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*KIRK IRETON near WIRKSWORTH*

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## EARLY MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT: PROBLEMS, PITFALLS AND POSSIBILITIES

(by Margery Tranter, Department of English Local History, University of Leicester,  
5 Salisbury Road, Leicester, LE1 7QR)

*"The relationship between settlement and social and political organisation in that period [.....] is one of the toughest interdisciplinary problems which we face."*<sup>1</sup>

The past 20-30 years have seen an expansion of interest in the histories of local communities at all levels; local studies form part of history and geography courses in schools and colleges as well as constituting a popular subject for adult education classes. The Department of English Local History at Leicester University, founded in 1948, remains the only academic department devoted to the study of English Local History - i.e that of the country as a whole - but centres have been founded elsewhere, as for example in the south-west at Exeter University, at the University of East Anglia, and at Lancaster and Nottingham, for the study of local history of the surrounding region or county. In a rapidly changing world many people, individually or collectively, have set out to rediscover either their own roots, through the study of family history, or those from which this changing society has evolved. Numbers of Local History Groups, Civic Societies, Industrial Archaeology or Preservation Groups have sprung up in which much valuable work is being done to discover, record and analyse individual communities before the evidence is swept away. The search for documentation to support folk-memories or topographical surveys has been made easier by the establishing of County Record Offices in the 1960s, by technical advances such as micro-filing and photocopying, by the publication of handbooks and guides such as those published by the Family History Society or Shire Publications and by discussions on sources and legitimate ways of using them in journals such as *The Local Historian*. Nevertheless, the wealth of material now available can itself present problems which, in spite of the dissemination of academic research and expertise through the medium of Adult Education classes, or day schools and conferences run by County Museum Services and so forth, can be daunting and bewildering for the non-specialist, would-be local historian.

In the words quoted above Professor Dumville summed up the difficulties facing the historian interested in interpreting the settlement history of the early medieval period - i.e the centuries between the English Settlements and the Norman invasion. A recently-published collection of essays highlights the problems for therein three eminent Anglo-Saxon scholars locate the original nucleus from which the Mercian kingdom expanded in three different, though contiguous, areas of the Trent Valley.<sup>2</sup> It is important that the stress laid by Professor Dumville on the interdisciplinary nature of such studies is heeded for rare indeed is the scholar who is qualified to interpret Anglo-Saxon literary texts and charters, to assess the bias in Bede's writings, to note the analogies in sculptural remains while also having the skills necessary to analyse the intricacies and omissions of Domesday Book; few Anglo-Saxon scholars would claim proficiency in the interpretation of manorial accounts, court rolls and medieval land law yet these, too, are important sources from which much incidental information relating to early settlement may be gleaned. Nor is this all: the settlement historian must also take into account the ever-increasing volume of archaeological, botanical and pedological evidence. Thus there lies before the local historian a daunting but seductive prospect with hidden obstacles and enchanting cul-de-sacs akin to those which lay before Bunyan's Pilgrim on his journey to the Celestial City and, as for Pilgrim, humility, perseverance and truth must be the seeker's constant guides.

The problems may be loosely grouped under four headings: where to start; how to record; understanding the sources; writing up the findings. In what follows consideration is given to some useful sources and their limitations and to a brief discussion of methodology; but this is not an exhaustive account: there are other sources, other difficulties and other possible lines of approach for which space precludes mention.

### MAPS

Maps form an obvious and easily accessible starting point and even 19th and early 20th century maps record many residual settlement features. Such, for example, are parish and township boundaries which have come through

from earlier periods sometimes with little apparent alteration. The 1st edition of the Ordnance Survey 25" maps for Alvaston and Boulton show numerous intermingled patches of the two townships clearly marked as detached areas of the Derby parishes of St Michael and St Peter respectively.<sup>3</sup> These maps thus provide us with two pieces of information; first, that Alvaston and Boulton were formerly detached chapelries of two of the town parishes of Derby, and secondly, that some of their lands lay together outside the main area of the two settlements. When these detached portions are related to the then extra-parochial area of Sinfin Moor and to the rights of common on the Moor held by Chellaston, Osmaston and Normanton one is beginning to reconstruct an agricultural and tenurial pattern much earlier than the 19th century. It gradually becomes apparent that townships and parishes outside Derby shared a large intercommoning area with the detached chapelries of St Michael and St Peter; such a pattern may have had its origin in the earliest phases of the English settlement; it may have resulted from the break-up of large estates in the later Anglo-Saxon period or it may have been a response to population pressure in the century prior to the Black Death. Thus it is already possible to postulate questions which could lead to further lines of inquiry.

Boundaries are, however, not immutable and those shown on the modern maps must be traced back as far as possible. The maps and Remark Books of the Ordnance Survey Boundary Survey were prepared in the mid-19th century when a series of Parliamentary Acts relating to boundaries was passed in the reigns of William IV and Queen Victoria.<sup>4</sup> Known as the Divided Parishes Acts they sought to rationalize the chaotic conditions found, especially along county boundaries, in areas such as South Derbyshire. The maps record boundaries in great detail and since they have subsequently been annotated to indicate the effects of the Acts, they enable earlier patterns to be accurately established. In the parish of Appleby Magna, for example, formerly divided between Derbyshire and Leicestershire, small areas of Derbyshire, only an acre or so in extent, are shown, while for Hartshorne, Winshill, Bretby and for the detached areas of Newton Solney or Measham on Derby Hills the dates of the boundary changes and the Local Government Board Order numbers which authorised those changes are also given.

18th and 19th century maps such as those of Greenwood, Teesdale, Bradshaw or Burdett give useful information which can be amplified by detail from enclosure and tithe maps and awards. These are especially useful as a guide to earlier road and footpath systems as well as to the fields and morphology of settlements. Collections of private estate papers such as the Paget papers in Staffordshire Record Office may also contain specially surveyed maps which, amongst other detail, indicate areas of common.<sup>5</sup> A combination of evidence from such sources suggests, for example, that the area of common represented by Sinfin Moor may have continued westwards, albeit intermittently, into Hatton (the tun on the heath), Hilton, Etwall, Stretton and Burton.

### SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Evidence deduced from maps needs, however, to be supported by written sources. The reports of the Boundary Commissioners have already been mentioned and, once again, estate papers can provide valuable information. The boundary and commons disputes between Bretby and Winshill are recorded in correspondence in the Paget papers, those between Calke, Castle Donington and Melbourne in the Lothian and Harpur-Crewe archives.<sup>6</sup> For early settlement Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the accounts of Gildas, to mention only three early sources, are essential background reading, but, of course, points like Bede's antipathy to the British or the West Saxon bias of the Chronicle must always be borne in mind and hence commentaries on them will help to maintain a balanced judgement.<sup>7</sup> Journals written by travellers such as Defoe, Celia Fiennes and Leland may contribute further incidental points.

### ARCHAEOLOGY

Lists of artefacts and archaeological sites known from excavation, from field-walking or from aerial photography are increasingly being kept on data bases by County Sites and Monuments Officers and by local museums. When combined with published results and mapped these lists can be very suggestive. Care must, of course, be taken to base conclusions only on the evidence which has definite provenance. Maps produced of distributions of Neolithic axes, Bronze and Iron Age querns and Roman kilns from the Leicestershire and Derbyshire lists for South Derbyshire and North-west Leicestershire imply, for example, that the upland area south of the Trent was being systematically exploited in those periods.<sup>8</sup> When these distributions are considered in conjunction with the

cursuses, henges and barrows of the ritual area between Aston-on-Trent and the confluences of the Dove and Tame the fragmentary remains of a prehistoric settlement can be glimpsed.

### PLACE-NAMES

Names are fascinating; the place- and field-names which abound have much to tell us about our ancient landscape and hence have become a widely used - and abused - source for settlement history. The study of place-names is a highly specialised linguistic discipline which demands not only detailed knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary of the Anglo-Saxon, Norse and, if possible, Celtic languages, but also an understanding of the ways in which sound changes occur and meanings evolve. A root word such as *wic* can become palatalized as in *Sandwich*, *Fordwich* or be voiced as in *Butterwick*. It is essential, therefore, that local historians without this specialist training base their use of names on the published works of place-name specialists and, additionally, observe certain guide-lines when applying interpretative explanations in particular cases.<sup>9</sup> Of these the following are perhaps the most important: only the earliest recorded forms should be used; later names are likely to have been influenced by Norman-French and Middle English and forms which appear after say, 1400 must be used with caution. Thus the two Miltons in Chapel-en-le-Frith and Repton parishes may appear to be the same, but whereas the former is first recorded as *la Mulneton* - the mill farm, the latter is recorded in Domesday as *Middeltune* - Middle farm; the endings of Averham, Kelham and Muskham, three neighbouring villages in Nottinghamshire, appear identical but are, in fact, derived from three totally different elements.<sup>10</sup> Secondly the whole place-name must be considered. The *-by* (Old Danish *bu*) ending in *Bretby*, for example, implies a Scandinavian presence there, but the first element *brettas*, *bretar* indicates a group of British people.<sup>11</sup> Some name-forming elements such as *-ton* (*tun*) were used well into the later medieval period and are therefore of doubtful use for dating whilst others such as *-ham*, *-bu*, *-port* were in vogue for much shorter lengths of time. A fourth point of great importance relates to the position of an element in a name; thus the meaning of *wic* in the combination of *wic* + *ham* cannot be equated with its meaning when combined with a personal name or a descriptive qualifier as in *Hardwick* or *Colwick*. The element *-ing* in *Nottingham*, *Birmingham* is an *ingas* element indicating a kinship group, but in *Willington* it is derived from *willign* - 'willow' with the habitative *tun*, while in *Tissington* it is formed by an OE connective particle and the name means 'Tidsige's farm'.<sup>12</sup> Finally, attention must be given to local aspects of topography and pronunciation which may give clues to the original meaning of the name. Two elements give rise to names in *Eaton* OE *ea* - 'river' and OE *eg* - 'island in marshy ground'. As examples of the former *Ekwall* gives *Eaton Socon* (Beds), *Water Eaton* (Bucks) where the Domesday forms are *Etone*. In his opinion the form *Detton* for *Little Eaton* also gives a derivation from *ea*, but *Cameron* sees it as being derived from *eg*.<sup>13</sup> The settlement is lowlying beside the *Bottle Brook* and topographically either element would be applicable. However, as can be seen from its use for *Eyam* and *Edale*, *eg* did not necessarily denote a low-lying site; hence a knowledge of the local topography and the earliest forms combined with local pronunciation can sometimes elucidate the meaning.<sup>14</sup> The older pronunciations *Spoondun*, *Haynor* and *Hayge* more accurately represent the Anglo-Saxon *spondun*, *hainoure*, *heyegge* (shingle hill, high spur, high edge) than the modern *Spondon*, *Heanor* and *Heage*.<sup>15</sup>

### LEGAL DOCUMENTS

Title deeds, wills, writs, leases and, although strictly a fiscal document, the Domesday Survey are among the documents which since they are concerned with transfer of land often contain useful descriptions of holdings and tenements. However, here the user is faced first with the problem of reading the document. Fortunately some have been transcribed and printed, although seldom in full, but many are available only in manuscript. Medieval script, medieval latin with its associated shorthand abbreviations and conflicting dating systems all have to be reckoned with. Ultimately the essential question of meaning remains and it is well to be wary of literal interpretations. Thus, for example, a parcel of land held in fee simple conditional (ie freehold but entailed) described as bought and sold in a document prior to 1285 may indeed have changed ownership in the way described, but post-1285 the same apparent process may have been carried out to enact a fictitious conveyance - a process devised by lawyers in the following decades as a means of circumventing and breaking the entail; similarly, where ecclesiastical land is in question the provisions of the Statute of Mortmain and hence the meaning of the phrase 'the statute of mortmain notwithstanding' also need to be understood. Charters in cartularies such as those of *Darley* and *Dale Abbeys* record grants and quitclaim of land, but those same lands may already have been in their possession. The legal action may have been taken in the courts by the abbots in order to reinforce their title

deeds in the light of subsequent legislation. Other similar documents purporting to transfer land may in fact conceal loans and mortgages.

It is sometimes said of Domesday that it records every estate, every village. While it is clear that much fuller detail was recorded the *summary documents* which have come to be known as Domesday Book have obviously conflated much detail. Since the purpose of the Survey was to provide King William with an accurate picture of his revenues, ie it was a taxation document, many units, whether villages or hamlets, were subsumed under the chief manor through which their dues were paid. Thus in Leicestershire although Tonge is included Breedon is not; but we know from early charters granting Breedon to Medeshamstede Abbey (Peterborough) in 675 x 691 and a grant of King Edgar to the church at Breedon in 972 that it existed.<sup>16</sup> The problem for the settlement historian is obvious - Domesday does not tell the whole story and one must not presume that non-mention there means non-existence.

Thus a wealth of information can be collected. How the individual researcher records his material is, to some extent, a personal preference since everyone has different approaches. Nevertheless, there are some general points which others have found by trial and error. It is important to have some general outline of broad categories which can be divided: place-names can be grouped under Celtic, Anglo-Saxon or Scandinavian elements and then further classified under Welsh or British, topographical, personal, habitative, etc and cross referenced. These are probably best kept, as are bibliographical references, on small index cards which allow for sorting in a variety of ways; more detailed notes are better on large cards while transcripts and photocopies are best kept in files. Those who are adept at manipulating computer data bases may wish to devise their own programme for storing and sorting data. However the number of fields which may be required can make this time-consuming, rather than useful, unless the computer has both a large memory and a sophisticated data-base.

Ultimately the fascinating occupation of collecting has to come to an end and the data has then to be analysed and written up. Since the publication in the 1880s of Frederick Seebohm's *The English Village* successive historians have followed the method of tracing history backwards which he there pioneered. Perhaps the most well-known modern exponent subsequently is W.G. Hoskins who, in *The Making of the English Landscape* took the present landscape and sought to explain its appearance by gradually stripping away the accretions of receding centuries. Applied to research this method has the great merit of revealing where gaps in the records occur - a fact frustratingly well-known to family historians who inevitably proceed backwards! In the history of a settlement of community these gaps can be no less frustrating; the writer of a narrative is tempted to gloss over them, to leap across centuries and make deductions without evidence. But, just as the genealogist may not invent ancestors who cannot be traced in the record, neither may a local historian argue that because an estate or tenement bearing a certain name is recorded in a 16th century document and is compounded of elements whose roots are Anglo-Saxon that it must therefore must have existed in the Anglo-Saxon period. To take an example: at the Dissolution the Abbey of Chester's estate at Weston-on-Trent passed initially to the newly created bishopric of Chester and within a short time was bought by William Paget, Henry VIII's Principal Secretary.<sup>17</sup> The abbey cartulary shows that in 1154/89 it possessed tenements in Derby and in 1230/50 a second charter refers to the abbey's possession of 3 acres 1½ roods in Derby.<sup>18</sup> The Pagets also acquired the lands of Burton Abbey and similarly its cartulary refers to lands in Derby which included tenements attached to their rural manor of Littleover as well as two mills.<sup>19</sup> As has been demonstrated in an earlier article in *Miscellany* some, at least, of the Paget's lands including the mills, were later acquired by the Borough of Derby.<sup>20</sup> Three questions arise from these documents: did the borough acquire the whole of the Pagets' holdings in Derby? If not to whom did the others pass and were they among the sequestered estates returned to the Pagets by James I? Can we be certain that the tenements in the rental, apart from the mills, had been the property of Burton rather than Chester? The answers to these problems can only be ascertained if it is possible to trace continuous tenancies for all the holdings of both abbeys and identify these in the inventories of the Paget lands before and after sequestration, and in the lands acquired by the borough. We may, therefore, have to be content with stating that the several groups of holdings owned by these landlords may have been interconnected.

Early medieval settlement patterns may be likened to immense double-sided jigsaw puzzles, but ones in which not only are some of the pieces missing, presumed destroyed, but others are continually changing shape and colour, sub-dividing and amalgamating. The challenge is enticing, the fascination obsessive and the historian must

hold fast to the principles of accuracy and integrity, and be prepared to accept that in all probability the entire puzzle will never be complete and that only a series of partial pictures can be constructed.

#### FOOTNOTES

- 1 Dumville, D, 'Essex, Middle Anglia and the expansion of Mercia', in Bassett, E. ed, *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, 1989, p126
- 2 Gelling, M, 'The early history of Western Mercia' p195; Brookes, N, 'The formation of the Mercian kingdom' p161; Dumville, D. *op. cit.*, p128 in Bassett, E. ed, *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, 1989
- 3 OS 25" LV,6,1880; LV,2,1883; LV,10,1883. Copies of these are held in the Local Studies Library, Irongate, Derby
- 4 The Ordnance Survey Records are now held in the Public Record Office at Kew, London. Class OS 26, 27, 28
- 5 Staffs Record Office, D(W)1734/2/3/138; D(W)1734/2/3/135
- 6 Staffs Record Office, D(W)1734/2/3/139; D(W)1734/1/4/37; Melbourne Hall muniments X94, Box 52, survey of the manor of Melbourne and Derby Hills, 1597; X94/237/3/17a-b. I am grateful to Lord Ralph Kerr for permission to use and quote from these documents and to Mr and Mrs Howard Usher for much help and advice on the Lothian archives; Derbyshire Record Office, Matlock, D2375/167/20
- 7 Useful editions are *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Trs. and Ed. G.N. Garmonsway, Everyman reprint, 1984; *The Ecclesiastical History of the English people*, Oxford, 1970
- 8 I am grateful to Mr David Barrett, County Archaeological Officer for Derbyshire and to the Leicestershire Museums service for the use of their records.
- 9 In particular the detailed county studies, monographs and articles published by The English Place-name Society. Care is especially important when using interpretative volumes such as Gelling, *Signposts to the Past* and *Place-names in the Landscape*. In her discussion of the element *eg*, for example, Gelling herself warns against this. Noting that the element is less common north of a line from the Mersey to the Humber, and that some the sites do not share the topographical characteristics of those south of that line, she writes '*This high degree of uncertainty in northern counties should be borne in mind when use is made of the analysis offered in this discussion*'. *Place-names in the Landscape*, p36
- 10 Cameron, *Place-names of Derbyshire*, I, 61, III, p653-4; Ekwall, E, *Dictionary of English Place-names*, p19, Averham is DB Aigrun from OE *ea-garum*, dative plural 'strips of land on a river'; *ibid*, p270, Kelham is DB Calun from dative plural of *kiolr* 'at the ridges'; *ibid*, p334, Muskham is DB Muscham from *mus-camp*, mouse field'.
- 11 Cameron, K, *Place-names of Derbyshire*, III, p623
- 12 English Place-name Survey, Vol XIII, *Place-names of Warwickshire*, p34-6, DB form *Berningeha*; Vol XVII, *Place-names of Nottinghamshire*, p13, *Snotingeham*; Cameron, *op cit*, II, 523; *ibid*, p409
- 13 Ekwall, E, *Dictionary of Place-names*, 3rd ed, p158; Cameron, K, *Place-names of Derbyshire*, II, p457
- 14 Cold Eaton in Dovedale, for example is on a spur overlooking the River Dove.
- 15 Cameron, *op cit*, III, p605; II, p469, from dat. singular *hean-ofre* 'high ridge'; III, p565, *heah-ecg* 'high edge'.
- 16 The documentation is drawn together in Dornier, A, 'The Anglo-Saxon monastery at Breedon-on-the-Hill, Leicestershire' in Dornier, ed, *Mercian Studies*, 1977
- 17 *Calendar of Letter and Papers Henry VIII*, Vol XVI, Sept 1540-Dec 1541, p536, 4/5 Aug 1541 Manor of Weston granted to John Byrde, Bishop of Chester; Vol XXI, ii, Sept-Dec 1546, p76, Surrender of the lordship and manor of Weston by Bishop of Chester to the king; p80, Letters patent granting the lands to Wm. Paget.
- 18 Tait, W. ed, *The Chartulary of the Abbey of S. Werburgh, Chester*, Part 1, p142, charter 128, 1154-89; p156, charter 169, 1230-50
- 19 *Collections for a History of Staffordshire*, 1937, *Catalogue of muniments belonging to the Marquis of Anglesey*, see charters 11 (1150-59); 36 (1188-97), 61/2 (1213-18); 625 (1409) for leases of the mills; 496 (1337) letters patent of Ed III allowing the Abbey to purchase '*ten marks-worth of land and rent*' in a year, notwithstanding the Statute of Mortmain indicates that the Abbey was actively engaged in the land market; *ibid*, 1916, 'The Burton Abbey 12th century Surveys', p209-300. Holdings in *Waldewyke strete*' mentioned in the 12th century surveys are not referred to as such in the charters.
- 20 Jane Steer, 'Medieval Holdings of Burton Abbey in Derby, Pt I, *Derbyshire Miscellany*, Vol 11, Part 6, Autumn 1988, p118-139

# ALABASTER TOMB MANUFACTURE 1400 TO 1430

## - towards a re-appraisal

(by Colin Ryd)

The principal accounts of Medieval English alabaster tomb-sculpture are five in number. In 1853 Edward Richardson published the first "*Notices of Medieval Sculpture and workings in Alabaster in England*".<sup>1</sup> This was extended by W.H. St. John Hope in his paper "*On the early working of Alabaster in England*" of 1904.<sup>2</sup> In "*An Account of Medieval Figure-Sculpture in England*" of 1912 by Prior and Gardner, alabaster tomb-sculpture was again reviewed.<sup>3</sup> Gardner's "*Alabaster Tombs of the Pre-Reformation Period in England*", published in 1940, provided an invaluable catalogue of the locations and details of 342 samples.<sup>4</sup> The most recent survey was included in "*Sculpture in Britain - the Middle Ages*" of 1955 by Lawrence Stone,<sup>5</sup> and it is appropriate to focus upon this.

Stone's function in that work was to edit a great deal of art-historical literature of the extensive period from c670 to c1540. This was admirably done, though with regard to any particular part he was at the mercy of the specialised papers to hand and their validity. By 1955 the subject of alabaster tomb-manufacture, a major division of English Medieval sculpture to survive from the later 14th and 15th centuries, had reached a state of confusion, superficiality and stagnation. Since that time the few additions to emerge have, at best, mostly been content to repeat items from the motley assortment of unsifted and unquestioned tradition, and, at worst, to add yet further embellishments of private fantasy. Notable exceptions to this include the scholarly works of J. Enoch Powell<sup>6</sup> and the welcome and industrious research of the geologist E.J. Firman.<sup>7</sup>

### Reappraisal

The first stage of my attempt at a more objective and coherent review of alabaster tomb-sculpture of the first half of the 15th century was an analysis of the Chellaston Standing Angel with Shield pattern at Lowick in Northamptonshire.<sup>8</sup> Another paper in the development of this thesis is to appear shortly. This present article permits an associated phase of the argument to be presented - one concerned with dissolution to aid the reformation. It is necessary to point out the weaknesses of the sketchy outline which has become consolidated over a long period, and is the consequence of accepting a string of secondary and even trivial fragments which seem reasonable, perhaps authoritative, in linear formation, but fail to coalesce in any greater dimension. Further building of the house on this sandy foundation is ill-advised.

### Distribution Maps 1 to 4

I include in this paper four maps, at Figures 1 to 4, showing the distribution of surviving memorials incorporating alabaster, in four periods from 1300 to 1450. The survivals may be effigial fragments; effigies without tomb-chests; effigies on chests not of alabaster; alabaster tomb-chests with alabaster slabs either incised or inlaid with brasses; and the fully developed alabaster altar-tombs of chests with effigies and accessories. Maps 1 to 4 also show documentary references to tombs no longer in existence. I have studied all of these at first-hand, and include a few not in Gardner's list.<sup>9</sup> The monuments are classified in four periods:

Map 1. the beginnings of alabaster usage from 1300-1360.

Map 2. the period of increasing popularity of the material 1360-1400.

Map 3. 1400-1425, when production is relatively intensified and the altar-tomb comes into its own

Map 4. the continuation at a steady rate of output during the second quarter of the 15th century from 1425-1450.

The lists of place-names for each map are given in the Addendum and are in the alphabetical order of Counties that Gardner favoured.

## CRITIQUE

Stone's summary of 1955 remains the latest principal account, and there, pages 197 to 200 are concerned with the manufacture of alabaster tombs in the first three decades or so of the 15th century. A critical analysis of the five consecutive paragraphs beginning at the sectional division of page 197, and the supporting 'Notes' on page 265, reveals the accumulated flotsam and the poverty of coalition. For simplicity's sake I omit references to page, paragraph and line; extracts are in double quotation marks and can easily be found in the original text. Beyond mention of the Plates contained in Stone's volume, I make reference only to a minimum number of other tombs for purposes of comparison. There is no shortage of extra examples.

Stone begins by saying that during the first quarter of the 15th century alabaster tombs "*dominated the whole of England except for the south-west*". Certainly alabaster was by then the most popular material of the memorial trade, but the distribution of Map 3 of that period is less absolute than suggested. A concentration in the Midlands and a dispersal along the waterways and coastal sites accessible from that region is clear, but East Anglia and the North-West have as few examples as the South-West. More importantly, all Maps 1 to 4 provide no support for the view that London was a major place of alabaster tomb-making or fashion, nor for the notion that these monuments enjoyed any wide favour in the surrounding counties of the South-East.

### "Clearly defined centres"

Stone's summary is defined on the single proposition that "*It is now possible to distinguish three clearly defined centres for the alabaster trade, at London, at Chellaston and Nottingham, and York*". This identification of places widely dispersed implies that each had a substantial manufacture of alabaster tombs, and a sufficient individuality of style in its collective output as to be "*clearly defined*" and recognisable in its own right. Upon those foundation all else depends, and to the substantiation of it all references to details of representative tombs are directed. Unfortunately, this three-cum-four part abstract of the tangible and documentary evidence is a lop-sided affair, whatever persuasions have sustained it over many years, and the justifications of it is impossible. The reality, as I see it, is this:

1. York has gained a reputation as tomb-making place of the period for no good reason at all.
2. Alabaster tombs in and around London are very few in number. These, and the little recorded information available, point to no thriving industry there, but only the odd craftsman making occasional use of the imported material. The capital city no longer had a Court Style to lead the way, and however much the elements of tomb design were inherited from earlier London example, in the alabaster tomb trade of the 15th century London was only a fringe participant.
3. Though Nottingham was established as a place of panel carving in the 14th century, it has no claim as yet to an equivalent importance and singularity in the making of alabaster tombs. It hovers geographically close to Chellaston and has thereby gained a mysterious credibility of its own. This tenuous duality of the second of Stone's "*clearly defined*" centres is harmless if it remains a unified, though vague, regional reference. When it is split into two distinct sources of tombs, and different clues have to be found in support, the result is chaotic. We need not be surprised at the fall of a house divided against itself.
4. That Chellaston played a major part in tomb manufacture and had the mineral resource in abundance is beyond dispute.

### The London 'primacy'

The impulse to make London a centre among others soon extends to giving it a priority and leadership in these matters. I accept that the effigies of Archbishop Courtenay in the Cathedral of Canterbury and William of Wykeham in Winchester Cathedral (Stone Plates 152 A and B), both possibly made about 1400, are probably the work of the same sculptor and are of forthright and fluent style. It is not known that he worked in London, and I see no reason to force that conclusion, nor to compound the invention by making the character of these two effigies of unknown provenance typify a theoretical "London style". During the 14th century a few London monuments had used alabaster in conjunction with other stones and bronze, notably at the Abbey of Westminster. That this occasional use persisted in the 16th century is made clear by the contract of 1421 between Richard

Hertcombe and Robert Broun, a London based sculptor, to make "a tomb of alabaster and of other stone" to be installed in Bisham Priory in the County of Berkshire.<sup>10</sup> Though the sepulchre survives not, the desire for London primacy does, and especially when the authorship of a tomb with 'Royal' connections is at stake. Stone suggests that the alabaster monument of King Henry IV, d1413, and Queen Joan, d1437, in the Cathedral at Canterbury - not in London - may be the work of the same Robert Broun, presumably on the basis that any name with a London association is better than one without, though there is nothing to link the tomb with the man. This one tomb triggers a bewildering sequence of supposedly obvious sculptural features peculiar to a London centre and so quite distinct from the products of the other centres, distant and "clearly defined".

### Principles and Variations

We move from the large-scale and regional issues of places of origin to focus upon the details of carving evidence meant to support their identification, Here the problems lie. I suggest that the tomb sculpture that emerged from the shop system of the day presents an amalgam of three features, not always easily separated.

1. The principles of the patterns of the shop, seen by the patron and referred to by craftsmen, are absolute only in theory, since they are always realised by a hand-working process. When the principles are safely determined, however, the pattern may reasonably be taken as exponential of a shop, and not a carver.
2. Within the principles of the pattern are the little variations of design that the manual process and the commercial atmosphere of the shop permitted. At Lowick this surfaced in a few subsidiary versions of the hair-style formula. Another instance occurs in the carving of wing feathers. At times this is sculpturally minimal; on other occasions the wing may be endowed with some more details from the range of possibilities of primaries/secondaries/shafts/vanes. These variables may be the result of shop pressures of time, cost, material, piece-rates and the like - the practicalities of making and trading. Alternatively they may stem from the attitudes and abilities of the employees. Failure to comprehend the structure of the pattern, incompetence in carving it (both evident in the tomb-chest of John, Lord Rous at Bottesford), and a willingness to settle for a quick and abbreviated working are some of the negative possibilities. Other survivals show that some craftsmen were fastidious and even a little inventive in their transcribing of the patterns and doubtless proud of their high standards and reputations. The variables of this second category are too sporadic and diverse to provide rigidity for Stone's framework.
3. The third characteristic to be noted is the trait of personality that any working of a pattern by eye and hand will always manifest. These signs of personality are not easy to define (which is why they seldom are) but they are, for example, of the order of fineness of resolution as opposed to a coarser execution; a sinuous, flowing curvilinear rhythm may be the sign of one hand, and the more angular and optically aggressive articulation of forms the natural and inevitable precipitation of another. These truly personal traits can never be an indication of any larger origin of shop or centre; they remain diacritical of personality.

Failure to discriminate in these matters results in anomalies which confuse rather than confirm, as we shall see.

### London - Chellaston - Nottingham: facial distinction of effigies

Stone maintains that the Canterbury effigies of Henry IV and Queen Joan show "a personal portraiture modified by a need for grandeur". Portraiture of the living is a divisive issue, but portraiture of the unseen dead of six centuries ago is very difficult to corroborate. "These London effigies" - now unquestionably of London origin - are distinguished by their "big heads and powerful characterisation". They are "very different from the small anonymous features" of the now "midland alabaster tomb-makers". This "midland" style is then sub-divided, as we feared, and Chellaston effigies all have "rather clumsy and heavy-jowled faces" and demonstrate "slightly coarse carving" which is "easily distinguished from the more sensitive and delicate style" of the effigies of North Leigh in Oxfordshire (Stone Plate 155 B), which are "probably of Nottingham origin" and have "graceful features". Soon the probability of this Nottingham source and style becomes certain, though on the strangely negative grounds that "the identity of these Nottingham alabastermen is unfortunately not known". Plates 115 A and B and 156 of Stone's selection show the heads of the representative effigies of the putative styles of London, Nottingham and Chellaston at Canterbury, North Leigh and Lowick respectively. We need only glance at these to see that this differentiation is simply not present.

Logically the reverse must be true. The sameness of the facial character of Queen Joan, Lady Wilcote and Katherine Greene is most striking, and not the differences which are meant to epitomise the now three "clearly defined centres" of origin.

The heads of male civilians and kings in alabaster effigy are far less common than those of knights, whose heads and faces are much obscured by armour. It is just possible that a little extra effort was made to refer to some existing image of the king's face for the purpose of the tomb, which was a prestigious contract to gain. Yet the urge towards realism was not the "powerful" factor in late Medieval art in England that it was on the Continent. The insular temperament produced no Fouquet equivalent, and the conditions of workshop manufacture were a long way from the studio portraiture of later centuries. Thus, the beard formula of the king is to be found on the Christs and Saints of alabaster panel carvings; the crown detail is much akin to the cresting of the helm beneath the head of one of the Hilton Knight effigies of c1410 at Swine in Yorkshire; the formation of the monarch's ear is that of the civilian at Aston-on-Trent of c1415; the schema of the eye is repeated on many an alabaster effigy of the period; and the royal hair-do is shared by the civilian at Aston-on-Trent and is a principle of the Chellaston Standing Angel pattern.

In this area of "facial distinctions", as in those to follow, Stone's summary suffers from the weakness of using variables of Categories 2 and 3 (of the previous section on 'Principles and Variations') and of basing his conclusions on too few samples of tombs.

#### **London - Chellaston - Nottingham: ornament in confusion**

As with facial matters, so with regard to ornamental features, the argument for territorial copyright fails to hold up. We are told of the "minute elaboration of ornamental detail" of "the midlands", now united; the "elaborate decoration" of Lowick, hence Chellaston; and the "elaborate treatment" of Nottingham. The "midlands" region is said to be responsible for the "increased use of a four-leaf flower ornament" which is then more precisely "very probably the work of the Nottingham workshops", now in the plural. As a consequence, the two (or three) tombs at Swine, the tomb of Ralph Nevill and his two wives at Staindrop in County Durham and a destroyed tomb of John IV, formerly at Nantes in Brittany, are all identified as of likely Nottingham origin.

The vanished tomb of Nantes generates yet a more complicated hypothesis. Queen Joan's first husband was the same John IV of Brittany; she it was who commissioned an alabaster tomb for him. The contract for its manufacture in or around 1408 survives the tomb,<sup>11</sup> together with an 18th century engraving of the monument.<sup>12</sup> In map 3 the documentary symbol for this monument is placed off the south coast of England and arrowed towards France. The contract records the names of three men responsible for making the tomb - Thomas Colyn, Thomas Holewell and Thomas Poppelhowe. These three, says Stone, "may have been inhabitants of London or Nottingham". One cannot deny that they might have been inhabitants of any place. Though the engraving is of only limited use as an informative description of the tomb, the chest details and the "decorated armour joint" banding of the engraving swing Stone's opinion away from London towards Nottingham as the source of the lost memorial of Nantes and the surviving one at Staindrop. However, the ornamental borders of the engraving bear no resemblance to the four-leaf repeating motif at issue. This proves no obstacle to the "suspicion" that the three Thomases were the "leading alabastermen" of Nottingham, no less, "in the first decade of the century". In summary, Nottingham now becomes the likely workplace of three named tomb-makers of high repute on the basis of a totally unrelated detail of an inadequate engraving of a non-existent tomb. To make matters worse, or better, the various kinds of the "elaborate decoration", including the four-leaf banding scheme, that are supposed to distinguish Midlands from Chellaston from Nottingham from London products, are abundantly present on the effigies of Henry IV and Queen Joan at Canterbury which are of 'compulsory' London origin and distinction.

#### **York - effigies**

"The third clearly defined centre of alabaster tomb-making was York" says Stone, and "there were produced more florid versions of the Nottingham-Chellaston type". Again the pendulum swings and the Nottingham and Chellaston styles, which were earlier "easily distinguished", become united again in differentiation from the legendary York. The effigy of Sir Robert Waterton, d1424, at Methley in Yorkshire (Stone Plate 157) is said to have "features and drapery much bolder in design and execution" than "the midland work". I agree that this effigy, and those of Sir Richard

Redman, d1426, and Sir William Ryther, d1425, both at Harewood in Yorkshire have an idiosyncratic character of carving consistent with a single author, but that is all. Three robust transcriptions of a standard tomb layout are not sufficient to indicate a regional industry. Indeed, since they may well date from 1430 or later, they may be part of an embellishing tendency to be found on several monuments likely to have emerged from the second generation of established Midlands production. Other than this, the quaintness of the set of three is more commensurate with the enterprise of a freelance sculptor than anything peculiarly Yorkshire. Tombs at places within the boundaries of the County of Yorkshire may be better considered in relation to the course of the River Trent and the coastal approaches it made possible.

### **Attendant Angels**

Stone describes the Attendant Angels at the heads of the effigies of Henry IV and Queen Joan as "*upright angels with carefully depicted wing feathers*" which "*are in the London manner*". The "*upright Angels*" are more accurately Attendant Angels seated on the horizontal slab of the tomb, with the upper half of the body "*upright*" or vertical in a pose that is not easily adopted by mortals. However, this sitting posture is true only of those Angels by the head of the Queen (Stone Plate 155 A). Those by the head of the King are poised in a more transient condition and lying in an inclined plane from slab to cushion. Both attitudes are common in the broader awareness of alabaster tombs of the period 1400-1430, and before and beyond. The "*carefully depicted wing feathers*" is rather vague. Presumably this applies in total to the carved resolution of primary and secondary feathers, and of shafts and vanes. Whatever, London, or more precisely, a London-based sculptor, had no monopoly of this chased feathering. This thorough carved delineation can be found on alabaster tombs far distant, and meant to be distinguishable by not having this detail. Even the wings of the inclined Attendant Angels at North Leigh are so modelled, and this tomb has already been ascribed to Nottingham, as are those of the Angels sitting uprightly by the head of Sir Thomas Wendesley, d1403, at Bakewell in Derbyshire. Similar wriggled traces still linger on the wings of the inclined Attendant Angels at Aston-on-Trent. Conversely, of the four extant examples of alabaster tombs in London to 1425, which one presumes have to be taken as the products of this "*London centre*", the feature of "*carefully depicted wing feathers*" is absent from the secondary feather regions of the Attendant Angels of John of Eltham, d1337, at Westminster, and from those by John Oteswich and his Wife, c1400, in Great Saint Helen's.

### **Tomb-chest: Hovering Angels with Shields**

The depiction of the Hovering Angel motif on the tomb-chest of Sir Robert Waterton at Methley (Stone Plate 154 B), as on the sister-tomb of Sir Richard Redman at Harewood, is as distinctive in personal working as that of the effigies. The two Angels supporting a Shield of Arms (not present on the walls of the third tomb of the set, that of Sir William Ryther at Harewood) are said by Stone to "*differ from those of the midlands*" in that they "*kneel sideways instead of standing upright with the shields before them ..... and the wings have carefully drawn feathers and inward turning feathers*".

In the wider context of Tomb-chest Angels and Attendant Angels I think the description of this pose as 'Hovering' is more useful. The transience of the Angelic state varies a little and causes Stone to settle for "*kneeling sideways*", and Gardner himself to hover between '*unusual kneeling angels*' and '*two flying angels*' on consecutive pages.<sup>13</sup>

The use of "*carefully drawn features*" has already been discounted; the extra feature of "*inward turning feathers*" on the wings of the Methley chest Angels can also be found on the Attendant Angels by the head of Henry IV, on those accompanying Lady Wilcote at North Leigh, and likewise at Strelley in Nottinghamshire, c1400. The regional significance of that detail is destroyed.

Stone implies that this seraphic duet, however described, is not part of the "*midlands*" repertoire which was restricted to the Standing Angel with Shield. This is not true. The Hovering Angel motif is certainly less common than the Standing Angel. Of the period 1400 to 1430 only six tombs employing this theme remain, including the two flamboyant versions of Methley and Harewood. The other four are to be found at Aston-on-Trent c1415; at Harewood on the tomb of Judge Gascoigne, d1419; and at Swine arranged repeatedly around the walls of the tombs of two Hilton Knights, c1410. The latter have already been steered by Stone towards a Nottingham origin. That the Swine Hovering Angels have a detailed carving of wing feathers, as do the Attendant Angels mentioned

above, confirms the nullification of such embellishment being the hallmark of Yorkshire or Nottingham or London, together with the converse that the absence of it is a sure sign of the Chellaston house-style.

I am persuaded that Chellaston had a strong claim to all of these four tombs and certainly that the Hovering Angels with Shield pattern was part of the Chellaston catalogue.

### **Tomb-chest: Standing Angels with Shields**

The Chellaston Standing Angel with Shield occurs twice on the tomb-chest of Henry IV at Canterbury. Stone argues that this "was adopted by midland carvers who kept the type, but left the upper wing plain without feather carving". He also suggests that the Royal tomb "may not have been completed much before 1420". At this time the Lowick monument was finished and erected and several others using the same Standing Angel pattern had been built well before. By now the subject of feather carving is too deranged to have any regional meaning, or indeed, to be understandable. The presence of secondary feather detail on the Standing Angels at Canterbury is not entirely convincing; the restoration of 1937 casts some doubt on the original achievement.<sup>14</sup> Nonetheless, the absence of this upper wing carving on Standing Angels, long held to be proof of a Midlands origin, is not borne out by the evidence of the Arderne monument at Elford in Staffordshire, which may well be soon after 1400 and the earliest instance of this tomb-chest theme.

All these wings and feathers apart, are we to suppose that just two copies of a quite precise Standing Angel with Shield pattern could emerge 'out of the blue', in Canterbury, but from an unknown London workshop in a city where no tradition of alabaster tomb-making and no evolutionary background existed? More absurdly, are we to believe that this sudden and solitary London invention, at Canterbury, could have provided the model for the Chellaston shop years after the repeated use of the pattern in the region of intense alabaster activity?

Faced with the hopelessness of the debate, Stone resorts to the claim that "In any case, it is unthinkable that a royal tomb should have been commissioned in the provinces". In no case do I find it "unthinkable". In this case I think the manufacture of the tomb of Henry IV and Queen Joan in an established workshop in the Midlands quite probable.

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## ADDENDUM

### Details of Maps 1 to 4

The entries for each Map are given in alphabetical order of County. Attributions are for identification; few are guaranteed. Abbreviations are: K - Knight; L - Lady; C - Civilian; P - Priest; doc - document.

#### Map 1. 1300-1360

Cambridge	Ely	John of Holtham (doc)
Gloucester	Cathedral	Edward II
	Tewkesbury	Hugh Despencer
Kent	Canterbury Cathedral	Archbishop Stratford
London	Westminster	John of Eltham
	Grey Friars	Queen Isabel (doc)
Northampton	Ashton	Johan de Herteshul
Stafford	Hanbury	John de Hanbury
Warwick	Kingsbury	K
Yorkshire	York Cathedral	William of Hatfield
	Harpham	chest and slab
	Hornsea	chest and slab

#### Map 2. 1360-1400

Berkshire	Wantage	William Fitzwarren
Buckingham	Aylesbury	K
Cheshire	Bunbury	Hugh Calveley
	Acton	William Mainwaring
	Barthomley	Robert Foulshurst
Cumberland	Greystoke	William the Good
Derbyshire	Bakewell	Godfrey Foljambe
	Ashbourne	C and K
	Barrow-on-Trent	P
Durham	Cathedral	Bishop Hatfield
	Cathedral	Ralph, Lord Nevill
	Cathedral	John, Lord Nevill
Gloucester	Berkeley	Thomas, Lord Berkeley
	Newent	K and L
Hampshire	Winchester Cathedral	Bishop Edington
Hereford	Cathedral	Richard Pembridge
Kent	Canterbury Cathedral	Archbishop Courtenay
	Canterbury Cathedral	Lady Mohun
	St. Radigund's Abbey	Thomas, Lord Poynings (doc)
Lancashire	Huyton	John de Winwick
Leicester	Trinity Hospital	Mary de Bohun
	Whitwick	John Talbot
	Kirby Bellars	K
	Kirby Bellars	L
	Appleby Magna	K and L
Lincoln	North Cockerington	K
	Guisborough	William, Lord Latimer (doc)
London	Westminster	William and Blanche
	Westminster	Archbishop Langham
	Old St Paul's	John of Gaunt (doc)

Norfolk	Charterhouse	Walter Manny (doc)
Northampton	East Harling	K and L
	Orlingbury	K
	Spratton	John Swinford
Nottingham	Willoughby in the Wolds	Richard Willoughby, C
	Willoughby in the Wolds	Richard Willoughby, K
	Whatton	Adam de Newmarch
	Radford	fragment (doc)
Oxford	Dorchester	K
Somerset	Wells Cathedral	Bishop Ralph
	Wells Cathedral	Bishop Harewell
Stafford	Norbury	L
	Norbury	K
	Norbury	L
Suffolk	Bures	Thomas de Vere
Warwick	Warwick	Thomas Beauchamp
	Aston	K
Yorkshire	West Tanfield	John Marmion
	Swine	Robert Hilton
	Pickering	K
	Hull	William de la Pole

**Map 3. 1400-1425**

Berkshire	Bisham Priory	Richard Hertcombe (doc)
Buckingham	Haversham	Lady Clinton
Cheshire	Over Peover	John Mainwaring
Derbyshire	Bakewell	Thomas Wendesley
	Longford	K
	Longford	K
	Newton Solney	K
	Aston-on-Trent	C and L
Devon	Hacombe	C, young boy
	Exeter Cathedral	Bishop Stafford
Durham	Dalton le Dale	William Bowes
	Staindrop	Ralph Nevill
Hampshire	Winchester Cathedral	Bishop Wykeham
Hereford	Kings Pyon	K
	Bredwardine	Roger Vaughan
Hertfordshire	Royston	K
Kent	Canterbury Cathedral	Henry IV and Queen Joan
	Canterbury Cathedral	Earl of Somerset
Leicester	Bottesford	William, Lord Rous
	Bottesford	John, Lord Rous
Lincoln	Spilsby	Robert, Lord Willoughby d'Eresby
	Spilsby	William, Lord Willoughby d'Eresby
	Broughton	H. Redford
	Stamford, St Mary's	K
	Harlaxton	Judge Rickhill
London	Great St Helen's	John Oteswich
Norfolk	Ashwellthorpe	Edmund de Thorpe
Northampton	Lowick	Ralph Greene
Nottingham	Strelley	Sampson Strelley
	Hoveringham	J. Goushill

	Nuttall	Robert Cokefield
	Fledborough	K
	Clifton	Gervase Clifton
	Clifton	Alice Clifton
	Holme Pierrepont	K
	Nottingham, St Mary's	K. fragment
	Nottingham, St Mary's	John Salmon
	Nottingham, St Mary's	chest and slab
Oxford	North Leigh	William Wilcote
Shropshire	Tong	Fulke Pembrugge
	Kinlet	L
	Abbey of Hales	Hugh Burnell (doc)
	Burford	Princess Elizabeth
Stafford	Elford	John Arderne
	Elford	K
	Gnosall	K
	Audley	K
Suffolk	Bures	Richard de Vere
Sussex	Arundel	Thomas, Earl of Arundel
Warwick	Birmingham	John de Birmingham
	Meriden	John Wyard
Wiltshire	Salisbury Cathedral	Bishop Mitford
Yorkshire	Hornby	John Conyers
	Swine	Robert Hilton
	Swine	a Hilton K
	Pickering	David Roucliffe
	Selby	John, Lord Darcy
	Darfield	K and L
	Harewood	Richard Redman
	Harewood	William Ryther
	Harewood	Richard Gascoigne
	Methley	Robert Waterton
	Barmston	K
Wales	Montgomery	K
	Penmynydd	K
France	Nantes	John IV, Duke of Brittany (doc)

**Map 4. 1425-50**

Berkshire	East Shefford	Thomas Fettiplace
Cheshire	Over Peover	Randle Mainwaring
Cumberland	Greystoke	John, Baron Greystoke
Derbyshire	Tideswell	K and L
	Ashbourne	John Cockayne
	Great Cubley	K
	Longford	K
Devon	Horwood	L
Dorset	Wimbourne	Duke of Somerset
Durham	Redmarshall	Thomas de Langton
Hampshire	Christchurch	J. Chideock
Hereford	Weobley	K
	Weobley	John Marbury
	Burghill	John Milbourne
Leicester	Melton Mowbray	L
	Lutterworth	C and L

Lincoln	Wellington	K and L
London	St. Katherine's Chapel	John Holland
	Tower	Chumleigh
Monmouth	Abergavenny	William-ap-Thomas
Northampton	Dodford	John Cressy
Nottingham	Willoughby in the Wolds	Hugh Willoughby
	Worksop	L
	Southwell	Bishop
Oxford	Broughton	Lady Wykeham
Rutland	Burley	K and L
Shropshire	Tong	Richard Vernon
Somerset	Wells Cathedral	P
	Porlock	K and L
Stafford	Kinver	K
Suffolk	Dennington	Lord Bardolf
Surrey	Lingfield	Reginald, Lord Cobham
Sussex	Arundel	John FitzAlan
Warwick	Merevale	Edmund, Lord Ferrers
	Wootton Wawen	John Harewell
	Polesworth	Isabel Cockayne
	Aston	Thomas Erdington
Worcester	Bromsgrove	N. Stafford
	Bromsgrove	L
	Kidderminster	Hugh Cokesay
Yorkshire	Wadworth	Edmund Fitzwilliam

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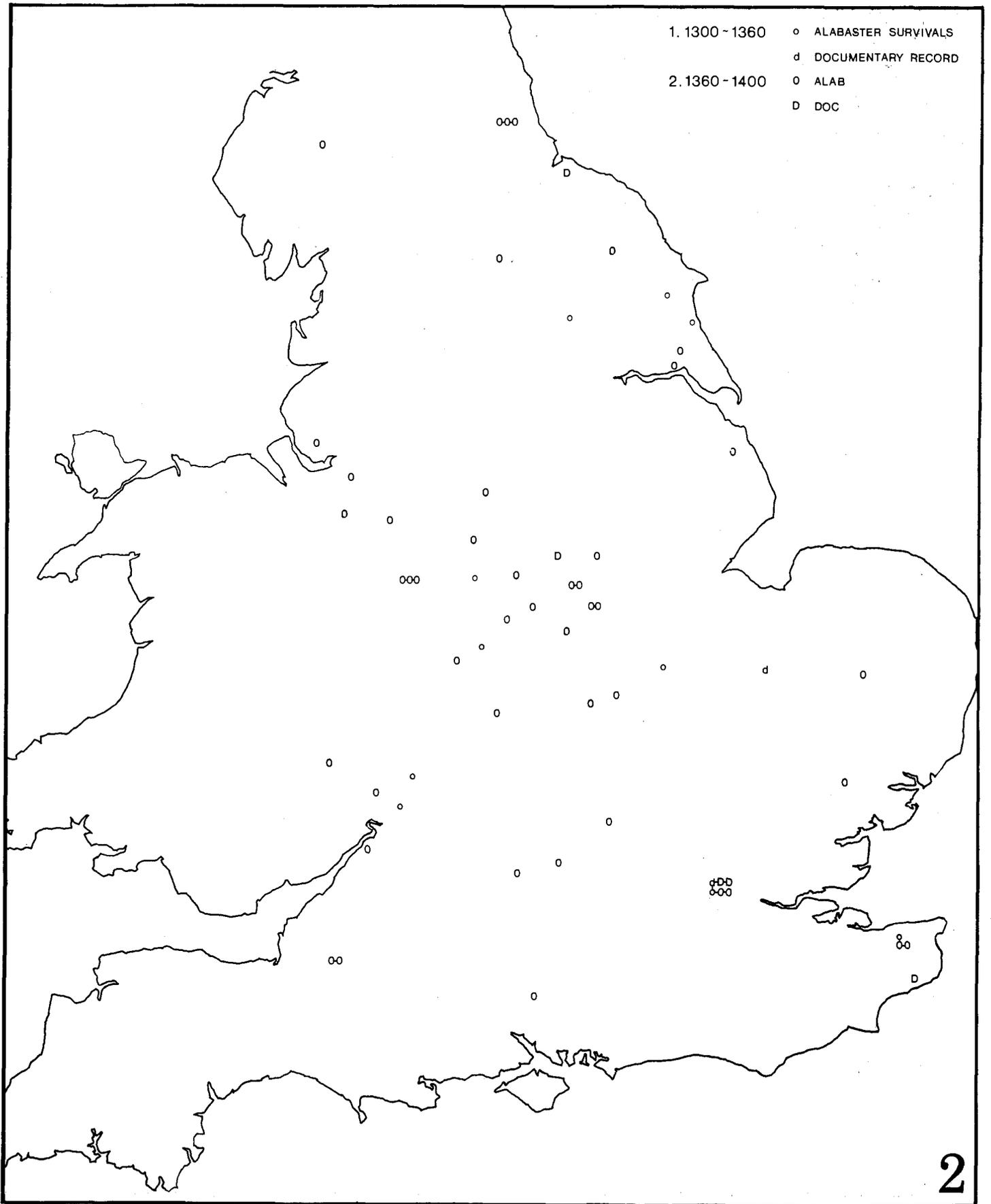
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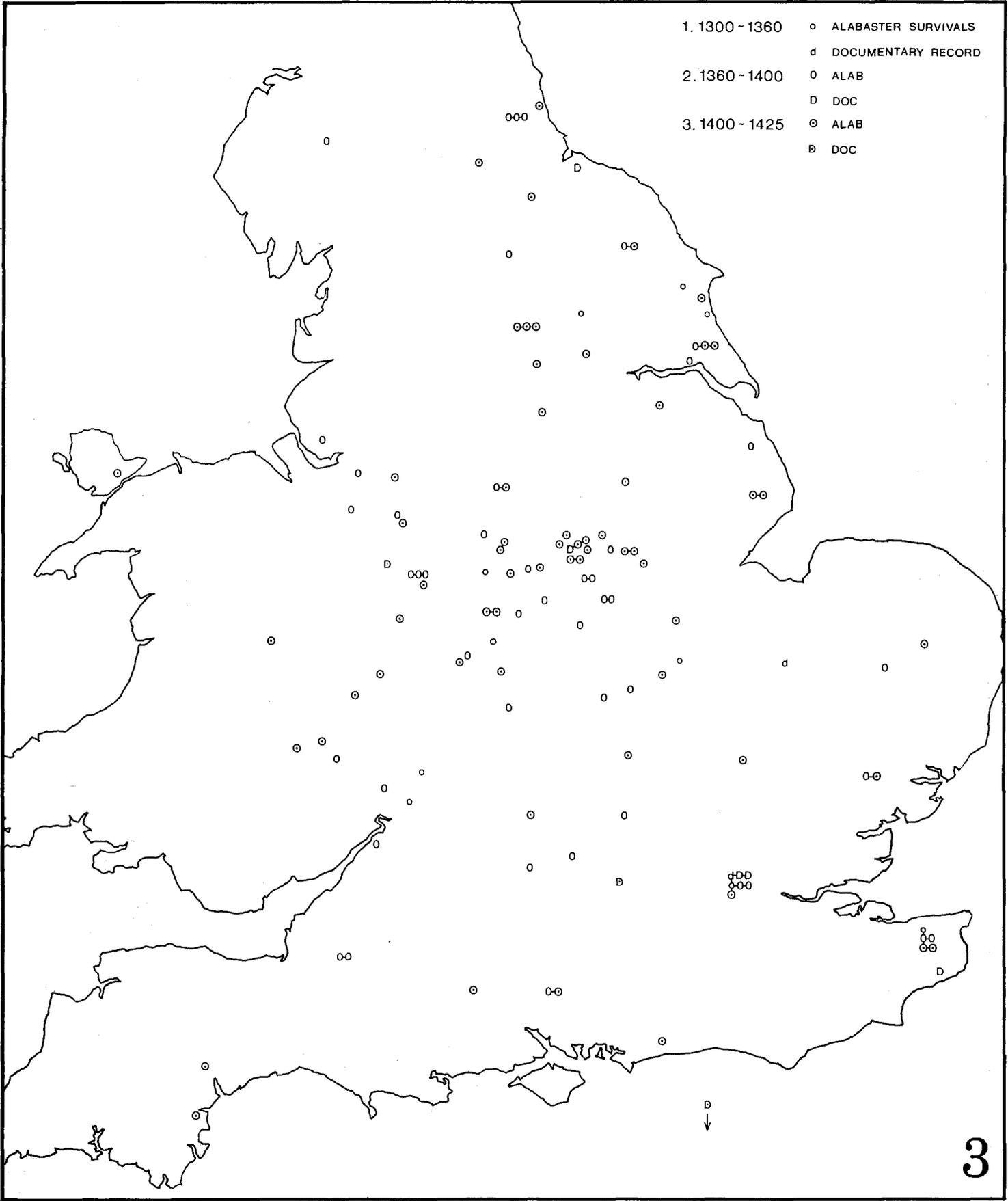
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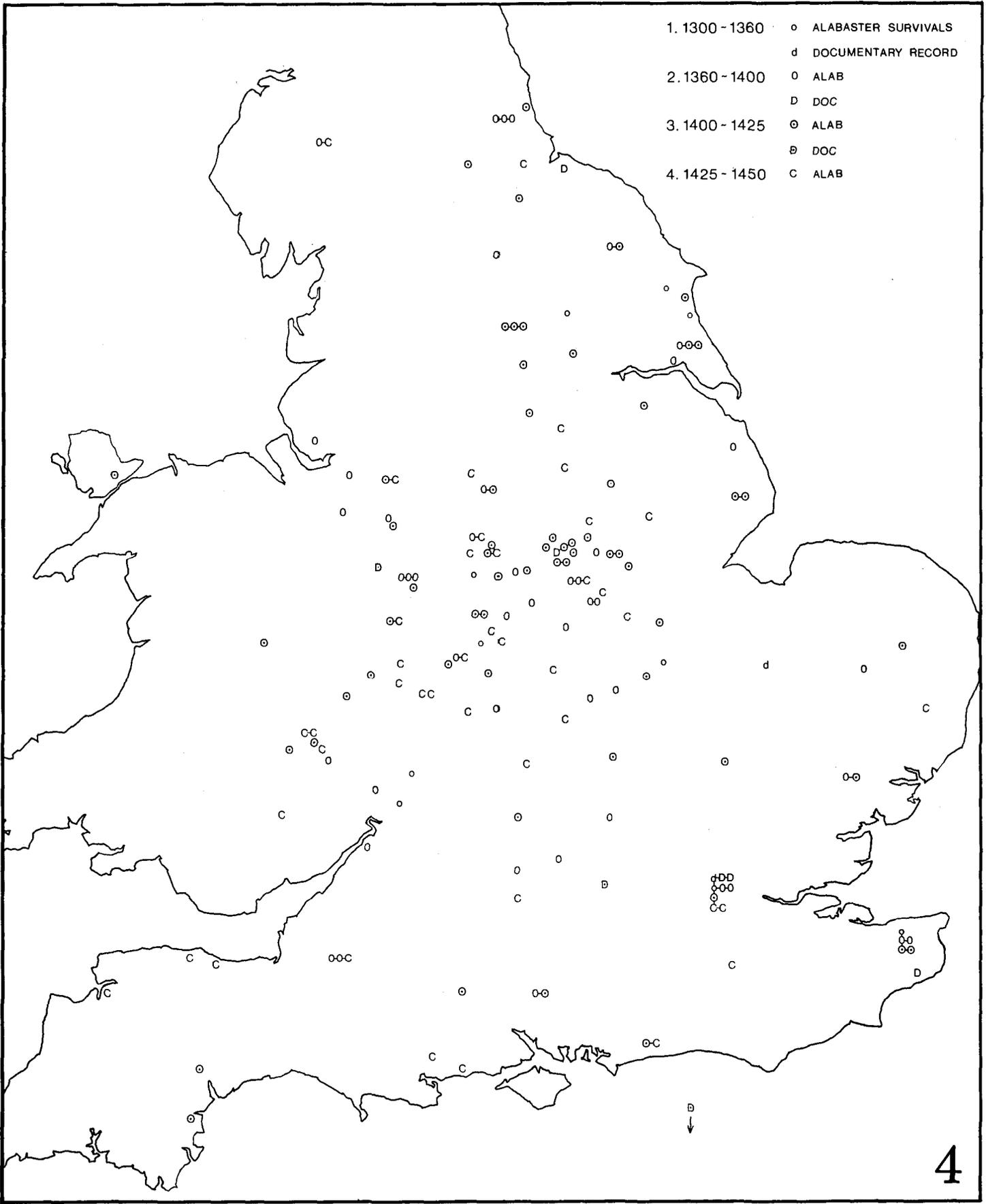
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- 1. 1300 - 1360    o ALABASTER SURVIVALS  
                         d DOCUMENTARY RECORD
- 2. 1360 - 1400    O ALAB  
                         D DOC
- 3. 1400 - 1425    ⊙ ALAB  
                         B DOC
- 4. 1425 - 1450    C ALAB

4

## IRISH INTERLUDE

(by Howard Ushe)

The Stuart Plantations in Ireland were accompanied by grants of land from the King to his particular friends and advisors. The intention was to make secure the Protestant faith in Ireland, a policy which is still having repercussions today. On 7th March, 12 Charles (1637), the King granted by his letters patent, an estate at Feartree [now Vartry] and Castle Kevan [now Castlekevin] in County Wicklow, to his Principal Secretary of State, Sir John Coke of Melbourne. The estate is in the Wicklow Mountains, about 25 miles south of Dublin and 700 feet above sea level. Sir John had no benefit from his grant as confusion reigned during the Civil War and it was left to his grandson, John Coke, to attempt to sort it out. Papers relating to this estate are in the Muniment Room at Melbourne, Box 59, Bundles 9, 10 and 11.

The Castle of Kevan and the lands of Fartree were granted by King Henry VIII to Arte Oge O'Toole, who was presumably a supporter of the Protestant faith. However, his son Barnaby joined a Catholic uprising in 1596 and his lands were attainted. Charles I granted the lands to Sir John Coke in 1637, but then "*the late horrid rebellion*" broke out on 23 October, 1641 when the Catholic population rose against their Protestant landlords and planted tenants. The King had enough to worry about at home and it wasn't until after the restoration of Charles II in 1660 that the case of the Irish estates was again considered.

By this time, both of Sir John Coke's sons, Sir John Coke the younger and Thomas were dead. Thomas's son, another John Coke, was born in 1654 and was under the guardianship of Sir Francis Burdett of Foremark. At the time of the restoration of the Irish estates, Gilbert, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate and Metropolitan of all England, was John Coke's guardian and produced a bill to recover the lands. It seems that after the 1641 rebellion, the lands became waste and Sir Theophilus Jones, Kt, PC, possessed himself of the waste lands and kept Sir John Coke out. By affidavit, several local inhabitants swore that Sir Theo had been in possession of the Feartry for 6 or 7 years after the King's restoration. The Exchequer was claiming £255 for 8½ year's chief rent to 1668. John Coke retook possession, although the final judgement against Sir Theophilus Jones was not made until 1675. A descendant of O'Toole made claim to the lands, which he was already occupying. This claim was said to be a vapour although "*you know its a saying in England that possession is nine poynts in the Lawe and I am afraid its 20 in Ireland*". "*He is the only Enemy upon yr Land, some writeings he has to claim the land.*" Mr Toole came to England in 1669 to see John Coke and when he returned to Ireland, he said that he had taken the whole farm upon a final consideration. A few years later, in 1673, Coke's agent, Robert Turner in Dublin obtained an agreement to farm the "*Castle Mannor towne & lands of Castle Keavan & the precincts of the Fartree in Co Wicklow*" for a consideration of £74.1.6 every half year.

Robert Turner was appointed Coke's Irish Agent in 1667 and corresponded regularly with Walter Chamberlaine, the Agent at Melbourne, until 1678. Turner seems to have been well met with, as tenants approached him, proffering their rents, and later he observed that the "*rents were coming in braveley*". The income from Fartree in 1668 was £120.10.0. By 1669, all the land had been let except Castle Cavan which was said to be waste, although the grass was let for £10. One of tenants, a Major Elliott, gave security for his son in Wicklow Gaol, and then absconded, drove his stock away and drew his tan vats. Turner took a writ to seize his goods, but found that were many obstructions. In 1674, Turner complained that "*.... Tenants hate me as I have been strong for my master ...*". Although Sir Richard Kennedy was searching for a coal mine on the land, the agent considered there was "*nothing on the land to make money except charcoal*".

Turner was instructed to build a Protestant church on the estate, but it appeared that the local woods provided nothing but crooked timber and the cost was greater than expected. Nevertheless, the church at Dilloseray [now Derrylossary] was completed in 1670 and the cost of building it was £88.13.7. The Coke coat of arms was set up in the church. Turner commented that the church was "*... to your Master's credit, the whole Countrey cryeing him up for soe good an act ...*".

With typical Irish humour, Turner described the scene in 1669 when the Countess of Mullenavette went to take possession of her manor house. "*... to her great satisfaction, she found brave fruits, rich gardens, sumptuous buildings and a house richly decorated, vizt. 3 crohans, 7 pounds of Bogg butter, halfe a Carte load of strawe put in a hoggs trough for Irish bedding, 6 ould Callaeoghs taking sneezing and drinking till they piss under them, a handsome red headed girle churning of butter with the Staff between her bare thighs, and the squirts occasioned by the churning of the butter, she takes her hand & feircly stroking her Fox like centre slaps it into the Chourns*".

By 1674, John Coke, now being of age, looked to sell the Irish estate which was of little value and a nuisance to him. The claims on Theo. Jones had not been settled and Jones was willing to go to Court, saying that he "*dare answer your challenge when & where you please provided it be between St George's channel and the hill of Howth*". The lands were let for £200 p.a. but there was no chance of increasing the rent to £300 because of the conditions in Ireland which were ten times worse than they had been. Corn was 38s a barrel, there was a great dearth of cattle and none left in many parts of the kingdom, the tenants had no bread to eat not cattle to manure their land and the land must be let at such a rate than a man can live. Turner concluded "*No man can or will believe that things are so bad with us as they are*".

Eventually Coke found a potential buyer in the shape of a judge, Sir Richard Reynolds. Reynolds requested the Lord Chancellor to show him Sir John Coke's patent of 1637, but the Chancellor claimed that he couldn't find it. In an act of espionage, Reynolds obtained a "*gentleman who searched his study when my lord was at leisure and found the patent*". The hearing with Sir Theophilus Jones was not finalised until 1675, when Sir Theo. Jones agreed to pay John Coke £400 in 3 portions, although the first payment of £150, due at Michaelmas, had still not been paid by the following June. Reynolds took possession of the Fairtree lands, but the tenants asked Coke for allowances for the improvements they had made during his ownership. The story finishes where we began, with the O'Toole family. Lawrence Toole claimed that when the plantations were assigned, some remote lands were lost. Luke Toole had assignment of other lands in Tralee, but wars stopped the proceedings. Mr Toole appealed to John Coke for his mercy and to deal kindly with him in these matters.

## THE ASHBOURNE FOOTBALL SONG

(by Ernest Paulson)

For how long have the annual football matches between the Uppards and the Downards been played in Ashbourne on Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday? Does anyone know? This song, written and performed in the Ashbourne Theatre in 1821 by Mr Fawcett, the comedian, shows that it was flourishing then.

I'll sing you a song of a neat little place  
Top full of good humour and beauty and grace;  
Where coaches are rolling by day and by night  
And playing at football the people delight.  
Where health and good humour does always abound  
And hospitality's cup flows freely around  
Where friendship and harmony are to be found  
In the neat little town of Ashbourne.

Shrove Tuesday, you know, is always the day  
When pancake's the prelude and football the play,  
Where Uppards and Downards men ready for fun  
Like the French at the battle of Waterloo run.  
And well may they run like the Devil to pay,  
'Tis always the case as I have heard say,

If a Derbyshire football man comes in the way  
In the neat little town of Ashbourne.

There's Mappleton, Mayfield, Okeover and Thorpe  
Can furnish some men that nothing can whop  
And Bentley and Tissington, always in tune,  
And Clifton and Sturston are ready as soon,  
Then there's Snelston and Wyaston, Shirley and all,  
Who all are good men at brave Whittaker's call;  
And who come to kick at Paul Gettcliffe's football  
In the neat little town of Ashbourne.

The ball is turned up and the Bullring's the place  
And as fierce as a bulldog's is every man's face;  
Whilst kicking and shouting and howling they run  
Until every stitch in the ball comes undone.  
There's Faulkner and Smith, Bodge Hand and some more  
Who hide it and hug it and kick it so sore  
And deserve a good whopping at every man's door  
In the neat little town of Ashbourne.

If they get to the Park, the Upwards men shout  
And think all the Downards men put to the rout  
But a right about face they soon have to learn  
And the Uppards men shout and huzza in their turn.  
Then into Shawcroft where the bold and the brave  
Get a ducking in trying the football to save,  
For 'tis well known they fear not a watery grave  
In defence of the football at Ashbourne.

If into Church Street should the ball take its way,  
The White Hart and the Wheatsheaf will cause some delay  
For from tasting their liquor no man can refrain  
Till he rolls like the football in Warin's tear-brain.  
Then they run and they shout, they bawl and they laugh,  
They kick and huzza, still the liquor they quaff  
Till another Football has been cut into half  
By the unfair players of Ashbourne.

Paul Gettcliffe was presumably the maker of the footballs. By tradition, they were made of solid cork and covered in leather by the Town saddler and decorated with the town arms and the 'Thrower Upper's' device by his daughter.

The game was suppressed by law soon after this song was sung in spite of strenuous opposition. It was revived in this century. Most of the play takes place in the Henmore Brook.

The same game was played in Derby on Shrove Tuesday between the All Saints and St Peter's factions, which accounts for the verse in the Derby Ram which goes:

The little boys of Derby, sir,  
They came to beg his eyes  
To kick about the streets, sir,  
For they were football size.

## WORKING CLASS HOUSING IN NINETEENTH CENTURY DERBY

(by Jonathan Grattidge and John Heath, Derbyshire College of Higher Education)

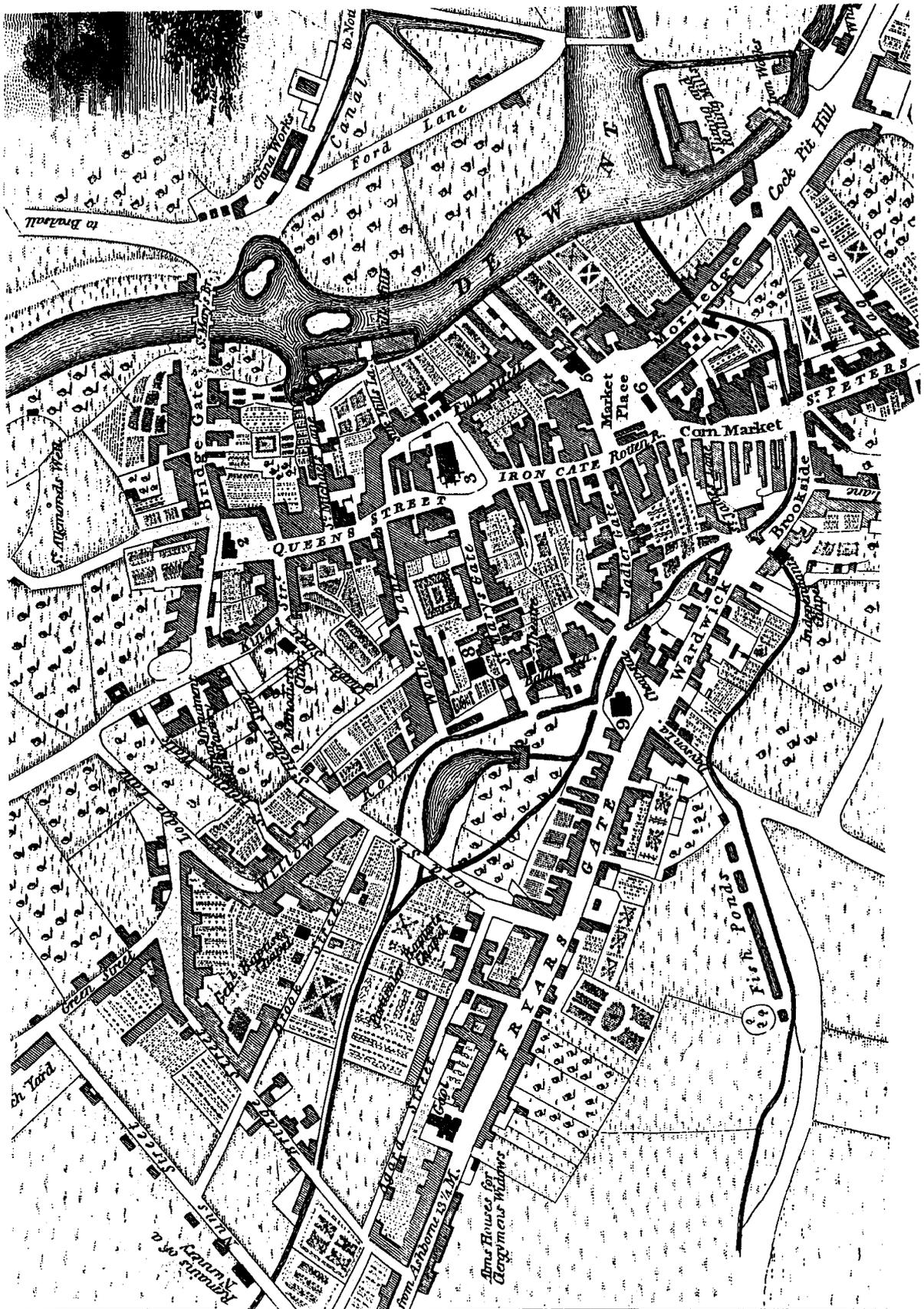
*"Derby, with serious structural defects as respects of streets and houses is almost unequalled in its neglect of drainage and sewerage. It is also very deficient in water for domestic purposes and for cleaning. The sickness and mortality are great in the districts inhabited by the working classes."* J.R. Martin wrote this in the Appendix to the Second Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the State of Large Towns and Populous Districts produced in 1845.

The Acts of Parliament of 1768 and 1792 which were intended to 'help' the Derby Improvement Commissioners to cleanse, light and improve the thoroughfares of the Borough of Derby in fact achieved little because in the first half of the nineteenth century the Borough experienced a rapid increase in its population. The increase of 383% was typical of the newly industrialised communities such as Manchester - 404%, Glasgow - 448%, Preston - 583% and Bradford - 800% and these increases meant more housing for as the *Derby and Chesterfield Reporter* of 31 March 1848 commented '.... no increase of houses and people can take place without a proportionate crowding together upon their original areas'.

These 'original areas' in the parishes of St Peters, St Alkmunds and St Werburgh's that had not been built on (see Cole's map of 1806) were in several instances the extensive gardens of the town houses of the gentry, the tradespeople and the 'new' industrialists. The enclosure of the remaining 'common land' in the Borough - Nuns Green - benefited such upwardly mobile townfolk by releasing for new buildings land adjacent to Friar Gate on its north side. But this elegant street, by 1850, had courts adjacent to the Greyhound Inn, between nos 87 and 88, near the Rising Sun and opposite St Werburgh's church. In his report on the sanitary condition of the town, the commissioner, J.H. Martin, found in the 'quarter of Brook-walk and all around it .... masses of houses clustered together, some old, some of quite recent construction, with the worst description of court approached from the street through a low-arched damp and noisome tunnel'. Martin continued 'the construction of the habitations (depended) .... on the caprice or the interest of the builder'. He listed Brook-walk, St James' Lane, Walker Lane, Bold Lane, Sadler Gate, Burton Road, Bridge Street, Willow Row, Ford Street and Eagle Street as examples of the worst streets, but there were many others in a 'similar state of neglect'. Such houses were generally old and badly built with the usual 4½ inch party walls. However there were no cellar dwellings in Derby, fortunately in light of the recurrent flooding of the Markeaton Brook, but there were 'masses of houses and rows of cottages built 'back-to-back', usually with one room on the ground floor in which the family cook, eat, and pass the day, with one or two sleeping rooms over it'. These were lived in by the labouring classes who worked in the silk-mills, the cotton-mills, as lace-workers, silk-weavers, stockings, china-workers, foundry-men or in the lead or paper-mills and who paid an average rent of between 1/9d and 2/- a week (the extreme limits being 1/6 and 3/6, the higher having a backyard and other conveniences).

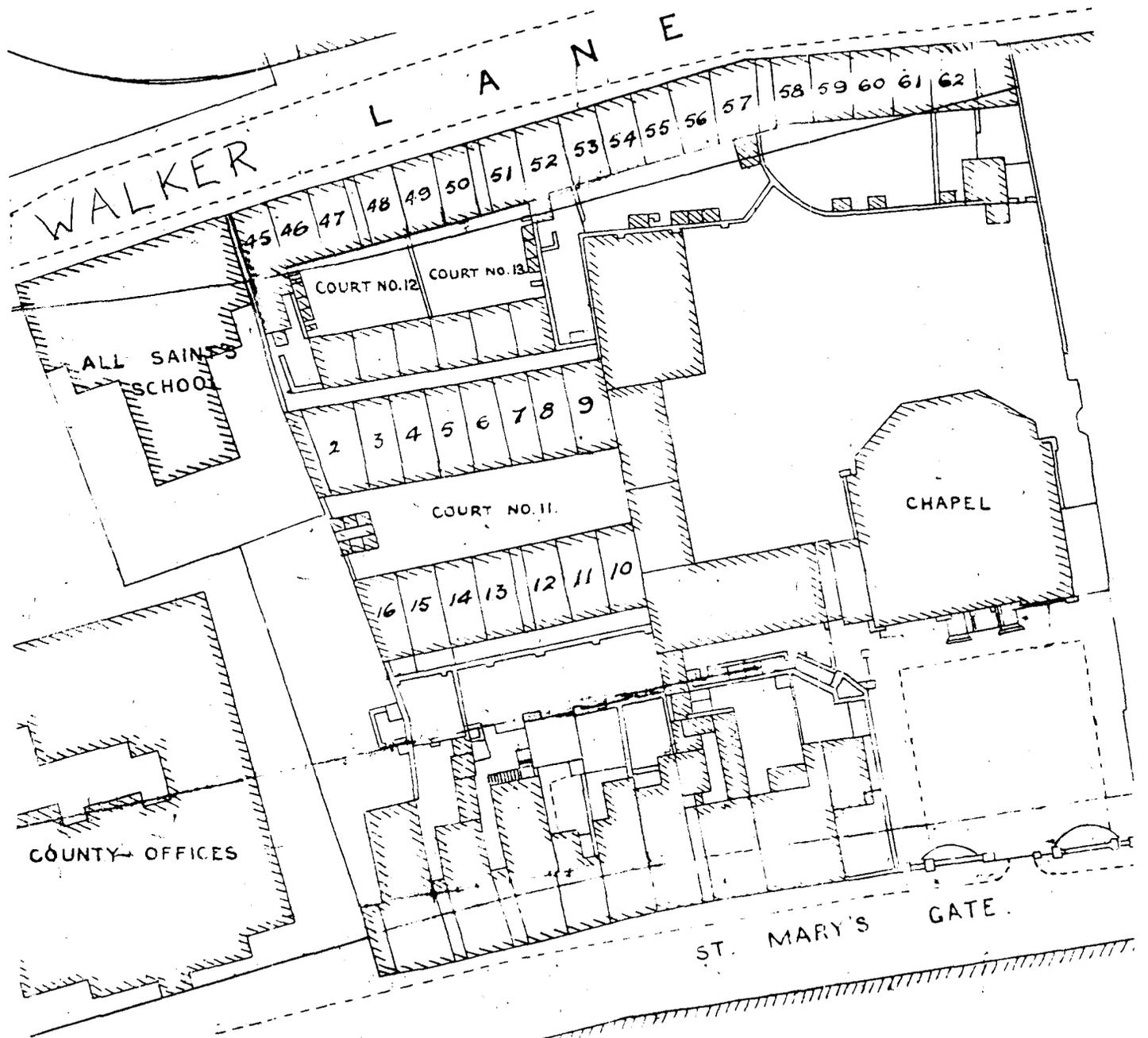
Dr William Baker, who was a member of the Derby Sanitary Committee and who reported on the 'Sanitary Condition of the Town of Derby' in the *Chadwick Report, 1837-1842*, described the conditions in Brook-walk No 1 Court (north of Willow Row) occupied by an Irish family which "consisted of eight persons - viz, a man, his wife and six children. The home they lived in was in a confined situation, had not any door, window, or other opening at the back, and contained only one sitting and one bedroom; the size of each is 10 feet by 7 feet 8 inches and 7 feet high". (*Derby and Chesterfield Reporter* - 31 December 1848). In the issue of 31 March, he described courts opening onto Walker Lane: "The houses here are of a most inferior description, and the inhabitants of a piece with their house .... and to crown it all, possesses lodging houses which are the principal headquarters of vagrants, and of those comers and goers, who, for reasons best known to themselves, prefer darkness to light". One of the houses "consisted of three small rooms, but in which thirty persons had slept at one time, whilst in another lodging house, eleven persons had slept in one room upon four beds" (*Derby Mercury* 24 November 1847). In Derby in 1841 the average number of persons per house was five, there being 6699 houses, 124 being uninhabited and 120 in the process of being built.

A major problem in the town was that half-finished streets were left unsewered and uncleansed and this with the ineffective sewerage disposal and the polluted inadequate water supply meant recurrent disease and early death.



Cole's map of Derby 1806. Note no development along Agard Street, nor adjacent to Markeaton Brook.

Moore's map engraved by R. Simpson's *History and Antiquities of Derby*, published 1825/6, shows these areas built upon, including the site of Robinson's Yard, but not St John's Church (built 1828).



Scale :-  $\frac{1}{500}$ .

Part of the map produced for the Walker Lane Improvement (1938-9) by the County Borough of Derby for a compulsory purchase order - November 1939.

Dr Baker reported to the Poor Law Commissioners in 1840 "*To every five houses there is a pump and at the bottom of each garden a double privy answering for two houses; the cesspool shallow and open to the air, and to this nuisance many have added a pigsty and a dung or rubbish heap*".

The effluent apparently drained into a central ditch, but that was 'recently' obstructed resulting in a succession of foul and stinking pools from four to six feet wide, whilst the earth of the garden was perpetually saturated with the offensive moisture exuding from them! Dr Baker commented that the locality was "*grievously afflicted with typhus fever*".

In 1848, Edward Cresy, who was a superintending inspector under the Public Health Act, found in Court No 1 Willow Row, which had twenty four houses housing 102 inhabitants, that there were two privies which were described as being "*indiscriminately used by all ages and sexes*" and were filthy, the women saying that the menfolk preferred the one in the adjoining public house. The thirty inhabitants of the six houses in No 4 Court, Walker Lane, had the use of one privy, the state of which was so bad that stepping stones were laid to the door so that "*the persons using it may not pass through the offensive and polluted stream which runs from the cesspool*". In the case of No 13 Court the contents of a privy and a pig sty found their way through the walls and "*render the apartments extremely disagreeable*".

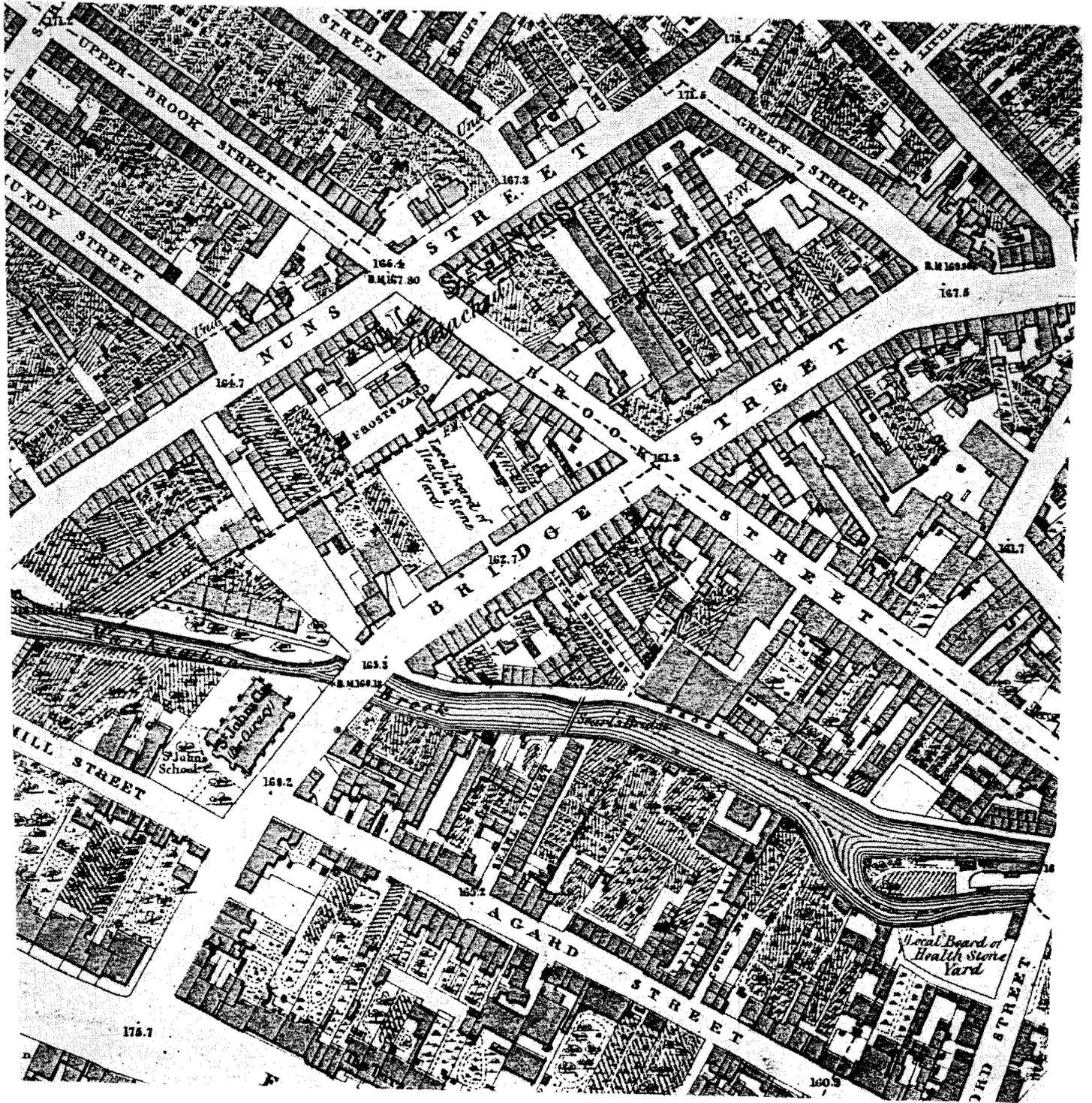
Another problem at this time was the water supply. Albert Dernay wrote in the *Derby and Chesterfield Reporter* of 15 August 1851 "*..... many of the poor are compelled to drink beer on account of the character of the water supplied to them. A tumbler of beer is far more wholesome than a tumbler of water as is common drink (if it ever serves such a purpose) of the courts .....*".

For this questionable water supply each house paid approximately ½d a week - other areas of the town paid 4/- to 5/- a year. It is little wonder therefore that the average age of death for those living in such accommodation was twenty seven or under, with nearly a half of the deaths being under three years of age. This contrasted with forty-nine for the professional classes who lived in the better areas of the town and had water-closets connected with the sewers by house drains. But ill-health was not solely ascribed to the bad water and the inadequate sewerage. According to Dr Baker it was the consequence of "*torrents of black smoke that issued from the manufacturing chimneys .....* (with the result that) *..... in gardens in the town, none but deciduous shrubs can be kept alive .....* and (they have) *a miserable existence of three or four years*". Dr Bent, a member of the Sanitary Committee, referred to the '*noxious vapours*' which resulted in the "*mildest form of headache and aching of the limbs, a loss of energy and power*" (*Derby Mercury* 17 May 1841). The editor of the *Mercury* in one of his rare comments on the health of the town's inhabitants wrote "*we will venture to say that persons who have never entered some of the courts and narrow passages in the Borough and have not observed the condition of .....* the newly formed streets, can have no accurately defined idea of the state these are now in, arising from inefficient drainage ....." (*Derby Mercury* 25 November 1846),

The state of the Borough's drainage was commented upon by John Harrison, a Commissioner for the Derby Improvement Act of 1825. He believed that a sough laid under the Markeaton Brook would receive all the filth from Willow Row and the streets built in the Nun's Green area (*Derby and Chesterfield Reporter* 5 November 1840). This suggestion was not acted upon, and indeed was opposed by the Improvement Commissioners because it would put 4d in the £ on the rates for thirty years. However, a bye-law ordered that "*as soon as a street had been paved and completed and declared a public highway .....* the same shall be regularly cleaned not less frequently than once a week". The result of this was that the central streets were cleansed daily, those in the outskirts once a week, at a cost of £378 in 1843 - but not being highways or thoroughfares, courts, lanes and alleys were left uncleansed.

As a result of the inaction over drainage, Markeaton Brook flooded the heart of the town during the night of April Fool's Day, 1842. Speaking to the Town Council, Mr Bainbridge reported that he had visited most of the courts which were flooded and "*in many houses the children, five or six in a house, were naked .....* In the Three Tuns Yard in Sadler Gate, in Brook Street and in Brook-walk many of the walls had been washed away by the flood". This statement illustrates the poor quality of the building of the houses.

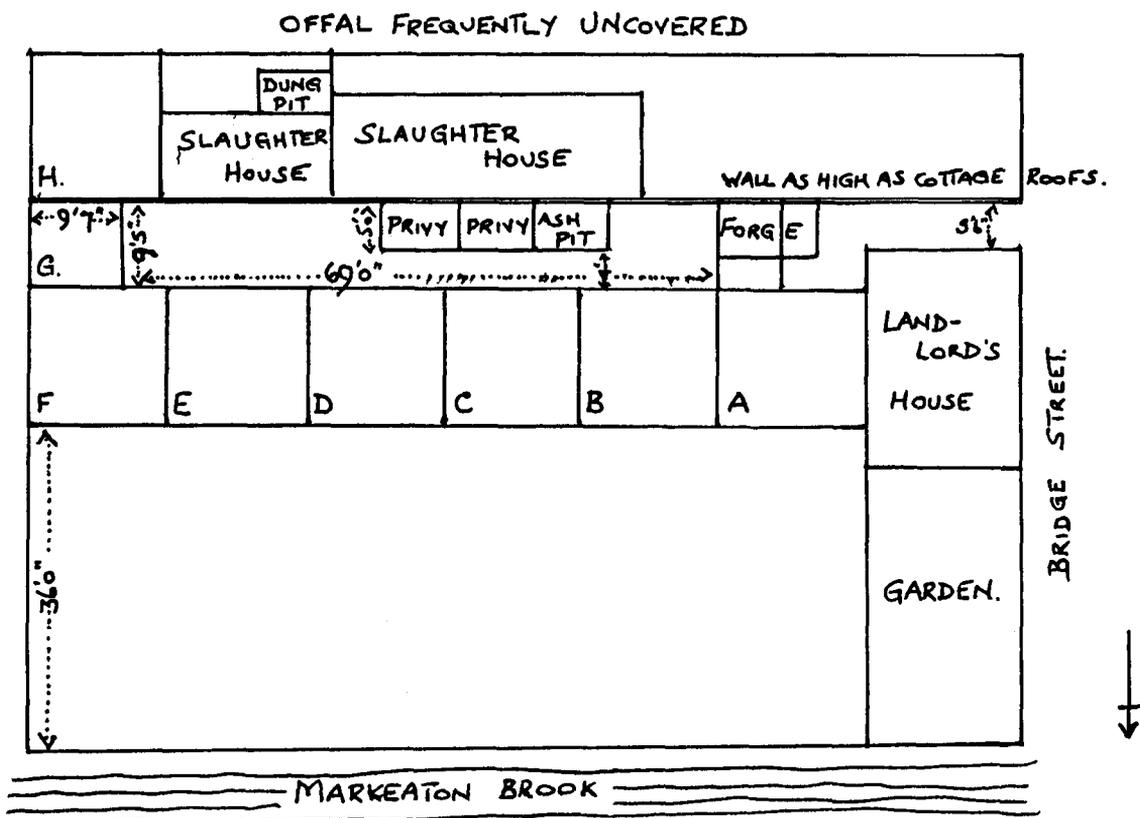
An aspect of the lack of a 'decent water supply' was that there were no safe or convenient open bathing places near the town, those commonly used being the canals or the River Derwent; but these were too near public roads or fre-



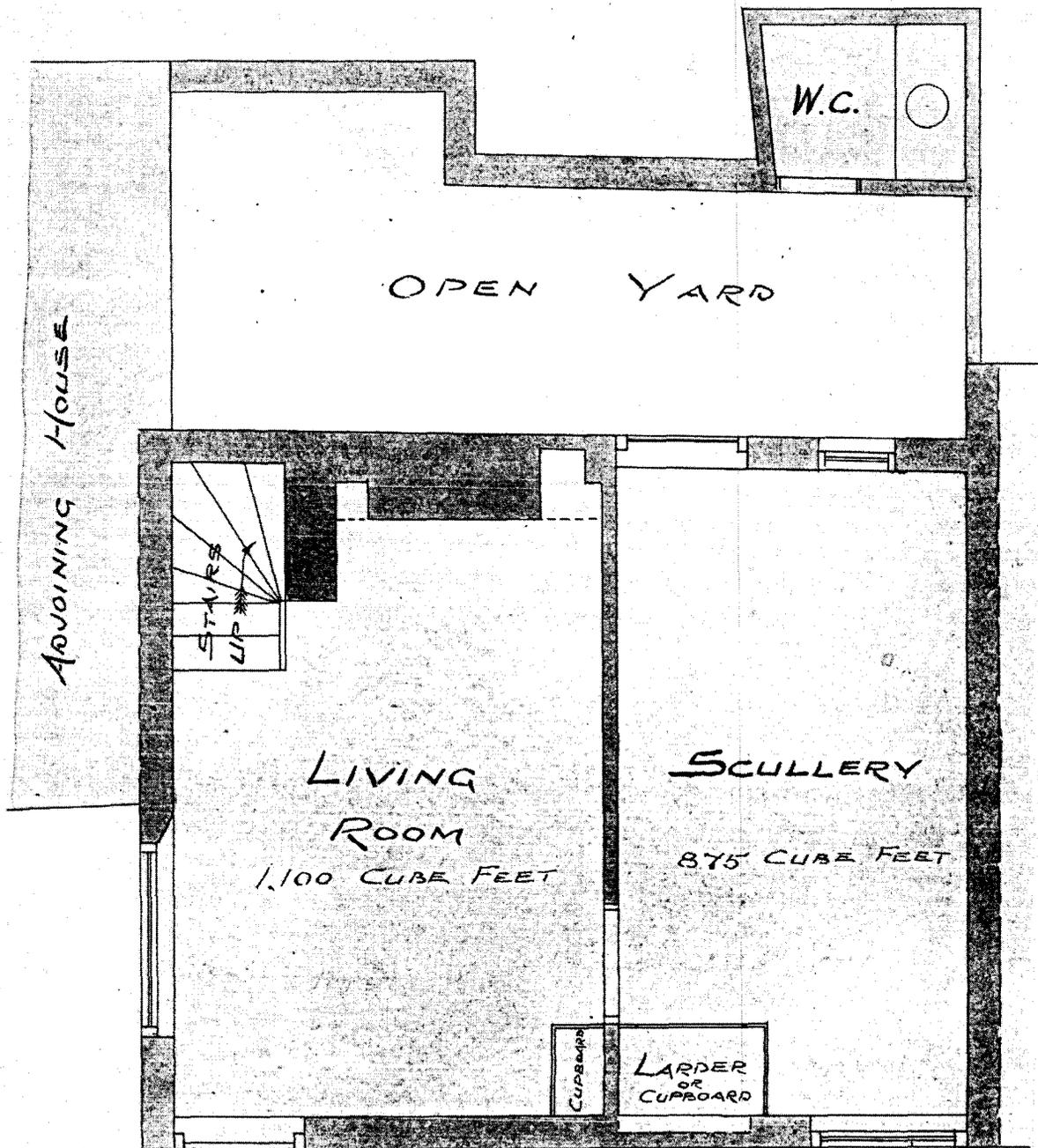
An enlargement of part of the Map of the Borough of Derby surveyed by the Board of Ordnance for the Local Board of Health - 1852

quented footpaths and as a consequence bathing was 'little practiced by the adult population'. Dr Baker observed "the town is remarkably ill-provided with public bathing baths, there being a small tepid swimming bath and two or three warm sitting-baths on the premises of Mr Hall, spa and marble manufacturer, supplied chiefly from the waster water of his steam-engine. Bathing as an aspect of health appears to have been little understood, and still less practised in Derby, even amongst the middle classes and warm bathing is altogether beyond the reach of the working-classes".

It is clear that most Derbeians lived in appalling conditions in the mid-nineteenth century as is exemplified by the court in Bridge Street called Robinson's Yard which was highlighted as a consequence of a fever epidemic which raged between August and November 1843, reported by Dr Baker in the Appendix to the *Second Report of Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Large Towns and Populous Districts*, 1 March 1844. On one side is St John's Church and opposite a neat house belonging to Mr Robinson, the owner of the court. The entrance to the court descends rapidly. There are two rectangular turns into the court which is accessed by a covered way. To the right of the covered way is a nailsmith's forge; over the covered way is a room let to stockingers. There are six uniform houses with one room on the ground floor and two bedrooms above, one towards the brook (11'-6" by 9'-2"), the other onto the court (6'-9" by 8'-7"), the height of the rooms being 8'-7". There are two privies for approximately forty people - opposite the houses, not furthest away from them.



Plan of Robinson's Yard



The downstairs plan of House no 12 in George Yard

- House A Thomas Ryde, wife and sister (Charlotte Symons) and Violetta Leech, a lodger. None suffered from the fever.
- House B Nehemiah Walkerdine (stockinger), wife and married daughter named Slater, two children (7 and 1½). One fever case.
- House C George Frost (stockinger), wife, four children - George (a turner), William, 17 (a slater), Anne, 14 (a seamer of stockings), Margaret, 10 (a factory hand at Bridgetts). None of the family worked at home. Three fever cases.
- House D William Ball (shoemaker), wife and Mary Nash, 29 (lodger). The Balls have a child (2½) living out of Derby because of the unhealthiness of the court. Ball keeps chloride of lime in his house and often burns pieces of old rope or linen to smother the smell from the slaughter houses when offal is boiling. One fever case.
- House E Charles Harlow (bricklayer), wife and seven children aged from three to sixteen. Six cases of fever.
- House F Luke Bradley (a painter), mother, wife and four children aged one to seven. Three fever cases.
- House G James Orme and wife. (Orme, a former nail-maker, worked for Robinson at the forge in the court. Wife a cheverner.) Only two rooms. Now lived in by Bradley's mother, widow and four children who had to leave House F which cost 2/6 a week for House G which was 1/6.
- House H adjoining the slaughter house. Barker, wife and four children. Described as a drunken, worthless fellow. The wife and three of the children had been taken to the Infirmary.

These conditions were in marked contrast with those to be found in the 'fine Georgian houses' fronting on Friar Gate.

The conditions described were not particular to Derby. In Kingston-upon-Hull, an Improvement Act of 1854 banned the building of tunnel entrances and in Bradford (Yorkshire) "*the connection between slum housing and disease was apparent to even the most casual observer, yet the Town Council had neither the will nor the power to do more than tinker with the problem of slums before 1900*" (Barbara Thompson, *Public Provision and Private Neglect in Victorian Bradford*, edited by D.G. Wright and J.M. Jowitt). It took a murder in 1923 and a newspaper campaign to persuade the Town Council to remove the courts in Portsmouth (from J. Riley of Portsmouth Polytechnic). In Derby it would appear to be road improvements. But how many courts were to be found in post war II Derby?

Further illustrations of Derby's courts can be found in the Map bundles in the Derby Local Studies Library:

- a) Derby Sanitary Authority - "Housing in the Working Classes Act, 1880" which illustrates 29 Bold Lane and 12 and 14 George Yard.
- b) Derby Corporation - Unhealthy areas - Bridge Street (1928)
- c) Derby Improvement Scheme under the Artisans and Labourers' Dwellings Improvement Act (1875): plans and book, November 1878
- d) Extension and Improvement Bill (1854/5). Plans and sections of proposed new streets, etc.

#### SOURCES

- 1 E. Chadwick, *Report to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department from the Poor Law Commissioners on an Inquiry into the Sanitary Conditions of the Labouring Population of Great Britain*, 1842
- 2 J.R. Martin, *Appendix to the Second Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Large Towns and Populous Districts*, 1845
- 3 E. Cressy, *Report to the General Board of Health on a Preliminary Enquiry into the Sewerage, Drainage and Supply of Water and the Sanitary Conditions of the Inhabitants of the Borough of Derby*, 1849