roman deposits at 3–15 Eastgate Street is conceivably Mercian, although the dating is uncertain and is described by the excavator as 'late or post-Roman' (Matthews *et al* 1995, 63–4).

The evidence, then, suggests that Chester had essentially taken on a rural character: not abandonment but a change in use of space, a picture that is increasingly being argued for many towns of Roman origin all over Europe and which Martin Carver argues is the result of elite investment shifting away from an urban focus in post-imperial Europe (1993, 48, 98). The paucity of surviving material culture in Chester is consistent with the rest of the west of Britain except for proposed high-status sites (Alcock 1971), and this lack of evidence for an administrative presence in Chester may indicate a shift of focus to the hinterland.

The lack of physical evidence for the pre-Viking period in Cheshire has often led to a concentration of interest on place-name studies (eg Thacker 1987, 244). The majority of place-names in Cheshire are English and undoubtedly result from English influence, but there is very little to support an early date for them. Chronologies developed earlier this century based on the use of specific place-name elements have been used to chart English settlement in Cheshire, with proposed starting dates as early as the sixth century (eg Dodgson 1967, 1; Thacker 1987, 243). However, these models were based on numbers of assumptions which even Margaret Gelling, a doyennne among place-name scholars, challenges today (Gelling 1988, 106). The bulk of settlement in pre-Viking Cheshire may have followed a shifting pattern as, for example, has been argued by Tom Saunders for the Raunds area (Northamptonshire) in the Middle Saxon period (1991, 236–41) or amply demonstrated for this period at Danish sites such as Vorbasse (Hvass 1983a; 1983b). Short-lived and presumably insubstantial structures, coupled with the fact that the west midlands was largely aceramic at least until the tenth century (eg Richards 1991, 76) would admittedly make such settlement very hard to identify. However, a telling demonstration of its absence is the failure to identify any pagan Anglo-Saxon burial sites,

or even seventh — eighth-century 'final phase' burials as defined by Helen Geek (1992, 83–94). The large numbers of 'final phase' barrows in the Peak District (Ozanne 1962–3) may mark the western limit of Anglo-Saxon influence at this time.

The clearest sign of English activity involving Cheshire is the late eighth-century construction of the Offa's Dyke system (Ill II.2. Wat's Dyke is now considered contemporary). Despite numerous excavations dating of this monument still relies on a reference in Asser's *Life of King Alfred* (*see* Appendix 1). Described as the 'largest archaeological monument in Britain' (Hill 1991, 142) it stretches down the Welsh Marches from coast to coast. At its northern end it delineates parts of north-eastern Wales which, administratively, became part of Cheshire (the best indication is *Domesday Book*: Morris ed 1978). Akin to the Danevirke (Roesdahl 1992, 132–6), which forms the traditional border between Denmark and Germany, Offa's Dyke would have controlled movement and is clearly part of the process of Mercian state formation, appearing to incorporate another polity based on Cheshire and part of north-eastern Wales into a dynamic English kingdom. It is from this time onwards that some evidence of English influence starts to become apparent, for instance, through a small body of ninth-century sculptural material (Appendix 2). Prior to this there may have been some form of Mercian overlordship of this other polity, but the relationship, if it existed, was presumably tributary. Certainly historical references mention a number of conflicts with north-east Wales and Chester (Appendix 1) but there is nothing to suggest direct control before the construction of the dyke. The nature of this pre-Mercian polity is somewhat obscure but what documentary evidence there is suggests it was part of the Welsh kingdom of Powys, which appears to have had several concurrent



Ill II.2 British and Mercian sites mentioned in the text, together with the northern end of Offa's Dyke. (Scale 1/100,000)

ruling dynasties active in different areas, one such area possibly comprising Cheshire and north-east Wales (Higham 1993, 72–5; Thacker 1987, 239). Gerald of Wales in his *Description of Wales* (I.4; transl Thorpe 1978, 223) records that three of the *cantrefs* of Powys were only absorbed into English Shropshire in the post-Conquest period, which appears to lend support to this scenario.

Nevertheless some settlements are known or can be inferred for this period, although it will be argued below that these are essentially Welsh or British and monastic. Most of the relatively few place-names of Celtic derivation in Cheshire (*see* Dodgson 1966–81) may well be irrelevant. As elsewhere in England, they denote topographic features, especially rivers, hills and forests (eg Gelling ed 1988, 90). As suggested above, settlement at this time may largely have been shifting, and it may be that only the names of fixed features have survived. A 'Dark Age' structure, a timber-framed building some 24m x 5m, has been posited at Tatton despite carbon 14 dates centred on the Roman period (Higham 1980–1, 49–56; 1993, 66–8; this volume). A more reliable indication of the type of site that may have been fixed within otherwise shifting settlement can perhaps be gained from Bede in his *Historia Ecclesiastica* where he states of a group of priests apparently present at a battle near Chester in AD 607:

> Most of these priests came from the monastery at Bangor, where there are said to have been so many monks, that although it was divided into seven sections, each under its own head, none of these sections contained less than three hundred monks, all of whom supported themselves by manual work. (II.2: transl Sherley-Price 1968, 103)

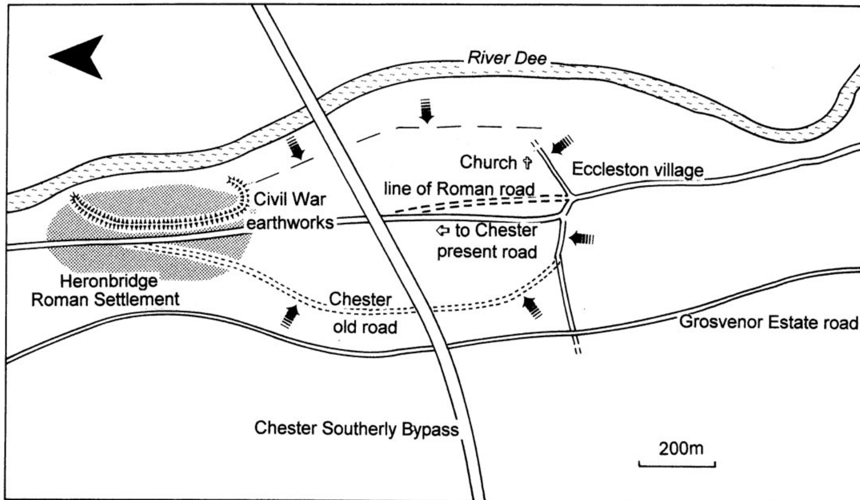
Bede is normally seen as a reliable source (*op cit*, 27) and was writing reasonably close to the event. Even allowing for exaggeration it suggests monasticism on a large scale. Bangor is Coed (on Dee) was within Cheshire at the time of the compilation of the *Domesday Book* (Cheshire 2.2 : Morris ed 1978) but by this time there is no mention of anything monastic.

Further downstream, again on the Dee, is another site, Eccleston, which, as already mentioned, has been proposed as a sub-Roman *matrix ecclesia* or mother church, largely on the strength of the place-name and because the medieval church stood within an oval enclosure, the old churchyard (eg Laing & Laing 1983, 20–1; Thacker 1987, 239). Such curvilinear churchyards have been argued by Charles Thomas to be indicative of early church foundations (1971, 38–43 and 51–3), but so far this correlation is unproven. The only firm dating, beside dedications presumed to be early or the presumption that cist burials are necessarily Christian (*see* James 1992), comes from an abandoned church site at Capel Maelog in Powys, where carbon 14 dates for the surrounding curvilinear bank and ditch suggest construction during or after the tenth century (Britnell 1990, 84). The place-name element 'eccles-' comes from the British (primitive Welsh) *egles*, which is borrowed from the Latin *ecclesia* meaning 'church' or 'Christian community' (Thacker 1987, 239). The eccles- element, widely distributed in the west and north of Britain, has been suggested as indicative of churches that had jurisdiction over large areas, perhaps equivalent to the medieval administrative district of a hundred (Barrow 1973, 26). A similar argument can be put forward for Wales, where Tomos Roberts points out that there is never more than one *eglwys* in a commote (1992, 42). Nancy Edwards and Alan Lane

have recently argued that the evidence increasingly supports the idea of a few major ecclesiastical settlements in Wales in the early medieval period — monastic institutions which also contained secular clergy and whose *parochiae* were coterminous with the administrative districts of commote or *cantref* (1992, 3). It should be noted that such monasteries probably differed from modern conceptions. Harold Mytum (1992, 75–7), in discussing Irish monasticism in the early medieval period, notes that abbots were not always clergy and that abbatial succession had often been on a kinship basis. In other words, dominant kin within a group used a form of monasticism to enforce control over the kinship group. Monasteries within huge estates could have acted as surplus collection points for elites, both ecclesiastical and secular. Considering the apparent size of the monastery at Bangor it could be argued that these effectively provided the local administration under a secular royalty.

Apart from the place-name there is some evidence to suggest that Eccleston could be of a similar nature to Bangor. Firstly, aerial photographs suggest a huge enclosure, around 800m by 500m, may have surrounded the site of the present church (Ills II.3a and b). Secondly, this enclosure, in part overlies the burial area of the Roman settlement of Heronbridge just to the north. A number of Roman cremation urns were recovered in 1848 to the south of the Roman settlement (Watkin 1886, 217) and probably lay within the enclosure. There are potentially interesting parallels with monastic sites which grew up over the graves of Christian martyrs from the Roman period, for example, the monastery at Tours in France that grew up around the necropolis of the martyred St Martin (Galinié 1988, 58). The final argument supporting a major monastic settlement at Eccleston is that at some time after the end of Roman Britain the road south from Chester, Watling Street, which runs directly through the middle of the enclosure was diverted around it and did not return to follow the direct route south until the mid-nineteenth century (Petch 1975, 31 and fig 7).

A final site to be considered is at Dove Point, at Meols on the Wirral. It is well known, largely because of the large numbers of artefacts that have become visible as a result of coastal erosion (eg Griffiths 1992, 67). Unfortunately, no controlled excavations have taken place there and our information is largely dependent on antiquarian accounts (eg Hume 1863) or more recent reinterpretations of the data (eg Bu'lock 1961). The finds include a small collection of pre-Viking-period metalwork and coins and, interestingly, a sixth- or seventh-century pilgrim's flask from Egypt (Carrington ed 1994, fig 33). The problem with Meols is that there is essentially no structural evidence to go with the finds, although Cox (1895) apparently observed part of a settlement revealed by erosion in the late nineteenth century. The assemblage has been used to argue a continuity at the site and includes artefactual evidence from all periods within the first millennium, although the coins suggest a break in activity in the tenth century. Interpretation generally suggests a beachmarket (eg Higham 1993, 63; Griffiths 1992); however, its post-Roman assemblage and coastal location could be argued to be similar to various east coast monastic sites such as Whitby (Cramp 1976, 223–9). Alternatively it could be seen as both. Charles Doherty (1980, 81), for instance, argues that many monastic sites in Ireland had taken on urban characteristics late in the early medieval period. It may also be the case that such sites were just part of a wider early medieval ecclesiastical landscape. Hartlepool, for example, is



Ills II.3a (top) and 3b (bottom): Aerial photograph of Eccleston and interpretative drawing. (Scale 1/20,000). Photograph copyright Cheshire County Council; reproduced by kind permission.

generally interpreted as the site of a historically known pre-Conquest monastery (eg Daniels 1988), but is also noted by Harold Taylor as once being a chapel of ease to a mother church at Hart located some 5km inland from the coastal site (1965, 287–8). Architectural and sculptural fragments support the notion of Hart being an important ideological focus in the Middle Saxon period with Hartlepool perhaps an associated trading site. (These arguments are expanded in Austin 1996).

Some trouble has been taken above to set the scene for Viking-period Chester. It is argued that the town was not really a factor in this period and that the English incorporation of

Cheshire and parts of north-east Wales into Mercia took place much later than has often been proposed. If this is accepted, by the time of this move the Mercian aristocracy was Christianised, and this allows the proposal that the central contradiction would not have been between pagan English and Christian Welsh but between established monastic elites and the new secular authority. This would have been over land and hence surplus. The monastic nature of established landholding restricted a Christianised secular authority in both altering landholding and extracting surplus. To do so would have conflicted with the source of its legitimacy — Christianity — the very thing, in its monastic form, that it needed to subvert in order to develop itself in Cheshire. This is seen as the political situation into which the Viking raids, starting at the very end of the eighth century, would have intruded. Whilst no such raids are recorded in the area under consideration it would seem unlikely that they did not happen; indeed it will be argued below that these were responsible for the demise of this kin-orientated monastic administration.

Viking raids

> 789 The first arrival in England of the Danes, who taught the English to drink too much (*Annals Cestrienses:* Christie ed 1886, 11)

The earliest phase of Viking activity appears to have been raiding, as recorded primarily in historical sources, especially the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (transl Garmonsway 1972) and the *Annals of Ulster* (transl Hennessy 1887–93). Raiding appears to have started at the very end of the eighth century, although John Hines (1984) has argued for Scandinavian contact throughout the early medieval period. The Viking raids appear two-pronged, with Danish activity concentrated largely in eastern and southern England and Norwegian activity in western Britain, especially around the Irish Sea. The accounts suggest that activity was concentrated against monastic sites (eg Sawyer 1982, 96–7; *see* Richards 1991, 15–29 for a general discussion of Viking raiding activity). As already mentioned, no raids are recorded in Cheshire, but the evidence from numbers of monastic sites elsewhere suggest their unrecorded destruction (or at least abandonment) at this time. In Northumbria, for example, monasteries at Jarrow and Lindisfarne are recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* as victims of Viking raids, while those at Tynemouth, Hartlepool, Whitby and Monkwearmouth are not, although excavation suggests that they were also abandoned in the ninth century (Richards 1991, 91).

Viking activity appears to have switched from raiding to permanent settlement in the second half of the ninth century. Again there are references in the sources which mention the Viking sharing out of land with, for example, partitioning recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* as taking place in Northumbria (AD 876), Mercia AD 877), and East Anglia (AD 880) (*see* Richards 1991, 30–42 for a general discussion of this settlement phase). With this permanent settlement other sources of data such as archaeology and linguistics become much more relevant. In Ireland the *Annals of Ulster* record the establishment of a fortified base at Dublin, the *longphort*, in AD 841. A pagan Viking (Norse) cemetery at Islandsbridge, just outside Dublin, confirms this settlement phase (Laing 1977, 227–30). It was the expulsion of these Dublin Vikings from Ireland at the beginning of the tenth century which apparently formed the basis of Hiberno-Norse settlement in Cheshire (including Wirral, which since 1974 has been in Merseyside). An obscure Irish source, a

translation of which was published under the title *Annals of Ireland*, *Three Fragments* by John O'Donovan in 1860 (reproduced in part in Wainwright 1943, 16–18) relates how, following their expulsion from Ireland, a group of Hiberno-Norse under the leadership of Ingimund settled with the agreement of 'Queen' Ethelfrida of Mercia on land near Chester (*see* Appendix 1). There are problems concerning the reliability of this source. O'Donovan's translation is apparently based on a copy of a copy made in the seventeenth century and now lost (Wainwright 1943, 15); however, other forms of evidence are generally supportive of the gist of this account. Keith Matthews has pointed out that the use of the term 'Queen' to describe Ethelfrida is used in contemporary Welsh documents, while later English material uses the word 'Lady' (pers comm).

Linguistic evidence, both place-names and personal names, suggests a Hiberno-Norse presence in Chester and western parts of Cheshire. Dodgson's great corpus (1966–81) makes it clear that Hiberno-Norse place-names are concentrated on the Wirral but also extend as far east as Helsby. Even beyond these large numbers of minor names of fields, features and so on confirm a Hiberno-Norse influence. Personal names tend to confirm this distribution. As Bu'lock (1972, 69) remarks, people with Scandinavian names were in the majority as manor holders on the Wirral in King Edward's time (as recorded in the *Domesday Book*) but there was also a scattering of people with Scandinavian names holding estates throughout the *Domesday* county. In the east of the county Danish influences may be stronger, presumably reflecting the influence of the Danelaw. The lasting significance of the Danelaw is debated (eg Hill 1981, 46 and 97–8) but the numbers of apparently Danish place-names in the east suggest some influence; however, one of the main elements, *hulm* (Old Danish, meaning an island or water meadow), has been argued as a Middle English dialect development of the late Old English, *holm*, based on the Old Norse, *holmr* (Fellows-Jensen 1970–1, 201–6).

The western distribution of Hiberno-Norse place-names representing settlement in this period is supported archaeologically by the distribution of a number of crosses and cross fragments dated to the tenth and eleventh centuries. This regional grouping is centred on Chester and the Wirral, with a few outliers in North Wales (*see* Appendix 2). These crosses have rectangular shafts and circle or ringed heads with those specifically of the 'Chester school' tending to have bossed spandrels and the circle decorated with key patterns or pellets (Ill II.4a). Interestingly, this grouping appears to be part of a much wider one with related circle-headed crosses being known in Cumbria, possibly northern Lancashire, and parts of Cornwall — all areas with place-name evidence for Hiberno-Norse settlement. The style of these crosses is seen as emanating from Ireland and the Isle of Man, themselves areas of Hiberno-Norse influence at this time (Bailey 1980, 177–82; Bu'Lock 1972, 81–4; Collingwood 1927, 137–45). A different tradition exists in the very east of Cheshire, on the edge of the Peak District. Here crosses of the Viking period typically have cylindrical shafts and heads with fan-shaped arms with a distribution centred on Derbyshire (Bailey 1980, 186–8; *see* Ill II.4b). Bu'Lock suggests that this is a Mercian tradition (1972, 84). Significantly, no crosses from either of these traditions have been identified in southern or central Lancashire, directly to the north of Cheshire, where an insular tradition appears to have continued (Collingwood 1927, 107–8). The place-name evidence (Ekwall 1922) suggests that, apart from the coastal strip, Scandinavian

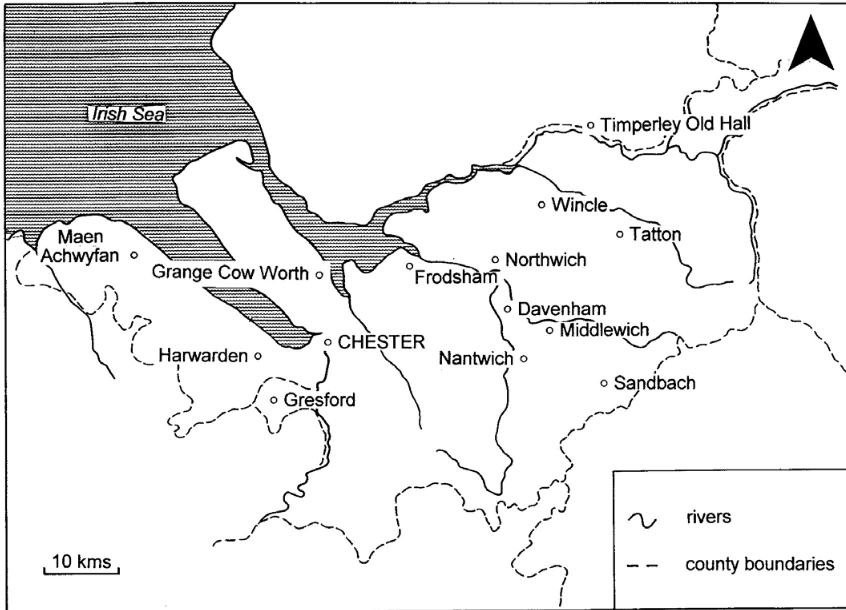
settlement was sparse (eg Fellows-Jensen 1992, 40). The distributions of these different forms of crosses may then, to some extent, represent ethnic influences but more importantly they may equate to political divisions.

The proposed dating of this Hiberno-Norse settlement to the early tenth century is perhaps confirmed by the lack of pagan Viking burials in Cheshire. Areas of earlier settlement in the west tend to be associated with such burials as, for example, at Islandsbridge outside Dublin (*see above*) or the numbers of pagan Viking burials identified on the Isle of Man (eg Richards 1991, 102–9). By the tenth century the Norse appear to have adopted the burial customs, if not the ideology, of Christianity. Overall, then, the evidence suggests a small but influential group of Scandinavian landholders concentrated in the west of pre-Conquest Cheshire.

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records the founding of a *burh* at Chester in AD 907 (transl Garmonsway 1972, 94). Recent publications (eg Carrington ed 1994; Higham 1993; Mason 1985; Ward *et al* 1994) cover much of the detail of Viking period Chester itself and it is intended to comment in brief only. It is only since the late 1950s that Viking-period deposits have been consistently recognised. Before this it must be presumed that they either were generally not recognised or were not of interest, with the emphasis being on Roman Chester. There was quite a lot of speculation using historical data or inferences from dedications about the foundation dates of the city's churches. Reasons why pre-Viking period dates for these should be rejected have been discussed above, but a number of Chester's churches do have a secure foundation date in this period (Ill II.1). Three — St Werburgh's, St John's, and St Peter's — are recorded in *Domesday Book* (Morris ed 1978). Two others, St Bridget's and St Olave's, have been argued as pre-Conquest mainly because their dedications are seen as appropriate to a Hiberno-Norse community (eg Alldridge 1981, 11–16; Thacker 1987, 257–8; Ward *et al* 1994, 121). There is some further evidence to support this claim for St Bridget's in that the demesne of the post-Conquest Norman castle splits its parish in two, with the likelihood that these were, in fact one previously (Alldridge 1981, 19 and fig. 5); however, St Olave's could not have been dedicated before AD 1030 when this saint was martyred (*art cit*, 19).

The essential breakthrough for the study of the Viking-period in Chester was the discovery of a hoard, mostly coins, in a pottery vessel at the Castle Esplanade site (Ill II.1) in 1950 (Webster *et al* 1953). The hoard dated the vessel to the tenth century, and the pottery has become known as 'Chester ware' (Carrington 1975, 3). Subsequently this type of pottery has been recognised at other *burh* sites in the west midlands, for example, Hereford, Worcester, Shrewsbury, and Stafford (Vince 1985, 61–3); however, it is only at the last that wasters and kilns have been identified (Carver *forthcoming*; Youngs *et al* eds 1984, 239–40). Chester ware and Stafford ware are considered identical, with production seemingly confined to Stafford. For ease and clarity, it is intended, henceforth, to adopt the term used by Alan Vince (1985), 'West Midlands ware', to denote this pottery. Since its recognition West Midlands ware has been recovered in most excavations within Chester (eg Nenk *et al* eds 1992, 203–4: Rutter 1985; 1994) and its distribution suggests intensive occupation over much of Chester both within the former fortress area and outside the south and east gates (Ill II.1). Importantly it has also allowed the assignment of structures and their associated

Ill II.4a (top) and 4b (bottom): 'Chester school' cross *? in situ* at Maen Achwyfan, Flintshire; 'Mercian' cross shafts in Central Park, Macclesfield



Ill II.5 Viking-period sites in Cheshire mentioned in the text. (Scale1/100,000)

activities to this period. Often these were set into the agricultural soils of the pre-Viking period (*see above*). So far the evidence for industrial activity in the town during the Viking period is limited. The reassessment of the Abbey Green site by Simon Ward (1994, 69–84) has placed the evidence for antler-working and possible iron-smithing in the Viking period. Otherwise the only other evidence is from the Lower Bridge Street site, where there is evidence for a substantial tanning industry in the eleventh century (Mason 1985, 23–30).

Industrial production, then, does not appear to have been a mainstay of Viking-period Chester. Certainly an industrial revolution is not recognisable, as has been posited, for example, by Richard Hodges (1989, 150–85). However, evidence for numbers of buildings from this period has been recovered, including post-built hall-type structures at Crook Street and Hunter's Walk (Ward *et al* 1994, 22–3 and 48–9) and sunken-featured buildings at Hamilton Place, Hunter Street School and Lower Bridge Street (*op cit* 37–40, 61–2; Mason 1985, 10–23). Of this latter group the structures at Hamilton Place and Lower Bridge Street have been interpreted as of the type of 'cellared' building represented at a number of other urban sites in this period (*see* eg Wallace 1992, 74–80 for a discussion). Interpretation generally favours these cellars being used for storage (eg Mason 1985, 21). Five of these structures were identified during the Lower Bridge Street excavations. Such storage capacity may be indicative of Chester largely being concerned with trade at this time.

A mint was active in the town from at least the beginning of the tenth century (although Dolley 1976, 356 argued for a late ninth-century date), presumably with the purpose of exercising elite control over trade. The mint was one of the most productive in England

during much of the tenth century (based on the number of moneyers) and for a time rivalled London in its scale of coin production (Griffiths 1994, 125). The number of Chester coins found during excavations in Dublin suggests that this was the main axis of trade (eg Wallace 1986, 213); however, it should be noted that Chester coins also turn up in Scandinavia, especially Norway, with large numbers in hoards found at Rønvik and Trondheim (Griffiths 1994, 126). Patrick Wallace, in his recent assessment of the economy and commerce of Viking-age Dublin, makes it clear that Chester was the main English port for Dublin's trade (1987). There are problems in identifying what was being traded, in that most goods were probably perishable or at least invisible, with a consequent dependence on historical sources. Wallace (*art cit*, 222–4) states that the slave trade was initially important but increasingly animal hides and fleeces became Dublin's major exports (which might fit in with Chester's tanning industry). In return, cloth and pottery seem to have been the main English exports presumably *via* Chester (*art cit*, 215–20). Amounts of West Midlands ware have been found in Dublin (*art cit*, 217). Obviously pottery can be distributed as packaging for other material, the clearest example being amphorae (eg McCarthy & Brooks 1988, 82). The West Midlands ware vessels in Dublin had been used as cooking pots, but this may be have been a secondary use and its is possible that their primary use was as containers for salt from the Cheshire wich towns (Ill II.5). Nantwich, Northwich and Middlewich are listed with active salterns in the *Domesday Book* (Morris ed 1978) but as yet, apart from a tentative identification at Nantwich (McNeil-Sale 1983, 22), no West Midlands ware has been found in salt-working contexts.

Chester, then, would appear to form the linchpin in an Irish-English trade, although on coin evidence this appears to have declined in the late tenth century (Griffiths 1994, 127–8). The Viking settlers played a part in this trade. As already mentioned, people with Scandinavian (and Irish) names were significant amongst the moneyers of Chester. These were important people, effectively acting as tax collectors for controlling elites. (The purpose of making it a legal obligation to have any silver entering the town converted to coin was to retain a percentage as a fee). There is also a fairly secure ascription of a pre-Conquest date to a church, St Bridget's, a dedication that would have been favoured by Hiberno-Norse settlers (*see above*).

This, then, would be the basis of Richard Hodges' model with the Vikings providing the 'catalyst' for other changes (eg 1989, 153); however, this fails to explain what underpins an apparently booming economy that fuels other changes. These urban developments required an increased agrarian surplus to support them, as reflected by exploitative elites having more surplus to invest in trade and industry in order to convert surplus into what they required. In other words, changes in the economic base, the rural economy, must have occurred to underpin urban developments.

It has been argued above that pre-Viking Cheshire was essentially administered through a number of very large monastic estates under a secular royalty. By the time of the *Domesday Book* (1086 but also recording holdings at the time of the Norman Conquest) there were large numbers of relatively small estates (Morris ed 1978). Edwin, the Mercian earl of Chester, and the Anglo-Saxon monastery of St Werburgh's were the major

landowners but there were also large numbers of manors held independently. Amongst the smaller landholders some held a few manors but often it was a single manor. In other words the proposed pre-Viking-period kin-based monastic estates had been broken up and the land effectively privatised. The *Domesday Book* provides a wealth of detail about these manors, for instance, the amount of ploughland, meadowland, and woodland or the presence of additional resources such as mills or fisheries.

As in the pre-Viking period there is very little physical evidence demonstrating rural organisation. West Midlands ware has been found at two rural sites in Cheshire (Ill II.5); Tatton (Higham 1993, 122) and Grange Cow Worth (Brotherton-Ratcliffe 1975, 78). There were traces of occupation — evidence for timber-built structures — at both sites. It is also significant that both sites became high-status residences in the medieval period, the first being within the grounds of Tatton Hall and the other becoming a moated grange attached to St Werburgh's in Chester. A third site, also moated, at Timperley Old Hall (Faulkner 1994, 16–18) has produced a calibrated carbon 14 date of AD 797–1020 for a hearth. No buildings have yet been identified but there are associated features. From this scrappy data set it is suggested that these sites of known later high status have their origins in the tenth century (a sherd of West Midlands ware has recently been found at Poulton, a few kilometres to the south of Chester — pers comm. Keith Matthews — to which the earliest reference is again in the *Domesday Book*, which notes a relatively prosperous manor). The restricted distribution of West Midlands ware (concentrated at *burh* sites as noted by Carver *forthcoming*) could be seen as supportive of this argument in that whatever was being distributed in such pots was not for general consumption. The only surviving pre-Conquest charter for Cheshire notes the transfer of land by King Edgar to St Werburgh's in AD 958 (Sawyer ed 1968, 223–4), which again supports the argument of land in Cheshire being privatised in the tenth century.

Other changes within the rural context include the appearance of secular churches. Again there is no direct physical evidence but *Domesday Book* lists several churches within Cheshire (as then constituted), namely Hawarden, Gresford, Frodsham, Davenham and Sandbach (Ill II.5). Priests are also noted for a number of townships and may represent the presence of private chapels. The presence of Viking-period crosses (above and Appendix 2) has been taken to indicate the location of pre-Conquest churches (eg Bu'Lock 1972, 77–81; Thacker 1987, 268–72) but this inference is unsound, as only two such crosses are thought to be still *in situ* and these are both in isolated situations (Appendix 2: Maen Achwyfan and Wincle). John Blair in a general review of church foundation states: 'The signs are, in short, that small private churches were still rare in AD 900 whereas by AD 1000 a church was something that any prosperous ceorl aspiring to thegnhood might be expected to have' (1988, 57). However, whilst there is agreement about the relative scarcity of churches up to AD 900, a different reason will be advanced for their blossoming after this time.

It has been argued above that a contradiction had arisen between elite factions in pre-Viking Cheshire. The evidence suggests that a Mercian kingship had taken control but their legitimating ideology, Christianity, restricted their ability to institute changes to an economic base administered through a monastic hierarchy. It is argued that Viking raiding in the ninth century destroyed the structure of this kin-based monastic relationship between

productive forces. This destruction necessitated and allowed a renegotiation of relations and thus the emergence of a feudal organisation through the privatisation of these monastic estates. Although our data is limited, it seems possible that, alongside the setting-up of Mercian power centres, large numbers of small landholders established themselves during the later ninth and tenth centuries. As Rosemary Cramp states regarding the fate of the Northumbrian monasteries: '...the Viking wars and settlement brought about a redistribution of this land comparable with the dissolution' (1976, 207). Accompanying this transformation was an associated spate of church-building, not only the foundation of St Werburgh's abbey, but also numbers of secular churches — perhaps the first reformation. This church founding may be seen as part of a legitimation process by the new elite, not so much for the benefit of the productive forces but as a signal to other elites. The numbers of crosses erected at this time, especially those of the 'Cheshire school' in western parts of Cheshire, the areas with the strongest Hiberno-Norse associations, are similarly argued to be part of this legitimation process, effectively replacing the mound burial popular in earlier Viking contexts elsewhere.

The Vikings, then, were the unwitting mechanisms of this transformation. In a sense Richard Hodges was right, but for the wrong reasons. Changes to the economic base — rural production — fuelled the changes in Viking-period Chester. As Tom Saunders argues, these new elites, the private owners of small estates, would have had a vested interest in increasing production and hence their surplus (1991). This surplus was only useful if it could be converted into wants, goods or services, hence the changes in Viking-period Chester. Intriguingly, the rise of feudal relations would have caused a decline in what appears to be one of the town's major imports — slaves. This may explain the apparent decline in the town's fortunes in the later tenth century.

Conclusions

Traditional models for the development of Chester during the early medieval period, largely based on assumptions about the chronology of the development of place-names and on historical sources of questionable reliability, have been questioned archaeologically. Recent models have similarly been questioned and found lacking in that they do not reach the real dynamic behind change, namely the social process which, in pre-industrial societies, is argued to be the contradiction over surplus from the economic base, namely agrarian production.

An alternative model for developments in Viking-period Chester has been presented for consideration above. Viking raids in the ninth century broke a deadlock between different aspects of the Christian ideology, namely established monastic relations and incoming elites reliant on Christianity for their legitimation. There followed a renegotiation of the relationships within production and the emergence of a feudal organisation through the privatisation of landholding. The self-interest of these new elites led to the urban development of Viking-period Chester through the investment of exploited surplus. Hence Chester boomed.

Many will disagree with this model but that is the very reason it is proffered — to stimulate discussion and hopefully research. Accordingly, some thoughts for future work that might strengthen or weaken the model are offered.

Firstly, this paper only samples the data currently available for synthesis: it is, essentially, a reconnaissance. More detailed research may well be rewarding, especially in areas peripheral to Cheshire. Other suggestions are limited in that the finance for research-driven archaeology is derisory. Research does admittedly continue in urban contexts, although developer-led (*see* Carver 1993, 1–18 and 78–96 for the implications of this); however, in rural contexts — the area this model suggests is of paramount importance, the funding available for research is virtually non-existent. If funding were available it is suggested that the enclosure at Eccleston should be thoroughly evaluated in an attempt to establish its potential to answer research-based questions (eg Carver 1990) . Another prime target would be the identification of early manorial sites with more substantial remains than the three example mentioned above.

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The influence of Peter Carrington is fully acknowledged in relation to Ills II.1 and 5. Illustration II.3a is copyright Cheshire County Council. The other illustrations were produced by Elizabeth Stone. The academic input of the staff of the Department of Archaeology at the University of York is fully recognised, with special thanks to Julian Richards, Steve Roskams and Martin Carver. My thanks also to Chester Archaeology who helped to stimulate my initial interest in archaeology.

Appendix 1

Some historical dates and their sources

c 601	The synod of *Urbs Legionis — The Welsh Annals* (Morris ed 1980, 46). This is not conclusively identified with Chester (eg Higham, 1993, 85–6). The reference could be to somewhere near Chester, the only place with a fixed name.
c 607	Battle of Chester: Bede records Aethelfrith, king of Northumbria, gathering an army at *Legacestir* (Chester?) and making a 'great slaughter of the faithless Britons', including numbers of monks from Bangor (transl Sherley-Price 1968, 103). Bede was writing in the eighth century. The battle was also recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (transl Garmonsway 1972, 22), probably based on Bede.
689	Foundation of St John's church in Chester? 'In the year of our lord six hundred and eighty-nine Ethelred, king of the Mercians, the uncle of S Werburg, with the assistance of Wilfric, bishop of Chester, as Giraldus [Cambrensis] relates, founded a collegiate church in the suburbs of Chester in honour of S John the Baptist' (Christie ed 1886, 11). This is recorded in the *Annales Cestrienses* apparently based on a lost work of Gerald of Wales. The composition of the annals themselves are considered to be of a late fifteenth-century date at the earliest (*op cit*, viii).

late 8th cent	The construction of Offa's Dyke as recorded by Asser (eighth century) in his *Life of King Alfred*: 'There was in Mercia in fairly recent times a certain vigorous king called Offa, who terrified all the neighbouring kings and provinces around him, and who had a great dyke built between Wales and Mercia from sea to sea.' (transl Keynes & Lapidge 1983, 71). The 'great dyke' is also known in Welsh tradition as *Clawdd Offa* (*op cit,* 236, note 29)
c 797	In the *Welsh Annals* the English are first recorded in north-east Wales involved in a battle at Rhuddlan (Morris ed 1980, 47). It is worth noting here that excavation has identified tenth-century settlement activity at Rhuddlan which has been equated to the *burh*, *Cledemutha,* founded in 921 (Manley *et al* 1991, 139).
878	Treaty between King Alfred and Guthrum, a Viking leader, establishes the Danelaw (transl Keynes & Lapidge 1983, 171–2).
c 894	A Danish army in Chester. After a defeat at Buttington (on the Severn) a Danish army retreated to their base in Essex. After collecting reinforcements, 'they marched without a halt by day and night, until they arrived at a deserted Roman site in Wirral, called Chester. The (English) levies were unable to overtake them before they got inside the fort, but they besieged it some two days, and seized all the cattle in the vicinity, slaying all the men they could intercept outside the fort: they burnt up all the corn, and with their horses ate all the neighbourhood bare.' *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (transl Garmonsway 1972, 88). Asser records a similar story under the year 893 (transl Keynes & Lapidge 1983, 117) based on the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (*op cit*, 113). There is some suggestion that the Danish army wintered in Chester but the reference is ambiguous (Wainwright 1943, 13).
902	The *Welsh Annals* record that 'Ingemund came to Mona (Anglesey) and took Maes Osfeilion' (Morris ed 1980, 49). *The Annals of Ireland, Three Fragments* (reproduced in part in Wainwright 1943, 16–18) records that, following their expulsion from Dublin, a group of Vikings led by Ingimund were allowed to settle near Chester, 'Ethelfrida gave him lands near Chester'. There has to be some query about the *Three Fragments* as they are apparently a copy of a copy made in the seventeenth century of a lost original; however, the reference in the *Welsh Annals* is to some extent supportive of its pedigree.
907	*Burh* at Chester: 'In this year Chester was rebuilt'. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (transl Garmonsway 1972, 94).
917	Restoration of the Viking kingship in Dublin (*Annals of Ulster*, transl Hennessy 1887–93)
921	*Burh* founded at Rhuddlan. 'In this year king Edward built the fortress at the mouth of the Clwyd'. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (transl Garmonsway 1972, 105). This has been equated with tenth- century activity identified at Rhuddlan in Clwyd (Manley and others 1991, 139).
972	'In this year prince Edgar was consecrated king on Whit Sunday at Bath ...Soon after this the king led all his fleet to Chester, and there six kings came to him to make their submission and pledged themselves to be his fellow workers by sea and land'. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (transl Garmonsway 1972, 119)

Appendix 2

Pre-Conquest sculpture in the study area

Anglo-Saxon sculptural fragments are few in Cheshire and without exception late, generally of the ninth century. Sculptural pieces of the Anglo-Scandinavian period fall into two groups. Those of the 'Chester school' (Ill II.4a) have rectangular shafts and ring-headed or circle-headed cross heads (Bailey 1980, 177–82). These tend to bear what are considered Viking stylistic motifs such as the 'T' fret and ring-knot as well as figurative material (Edwards 1991, 140). More specifically the 'Chester school' cross heads tend to have bosses in the spandrels of the cross and the circle is generally decorated with key patterns or pellets (Bailey 1980, 179–80). Surviving examples of these are concentrated in the west of Cheshire and north-eastern Wales. An entirely different tradition is observed in the east of Cheshire, where known crosses from the Viking period have cylindrical shafts and heads with fan-shaped arms (Ill II.4b). The distribution of round shafts appears to be centred on the Peak District (*op cit*,186–8). This has been suggested as a Mercian tradition by Bu'Lock (1972, 84). Arguments for crosses of either group still being *in situ* can only be advanced in two cases, Maen Achwyfan in Flintshire, which is mounted on a sunken base in a field bearing no relationship to any know features (Manley *et al* 1991, fig 114) and Wincle, located near a crossroads on the township boundary. Although numbers of these crosses appear in presently Christian contexts none are in demonstrably primary contexts.

Anglo-Saxon

Astbury (SJ 847616 — in church) Two fragments with foliage decoration (Thacker 1987, 286).

Chester (Findspot unknown, presently in Grosvenor Museum) Sculptural fragment with animal carving (Bu'lock 1972, 47–8 and pl 8). Reminiscent of the Trewhiddle style?

Over (SJ 634663 — in church) Fragment of rectangular cross shaft with interlace decoration; similarities to the Sandbach crosses (Bu'lock, 1972, 45 and 47).

Prestbury (SJ 901769 — in churchyard) Three fragments representing two rectangular shafts re-erected inside a glass case as one shaft. Their form is late and does not particularly exhibit Scandinavian influences. Figures are just discernible on one of the fragments (personal observation but *see* Richards 1973, 280: Thacker 1987, 290).

Sandbach (SJ 761608 — in market place) Two large pre-Viking crosses presently situated on a stepped base. One bears a cross head from another cross and another cross head is presently built into one of the bases; in other words they are reconstructed. Three more rectangular shaft fragments representing at least one other cross similar to those in the market square are now in St Mary's churchyard. These were removed from the base structure of the market crosses in 1956. There are also fragments of two pre-Viking tomb slabs here, bearing figure and interlace decoration (Thacker 1987, 291).

Upton in Overchurch (SJ 264889 — currently in the Grosvenor Museum) A fragment of a pre-Viking sculpted stone bearing a runic inscription, the only one so far found on the Wirral (Higham 1993, 132). Found during the demolition of the Norman church at Upton in 1813. It has interlaced animals on one side and the inscription on the other one version of which has been translated as, 'The community erected [this] monument... Pray for Æthelmund['s soul]' (Bu'lock 1972, 49). The name is clearly English and the date probably ninth century.

Anglo-Scandinavian (Viking period)

Adlington (SJ 905803) Cylindrical 'Mercian'-style cross shaft moved and used as a sundial in the early eighteenth century in Adlington Hall Garden. A similar shaft stood next to this but was moved to Prestbury (below) in the 1950s (Thacker 1987, 290).

Astbury (SJ 847616 — in church) Part of a cylindrical 'Mercian' cross shaft with some scrollwork on it (Thacker 1987, 286).

Bowdon (SJ 759869 — in church) Two cross fragments, one with interlace, the other with a priest vested in chasuble and stole (Thacker 1987, 286).

Bromborough, Wirral, now in Merseyside (SJ 349822 — in churchyard) At least fourteen fragments were known in the late nineteenth century, constituting more than one cross and some possibly recumbent slabs (Romillly Allen 1895, 163–5, including drawings of lost fragments). Today only three fragments appear to survive. These have been re-erected as a standing cross outside the church of St Barnabas (eg Randall ed 1993, pl 4). These fragments do not match and represent more than one cross. The surviving pieces bear interlace on a rectangular shaft and the head is ring-headed though its spandrels are not bossed as in the pure 'Chester school',. However, it is similar enough to be considered part of this tradition.

Cheadle (now in Cheadle Town Hall but findspot unknown) Two fragments, part of a cylindrical 'Mercian'-style shaft and a typical 'Mercian' cross head with fan-shaped arms and incised volutes (Collingwood 1927, 177 and fig 221).

Chester

Grosvenor Museum (findspot unknown) Fragment of a rectangular cross shaft with interlace, probably belonging to the 'Chester school' (Thacker 1987, 286).

St John's church (SJ 409366 — in church) Heads of six ring-headed crosses with bossed spandrels of the 'Chester school'; also two fragments of rectangular shafts (Thacker 1987, 288). Found in 1870 during clearance work in the ruins of the choir of the Norman church (Cooper 1892, 5).

Disley (SJ 984835) Two fan-shaped cross heads decorated with interlace and plait and originally joined to 'Mercian'-style cylindrical cross shafts which were found in 1854 at Black Farm near Disley church but are probably those now located at Lyme Hall (Marshall 1975) where one has (very recently) been broken (personal observation). A base with twin rounded sockets was recovered from Church Field in Disley in 1957 and has been argued as the correct base-stone for the 'Bow Stones' now at Lyme Handley which, despite being cylindrical, are currently set in a base with square holes (Marshall 1975, 68).

Dyserth, Denbighshire (SJ 060792) Ring or circle-headed cross similar to those of the 'Chester school' in that it has the Chester form of spandrels but a Cumbrian-style interlaced circle head (Bailey 1980, 180: Manley and others 1991, 140; Romilly Allen 1989, pl 40).

Fallibroome (SJ 897751) Cylindrical cross-shaft of the 'Mercian' type. Moved slightly in 1935 (Thacker 1987, 290)

Frodsham (SJ 521773 — in church) Fragments of a figure sculpture possibly a priest (a cross? as at Neston) built into the inside south wall of the tower (Smith ed1985, 18).

Hilbre Island, Wirral, now in Merseyside (SJ 184879) Head of ring-headed cross of the 'Chester school' (Hume 1863–4, 233–4). Found in 1852 and now in Charles Dawson Brown Museum at West Kirby (Collingwood 1928, 14)

Lyme Hall (SJ 974844) Current location of two 'Mercian'-style cross heads which may originally be from near Disley church (*above*) (Marshall 1975).

Lyme Handley (SJ 974813) Possibly from Disley originally (above); this is the current location of the 'Bow Stones', cylindrical cross-shafts of the 'Mercian' type, set in an incorrect base outside the Bow Gates of Lyme Hall (Marshall 1975).

Macclesfield (SJ 918737 — in church) Four cross-shaft fragment in St Michael's church. Two are of rectangular cross-section, with one bearing ring interlace (similar to one of the Disley

crosses now in Lyme Hall) whilst the others are cylindrical 'Mercian'-style shafts. In Central Park (SJ 911741) three complete shafts are set up in the middle of a children's playground (Ill II.4b); they are not *in situ*, with two known to have come from Sutton (Thacker 1987, 290).

Maen Achwyfan Flintshire, North Wales (SJ 129787) Characteristic 'Chester-school' cross (Ill II.4a). It is complete, set in a sunken base, and suggested as still *in situ* (Edwards1991, 140 and fig 114) although it stands merely in the middle of a field (?), though near a road junction (Romilly Allen 1989, pl 33)

Neston, Wirral, now in Merseyside (SJ 292774 — in church) Five fragments of rectangular cross shafts probably representing three crosses. Three of the fragments have figures on them, a priest, an angel with a fight scene on the reverse, and a hunting scene with another confrontation on horseback on the reverse. Some of these scenes are suggestive of Pictish and Manx figurative work. Partial remains where the shafts would have joined to cross heads and decorative details suggest these belong to the 'Chester school' (White 1986).

Penmon, Anglesey (SH 628 805 — in church) Tall ring or circle-headed cross. Some similarities to Maen Achwyfan and hence the 'Chester school'. Also ring-chain in the style of Gaut of Manx fame in the Scandinavian period (Collingwood 1927, 143, 148 and fig 158; Romilly Allen 1989, pl 1).

Prestbury (SJ 901797- in churchyard) Cylindrical 'Mercian'-style cross-shaft moved here from Adlington Hall in the 1950s (Thacker 1987, 290).

Rainow (SJ 971765 — at Blue Boar Farm) A fragment of a cylindrical cross shaft of the 'Mercian' style built into a garden wall (Thacker 1987, 290).

Sutton (SJ 940705) Ridge Hall Farm, former location of the cylindrical cross-shafts of the 'Mercian' style, removed to Central Park, Macclesfield, in 1857 (Marshall 1975, 72).

Swettenham (SJ 801672 — in church) Small slab with wheel-headed cross design raised in relief (Thacker 1987, 291). Found in 1846 during the rebuilding of the church (Richards 1973, 316).

Thornton le Moors (SJ 441745 — in church) Inscribed and sculpted stone including figurative work. Some of the decorative motifs and the figurative work are considered of Scandinavian influence but the inscription is in Old English and reads +GODHELPE... (Brown and others 1983). It has a rectangular cross-section but is not obviously part of a cross-shaft, although it does taper slightly.

Upton, Prestbury (SJ 897 751) Fragment of cylindrical 'Mercian' style cross-shaft built into a stone wall (Thacker 1987, 291).

West Kirby, Wirral, now in Merseyside (SJ 218864) Fragments of the heads of two ring-headed crosses of the 'Chester school'. Also two pieces of rectangular decorated shaft probably for cross heads also of the 'Chester school' (Collingwood 1928, 14–18). All these fragments found when the church was rebuilt in 1869 (Thacker 1987, 289). Cheshire's (or now Merseyside's) only known hogback in a non-local stone was found buried in the churchyard (Laing 1984, 168–9). All now in the Charles Dawson Brown Museum in West Kirby.

Wincle (SJ 952 674) Also known as the Cleulow Cross. Well preserved cylindrical shafted cross of the 'Mercian' type. Stands on a mound near a crossroads on the township boundary (Thacker 1987, 291). Possibility of being *in situ*.

Woodchurch (SJ 275 868) Plain circle-headed cross (Thacker 1987, 292). Built into the north wall of the chancel (Richards 1973, 365).

Yeardsley cum Whaley (SJ 996 817) Stone base with twin sockets for cylindrical 'Mercian'-style crosses (Thacker 1987, 292).

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