RICHARD COATES

THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC CONTEXT OF BRUNANBURH

The systematic reader of this book will already know that there has been debate over many decades about where the Battle of Brunanburh, commemorated in poetry in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Item 4 in this volume) and mentioned briefly in other many other sources, actually took place. Paul Cavill and Stephen Harding have shown in their essays, to my mind convincingly, that the only serious candidate for the battle-site is Bromborough in Wirral (see also the works cited in footnote 10 below). My purpose here is to take that identification for granted, to explore the evidence revealed, chiefly in place-names, for the linguistic history of this area, and to relate that evidence to the battle, its background, and its consequences.

The north-western part of Wirral, formerly in the county of Cheshire, now in the metropolitan county of Merseyside, has one of the most complex linguistic histories in England. The purpose of this work is to disentangle it, refine what is known, and comment on the sociolinguistic status enjoyed by the relevant languages, especially at the time of the battle in the early tenth century and subsequently. The evidence to be assessed comes from place-names, an Irish chronicle and, to a lesser extent, local dialect.

The oldest layer of place-naming identified by John McNeal Dodgson (in *PN Ch*) is Proto-Welsh. It will be shown that some of the evidence previously claimed in support of this view is really, however, early Middle Irish. The second layer is Old English, which is relatively uncontentious, but its relation to Scandinavian naming needs to be discussed. It will be shown that some names claimed as Old English are in fact equally, or more, likely to be Scandinavian, at least in some sense. The third layer is represented by a simultaneous deposit of Old Scandinavian and Middle Irish, which can be understood as the result of a documented invasion and controlled landtaking by Vikings in the first decade of the tenth century. An assessment will be made of what sociolinguistic conditions permitted the exercise of the naming function in two different languages, when, in the light of later dialect developments, it is clear that Scandinavian must have been the language of everyday activity, or perhaps even the local lingua franca; Scandinavian usage was clearly intense.

It has been claimed by Gillian Fellows-Jensen that the Irish and Norse evidence permits the view that the Viking invasion contained an element from the Isle of Man.[1] This claim will be assessed briefly. The significance of names apparently referring to Danes and Franks or Frenchmen will also be assessed.

ACADEMIC SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Firstly, we need to consider the place-name evidence. The groundwork is presented in Dodgson's *PN Ch*, and in some preparatory studies published mostly in advance of the first

[1] See, e.g., Fellows-Jensen, "Anthroponymical Specifics" and "Scandinavian Settlement."

The Battle of Brunanburh

A Casebook

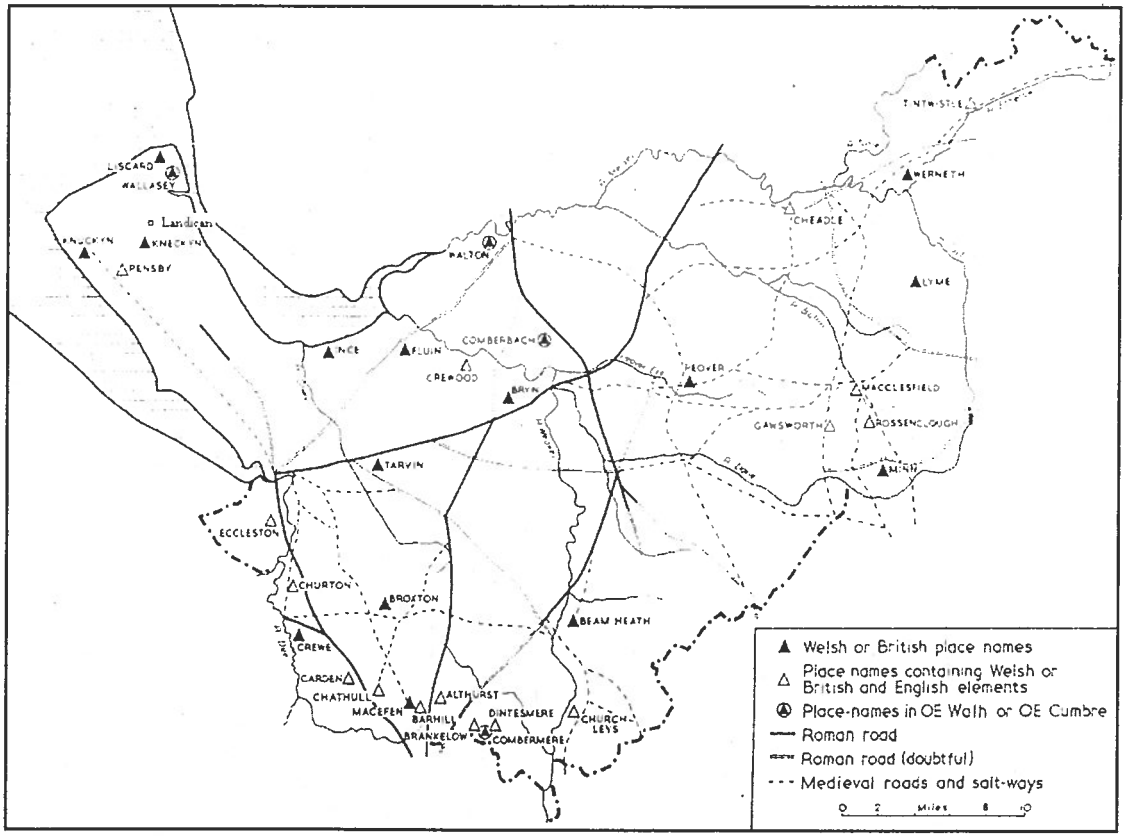
edited by
Michael Livingston

University of Exeter Press

volume of this work.[2] The multi-volume work contains all the essential material, and where a claim about linguistic forms serving as evidence is made in this paper without chapter and verse, the spellings are to be found at the appropriate place in it (mainly volume 4, published in 1972). Despite his subtle use of the material, I do not agree with all his conclusions. I shall also refer frequently to the work of Fellows-Jensen on Scandinavian personal and place-names and their distribution and significance in the islands.[3]

Wirral Place-Names Testifying to a Welsh Presence

The oldest identifiable layer of place-naming in Wirral is Welsh. There is a thin scattering of names of Brittonic or Welsh origin over the whole of Cheshire (with a concentration near to the current boundary with Wales). There ought therefore to be nothing special to say about Wirral, since what goes for Wirral goes in principle for the rest of the county too. I shall pay attention to those in Wirral only because several of them are not certain to be what they have been claimed to be, and an alternative view of those will have repercussions for a proper understanding of the tenth-century situation. So let us deal with them first. They are shown on Map 1, but for some mysterious reason the best candidate name, which I shall discuss immediately, is absent from the original version of the map; the crudity of my calligraphy draws attention to it.



Map 1. Welsh place-names in Cheshire. Reprinted courtesy of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire.

[2] Dodgson, "Background," "Old-Irish Placename," "English Arrival," and "Welsh Element."

[3] The evidence relating to major place-names in Wirral is also conveniently presented, with some updating, in Cavill, Harding, and Jesch, eds., *Wirral and Its Viking Heritage*.

The only ancient Welsh place-name securely identified in Wirral is that of the township of Landican in Woodchurch parish. Current scholarship takes it to consist of Proto-Welsh (PrW) **lann* [church-site], with a personal name spellable as *Tecan*, i.e. /te'gan/, which may or may not be a saint's name (*PN Ch* 4.266–67). Names in such constructions usually are, but no such saint is known, and place-names like this in Wales occasionally contain the name of a private person. Dodgson, following Melville Richards (apparently private correspondence), rejected an older alternative view that it commemorated one Dagan, a seventh-century saint-bishop of Ennereilly, Wicklow, Ireland, since the <g> in this name represents a voiced velar fricative, and no Welsh borrowing of it at any historic period would be likely to yield a plosive in the modern name.[4]

Dodgson analyzes the first element of the hybrid name *Pensby* as being PrW *penn* [head; used in names for hills]; Pensby would therefore be a Scandinavian name meaning "farmstead at the place called (by the English using its original Welsh name) *Penn*" (*PN Ch* 4.271). This seems quite possible. It therefore contains a Welsh name which is now lost in its original application — no hill called *Penn* (the word never actually *meant* "hill") exists in Wirral at present. A similar case may be that of Carnsdale in Barnston, Woodchurch parish, with PrW *carn* [cairn] as the first element of an essentially Scandinavian name, but this is less secure.[5] Also doubtful is the identification of the first element of the field-name *Wirloons* in Frankby (Caldy parish) with Welsh *gwern* [alder(-swamp)] on the strength of a form of 1454 *the Werne Londes*; the same document has *Werle* (*PN Ch* 4.286). This element may however be found elsewhere in Cheshire.

There is a further English-language name which indicates the presence of Welsh people, namely *Wallasey*, whose earlier name, for which a typical spelling is *Waley*, reveals that it probably meant "island of the Welsh." This might imply that it became a refuge for Welsh people driven out of mainland Wirral by the original English colonization, and separated from mainland Wirral by the ancestor of the watercourse now known as The Fender; or it might mean that the incoming Angles never got as far as colonizing this remote and detached corner. The modern name *Wallasey* is a pleonastic expansion of the original, amounting to "Waley's *ey*" [Waley's island] (*PN Ch* 4.323–34). Or, less redundantly, if the name *Waley* had become attached to an inhabited site rather than to the island itself, then the new island name is "island of the site called *Waley*."

Prenton, a township of Woodchurch, is taken by Dodgson to contain the historically-attested nickname *Præn* belonging to an eighth-century Kentish earl who was mutilated on the orders of Cœnwulf, king of Mercia (*PN Ch* 4.272). It would not necessarily refer to that earl himself, of course. This suggestion poses a problem, because one would expect **Prenston* with a genitive suffix on the first element, in line with the overwhelmingly dominant pattern of such names; the form *Prestune* found in *Domesday Book* suggests confusion with the frequent name *Preston* rather than a garble of **Prenes-tūn* as Dodgson claims. A thirteenth-

[4] I defended, wrongly as I now think, the older view in the conference paper ("Sociolinguistics of North-western Wirral") which was a precursor to this chapter. The only purpose in mentioning this fact is that my earlier opinion was cited by Cavill, Harding, and Jesch (*Wirral and Its Viking Heritage*, p. 137, under *Landican*), with a reference to the paper as forthcoming. But it was never published in that form after all. That said, the Wirral place-name *Saughall* (*PN Ch* 4.321–22) is pronounced with /g/ for a historic fricative, but this seems to be a late spelling-pronunciation.

[5] Fellows-Jensen, *Scandinavian Settlements*, p. 367.

century spelling in *Premp-* found in a surname may suggest something entirely different and uncertain. It is the *lectio difficilior*, but it is also unique in the medieval record and I avoid discussion of it here.[6] With due allowance made for this, one might suspect the first element of *Prenton* to be the ancestor of Welsh *pren* [tree, wood].

It is not known how long any distinctive Welsh presence survived. There are at least two other names containing a Welsh personal name in the south-west of Wirral, but they are likely to be very much later, even modern. There was a *Granowes Fielde* in 1592 in Burton-in-Wirral, Shotwick Park, analysed by Dodgson as commemorating a man whose Welsh name was *Gronw/ Goronwy*, and a late thirteenth century *Iagowesmedwe* in Great Meols, from *Iago* (*PN Ch* 5.2.367). In Woodbank township in Shotwick lay land held by Adam *le Waleys* [the Welshman] in 1284.[7]

The site of the Battle of Brunanburh itself seems to have had a Welsh name, *Tybrunawc*, probably a purely literary and rather artificial rendering of the English name, something like "*Brun*-ious house."[8]

Also in Wirral were the names *Kne(c)kyn* and *Knukyn*, lost places respectively in Caldy and Irby townships. Dodgson analyses these as descending from Welsh *cnycyn* [little hill] (this is printed in error as *cyncyn*; *PN Ch* 5.2.293). The Celtic root of this word is **knokk-* meaning "boss, knuckle" or the like. Welsh *cnwc* appears to be a copying from fairly recent Irish (Modern Irish pron. /knuk/), and *cnycyn* is therefore a modern derivative. There is no strong phonological reason why the Wirral names cannot be for Irish *cnoicín*, and the significance of this will be explored later. *Knockeen* is a frequent Irish place-name. Although in Manx the *-an* suffix is generally preferred and the corresponding word in later Manx is *crongan*, George Broderick accepts that the Manx place-name *Knockean* may be a form corresponding to the Irish one cited, and fossilized in English prior to the change of [n] → [r] in certain environments which characterizes other Manx names.[9]

A case has been made that *Liscard* is also Welsh, but the claim is demonstrably false and I shall return to it below. I believe that it too is Irish in origin.

The ground has now been cleared, and there will be no further reference to Welsh-language activity in Wirral.

Wirral Place-Names Testifying to an English Presence

In common with the situation in most of the rest of England, any other Welsh names which might have existed have been obliterated by an overlay of English ones, such as *Saughall*, *Leighton*, *Woodchurch*, *Heswall*, *Bebington*, and *Bromborough*. No further attention will be paid to unambiguously English names, except to note that Bromborough is almost certainly *Brunanburh*, for reasons spelt out in this book in abundance.[10]

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[6] For full analysis of some similar spellings in <mp> for names with probable historic /n/ in Lincolnshire, see Coates, "Reflections," under *Panton* and *Ponton*.

[7] *PN Ch* 5.2.364. I cannot tell what is meant on the map at *PN Ch* 5.2.356 by a symbol in Wirral indicating an "English place-name with a Welsh alternative."

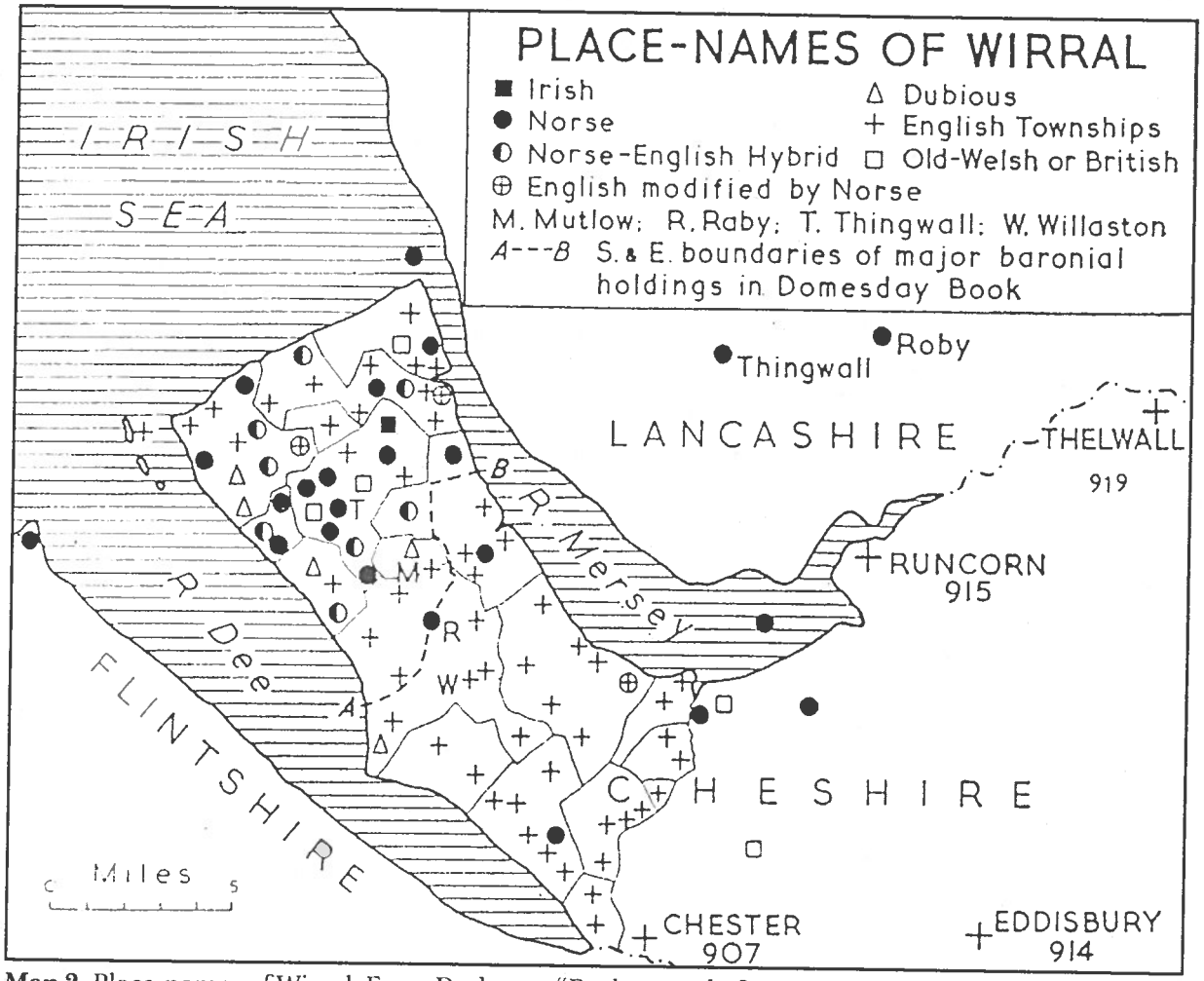
[8] Breeze, "Welsh Tradition"; see Haycock, p. 181 in this volume, and Bollard, p. 206n60.

[9] Broderick, *Placenames of the Isle of Man*, 3.138, 7.132–33. Names with *cronkyn* are alluded to by the indexes to Broderick's books, embedded in discussion of the many *cronk* names.

[10] Other candidates are identified in Campbell, *Battle of Brunanburh*, pp. 57–80, for instance, but, following Dodgson, "Background of Brunanburh," opinion has hardened in favor of Bromborough, for a range of reasons; see Higham, "Context of *Brunanburh*" (against Wood, "Brunanburh Re-

Wirral Place-Names Testifying to a Scandinavian Presence

The particular interest in Wirral, and the main point of this chapter, resides in a layer of post-English names. Several are clearly Scandinavian in their entirety.[11] These names include *Meols* in West Kirby [sandhills], *Raby* in Neston [boundary farmstead, on whose significance see below], two instances of *Kir(k)by* [church farmstead or churchtown], the lost *Hesby* in Bidston [ash farmstead], *Tranmere* in Bebington [crane sandhills], the lost *Routheholm* [red marsh-island] in Wallasey,[12] *Lingdale* [heather valley] in Oxton, Woodchurch; and probably the following containing a Scandinavian personal name: *Arno* [Arni's burial-mound] in Oxton; and finally *Irby*, about which, again, more will be said later. These are sufficient to guarantee that Scandinavian was a language of everyday activity, including name-bestowal, at some stage in the history of Wirral. A preliminary analysis of these names by Dodgson is represented on Map 2, and an updated one on Map 3, but what it represents will not survive unscathed.

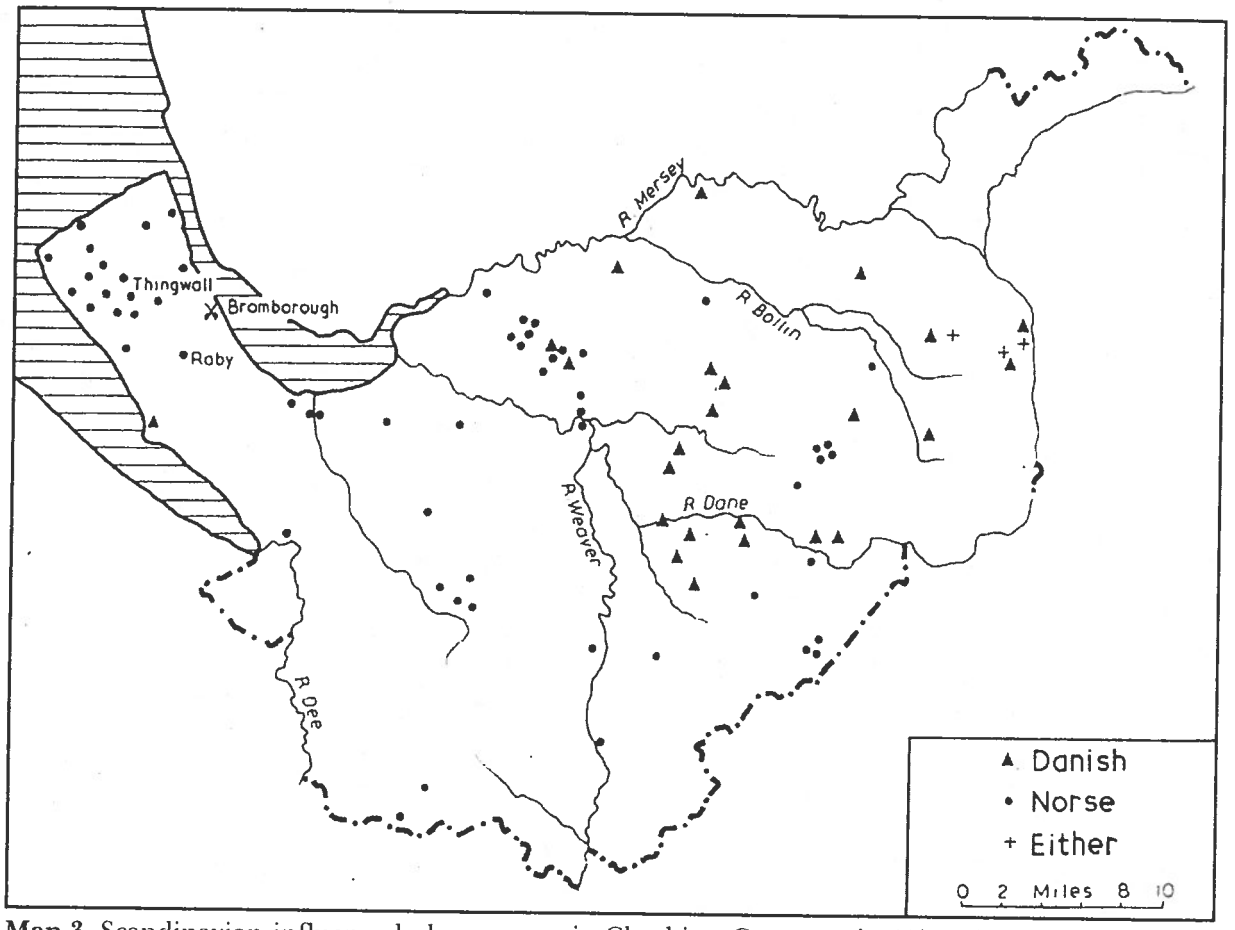


Map 2. Place-names of Wirral. From Dodgson, "Background of Brunanburh"; reprinted courtesy the Viking Society for Northern Research.

visited"); Cavill, Harding, and Jesch, *Wirral and Its Viking Heritage*; and Coates, "Further Snippet."

[11] See Dodgson, *PN Ch*, *s.nn.*, and the Scandinavian background is thoroughly rehearsed by Fellows-Jensen, "Scandinavians in Cheshire," and Jesch, "Scandinavian Wirral."

[12] Gelling, "Scandinavian Settlement," p. 192.



Map 3. Scandinavian-influenced place-names in Cheshire. Courtesy the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire.

There are also some names on which, as a type, the history of scholarship has had a distorting effect. These are names which may be of English origin, but which are claimed to have undergone Scandinavianization; the tendency has been for such names to have been presumed to be originally English even where the evidence is at best ambiguous. For instance, this has been claimed for *Gayton* in Heswall [goat farm], on the presumption that the second element is OE *tūn* [farm] and the first Scandinavian *geit* [goat], presumably replacing OE *gāt*. This needs some commentary. There was of course an Old English word *tūn* meaning "farm," and it is the commonest of all English place-name elements. But there was an ON word *tún* of the same phonological form and with a compatible range of meanings. (I shall write *tun* without a diacritic where it is desirable not to prejudice the reader into viewing the word in question as either Old English or Scandinavian.) It has generally been argued, for instance by A. Hugh Smith, that names with a Scandinavian first element and *tun* as the second are "hybrids," on two sorts of grounds:[13]

1. that the documentary record for some of these names shows the replacement of Scandinavian *bý* by *tun* long after Scandinavian had ceased to be spoken in the relevant

[13] *English Place-Name Elements* 2.192–93. The concept "hybrid" is problematic, even incoherent, but this is not the place for a critique. See Cox, "Questioning."

area. It is therefore argued that the active replacing element must be the Old or Middle English word, not the Scandinavian one. Furthermore, *tún* is exceptionally rare as a place-name element in the East-Scandinavian speaking regions of Denmark and South Sweden (Scania) from which Scandinavian settlers in the Danelaw are generally assumed to have come, and some simplex names of the form *Tune* may be new coinings in the wake of administrative reorganization at the end of the first millennium.[14]

2. that, more crucially for our purposes here, Scandinavianization of specifiers is also found. Given that the number of *tun* names in the island of Britain with Scandinavian first elements is small, it has been argued that one should assume that these Scandinavian elements replace corresponding native English ones — this would mean for example that the place called *Stainton* [stone farm] in the West Riding of Yorkshire originated in a form which would give Modern English *Stanton* if it had not passed through the mouths of Scandinavian-speakers in around the ninth century.

To recap: it is therefore claimed that apparently hybrid names in *tun* fall into two types; those where a Scandinavian generic element is replaced by an English one, and those where an English name receives a Scandinavianized specifier. The standard view as I have just presented it does not amount to a watertight position, but it is not a priori unreasonable, and we can allow it for the sake of argument insofar as it applies to the Danelaw. It is bolstered by the existence of so-called *Toton*-"hybrids" (formerly misleadingly known as *Grimston*-"hybrids"), which have a Scandinavian personal name as their first element and what is believed to be OE *tūn* as their second. However, the problem looks different from the perspective of early Cheshire. Cheshire was not part of the Danelaw, and we need to know what sort of Scandinavians could have been responsible for namegiving in Wirral.

The township of Storeton in Bebington has a name transparently including Scandinavian *stór*- [big, no English alternative comes to mind] and the word *tun*, so we need quite powerful arguments to stop us believing that it is not a purely Scandinavian name meaning "big farm."[15] We have seen that such a name is unlikely to be Danish, and the likelihood diminishes still further in the light of evidence to be presented below. But if it were Norwegian rather than Danish, we would not need to believe in an English reformation of some older name like **Storebý*. West-Scandinavian place-names in *tún* do in fact exist, for instance the saga-period *Túnir* and *Túnsberg* in Norway and *Túngarðr* in Iceland.[16] On the modern map, there are names with *tun* as a second element in both Norway and Iceland; note *Fortun* in the fylke or county of Sogn og Fjordane in Norway and *Ártún* high in Geitadal in eastern Iceland.[17] *Sigtúnir*

[14] Fellows-Jensen, "To Divide the Danes," p. 45, citing T. Andersson, "*Tuna*-problem," and Hyenstrand, *Centralbygd – Randbygd*, p. 103. There are special problems concerning the dating and significance of Swedish names with the special additionally-suffixed form *-tuna*; see also Holmberg, *De Svenska* Tuna-*namnen*.

[15] Smith, despite his enthusiasm for hybrids, in effect acknowledges the latter fact (*English Place-Name Elements* 2.193).

[16] Notably with *tún* always as specifier; for early names in Norway, see Rygh, *Norske*, p. 82.

[17] Rygh (*Norske*, pp. 81–82) claims that *tun* as a second element is confusable with *tó* "Græsplet." Lárusson, "Ísland," pp. 66–68) claims that all the tiny places named with such names in Iceland are post-Viking.

in Sweden was outside Scania. It is generally conceded that *tún* is not found as an element in the Scandinavian toponymy of the Western and Northern Isles. W. F. H. Nicolaisen notes that the several Orkney names in modern *-ton* (for instance *Herston*, South Ronaldsay) are derived from Scand. *stǫðum*, the dative plural form of *stað-* [place, dwelling].[18] Scottish mainland and island names such as *Plockton* (Wester Ross), *Milton* (Applecross, Wester Ross), *Kirkton* (Lochalsh, Wester Ross) and *Middleton* (Tiree) are probably Scots.[19]

But evidence that would be most impressive, if it were credible, has been offered that we find some such names in the Isle of Man. The old name for Peel was *Hólmtún*, according to J. J. Kneen, a clearly Scandinavian creation involving the word *holmr/holmi* [island], referring to St. Patrick's Isle, and *tún*.[20] Kneen appears to say that there is an ancient record of the name in this form; I have not however discovered it, and it is not mentioned by Broderick.[21] Kneen also cites a form from a bull of Pope Gregory IX dating from 1231, *Holme Towen* (correctly "le Holme towne"), though the form as cited appears to be later. If these could be taken at face value, they represent the clearest possible evidence for *tún* being in everyday use in an environment where one of the languages is known to have been Scandinavian — that is, long before English was a significant force in local namegiving. However, the oldest attestation of the name offered by Broderick is of 1417, after the arrival of English interest in Man in 1405.[22] If this new face value does not deceive, the older name of Peel is Middle English rather than Scandinavian. This name is an important element in assessing whether *tun* names in Wirral are (a) translated from or amended from English, or (b) Scandinavian, taking into account further historical evidence that I shall discuss a little later.

Other names in *tún* were identified in Man by Kneen: *Glayton* in Kirk Christ Rushen[23] and *Brystone* in Kirk Christ Lezayre, but Broderick rejects the identification.[24] C. J. S. Marstrander suggested that *Milntown* in Kirk Christ Lezayre was for Scand. *mylnu-tún*, but Broderick believes that it is English, with parallels in English toponymy in Ireland.[25] Marstrander rejected the detail of Kneen's etymologies but accepted that Glayton and Brystone were probably names in *tún*.[26] Broderick's general notes, however, suggest that he believes *tún* is

[18] Nicolaisen, *Scottish Place-Names*, p. 116.

[19] No attention is drawn to any names in *tun* in the Western Isles by Cox in his work on "hybridity" ("Questioning" and "*Allt Loch Dhaile Beaga*").

[20] Kneen, *Place-Names of the Isle of Man*, p. 404. Kneen's form is suspicious, and it is surely his etymology for the later name rather than a documented form; the entry for Peel is garbled. Hólmtún is not mentioned in Moore, "Bull of Pope Gregory IX."

[21] Broderick, *Placenames of the Isle of Man* 1.298 and 7.147.

[22] Broderick, *Placenames of the Isle of Man* 1.298.

[23] Kneen, *Place-Names of the Isle of Man*, p. 37; this appears certain, though the first element is doubtful — Broderick's ongoing work does not yet cover this parish.

[24] Kneen, *Place-Names of the Isle of Man*, p. 508; Broderick, *Placenames of the Isle of Man*, 3.378 rejects this in favor of a bungling of English *Dry Stone*, the earliest form in the record being exactly that. See also Broderick, *Dictionary*, p. 182.

[25] Marstrander, "Det Norske Landnåm på Man," p. 254; Broderick, *Placenames of the Isle of Man*, 3.435–36.

[26] Marstrander, "Det Norske Landnåm på Man," pp. 117–18, 245.

absent from Manx toponymy, and therefore, for caution's sake, we shall not build on the apparent evidence just discussed.[27]

If the presumption in the Danelaw is that names in *tun* with Scandinavian first elements are or may be English renamings of Scandinavian-named places, then I submit that, irrespective of the evidence from Man, the opposite presumption should at least be entertained in Wirral: that such names are Scandinavian inventions. This allows Storeton, where we started this part of the discussion, and Claughton, Larton and Gayton, with indisputably Scandinavian first elements, to be Scandinavian names, and pushes the possibility that Barnston in Woodchurch was farmed not by an English Beornwulf but by a Scandinavian Bjǫrnulf;[28] likewise that Thurstaston was named for a Scandinavian Þorsteinn, not an Englishman bearing a fashionable Scandinavian name.[29] These two names are therefore not necessarily *Toton*-hybrids (see above). It is possible to tilt the balance too far in the opposite direction, though; we must acknowledge that Bebington, Moreton, and Upton are clearly English names in the middle of all this Scandinavian debris, and may have been there when Scandinavian arrived. Some cases will remain in principle undecidable, for example Neston, Oxton, and Thornton, for which phonologically indistinguishable English and Scandinavian etymologies could be provided.

The fact that English names could indeed by influenced by Scandinavian speech is illustrated by *Birkenhead*, for which an obsolete variant *Birket* existed. Birkenhead is Old English [birch head(land)], but the /k/ betrays Scandinavian influence; Birket shows this also, and additionally has a generic descending from Scand. **havuð*, later *hǫfuð* [head], rather than English *hēafod*, if the earliest attestation is taken at face value (*PN Ch* 4.313–14). The modern form of *Tranmere* shows obscuration of its Scandinavian etymology in *mel-* [dune] or **mal(u)-* [pebbly beach] in favor of a (late) suggestion of OE *mere* [pond]. Some names also show Scand. *bý-* [farm] replacing the English element *byrig* [(at the) fort] during the historic, post-1066, record; these are *Greasby* in West Kirby, earlier OE *Græfesbyrig*, *Whitby* divided between Eastham and Stoke parishes, earlier apparently OE *Hwitbyrig*, and perhaps in parallel fashion *Irby* in Woodchurch, but I am less confident about that, and generally a little skeptical about the apparent existence of so many (evidently minor) fortified sites in a small area; the one undoubted fortification-name, *Bromborough*, shows no sign of such Scandinavianization. All this suggests on balance that the partial replacement or transformation of English names did indeed take place, and warns us of the risk of overemphasizing Scandinavian name-creation in the region.

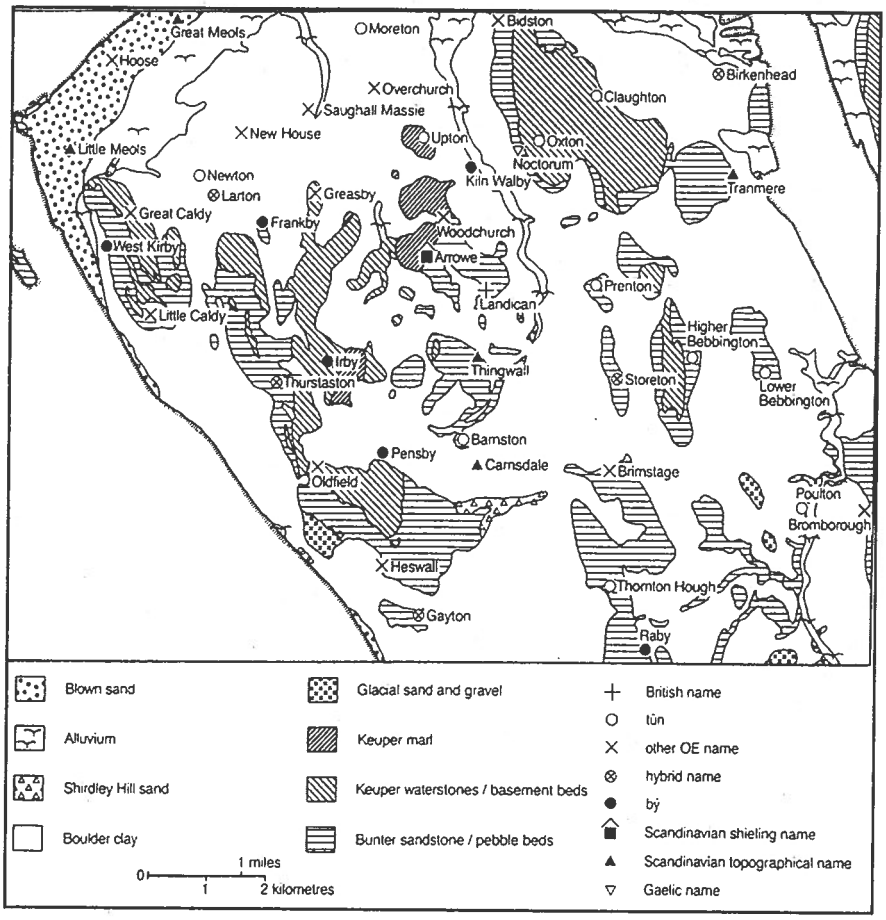
Perhaps the scenario which most adequately accommodates all the facts presented above is as follows. *Tún* was probably not a place-name element in the earliest West Scandinavian. But it was a lexical word with the meaning "farmyard." When the Scandinavians arrived, they found such pre-existing English place-names as *Poulton* (x2), *Leighton*, and *Hooton*, which would have been semi-transparent to them. They either copied OE *tūn* as a place-name forming element, or copied it as a lexical word and applied it themselves on the Old English model in their own place-names such as *Claughton*, *Larton*, *Storeton*, and *Gayton*. This obviates the need to believe in either re-anglicization of such hypothetical names as **Storebý* or

[27] *Santon* is undoubtedly for the saint's name *San(c)tan* (Kneen, *Place-Names of the Isle of Man*, p. 133).

[28] On this personal name, compare Fellows-Jensen, *Scandinavian Personal Names*, pp. 55–56.

[29] Although this particular place-name admittedly shows traces of anglicization in some attestations; see *PN Ch* 4.279–80.

English copying of Scandinavian lexical words that do not show up in modern dialect vocabulary. The key names can be regarded as showing English substrate (or adstrate) influence on Scandinavian; recall that this area was administratively Scandinavian and their language was the probable lingua franca.[30] There is no reason to believe that influence between English and Scandinavian was unidirectional, nor that it was the same over the whole country.



Map 4. Geology of the Wirral. From Fellows-Jensen, *Scandinavian Settlements*, map 22; reprinted courtesy C. A. Reitzels forlag.

There are events in the historical record which allow us to be more confident than we might otherwise be that significant Norwegian input into place-naming in Wirral occurred, and we can be much more precise about the date at which such names are likely to have been formed. There is an Irish source preserved in a late copy in the royal library in Brussels, entitled *Three Fragments of Irish Annals*.[31] The third fragment informs us that a party of Scandinavians under the effective leadership of Ingimund arrived in Wirral in 902. They came in the aftermath of the death of King Alfred three years previously, perhaps expecting

[30] This suggestion is at variance with the proposal in the ancestor of this chapter, as originally delivered at a conference in 1998, that *tun* in these names was indeed the Scandinavian word ("Sociolinguistics of North-western Wirral"). I have concluded that the evidence for onomastic *tún* in Norse is harder to sustain than I first thought.

[31] Wainwright, "Ingimund's Invasion"; first published in 1860 by O'Donovan.

easy pickings, and were granted permission to settle. After a few years, they became discontented with the land that they had been granted, which can be presumed to have been less productive than other land in Wirral. Map 4 shows the probably Scandinavian names *Larton* and *Pensby* on the inhospitable Boulder Clay, and by the edge of it are *Raby* and *Tranmere*. *Irby* is also on the claylands. But there is no clear relation between the language in which some name was formed and the geology of its location. Some English names are on the bad lands too: *Moreton* (as its name suggests), and *Poulton* (by Bromborough); but the dates of their coining are unknown. Perhaps the currently apparent situation reflects some redistribution amounting to a practical consequence of Ingimund's agitation. Margaret Gelling speculates that the original land-grant was nearer to Chester and that the present situation indeed shows the effect of Scandinavian movement into an "English" area.[32]

Armed with their grievance, the settlers attacked the English in their administrative center of Chester. But some of them were eventually bottled up in the old city by the forces of Æthelflæd, Alfred's daughter, and then slaughtered. Their fellows, if we are to believe the Irish account, tried to mine their way into the city, but were deterred by having boiling ale poured on them, followed by a cascade of hives full of disgruntled bees. They fled, at least temporarily. The *Fragment* breaks off here, and we do not know what happened after that from any historical source.

The *Fragment*, most interestingly, gives us details of the ethnic composition of the party that I have been referring to as Scandinavian. This party had been thrown out of Ireland in 901 ("alias 902") according to the *Annals of Ulster* and had fought battles in North Wales in 902 under "Igmunt" according to the *Annales Cambriae* and the *Brut y Tywysogion*.[33] We know that it contained Norsemen and Danes, since Ingimund, the most malcontent of Æthelflæd's grantees, persuaded "the leaders of the Norsemen and Danes" to embark on the painful adventure that I have just described. This distinction was crucial, and fatal. We are told that the party also contained many Irishmen, described in a marginal note as *dalta* [fosterlings]. Æthelflæd appealed to their Christian sensibilities against the pagan Northmen. In a classic, if crude, divide-and-rule maneuver, she persuaded them to lure the Danes in the mixed party into a trap where they were killed. If there was a strategically subtle reason for this about-turn by the Irish, we are not told; the *Fragment* just says that they were "less friends to [the Danes] than to the Northmen."[34]

We can infer from this that the settlers were ethnic Danes, Norsemen and Irish, and that they had at first enjoyed more or less equal status with each other as small farmers. Dodgson assembled evidence that the area they collectively controlled from 902 amounted to a separate fiefdom (*PN Ch* 5.2.255–57); place-names surviving to today reveal that it had a *Thingwall* or parliament-field (**Þing-wall(u)-*), and a *Raby*, or farm at a boundary (*rá*).[35]

The feudal arrangements of the Norman period confirm that north-west Wirral had a separate status, and that Raby was indeed at the boundary of this fiefdom. The boundary is shown by the bold solid line on Map 5. It does not follow that the whole of this area was devoid

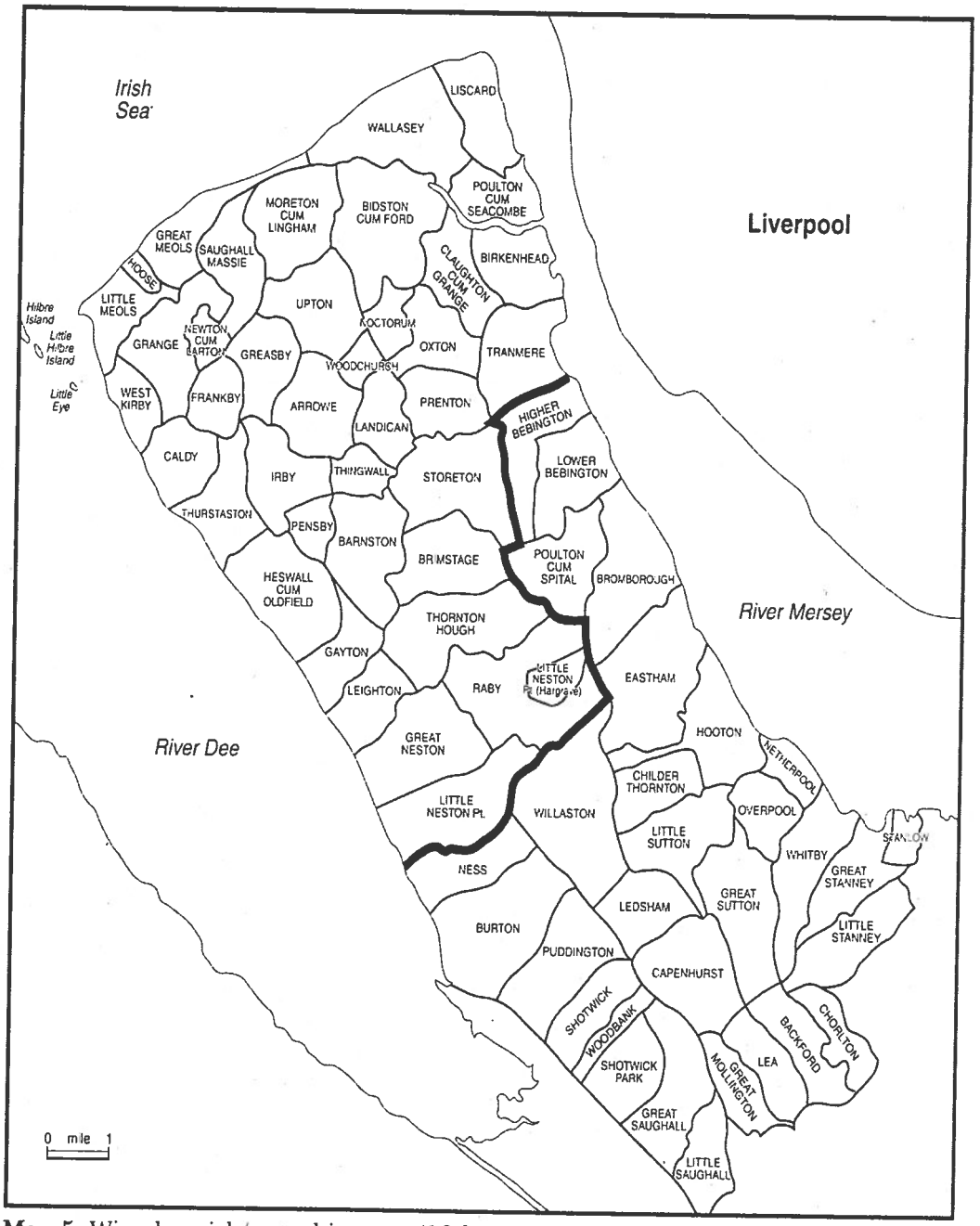
[32] Gelling, *West Midlands*, p. 134.

[33] See Phillimore, "Annales Cambriae," p. 167; Breeze, "Welsh Tradition."

[34] Citation for *Fragment*.

[35] These names are paralleled, the latter as *Roby*, in south-west Lancashire, as has long been noted (see Wainwright, "Scandinavians in Lancashire").

of English farmers, but the Northerners appear to have held sway, at least for a time.[36] For this fiefdom to have become established suggests that the unpleasant business under the walls of Chester was a temporary setback, and that they were neither absolutely defeated, nor dispersed into a condition where they were indistinguishable from the English. In the longer run, it is believed that merger of the English and Norse communities did indeed take place, a view required by the fact that the English language survived as the dominant one, and accepted a largish Scandinavian lexical tribute into the dialect of Cheshire (recorded especially, though not annotated as such, by Robert Holland's *Glossary of Words*).



Map 5. Wirral parish/township map (19th century). Courtesy of Chester & Cheshire Archives & Local Studies.

[36] Compare Gelling, *West Midlands*, pp. 132–34, and "Scandinavian Settlement."

If a (partly-)Norse fiefdom existed, as the record appears to make certain, we should have even fewer qualms about interpreting the names in the region, or at least some of them, as Norse. There is no pressing reason to believe that Storeton and Claughton have been anglicized by having an English element *tūn* inserted into them, as we have seen.

The concept of a Norse place which can be identified on linguistic grounds receives some support from considering some of the other place-names of the area. One place was recognized as a Danish place: *Denhall*, either OE *Dena-wælle/a* [Danes' spring] or Scand. **Dana-wall(u)*- [Danes' grassy field/paddock] (*PN Ch* 4.220). The lack of others reminds us what happened to the Danes at the hands of the Irish. Dodgson speculates that *Lach Dennis* by Chester was that Lach which was held by a person called, or by the people called, in Old English *denisc* and in (Anglo-)Norman French *daneis* [Danish] (*PN Ch* 2.286).

Wirral Place-Names Testifying to an Irish Presence

Other places we can identify as Irish places. It has long been believed that *Noctorum* in Woodchurch is a fully Irish name, late Old Irish *cnocc tírim* or *tirim* [dry hillock].[37] This in itself tends strongly to confirm the general veracity of the *Three fragments* account discussed earlier. An Irish name here is no surprise. But a mere one would be disappointing. I believe others can be identified. I mentioned above that *Liscard* has been thought to be a Welsh survival, meaning "hall of the rock," as if Modern Welsh *llys y garreg*, though the form of the second word, the article, is not so much Welsh as Cumbric */in/, as witnessed by such spellings as the thirteenth-century *Lisenecark*; Welsh lost the form with /n/ early on and it survives only in such fossilized expressions as *yn awr* [now (lit. "the hour")]. However, there are three phonological problems with this solution, and I have proposed that the meaning suggested by Dodgson, "hall of the rock," is correct, but that the name is Irish, as if *lios na carraige* (to use the modern spelling).[38] This solution solves three phonological difficulties at a stroke (the form of the article, the /k/ rather than /g/ at the beginning of the final element, and the elision of the vowel of a final syllable stressed in Old Welsh), as well as the problem of accommodating a Cumbric name so far south, and it ties the name into a known cultural context.

Other place-name evidence suggests the Irish contingent in a slightly more shadowy way. There is a Scandinavian parish-name *Irby*, on the face of it meaning "Irishman's/-men's farm." The face of it may be candid; but sometimes the word *Íri* was applied either as a descriptive term or as a by-name to a Norseman who had settled and traded at Dublin or one of the other east-coast Norse colonies in Ireland.[39] There is a place-name *Arrowe*, a township of Woodchurch, which could be a Brittonic river-name of a known type, but is much more likely to be a Scandinavian word meaning "shieling, summer pasture"; if so, it testifies to the practice of seasonally-shifting stock-raising here. More specifically, it may derive from *érgi*, which is Scandinavian for "halfway house shieling," but this is copied from Old or Middle Irish *áirge*.[40] Fellows-Jensen has argued that the word is always Scandinavian in early place-names in Britain outside the Scottish islands, and is inclined to dismiss the

[37] Dodgson, "Old-Irish Placename."

[38] Coates, "Liscard and Irish Names," contra Dodgson, *PN Ch*, 4.324.

[39] Compare Fellows-Jensen, *Scandinavian Settlements*, p. 16.

[40] Compare Fellows-Jensen, "Gaelic-Scandinavian Loanword," pp. 24–25, comparing the form and meaning of the Manx *eary* and the meaning of the Norwegian *heimseter*.

idea that the Wirral place-name is Irish.[41] Finally, we can revisit the two lost names *Kneckyn* and *Knuckyn*. Whilst Dodgson claims them for Welsh *cnycyn* [hillock], they may well be for Irish **cnoicín* in the same sense, not a recorded form, but entirely regularly formed with the diminutive suffix *-ín*; that would fit with the known context in which other minor names arose in Wirral. Let us note that the secure Irish names are all topographical and refer to elevated land (rather than, say, its occupational status — there are no analogues of *Dundonald* or *Ballygowan*). The *carraig* [rock] in the name of Liscard doubtless refers to the hill which was a prominent landmark overlooking the Mersey estuary before urbanization, or to one of the more local possibilities mentioned by Dodgson (*PN Ch* 4.325–26). *Noctorum* contains the word *cnocc* [hillock], and the two lost names may contain a diminutive of this. *Áirge* in its original application would by its nature denote upland. Collectively, these seem to suggest a local Irish onomastic pattern, distinct from English or Scandinavian in being exclusively topographical.

We can take it as certain, then, that West Scandinavian and Irish were in use as languages of name-bestowal in tenth-century West Wirral.

SOCIOLINGUISTIC CONSIDERATIONS

Let us conclude with some sociolinguistic considerations, especially on relations between Norse and Irish, and with some rather bitty reflections on particular details, namely a point of Scandinavian dialect phonology and a Manx connection. Let us consider each language of the tenth-century situation in turn.

English

English can be assumed to be the general background noise in the region, eventually becoming dominant because of the centralization of political power in southern England and through the failure of Danish to achieve sociopolitical pre-eminence during the Scandinavian kingships of the eleventh century. Scandinavian-speaking communities shift at unknown dates to English, which itself absorbs substantial amounts of vocabulary into both standard and non-standard lects, along with some grammatical words and inflectional morphology. There is a consequential impact on English phonotactics. All this is very well known, and does not require extensive discussion.[42]

On the face of it this is a classic shift from a language of narrower to a language of wider currency. It is often claimed that the close similarity of the two languages facilitated adstrate influences; this would entail a fluid common core vocabulary, with the perceived divergences being interpretable as ethnic markers, these being lost in due course wherever they were perceived as non-English equivalents, i.e., as marked cipherings of English expressions.[43] In that sense, the process of de-Scandinavianization would be as closely akin to standardization as to language shift. Scandinavian would have lacked any conscious maintenance as an ethnic variety. It appears, however, that English may locally have been non-dominant in the tenth century, and the shift to English will have followed a period when the perceived status of the

[41] Fellows-Jensen, "Gaelic-Scandinavian Loanword," p. 22, and "Common Gaelic *áirge*," p. 70.

[42] See, for instance, Baugh and Cable, *History of the English Language*, pp. 93–105; Crystal, *Stories of English*, pp. 65–77, 82–85.

[43] As argued in Coates, "Survival."

two languages was reversed and when Scandinavian was actually dominant, with English serving as the language of ethnic marking.

Irish

The situation of Irish in Wirral is very interesting to speculate upon. The political and social basis of Ingimund's invasion in 902 appears to require that the Irish in the party also spoke Scandinavian, since they had thrown in their lot with the Norse (and more doubtfully the Danes) as fosterlings. Everyone in the party appears to have had a modest aspiration: to farm in comfort. It is hard to imagine that these warriors with cows and ploughs employed a class of professional interpreters. Scandinavian was the language of the numerical majority, and for the Irish it must have been a second language learned as a community necessity. It must, after all, have been the language of the assembly known as the Thing, and of the fiefdom identified by Dodgson. The scattered Irish personal names found in place-names throughout central and eastern Cheshire (that is, not in Wirral) can perhaps be taken to be evidence for persons speaking Scandinavian rather than Irish, and embedded in Scandinavian-speaking networks. No Irish words have been identified in the dialect of Cheshire and few indeed have been suggested among the general Scandinavian words copied in the English of the north.[44]

But the place-name evidence precludes the simple assumption that the invasion was, in effect, linguistically Scandinavian. The use of Irish must have been an indicator of ethnicity, and possibly also of Christianity, the Scandinavians still being pagan as noted earlier; the English were able to trade on this to achieve the Irish betrayal of the Danes at the walls of Chester. Irish was used in place-name bestowal for the settlements at Noctorum and Liscard, but for none at parish level. It appears to have supplied words for small hills which may have been treated as names.[45] What is significant in assessing the relationship between Irish and Scandinavian is that these names stuck — that is, they outlasted both of the invasion languages. This appears to suggest that although the names represent the internal view of the settlements — the view of the inhabitants — they were used by Scandinavian speakers, as well as ultimately by English-speakers, as the proper names of the relevant places. It may be that *Irby* [Irishman's farm] also had an Irish name which was superseded by the present name which appears to indicate an external, Norse, view of the settlement. That the external perception was usually dominant is strikingly confirmed by the fact that Christian churches in Wirral dating from before the invasion — more likely to interest Christians, one might have thought — are referred to by a term of the language of the pagan invaders, **kirkju-bý-*, and not by an Irish word such as the ancestor of *domhnach* or *eaglais*. Bestowal of novel names in Irish evidently however had some legitimacy in the wider community, which does not suggest a classic modern relation of dominance and inferiority between the two languages. It was simply an ethnicity indicator. The extinction of Irish is likely to have had to do with lack of a distinct territorial base, small numbers of speakers, exogamy, loss of contact with Irish communities as opposed to Irish Sea trading communities, and perhaps restriction to domestic business, without the presumption that this latter condition marked

[44] Though Andrew Breeze has a series of recent notes identifying over 20, mainly in Scots; we should notice one in nearby Lancashire: Old/Middle English *beltancu* ("Irish *Beltaine*").

[45] But note the definite article in *The Kneckyn* in Caldy (1454) may suggest that the word was copied into English and applied as an English term.

it as inferior and therefore ripe for abandonment — in short, a selection including some of the classic weaknesses suggested by Ronald Wardhaugh.[46]

Irish has left no local traces in the dialect, suggesting that English speakers never heard it, or could not understand it if they did.

Scandinavian

Using place-name evidence in order to make judgements about the language in which places were named, English or Scandinavian, is fraught with problems. An apparently Scandinavian name is not irrefutable evidence for Scandinavian settlement and language. An instructive name in this respect is the field called *Routlothefeld* in Farndon, 15 km south of Chester. It appears to be from Scand. *rauð-* [red] and *laut* [hollow, dingle]; but if that is its real source, then we must assume that these words had passed into the general vocabulary of Cheshire folk speaking English and been compounded for use in this name, because the area around Farndon offers no other evidence, linguistic or historical, for occupation by Scandinavians.

It is also clear from Dodgson's analysis that elements of Scandinavian origin appearing in place-names are not restricted to the most obvious deeply Scandinavianized areas of the county: *carr*, *bosk*, and *intack* are widespread in the North Country; *flat* is actually rare in Wirral despite the appropriateness of some of the topography for its usage; and *scale* [temporary hut] is absent (*PN Ch* 5.2.230–47).

Some eighty-two Scandinavian place-name elements are identified by Dodgson in the place-name forming vocabulary of Cheshire, many not specifically topographical terms, for instance *kringla* [circle], *skamm-* [short], and *útar-* [outer, further] (*PN Ch* 5.1.255, 339, 376, respectively). Some of these recur and appear restricted to Wirral and adjacent areas, for instance *bý-* [farmstead], *deil-* [share], *rein* [boundary strip],[47] and *brekka* [slope], as well as the problematic *klint* [steep bank, rock outcrop] (*PN Ch* 5.1.124, 157, 318, 113, 254, respectively). Coupled with the historical evidence we have seen, these are indisputable evidence for the nature of the language used locally in Wirral. The general dialect vocabulary collected by Holland is less certain in this regard. His evidence is hard to tie down to specific areas, and in many cases Cheshire words of Scandinavian origin appear in not especially Scandinavian areas of the county. By the time Holland made his collection, there was a general northern vocabulary with a Scandinavian stamp on it, for instance *pace-egg* [Easter egg], *muck* [filth], and *stang* [pole]. These may be local, but may equally have spread from other Scandinavianized districts. This applies even to topographical vocabulary: we find *carrs* near Cheadle and *gate* [road into a moss] on the north side of Lindow Moss.[48] Some of Holland's words are however specific to Wirral and adjacent districts, and can be presumed to have been first applied there, for instance *reean* [furrow between two butts in a field], which continues the place-name element *rein* noted by Dodgson (*PN Ch* 5.1.318).

Even the field-name in Liscard, *Golacre*, recorded as early as 1398 as *le Goliacr'*, cannot be assumed to have been bestowed by Scandinavians, although it consists of Norse words meaning "merry" and "field" (*PN Ch* 4.328); the former is known to have been copied into Middle English (see *golik*, in *OED*), and the latter is indistinguishable from the Middle English reflex of the corresponding Old English word. There is, however, sparse but clear

[46] Wardhaugh, *Languages in Competition*, p. 3.

[47] But on its significance see also Gelling, "Scandinavian Settlement," pp. 188–89.

[48] Holland, *Glossary of Words*, pp. 57, 139.

evidence of local Scandinavian impact on English; *Middlefield* in Caldy, West Kirby, shows signs of being influenced by the Scandinavian word *meðal* in the same sense; *Afnames* [detached portions of land, intakes] in Childer Thornton shows Scandinavian phonology; sandbanks appear to have been known by the Scandinavian term *mel-*; *bý-* is found only in Wirral and adjacent hundreds along the Mersey.[49]

These things suggest what history confirms: that Scandinavian was temporarily a locally dominant language, given what is known about directions of linguistic influence and political-cultural prestige, and this is what licenses my conclusion about the lexical copying involved in such names as *Storeton*. But our final word about Scandinavian involves a consideration of a dialect feature distinguishing Danish and Norse, evidence for which here is paradoxical. We have seen that Scandinavian in Wirral is likely to have been predominantly Norse, though we know that there were Danes in the invading party, some of whom were massacred at Chester, but who were commemorated in toponymy at *Denhall* (see above). West and East Scandinavian are distinguished by the complete assimilation of a nasal consonant to a following voiceless plosive (as in *drekka* [to drink]) in the western, or Norse, dialect. This took place in between the seventh and ninth centuries.[50] It is exemplified, by its presence or absence, in two key words of local toponymy:

"bank"	*brekka*	*brink* (giving English *brink*)
"steep bank, rock outcrop"	*klett-*	*klint*

All these forms except *klett-* are found in Wirral. What can this mean? Traces of *brekka* are found only in north-western areas of Cheshire (in Wirral hundred, for instance *Cambrick* in Liscard, Wallasey); and in northern parts of Bucklow and Eddisbury hundreds close to the Mersey,[51] suggesting possible spread from the focal area further west and therefore confirming the presence of Norse in a relatively self-contained area, if not confined to the original Norse fiefdom.[52] *Brink* is found early further east and south, and it then spreads to be found in relatively late names in Wirral presumably as a general English word, historically copied from Danish.[53]

Problematically, *klint* is found in field-names only in four Wirral parishes[54]; but in three such instances the name is *The Clints* (or a translation-equivalent), suggesting by the article and the inflection that this too is a late introduction into Wirral as an English word copied from Danish and spreading westward.[55] It is also seen in what is probably a fully-English name *Clinton (Hill)* in Over Alderley in the east of Cheshire (*PN Ch* 1.100). In favor of this

[49] Norse field-name types hereabouts are extensively discussed by Wainwright ("Field-names").

[50] Haugen, *Scandinavian Languages*, p. 155, citing Moberg, *Nordiska Nasalassimilationerna*; note that this isogloss is not an absolutely firm diagnostic of the West/East distinction.

[51] On the dubious exception of *Limeric* in Moston, Warmingham, see *PN Ch* 2.260.

[52] *PN Ch* 1.70; 2.44, 179, 260; and 3.251.

[53] It has been suggested that a cognate English word **brince* existed, and that it is this which occurs in place-names, in particular of course in non-scandinavianized areas, for instance *Brinkburn* (Northumberland; see also O. Anderson, *English Hundred-names*, p. 133; Arngart's Review of Dodgson, p. 576). Dodgson (*PN Ch* 5.1.115) appears to sit on the fence. Note that *bank* is also a copy of a Danish word, and it appears in the Wirral parish-name *Woodbank* as an English term.

[54] *PN Ch* 4.182, 196, 242, 243, and 334.

[55] For illustrated discussion of this word, see Harding, "Locations and Legends," pp. 116–18.

idea also is the fact that the four Wirral parishes alluded to are not all in the Norse fiefdom identified above.

An alternative to this account is that the Scandinavian of this area showed variability for the assimilation process, and that both variants were taken up into local usage. This is out of the question chronologically, if it is true that assimilation took place before the tenth century.[56] Dodgson nevertheless entertains this possibility, as does Fellows-Jensen;[57] if there was such variation, it must have arisen from the juxtaposition of differentiated West and East Scandinavian in the new context of Wirral. However, even if Dodgson's view were admissible chronologically, the history that we have been examining makes it improbable that in the specific context of Cheshire in the early tenth century a variant signaling Danish ethnicity should be preferred. From the early eleventh century, when Danish political ascendancy developed in England in general, preference for Danish forms is more credible. This therefore meshes with the account above to reinforce the idea that the unassimilated forms are in fact general English words, first copied from Eastern Scandinavian but spreading as English words.

In the light of this, we must examine the Wirral place-name *Frankby*. If this is a Scandinavian name, as appears necessarily to be the case, it is non-Norse, because it shows unassimilated <-*nk*->, unless — dubiously as we have seen — sociolinguistic conditions allowed for the stabilization of a clearly Danish phonological variant of a name. Fellows-Jensen observes that the personal name *Franki* is known to have been in use in its unassimilated form (runic *FRĄKA*) in the Isle of Man; it appears on Odd's Cross (Kirk Braddan), datable to the turn of the millennium.[58] This is impossible to square with Moberg's date for assimilation (700–somewhat after 800) unless we reckon with conservative usage among the inscribers of runic inscriptions — a timelag of a good hundred years.[59] Fellows-Jensen argues further that Frankby may have therefore gained its name from a Manx Viking. We can accept that Irish names (like *Noctorum*) could have been left formally unaltered by Scandinavian-speakers, but not a Scandinavian name with a feature serving as a strong ethnic indicator where speakers of a competing lect of the same language were numerically and politically dominant. It would have been expedient for Danes to downplay any cultural differences between themselves and the local Norse, perhaps even in speech by convergent phonological shifting; and in any case, as with Irby, the external perception, as well as numerical dominance, is likely to have dictated which form of the name had general validity. That perception would have been in favor of Norse, and *Frakka bý* → *Frackby* is expected, just as the word for "slope" locally gains *brekka* as its final stable form. All sociolinguistic considerations lead us to expect the name to have developed as **Frackby*. The fact that the place is called *Frankby* therefore remains a problem.

Dodgson cuts the knot by suggesting rather that *Frankby* testifies to the presence of an eleventh-century Frenchman (with a serf), *unus Francigena cum i serviente*, in Little Caldy manor, of which Frankby can be assumed to be have been a part, a possibility which Fellows-Jensen does not deny.[60] Dodgson's account avoids the difficulty with both the phonology and the sociolinguistics. It also requires a belief in *-by* as a living place-name element in the

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[56] Haugen, *Scandinavian Languages*, p. 155.

[57] *PN Ch* 4.287 and "Anthroponymical Specifics," respectively.

[58] Fellows-Jensen, "Anthroponymical Specifics," pp. 49–51.

[59] Moberg, *Nordiska Nasalassimilationerna*, pp. 183–205.

[60] *PN Ch* 4.288; Fellows-Jensen, *Scandinavian Settlements*, pp. 31, 372.

1080s (not necessarily as a Norse word of course; it could have been copied into English). That is not a problem, because of the existence of *Kiln Walby* in Overchurch parish, which contains a place-name or surname *Gildewalle* and is therefore (possibly in the case of a place-name, certainly in the case of a surname) medieval (*PN Ch* 4.305). It was certainly a living element in northern Cumberland at this period.

TAILPIECE: A MANX CONNECTION?

The discussion about Frankby makes it desirable to consider together the alleged evidence for a Manx strain in the linguistic history of Wirral.

1. The probable presence of Old Irish *áirge* in *Arrowe* suggests that Scandinavian namers were aware of this element in use among Gaelic speakers, which requires contact to have been made in the Western Isles or Man. It does not follow that transhumance economy was itself practiced in Wirral; the word may have been applied in a bleached sense "area of poorer-quality land only of economic value as summer pasture" → "poorer-quality land." Arrowe is at the edge of an isolated patch of the Keuper Marl, and an area in the township was divided into pasture-lands at the time of the Tithe Award in 1846.[61]

2. It is probable that some *-tun* names are Scandinavian, in the qualified sense of including a copy of an English word, as argued above. If there are names in *-tún* in the Isle of Man, that would reinforce the claims of the Wirral *tun*s to be Scandinavian, because it would guarantee the use of the element among Irish Sea Vikings. As we have seen, some scepticism is desirable about Manx *tún*s and about apparent instances of the element in names of the Northern Isles and the west coast of Scotland.

3. The name of Frankby is subject to an interpretation which bypasses Scandinavian dialect phonology completely; this name is not necessarily evidence for Norse personal-naming at all.

The above three points have to do with Scandinavian. The fourth is about Irish:

4. If the lost names derived by me from Gaelic *cnoicín* are correctly analyzed, they are evidence for a dialect of Gaelic which uses *-ín* as a diminutive suffix. The evidence for this is, as we have seen, better in Irish than in Manx, though the *cronkyn*-names may testify to its use in Man.

On the basis of this, we should probably conclude that the evidence is too weak and ambiguous to support fully the view that the settlers in Wirral contained a component which had experienced the Isle of Man, though it cannot be ruled out that there was one.[62]

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[61] Wainwright, "Field-names."

[62] My thanks to the Centre for Manx Studies, Douglas, for its hospitality during the conference at which an early version of this paper was delivered in 1998; also to Andrew Hamer, Jennifer Kewley Draskau, and Rhisiart Hincks for comments on the paper as delivered.