

**Professor Stephen Harding**

A VIKING  
HERITAGE  
TRAIL  
FOR  
WIRRAL

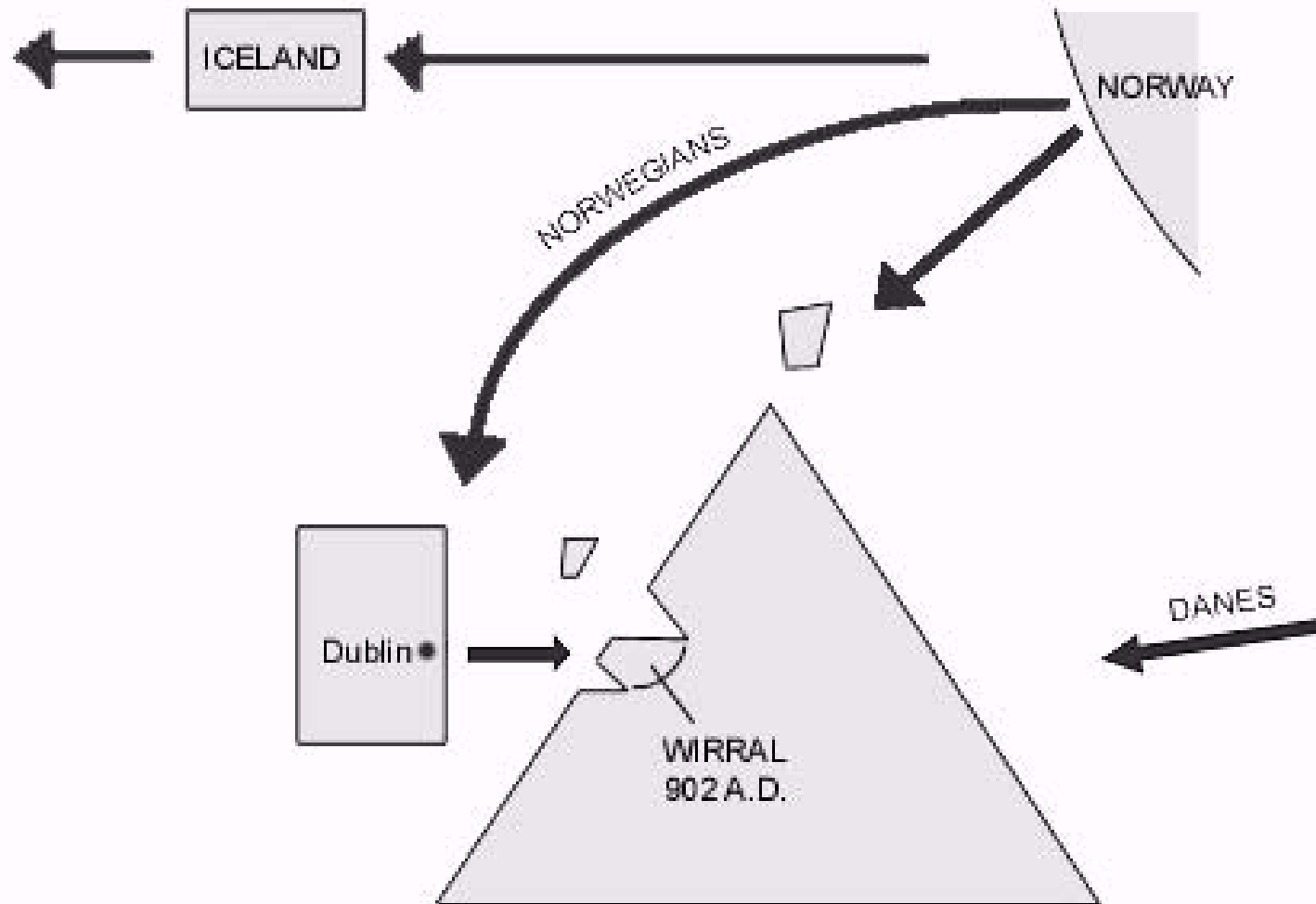


# A Viking Heritage Trail for Wirral

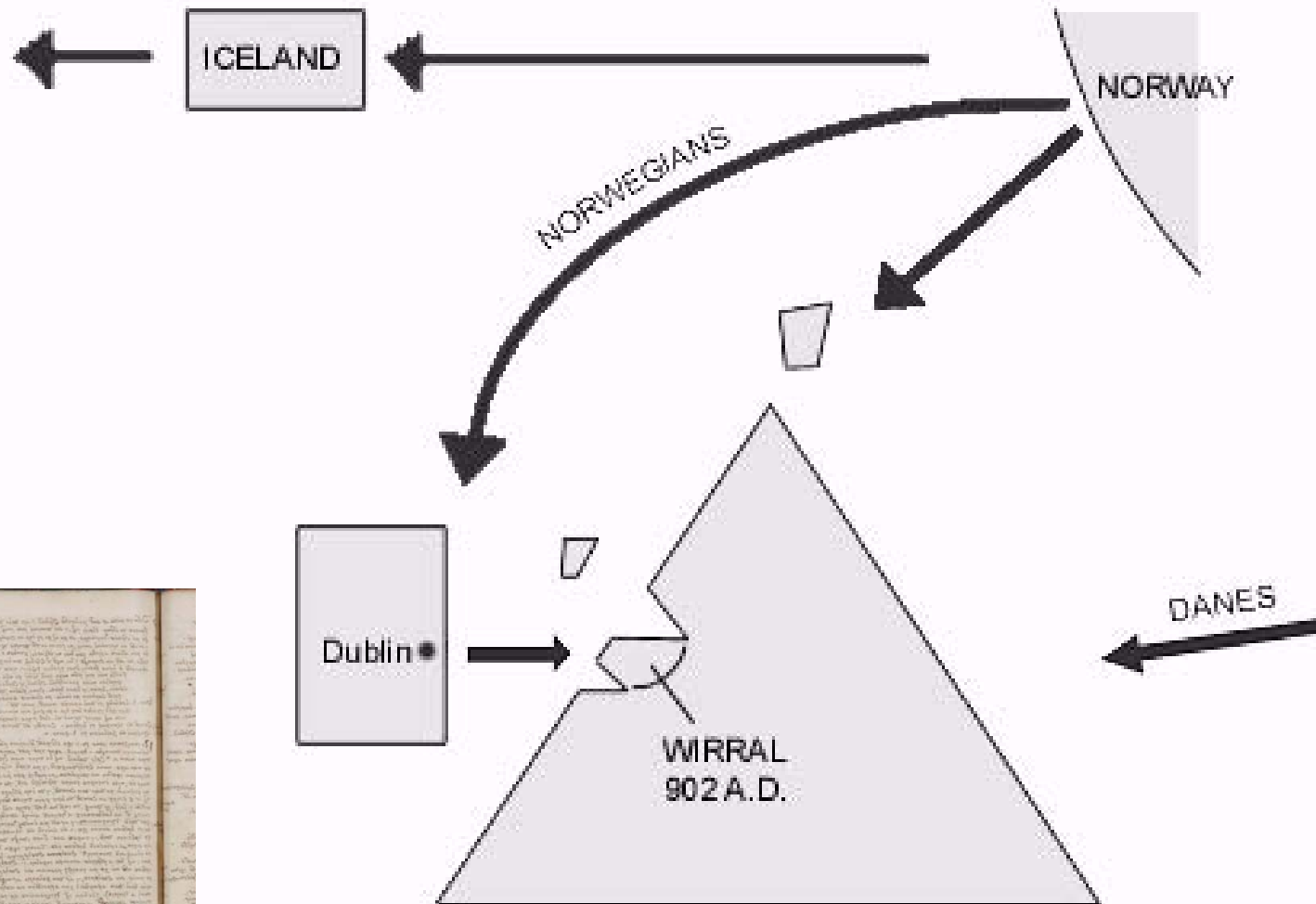
BY STEVE HARDING



**Where and when it all started!**

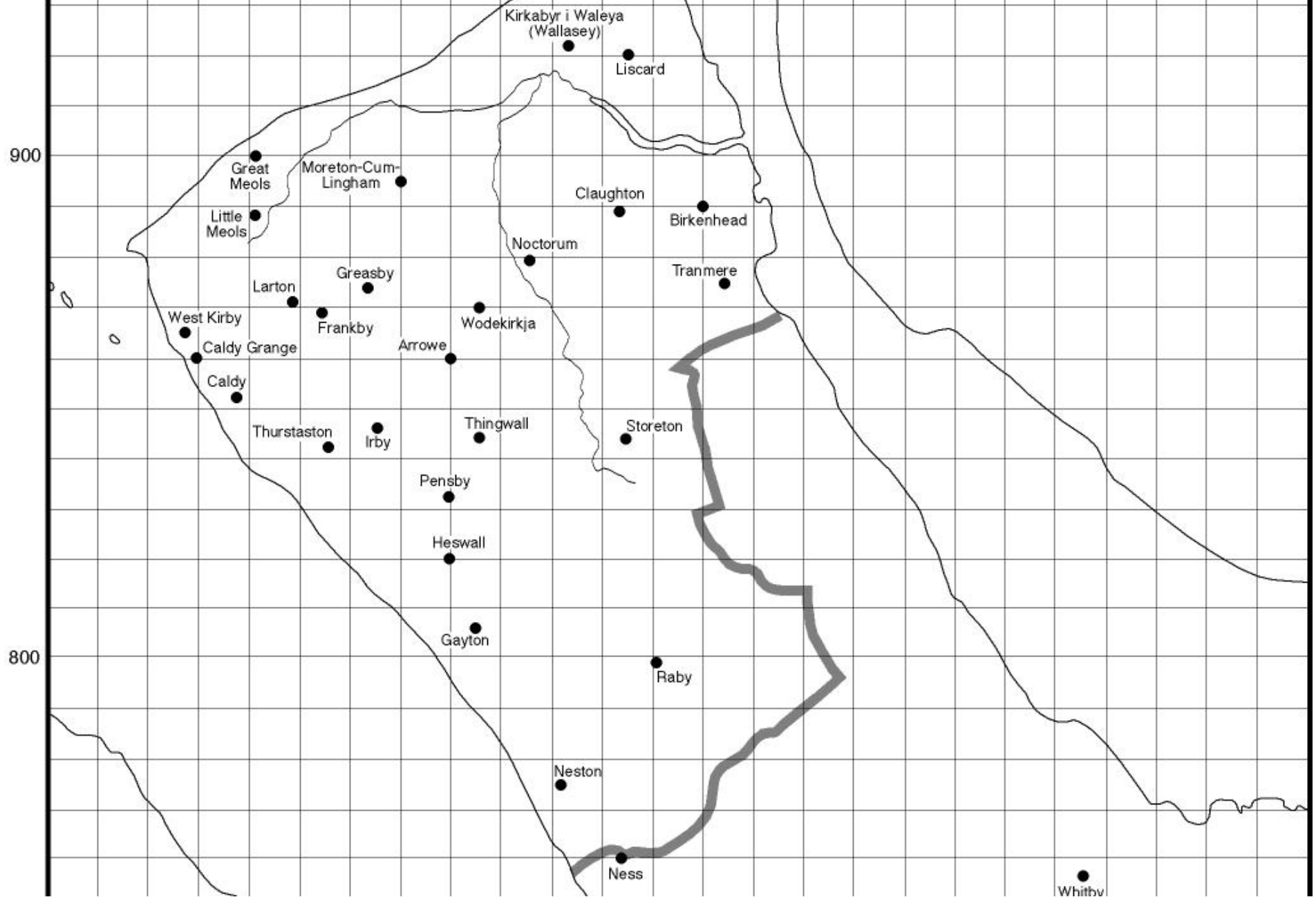


## Where and when it all started!





# Viking Place names









A photograph of a street sign for Carr Lane. The sign is rectangular with a white background and a black border, featuring the text "CARR LANE" in bold, black, sans-serif capital letters. It is mounted on a black metal post. The sign is positioned in front of a dense thicket of bushes and trees with autumn-colored leaves in shades of yellow, orange, and red. Some small red berries are visible on the branches. In the background, a brick building with several windows is partially visible through the foliage.

**CARR LANE**



## 50 carrs

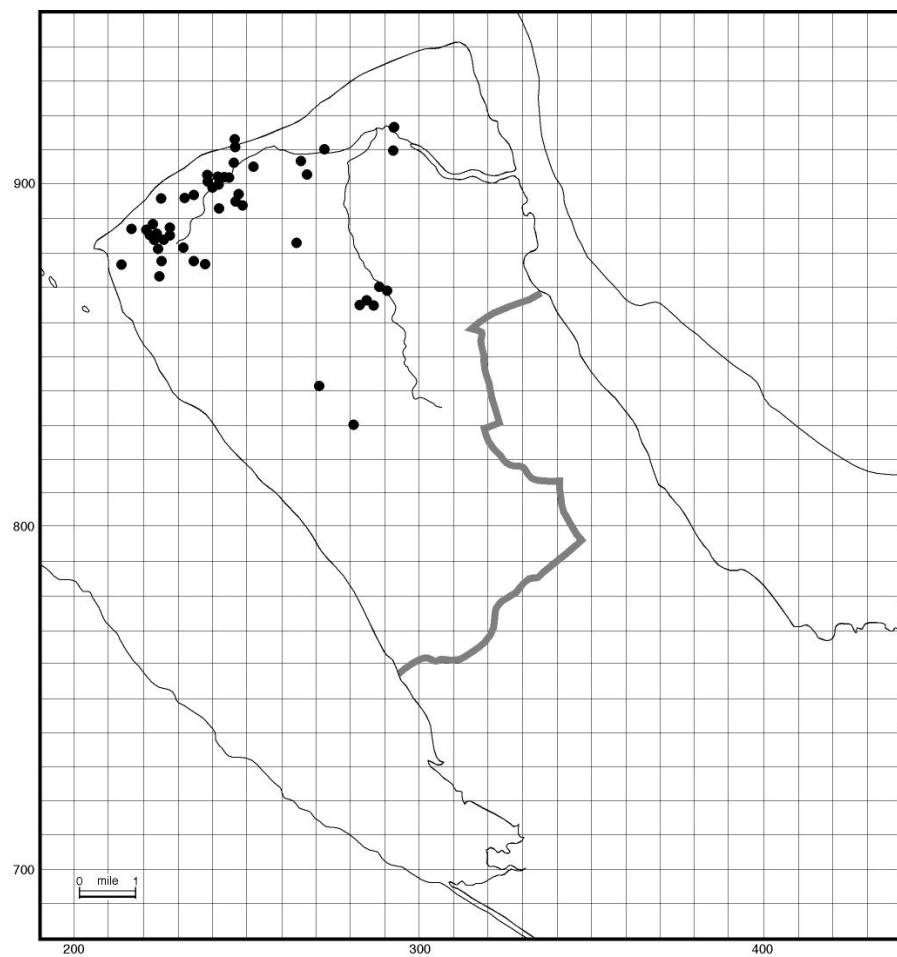


Fig 6c

## 96 rakes

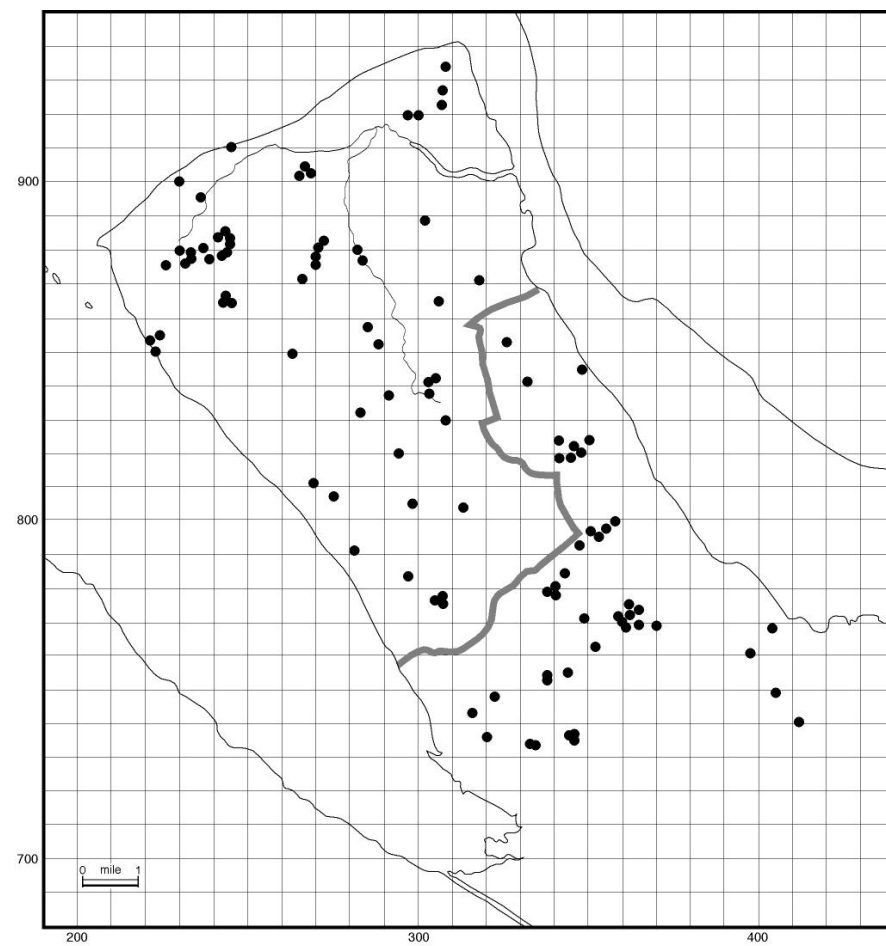


Fig 8  
rakes



## Excavating Past Population Structures by Surname-Based Sampling: The Genetic Legacy of the Vikings in Northwest England

Georgina R. Bowden,\* Patricia Balaesque,\* Turi E. King,\* Ziff Hansen,† Andrew C. Lee,\*<sup>1</sup> Giles Pergl-Wilson,† Emma Hurley,† Stephen J. Roberts,‡ Patrick Waite,§ Judith Jesch,|| Abigail L. Jones,¶ Mark G. Thomas,# Stephen E. Harding,† and Mark A. Jobling\*

\*Department of Genetics, University of Leicester, Leicester, United Kingdom; †National Centre for Macromolecular Hydrodynamics, University of Nottingham, Sutton Bonington Campus, Loughborough, United Kingdom; ‡The Queen Katherine School, Kendal, Cumbria, United Kingdom; §West Lancashire Heritage Association, Ormskirk, United Kingdom; ||School of English Studies, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham, United Kingdom; ¶The Centre for Genetic Anthropology, Department of Biology, University College London, London, United Kingdom; and #Department of Biology, University College London, London, United Kingdom

The genetic structures of past human populations are obscured by recent migrations and expansions and have been observed only indirectly by inference from modern samples. However, the unique link between a heritable cultural marker, the patrilineal surname, and a genetic marker, the Y chromosome, provides a means to target sets of modern individuals that might resemble populations at the time of surname establishment. As a test case, we studied samples from the Wirral Peninsula and West Lancashire, in northwest England. Place-names and archaeology show clear evidence of a past Viking presence, but heavy immigration and population growth since the industrial revolution are likely to have weakened the genetic signal of a 1,000-year-old Scandinavian contribution. Samples ascertained on the basis of 2 generations of residence were compared with independent samples based on known ancestry in the region plus the possession of a surname known from historical records to have been present there in medieval times. The Y-chromosomal haplotypes of these 2 sets of samples are significantly different, and in admixture analyses, the surname-ascertained samples show markedly greater Scandinavian ancestry proportions, supporting the idea that northwest England was once heavily populated by Scandinavian settlers. The method of historical surname-based ascertainment promises to allow investigation of the influence of migration and drift over the last few centuries in changing the population structure of Britain and will have general utility in other regions where surnames are patrilineal and suitable historical records survive.

### Introduction

Studies of the human past draw on lines of evidence

through studies of men sharing surnames (Sykes and Irven 2000; King et al. 2006; McEvoy and Bradley 2006). Although the link between surnames and Y-chromosomal

## Knowsley Hall, 27 November



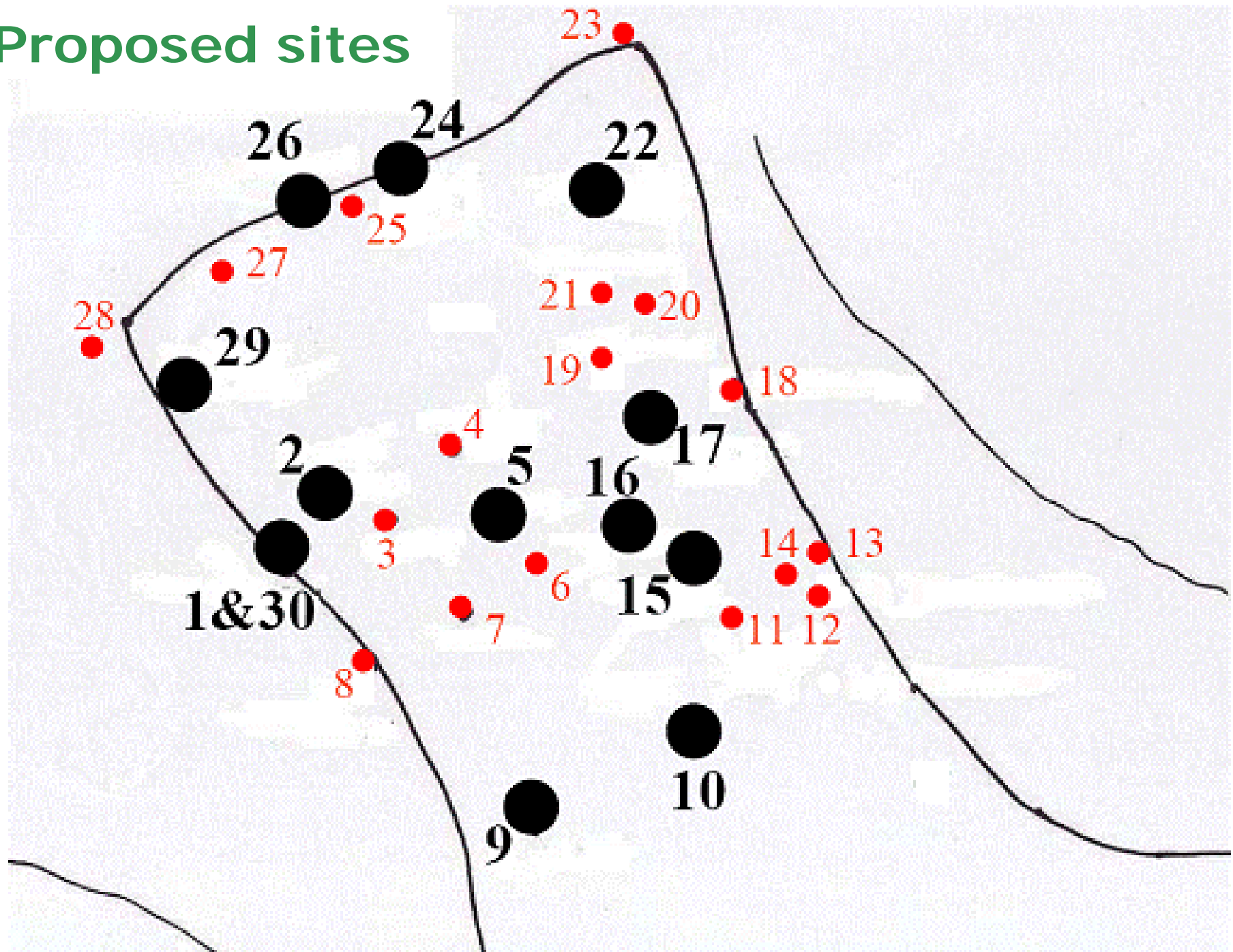
1. **Viking Heritage Trail – 29 possible sites**
2. **Viking Churches Heritage Walk – every July:  
St. Bridgets - St. Mary/St. Helen - St. Olave's**

[www.nottingham.ac.uk/-sczsteve](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/-sczsteve)

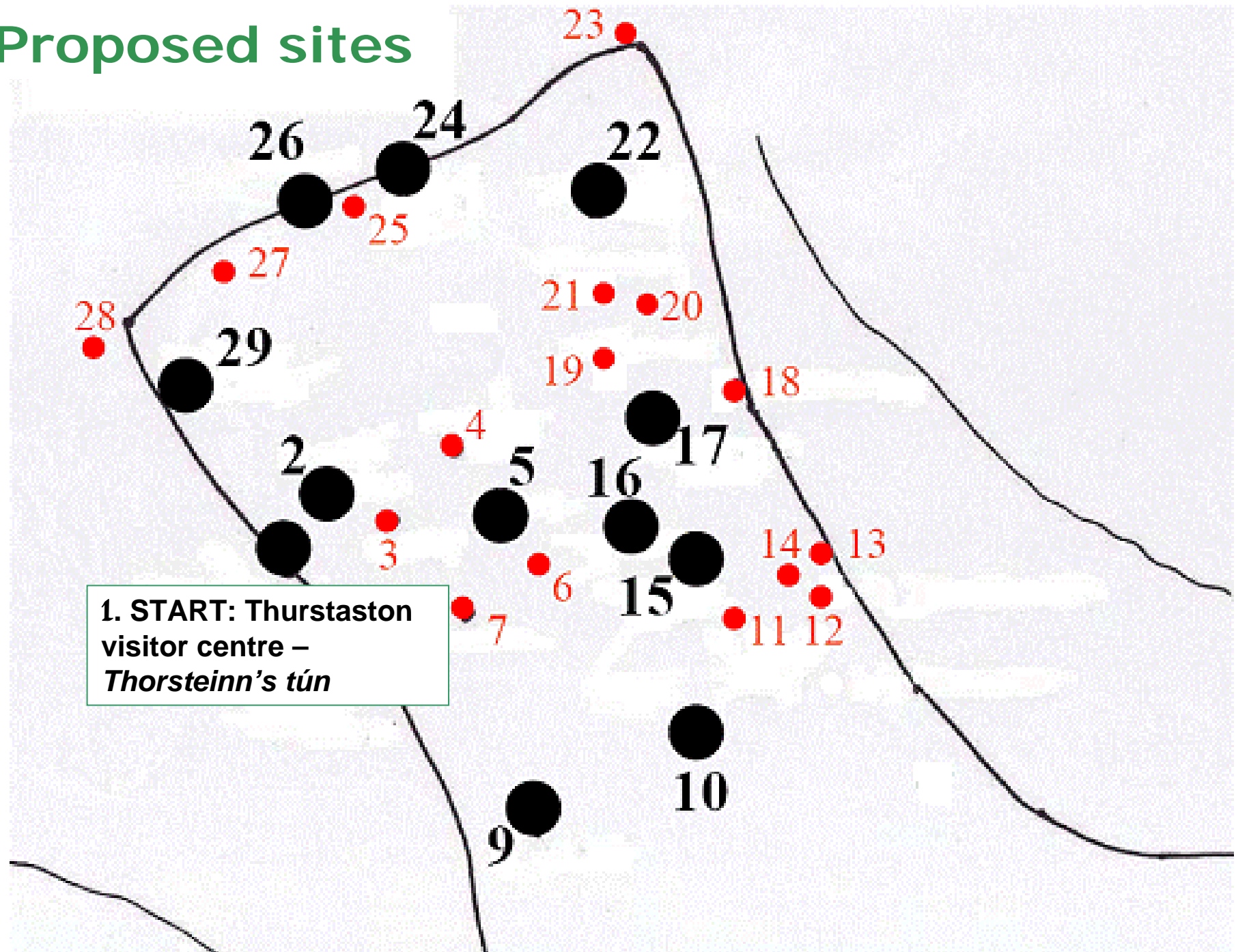




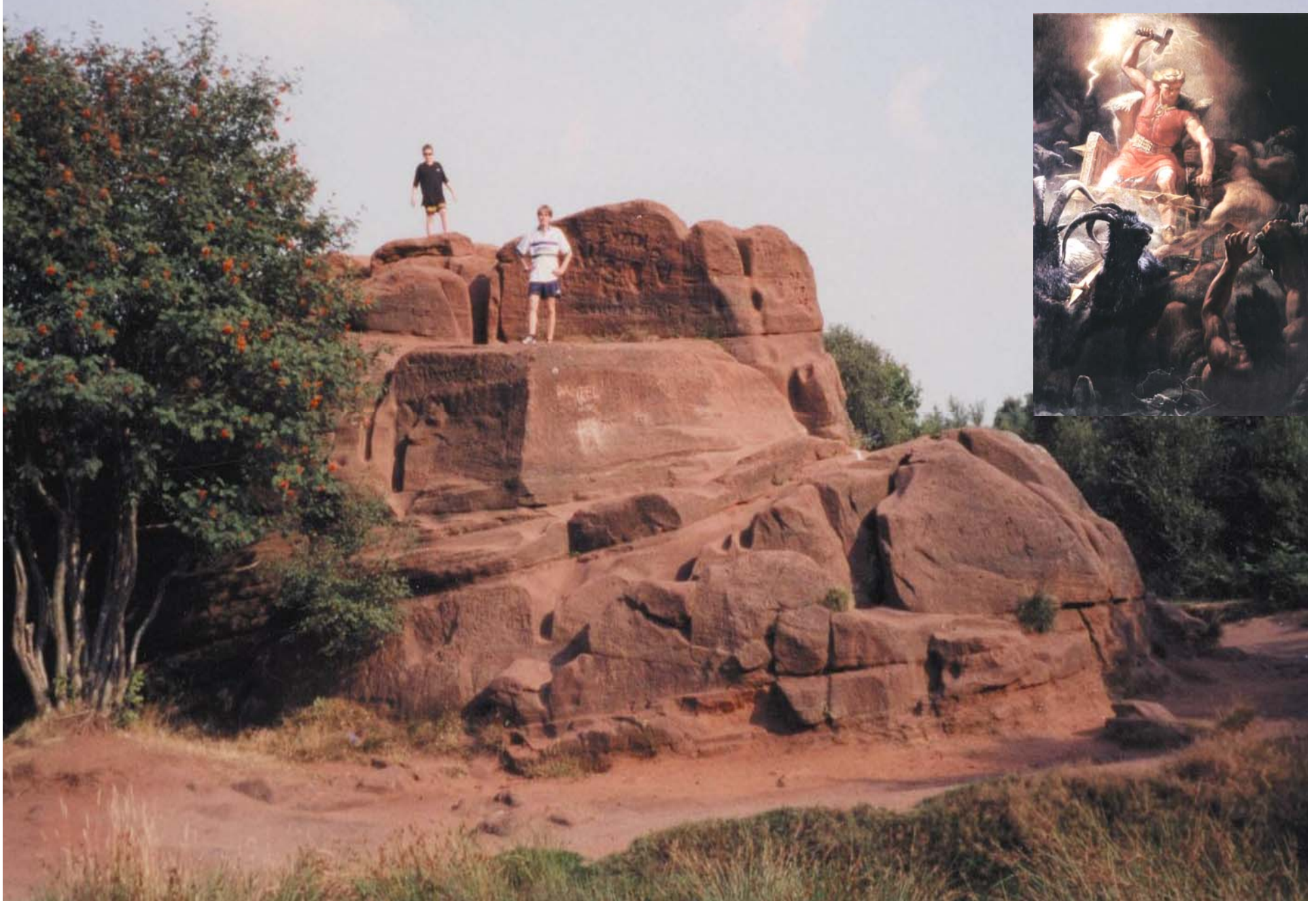
## Proposed sites



## Proposed sites



## 2. Thor's Stone





# De fant Tors hammer

Trønderske utsendinger i vester-veg har gjenfunnet Tors hammer. Det skjedde ikke langt fra Liverpool der et helt lite samfunn med trøndersk utspring eksisterte for 1100 år siden.

Den engelske forskeren Stephen Harding lanserte i går kveld sitt materiale som skal påvise et av grunne trønderske vi-



Foto: MALCOLM GOY

**Utsendingene** fra Trøndelag, Liv Sandven og Gerhard Dalen, foran Tors hammer, gjenfunnet i området Wirral i Nordøst-England. Wirral var et selvstyrt, trøndersk samfunn for 1100 år siden, viser ny forskning.





3. Irby: Heskeths field  
*ON hesta-skeið* "horse race track"

#### 4. Arrowe Park – Old Norse "*aergi*"



## 5. Thingwall – Thing-volr “Parliament Field”





## Thingwall – Steve & Prof. T. Titlestad, Univ. Stavanger





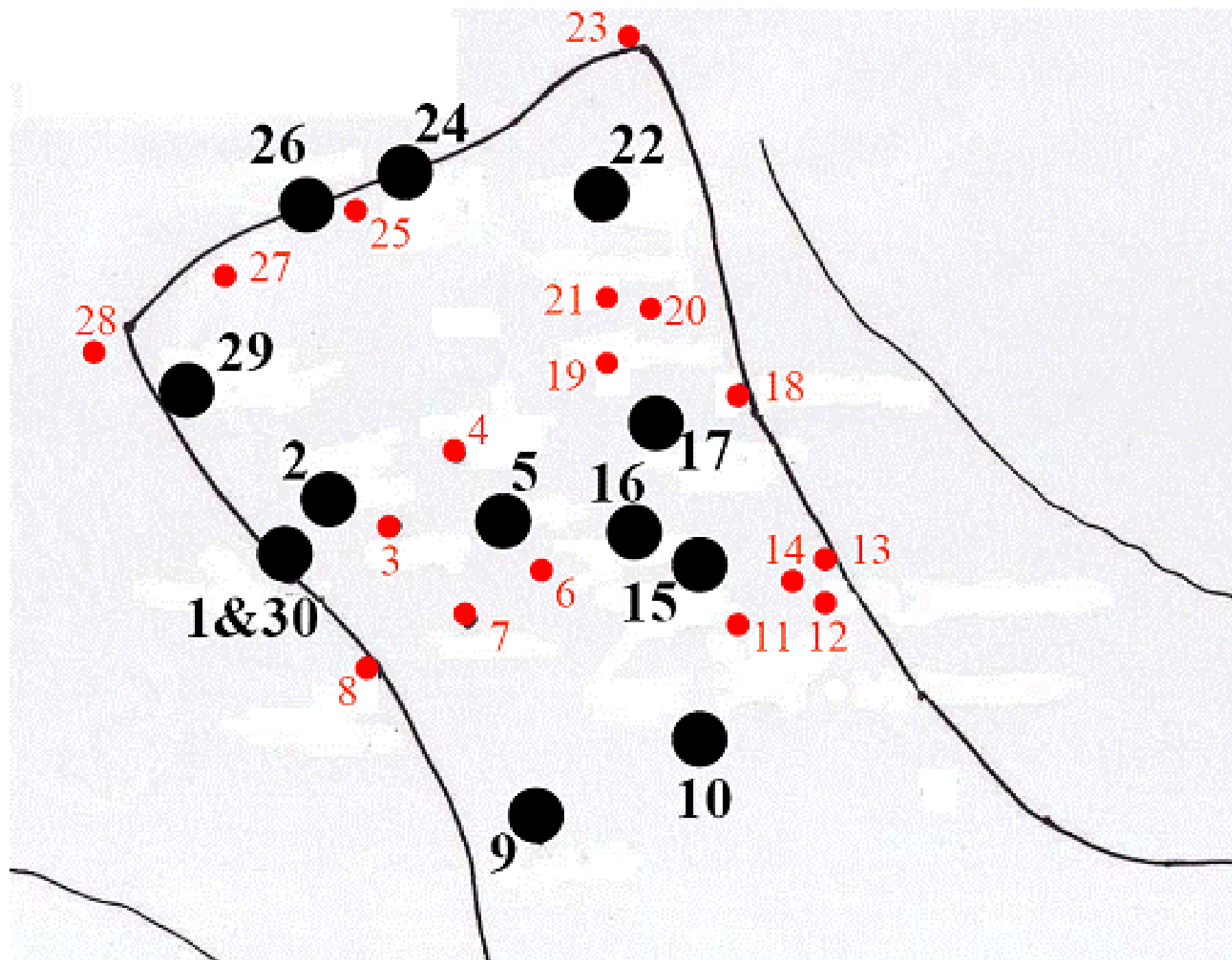
## 6. THE BARNSTON "GIL"





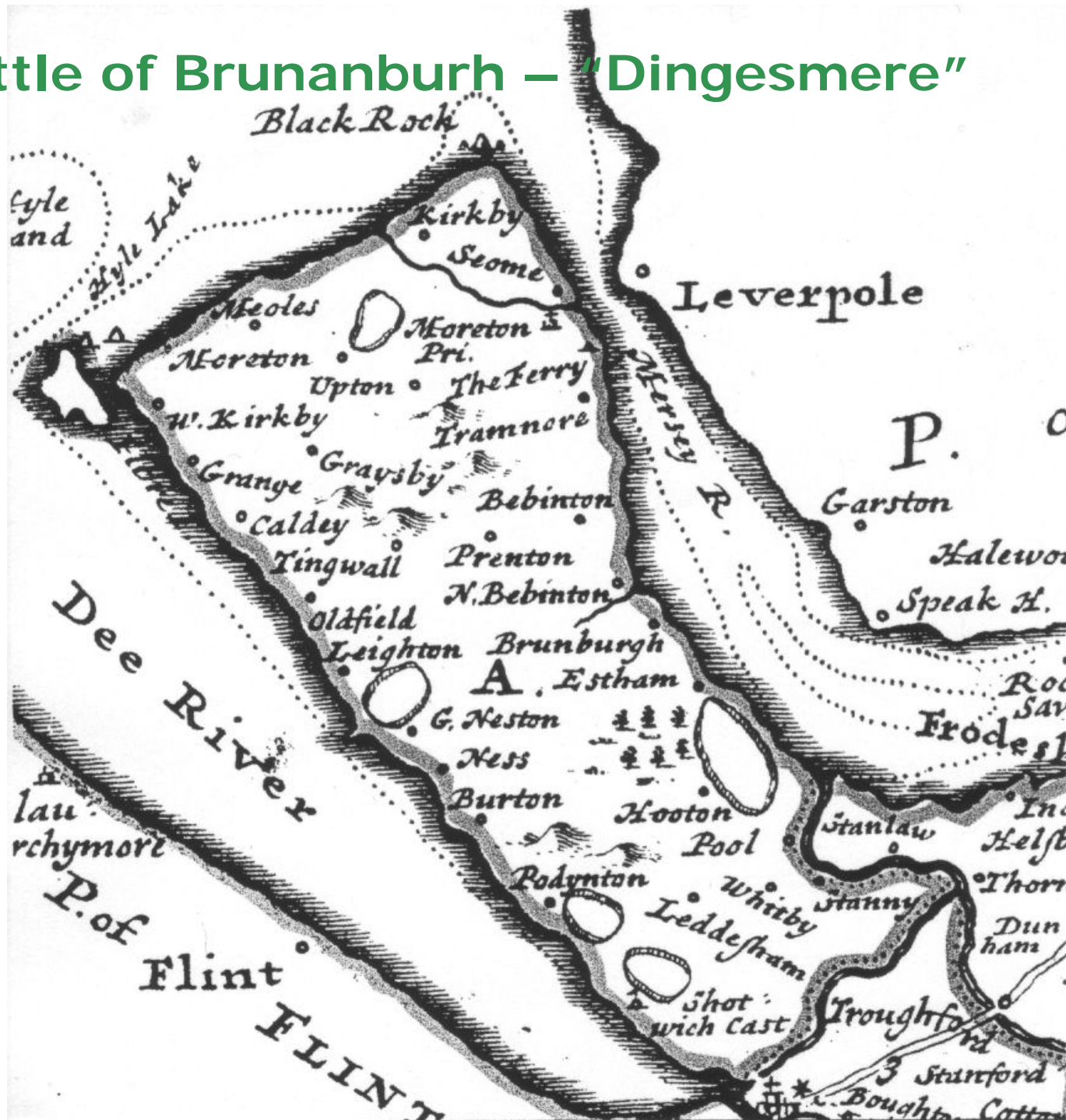
7. the heswall SLACK  
- OLD NORSE "SLAKKI"







## 8. Battle of Brunanburh – “Dingemere”



## Revisiting Dingesmere

Paul Cavill, Stephen Harding and Judith Jesch,  
University of Nottingham

*Dingesmere* is a place known only from the Old English poem *The Battle of Brunanburh*, found in versions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the year 937 (A, Corpus Christi College Cambridge 173; B, London, British Library Cotton Tiberius A. vi; C, Cotton Tiberius B. i; and D, Cotton Tiberius B. iv and one manuscript now lost, but copied and published before 1731 when the original was destroyed, Cotton Otho B. xi). After the resounding victory of Æthelstan and Edmund at *Brunanburh*, the coalition of Dublin Norse, Strathclyde Welsh, Picts and Scots split up, with the survivors making their own way home. The Dublin Norsemen sailed away *on dinges mere*.

Gewitan him þa Norþmen nægledcnearrum,  
dreorig daraða laf, on Dingesmere,  
ofer deop wæter Difelin secan,  
eft Ira land, æwiscmode. (53–6)

(Then the Northmen, dreary survivors of the spears, went in the nail-studded ships on *Dingesmere*, over deep water, to seek Dublin, went back



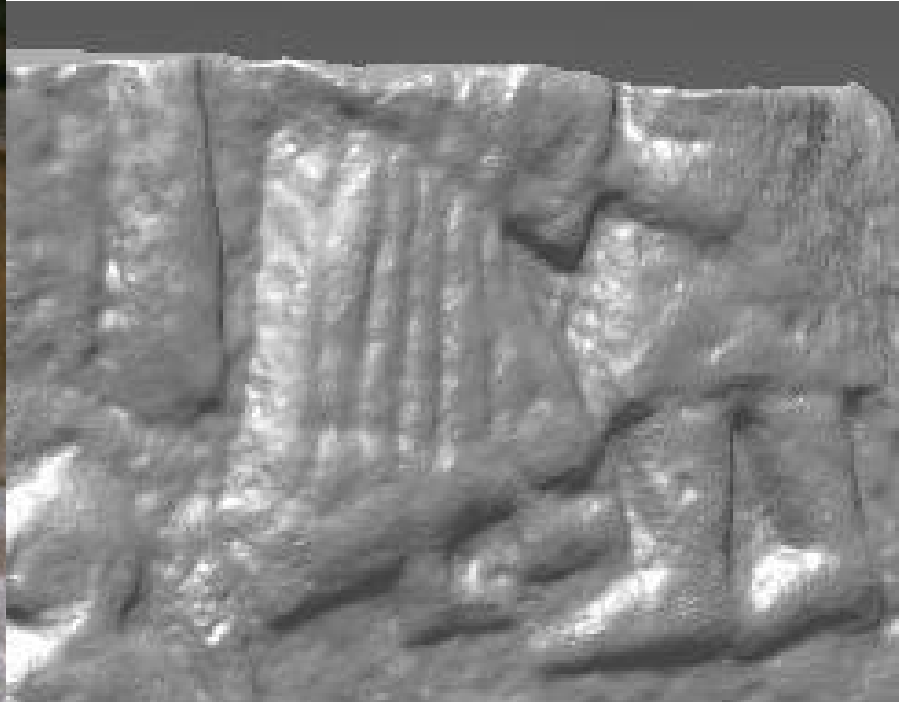




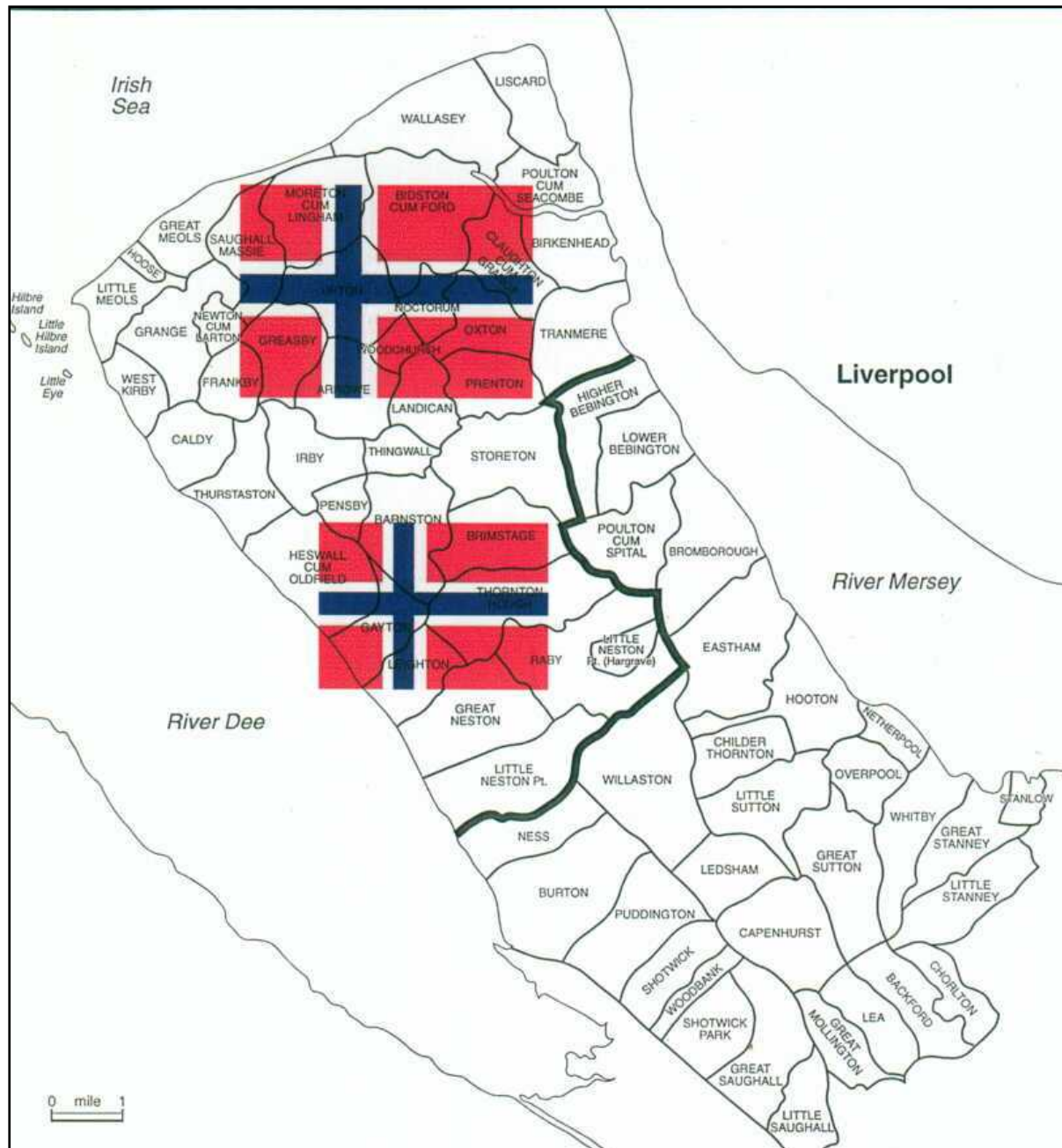
9. Viking cross fragments - Neston

# Neston Cross 2007

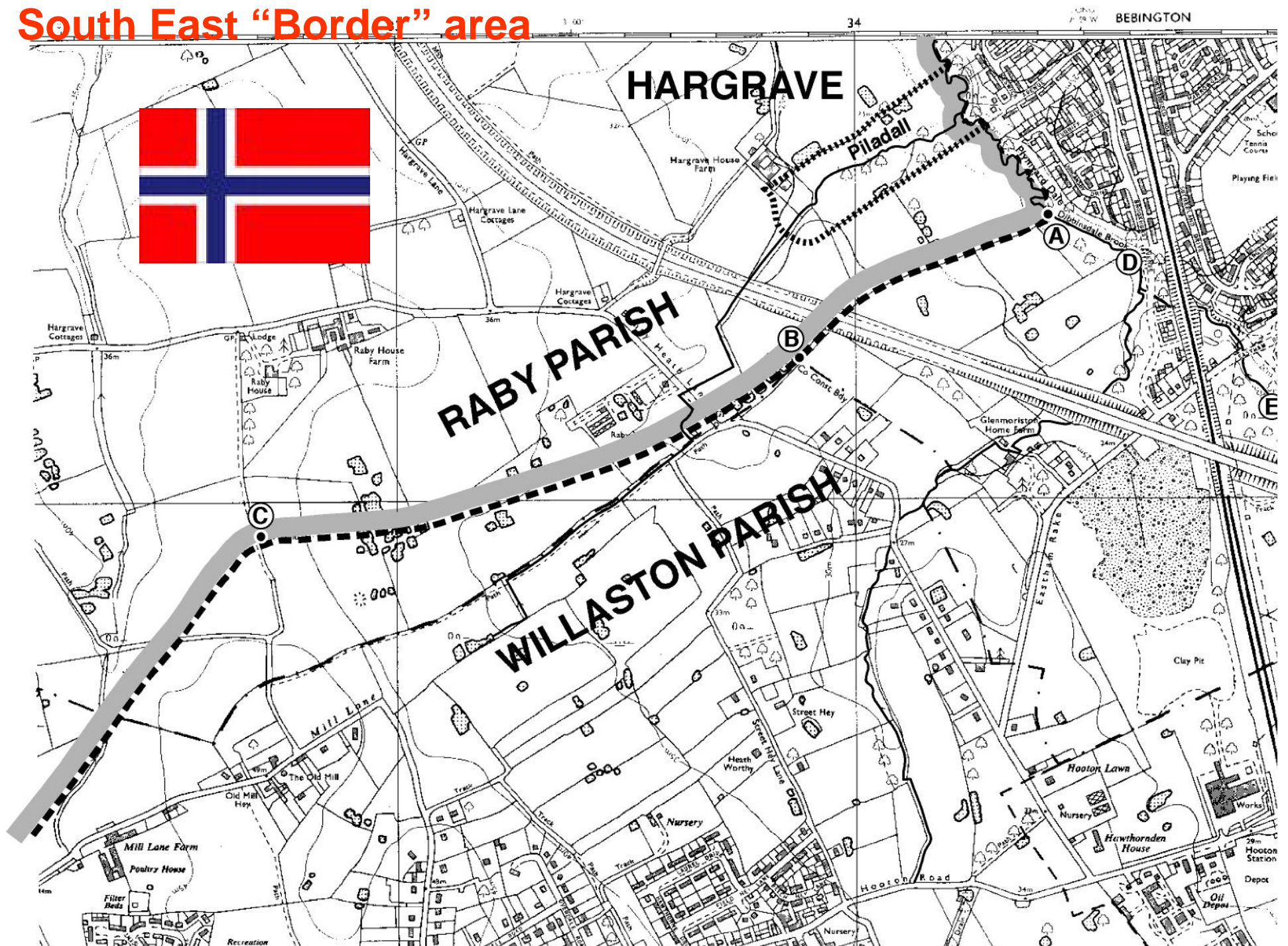
## Cross fragment, Neston







# South East "Border" area





# Piladall (*píll-dalr*) "Willow Valley"

willow





## 10. Raby (*rá-býr*) Mere

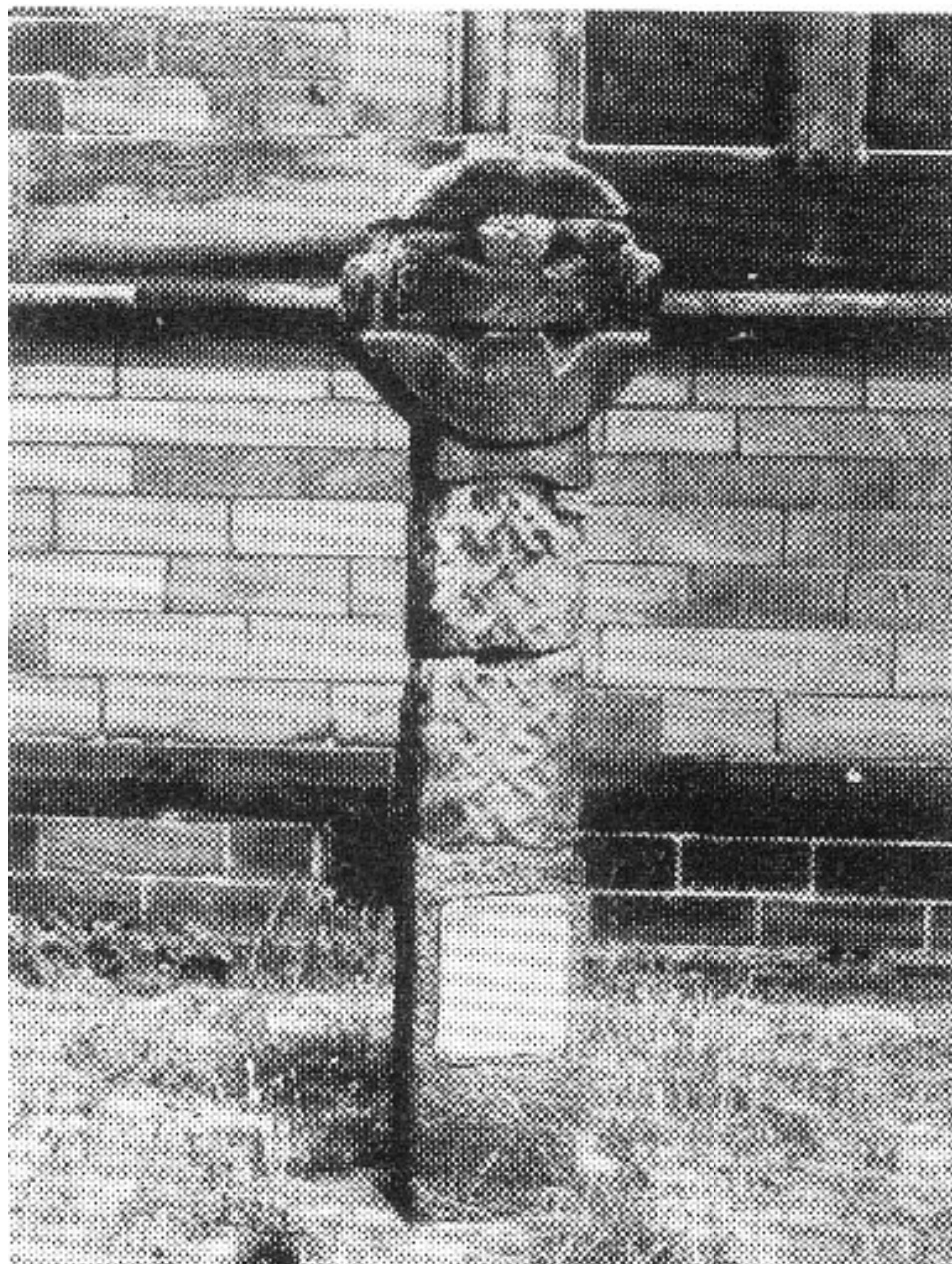


**11. Sue Sharples  
Brunanburgh Viking  
sculpture at Poulton  
Hall**





## 12. Bromborough – ring headed cross



### 13. BROMBOROUGH COURT house

**1968**



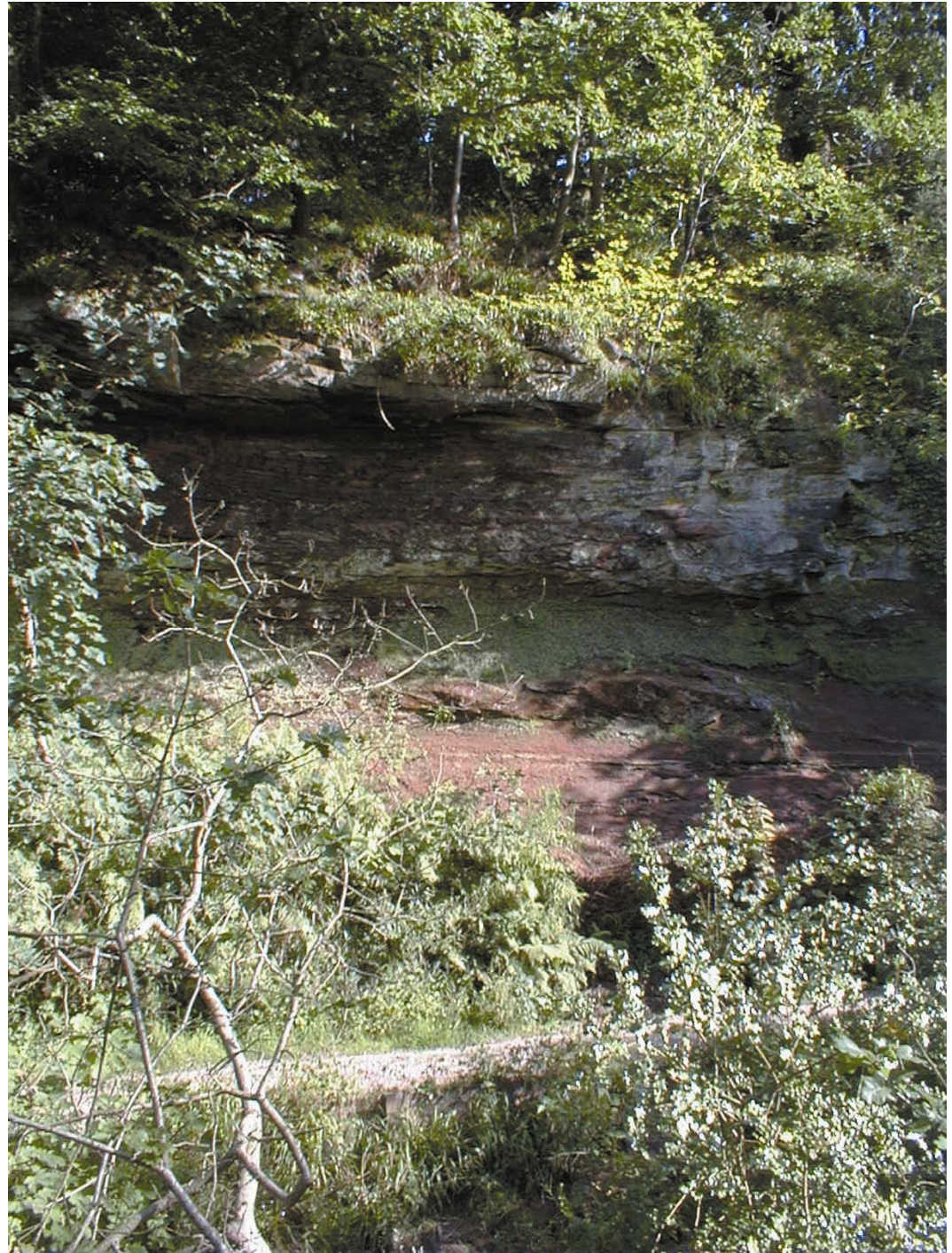
**Today**





## 14. The Clints at Dibbinsdale

Old Norse - *klintir*



## 15. Battle of Brunanburh – Bebington Heath?





## 15. Escape from Brunanburh!







... a few hours later!









## 16. Storeton – *stor-tún* – the big farmstead





## 17. VIKING TRAMERE





## 17. VIKING TRANMERE





# Viking invaders are flocking to Tranmere

## Supporters celebrate

**A NEW invasion of Vikings is hitting Wirral - Norwegian football supporters.**

There are now more than 100 regularly attending Tranmere's Friday games, coming from all over Norway.

Last Friday among the invaders was a group from Sarpsborg in Southern Norway who celebrated Tranmere's 2-0 win over Chesterfield.

Many of the "raiders" come over and watch Tranmere on the Friday and then go and see one of the Premiership clubs on either Saturday or Sunday.

But Wirral's Viking expert and lifelong Tranmere fan Professor Steve Harding hopes they will make Tranmere as "their" team, especially as the connection goes even deeper.

Professor Harding, from Nottingham University, explained: "I think many Tranmere fans are now aware of the club's wonderful



● Tom, Ingi, Svein and Erlende, from Sarpsborg, celebrate Tranmere's win on Friday night with Steve Harding (second right)

Code NA

uniqueness in being the only club in the English league with a Norwegian Viking name.

"Tranmere was founded by Viking settlers more than 1,000 years ago as Tran-mæl meaning "sandbank with the cranebirds or herons.

"I tell all my Norwegian friends that all Norwegians should support Tranmere, maybe the penny - or kronor - is starting to drop!

"One my friends, Gerhard Dalen, director of cultural affairs at the municipality of Trondheim and one of the main instigators behind Champions League Rosenborg FC's Lerkendal Stadium, has said Norwegians are very proud there is an English league team in Wirral with a Norwegian Viking name."

Professor Harding added: "One pair of Norwegian sup-

porters - Eirik and Rakel Fjeld from Skien near Oslo - have been so bitten by the club that they have chosen to study at Liverpool John Moores University, enabling them to get to all the games."

Together with Tranmere supporter Tom Roger, from Bergen, Eirik has started a new "blog style" Norwegian Supporters website on <http://trsn.blogspot.com>



18. Could *trani* – crane birds - be reintroduced to the Tranmere *melr* or sandbank?



## 19. *Árni's haug* - Arno Hill, Oxton

Is Árni buried here?

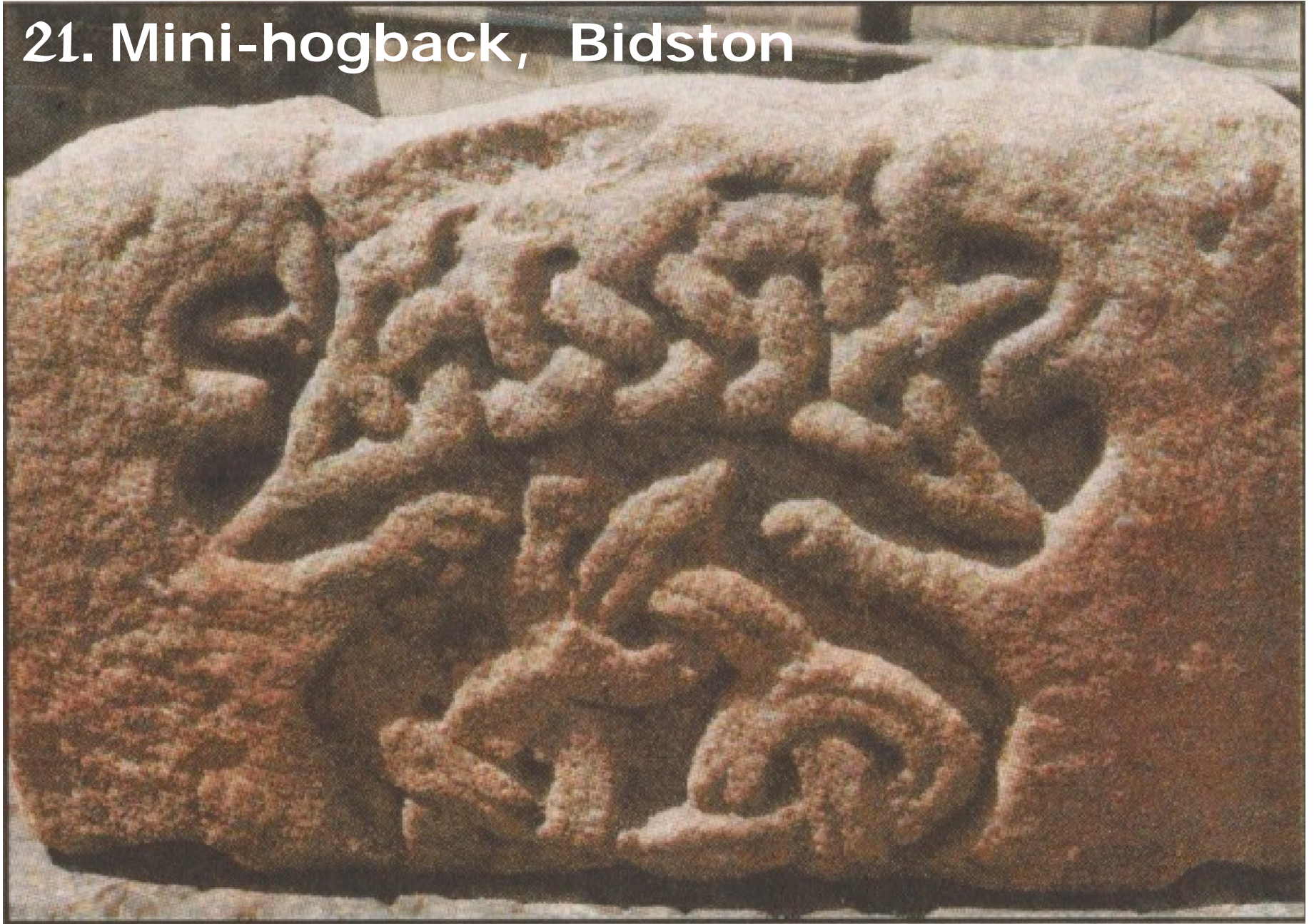




20. Claughton – *klakkr tun*, and *Ufaldi's green*  
(now part of Birkenhead Park)



## 21. Mini-hogback, Bidston





## NEWS

# Discovery is rewriting our peninsula's history

by Eric Munn



**EXCITED:** From left are Professor Richard Bailey, Jenny Whalley and Peter Crawford.

THIS stone featuring a combination of Viking and Celtic engraving has completely re-written the history of Wirral.

Found in a back garden in Bidston, it is more than 1,000 years old and predates the Norman Conquest.

The unique find proves that there were Vikings living in Wirral 500 years before it was previously thought.

The discovery was verified by Newcastle University's Professor of Anglo-Saxon Civilisation, Richard Bailey - who has spent over 40 years in his field.

"This is one of the most impressive finds I've ever seen - possibly the most impressive," he said.

"It is from the 10<sup>th</sup> Century and belongs to the Viking period. It is a grave marker that would

have stood at the edge of a very important person's burial site. This is an absolutely unique monument, it shows there was a 10<sup>th</sup> century church in Bidston and that the Vikings came into the Wirral area much earlier than previously thought."

The engraving shows a combination of styles that are derived from both the Viking and Anglian traditions.

"On the edge of the stone you can see two bears facing inwards - which is very Scandinavian - and in the middle the animals tongues intertwine in Celtic knot work.

"The Vikings did not use that style at home but as they travelled through Scotland and England they picked up elements of the native culture."

"The find also shows that there was probably a

link between Wirral and York - which is the only other site in England where remotely similar finds have occurred."

Bidston man Peter Crawford discovered the stone in his garden and had been using it as a doorstep.

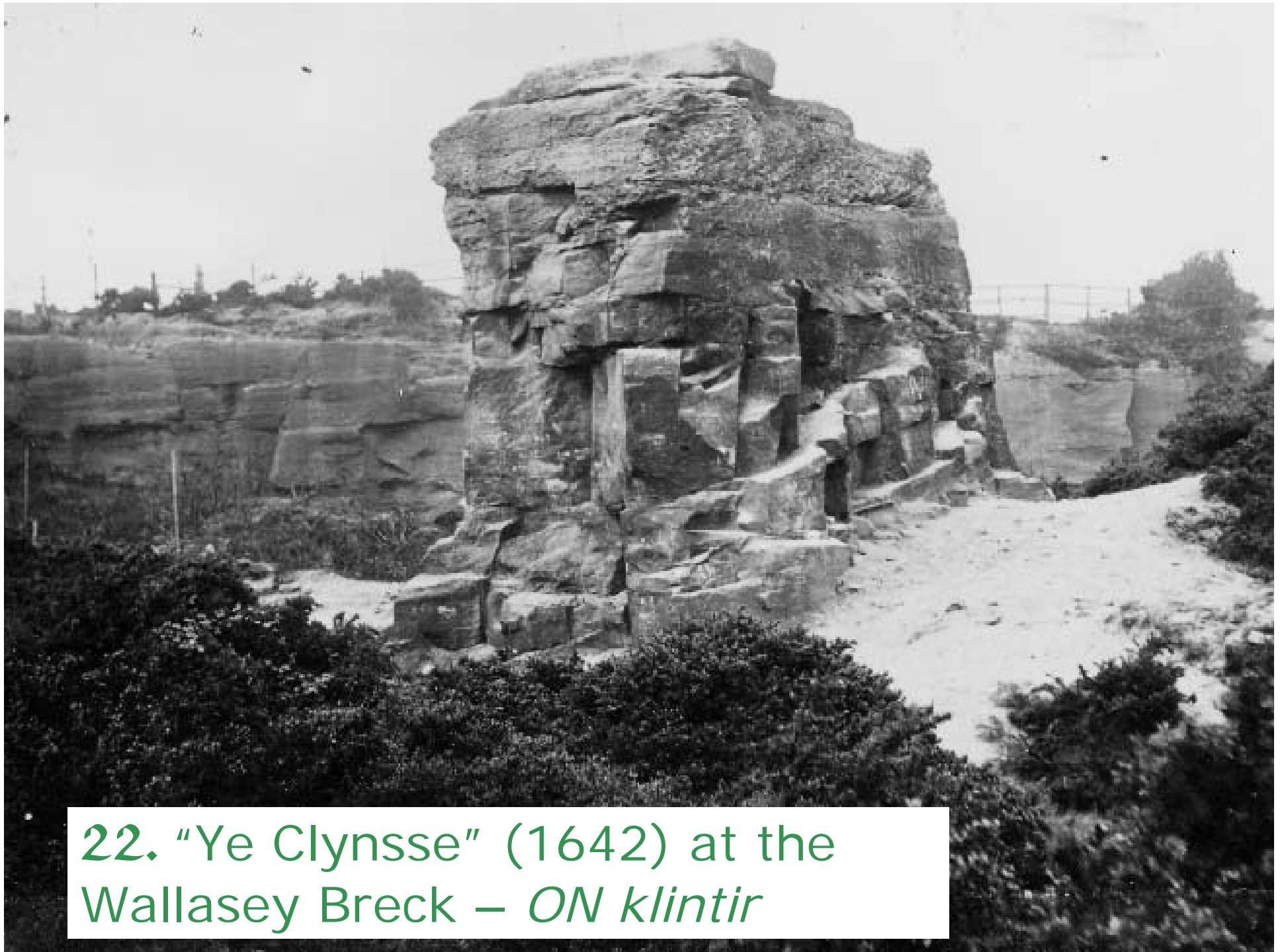
"I knew it was special but didn't realise just how important until I showed it to a local expert who was able to identify it," he said. Mr Crawford showed the stone to local archaeology expert Jenny Whalley who realised the stone's importance.

She said: "I was amazed when I saw it and even more delighted that it has been verified. I think there are many more important things in this area lying undiscovered. I think the council should find the resources to help us investigate further."



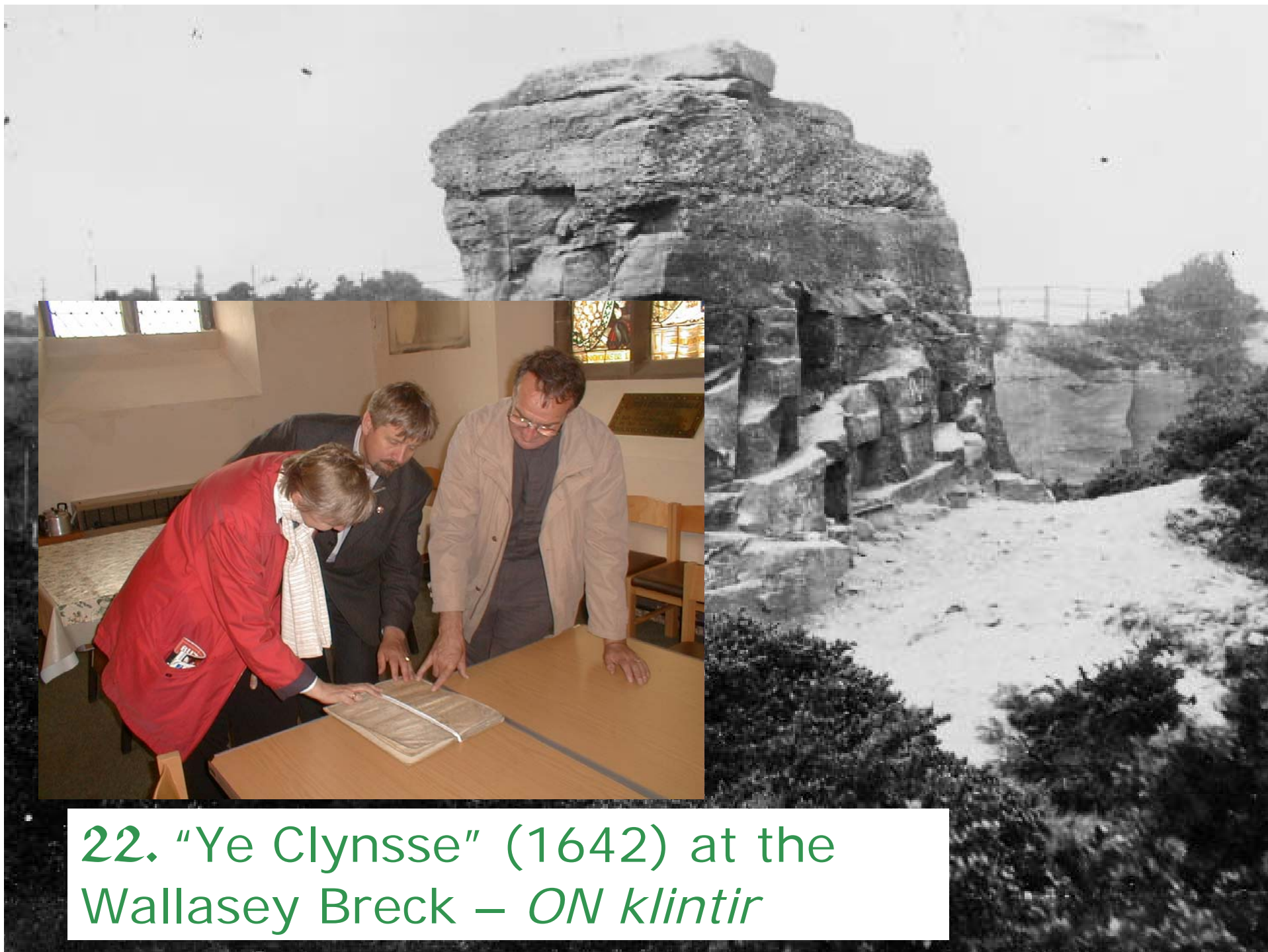
**THE UNIQUE STONE:** The engraving shows a combination of styles that are derived from both the Viking and Anglian traditions. It proves there was a 10<sup>th</sup> century church in Bidston and that the Vikings came into Wirral much earlier than previously thought.

**Wirral Globe  
23 June 2004**



22. "Ye Clynssse" (1642) at the  
Wallasey Breck – *ON klintir*





22. "Ye Clynssse" (1642) at the  
Wallasey Breck – *ON klintir*





23. "Svartskere" – *black rock*



## 24. Lingham – *lyng-holmr*





## 24. Lingham – *lyng-holmr*



## Leasowe Castle: the Canute Chair





## 25. Railway Inn, Meols





## 26. Meols – Old Norse *melr*







## Grave of a Viking warrior?



2



2

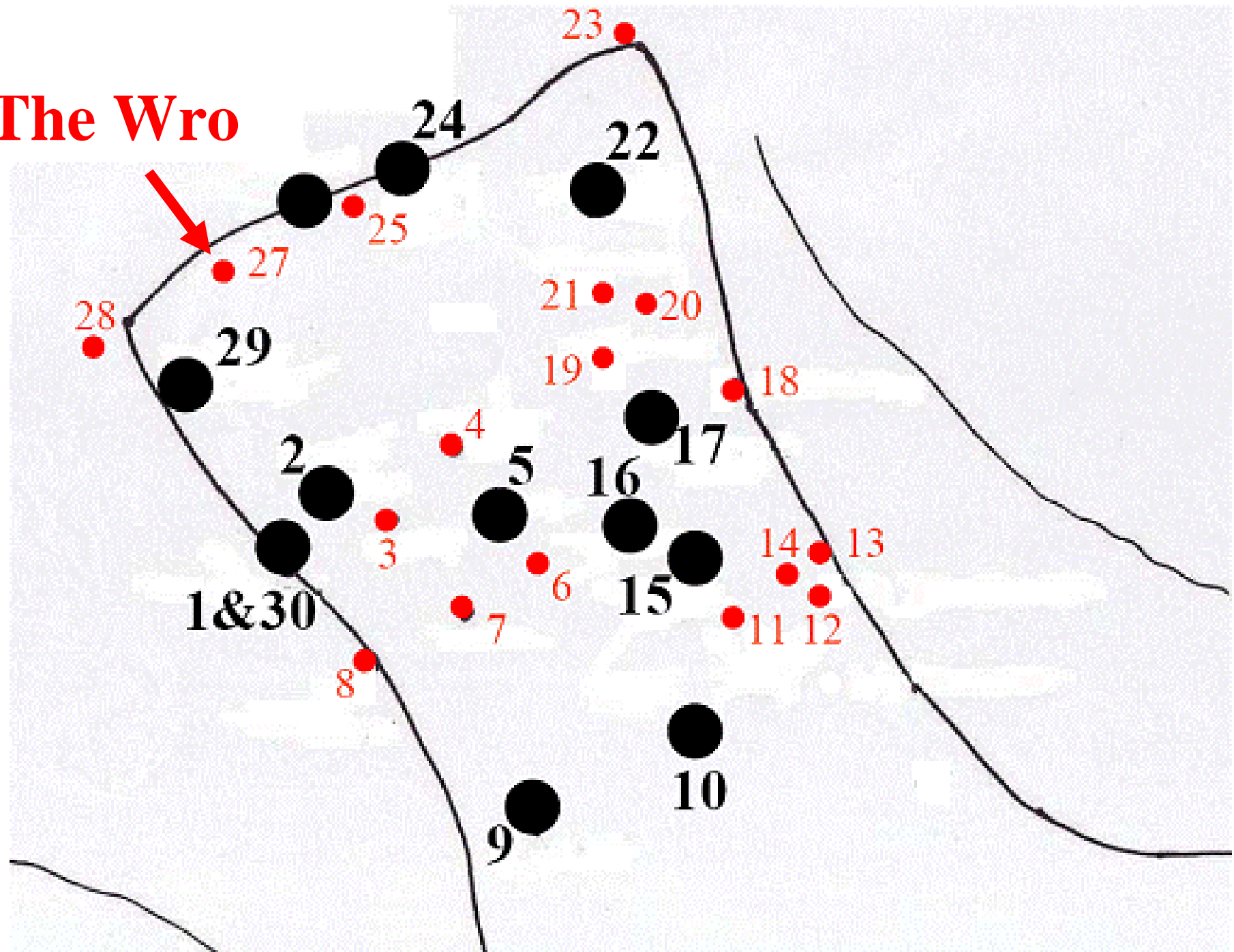


2





# The Wro



## 28. Tonn-skere – Tanskey rocks





## 29. St. Bridgets Church, *vestri kirkjubyr*

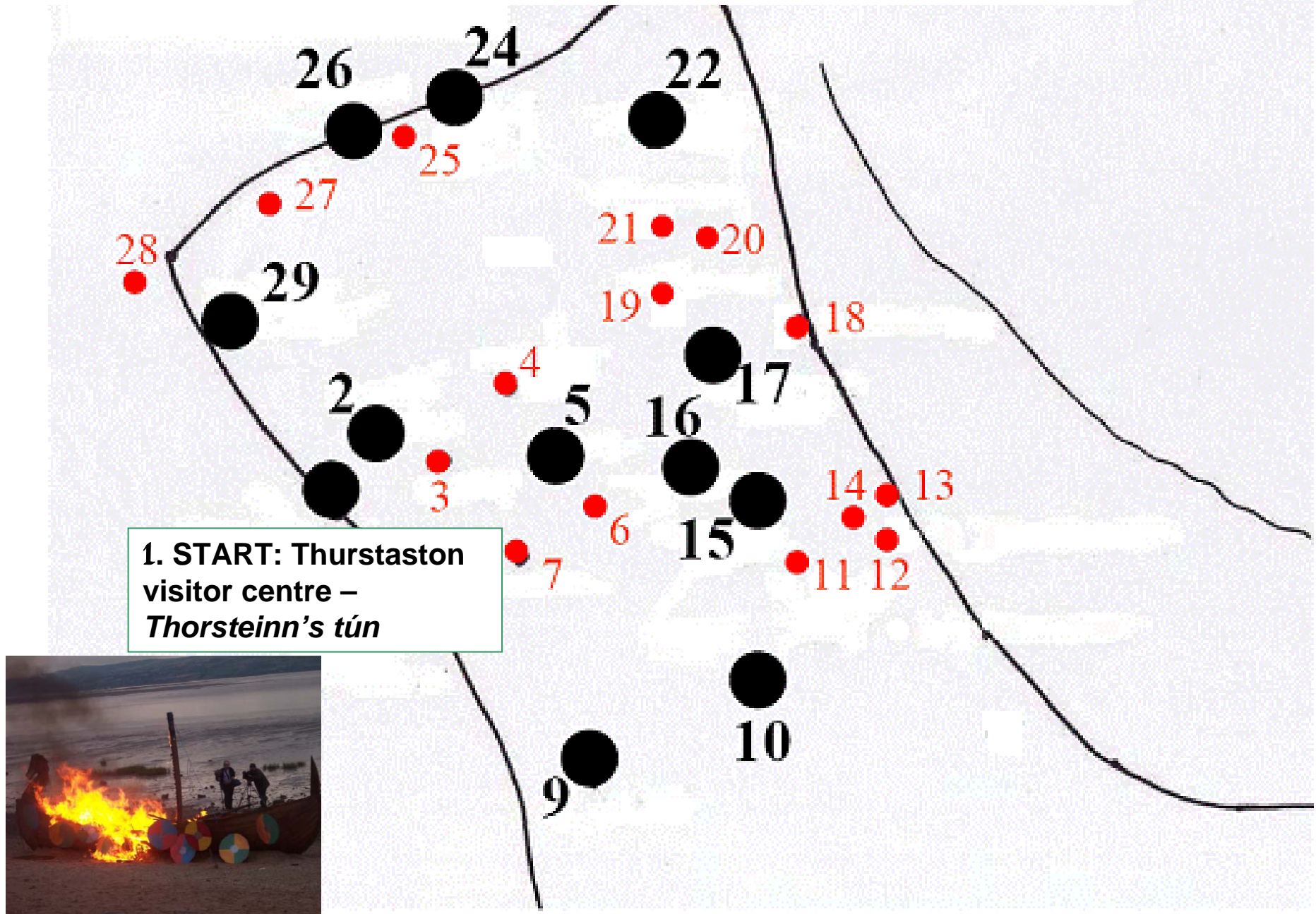


**Hogback Tombstone (1000-1050 A.D.)  
West Kirby**





## Back to Thorsteinn's farmstead...



# A viking centre?





A STATUE OF INGIMUND?



# A STATUE OF INGIMUND?

[www.nottingham.ac.uk/-sczsteve](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/-sczsteve)





# Viking Churches Heritage Walk

## "Olsok" every July

St. Bridget's



St. Mary & St. Helen St. Olave's



[www.nottingham.ac.uk/-sczsteve](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/-sczsteve)

This years walk on SATURDAY 26 JULY goes from Neston to St. Olave's