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THE ROCHDALE BOROUGH SURVEY

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In 1981, a sites and monuments survey of Rochdale Borough was conducted by a team financed by the Manpower Services Commission and under the direction of GMAU. The primary purpose of the survey was to enhance the computer-based Sites and Monuments Record for Rochdale Borough, but the results of the survey are summarised below.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL BACKGROUND

The solid and drift geology of the area; the post-glacial environmental sequence.

The solid geology of the Rochdale area consists of two main series of strata: the Westphalian Series, previously known as the Lower Coal Measures, and the Millstone Grit Series. Both are sedimentary rocks, laid down during the Carboniferous period, between 350 and 270 million years ago. The Coal Measures were the result of an accumulation of dead vegetation in the swamps which once covered the area. Rapid subsidence soon covered the peat in sand and silt, and these layers subsequently compacted to form alternating seams of coal and sandstone.

The Millstone Grit Series was laid down in the great river deltas which once flowed from the continent of North America. The silt and river-borne debris of these rivers accumulated in the deltas until, covered by later deposits, they were compressed into rock. These later deposits consisted of corals, shells and fishbones that had sunk to the bottom of the warm shallow seas which covered the area from 270 to 135 million years ago. They were in turn compressed by overlying material, to become the sandstones and limestones of the Permian, Triassic and Jurassic periods.

The subsequent folding and raising of these strata led to the formation of the Pennines. The succeeding layers of sandstone and limestone were eroded away in the Rochdale area, but can be found to the north in the Ribblesdale/Craven area, to the west in the Manchester Plain, and to the south in the White Peak. The raising of the Pennines was also accompanied by faulting, so that the Rochdale area is traversed by a series of faults running NNW/SSE, parallel to the main chain of the Pennines. The Lower Coal Measures are exposed in the valleys, and the uneroded edges of the later strata are exposed in a succession of steps on the slopes and hilltops.

In the extreme south-east corner of the district lie the youngest rocks in the area, the Permian Bunter Sandstones and Manchester Marls. The most recent of the Millstone Grit Series in the area are the Haslingden Flags, which are exposed over the majority of Hailstorm Hill and Rooley Moor to the north-east, and in small isolated sections along the foot of the Pennine slopes. Above them are the Middle Grits and on the summit, outcropping particularly at Blackstone Edge, are the oldest surface rocks in the area, the Kinderscout Grits.

Except where they outcrop on the surface, as at Blackstone Edge or Knowl Hill, the solid rocks of the area are concealed below drift deposits. These deposits are the products of glacial erosion and deposition, the accumulation of river-borne debris, and the climatic and vegetational changes of the post-glacial period.

Around 400,000 years ago, a major decline in climatic conditions led to the formation of ice-sheets which spread from the mountain areas of Britain and Scandinavia and covered all but the most southerly portions of England. The ice-sheets advanced and retreated as climatic conditions successively deteriorated and improved. The final glaciation commenced around 60,000 years ago, and whilst it covered the lowland areas of Lancashire, the Pennine uplands remained uncovered. Around 9000 years ago, the meltwaters of the retreating ice-sheets carved out deep gorges in the underlying rock, many of which can still be seen in Rochdale today. The most impressive of these is probably the valley of the Cheesden Brook, running from Deeply Vale to Ashworth Valley.

The ice-sheets left a thick layer of finely-ground

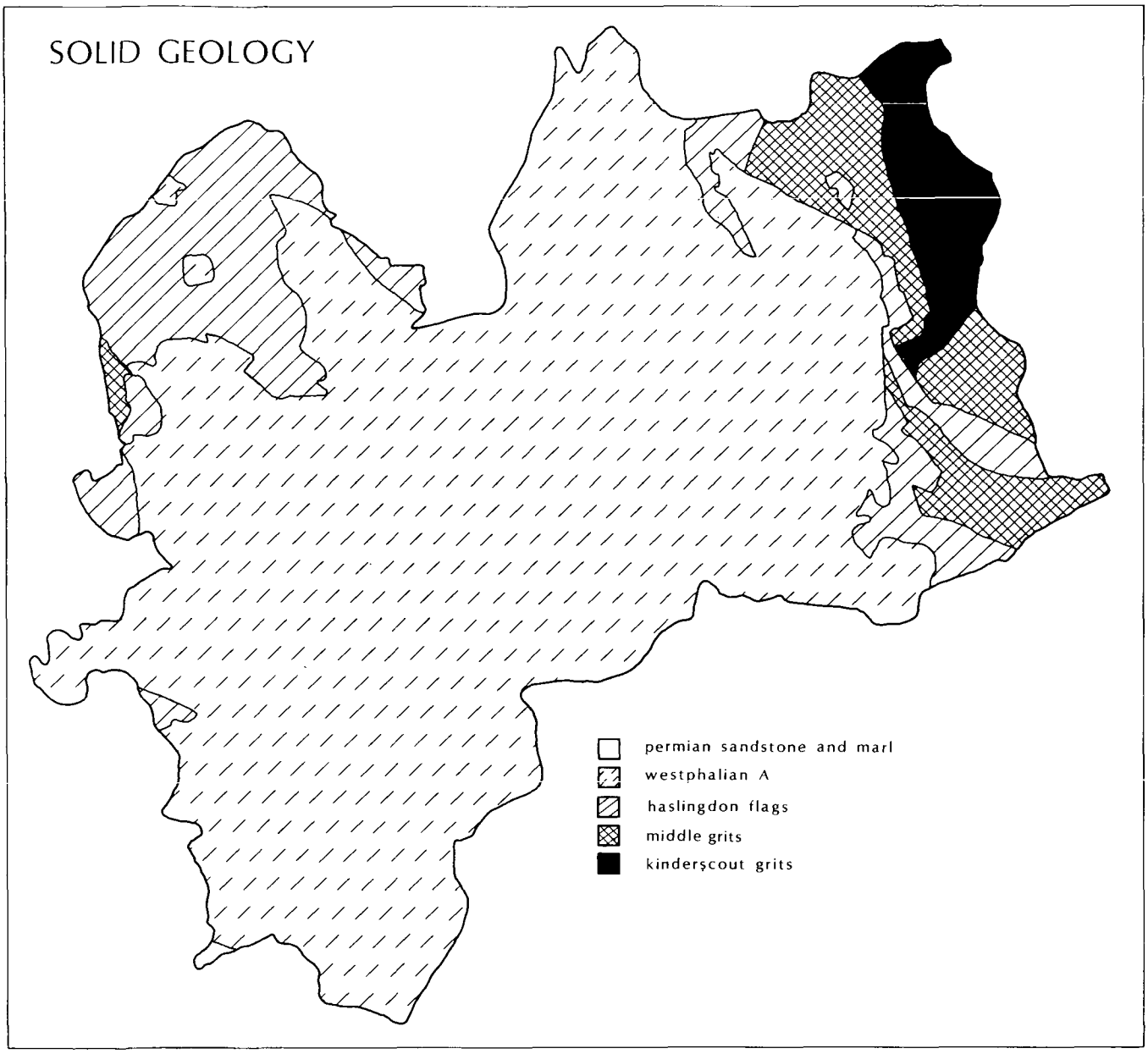

Fig 1 Rochdale : solid geology

material and large boulders, which had been brought long distances by the movement of the ice, and this Boulder Clay remains on the low-lying ground in the northern half of the district. The outwash of material carried by the glacial meltwaters produced the layer of sand and gravel which covers the southern half of the district, from the centre of Rochdale to Middleton.

The earliest environmental evidence dates from the last phase of the ice age. Around 12,000 years ago the ice sheets, which had covered Northern Europe for over 20,000 years, retreated to the high mountainous areas. Forests of birch began to grow where previously only tundra had existed. However, this process was sharply reversed around 10,800 years ago when a lesser ice age occurred. The mountain glaciers advanced again and the birch forests died back, to be replaced by grasses and sedges in a return to semi-tundra. This final advance of the last ice age was over by 8000 years ago, and for the next 3000 years there was a gradual warming up of the climate. Forested areas, at first of birch and later of pine and hazel, replaced the tundra environment (Godwin 1956). This is the period when human activity is first observed in the Rochdale area. Around 6000 years ago the climate began to become wetter and this, possibly coupled with man's early agricultural activity, led to the gradual deforestation of the uplands (Simmons 1975). At the same time the character of the woodlands was changing, and the familiar mixed deciduous woodland of oak, alder, elm and beech gradually replaced the pine forests (Woodhead 1929). The Pennines were not, however, fully covered by woodland at this period, the tree line probably being around 360m.

Around 3000 years ago, the climate became appreciably cooler and wetter, probably causing the rapid expansion of upland peat bogs and lowland mosses (Lamb 1977). The last 3000 years has seen a continuation of this cooler, wetter climate. During the early medieval period (AD 800-1200) there was a

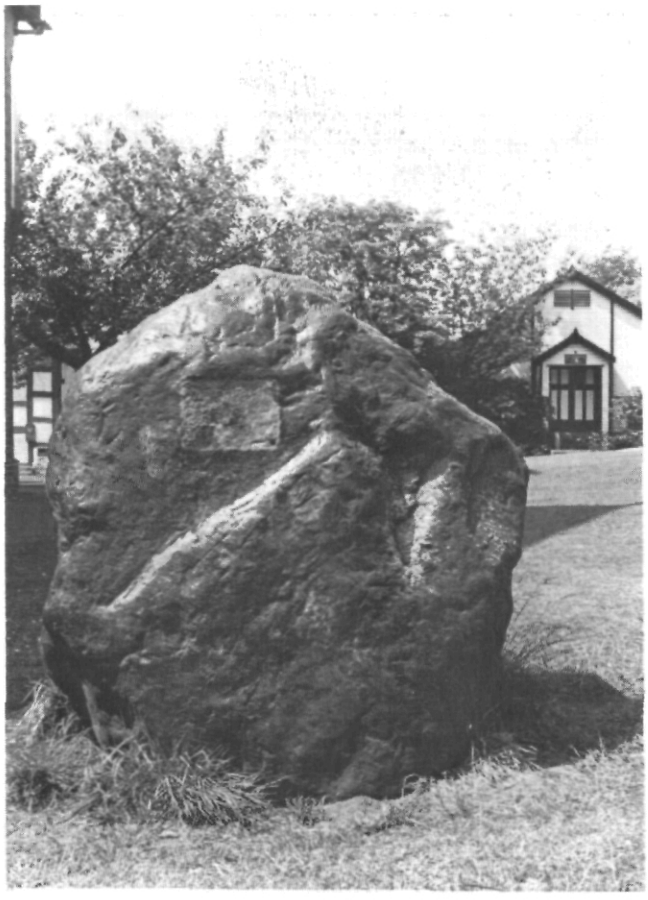

Plate 1 Glacial erratic, Middleton

brief warmer phase, during which vines and soft fruits were cultivated in England, but the period between the late 16th and early 19th centuries saw the dramatically-cooler period known as the 'Little Ice Age', with severe winters and cool, wet summers.

Since the development of earth-moving machinery and the massive building expansion since the 1940's, the effect of human activity on the environment appears to have become quite extensive, particularly in the levelling of slopes by dumping and terracing for the erection of houses. In fact this change is rapidly reversed when the areas are abandoned. The unused terrace-platform of the industrial estate at Stake Hill, Middleton for example, is beginning already to develop watercourses, while the disused railway-line at Healey Dell has reverted so rapidly to a natural state that it is now a nature trail. From our own perspective the effect of human activity on the landscape is significant, but from a geological perspective such activity is minor and transient.

THE MESOLITHIC

The age of hunter-gatherers and the use of flint and bone tools.

Major environmental changes took place during the Mesolithic period, between 8300 and 3200 BC. Open tundra-like habitats were replaced by forested regions. During the later phase of the Mesolithic period, much of the Rochdale area must have been covered by mixed deciduous forest: this is reflected in the pollen samples taken from such sites as Dean Clough 1, which yielded a radiocarbon date of 5645 +/- 140 bc (Barnes 1982, 86). From around 5000 BC onwards, the woodland began to decline and blanket peat started to develop. The tree canopy appears to have given way to scrubland, with patches of peat and grassland at around 360m. This habitat would undoubtedly have been attractive to such animal species as red and roe deer, aurochs or wild cattle, and wild pig. It was necessary for human communities to adapt to this environment, and to develop specialised hunting equipment to deal with a more diverse range of faunal species.

The effect of fire on the landscape is believed at this period to have caused a widespread change in the plants and animals of the uplands. To what extent this was caused by human activity is unknown, but it undoubtedly had a dramatic influence on the environment and on subsistence practices. Burning of vegetation has the result of destroying the tree canopy and increasing the light on the lower vegetation essential for the survival of herbivorous animals. The result must have been to increase the overall productivity of herds, and to influence their distribution and movement. The importance of this factor is unquestionable, since the decrease in forest cover would drive game herds into the open and radically change hunting strategies (Mellars 1976). Burning would also have increased the range of plant species available for gathering. However, it is possible that the use of fire to create open grasslands may have had a limited impact. Many animals in fact prefer woodland; thus the maximum concentrations may have been found where open grassland was in close juxtaposition with areas of undisturbed forest.

Climatic conditions must have affected patterns of behaviour. In winter, with harsh weather conditions and a lack of food resources, hunting would have played the principal role in subsistence. During this season, settlements are likely to have been at the lowest possible altitude, giving the maximum protection from prevailing weather conditions: valleys and south-facing slopes would have been the most suitable locations. In winter, game is known to prefer low-lying regions for the same reasons, and the location of their food supply must have

Plate 2 Glacial meltwater channel, Deeply Vale

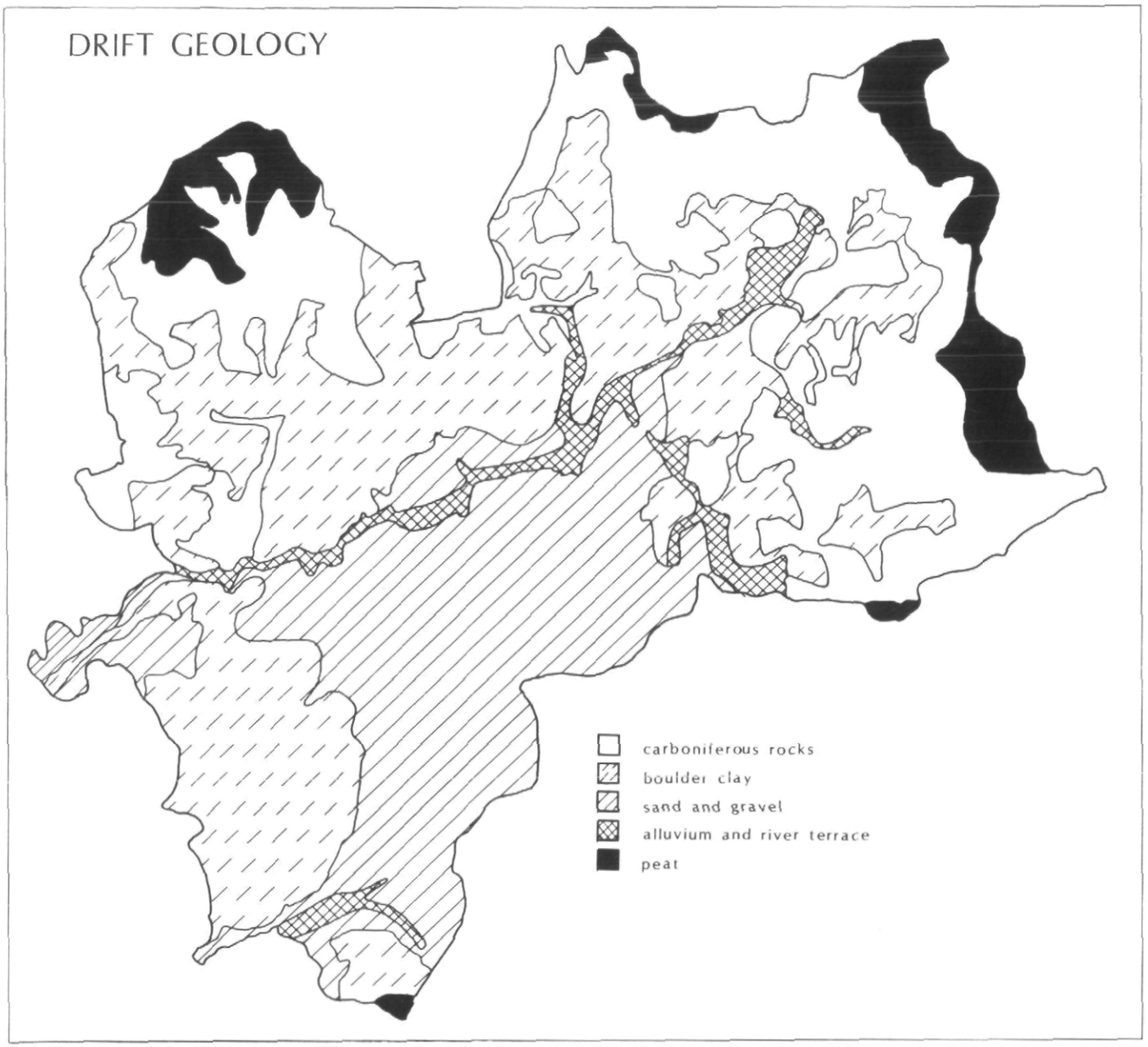

Fig 2 Rochdale : drift geology

influenced the distribution of social groupings amongst the human population. Group size was perhaps determined by the availability of this resource. It has been estimated that the Central Pennines supported few hunting groups at any one time (Jacobi et al 1976, 310). An unreliable, though often concentrated, supply of food usually necessitates the formation of larger social units, where the food can be shared out amongst the group. It is possible that a readily-available natural shelter would have been used as a home base, with short-stay camping sites used by hunting parties, situated some distance away.

In summer a different way of life was probably adopted. More abundant food supplies would permit the occupation of high altitudes and exposed hillsides, since vegetation and insects in the valleys would inhibit activity, and also affect the dispersal of game. Smaller social units, having access to widespread food resources and perhaps greater movement from one catchment area to another, may have inhabited the area. The growth of vegetation during this season would have facilitated the gathering of fruits, nuts and other vegetable resources. These hunter-gatherers must have travelled over large areas, while exploiting the various resources available at different times of the year. This factor must be borne in mind when analysing the distribution pattern of stone artefacts dating from the Mesolithic period.

Not only did the change in environment at the end of the glacial period result in a wider range of food resources becoming available; it also necessitated the development of more specialised hunting and gathering equipment. In this region, the only implements of the Mesolithic period to survive are those of stone. The first artefacts recovered from the Rochdale area derived largely from surface collection and excavation by local enthusiasts rather than from chance finds, and this has resulted in a dense clustering of finds in the well-explored areas.

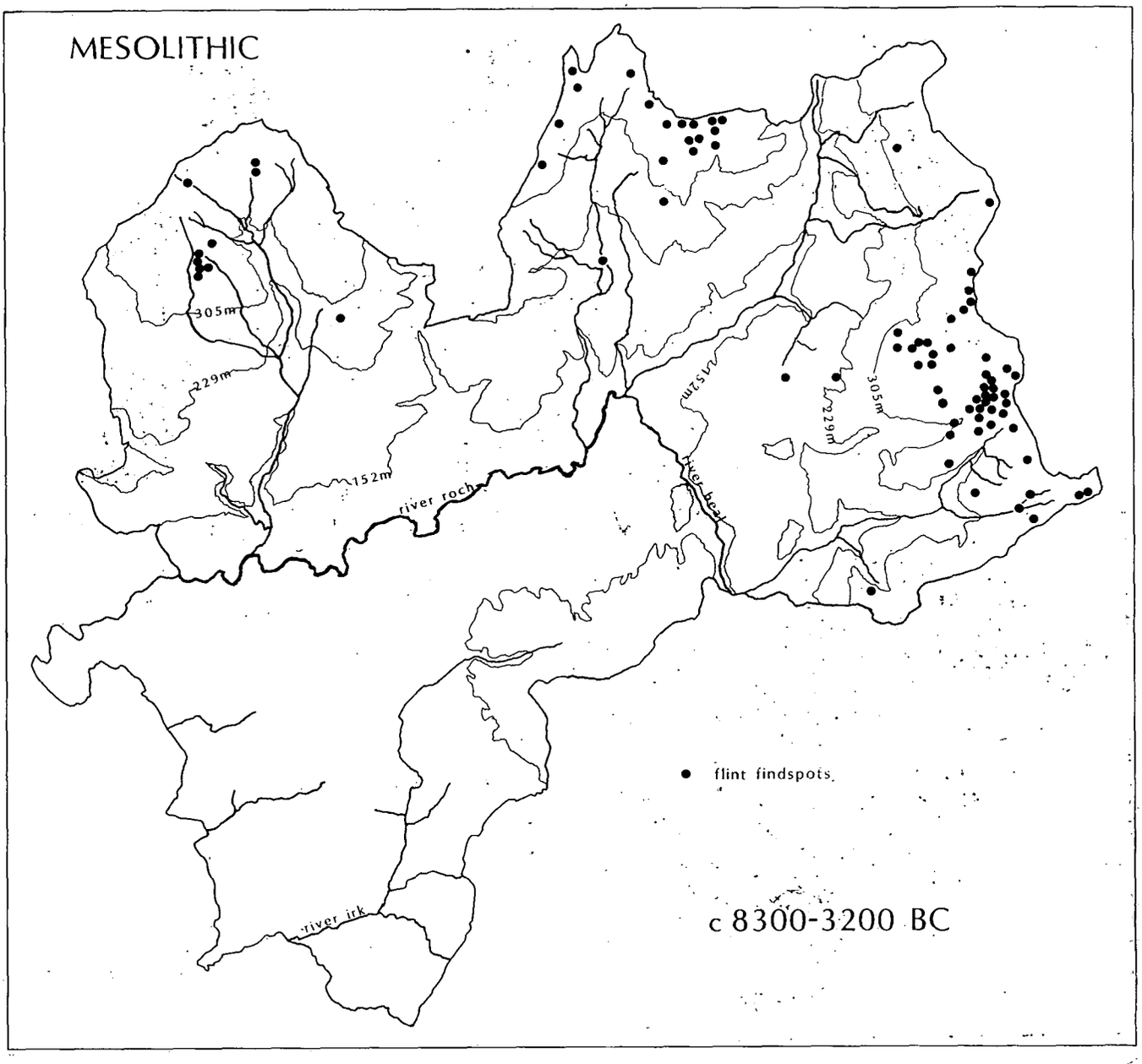

Fig 3 Rochdale : Mesolithic

The majority of artefacts have been recovered at the edge of patches of peat or in areas where erosion, caused by wind or water, has exposed the original land surface that lies beneath the peat. Very often the flints have been found within the peat itself, indicating that peat was already beginning to form by the Mesolithic period. Differential preservation may occur between those areas where the stone implements were protected by the growth of peat and those where there was a gap between the deposition of the object and the start of peat formation (Switsur and Jacobi 1975). It is also feasible that urban growth has obliterated much of the material that should have been found in low-lying areas, but the contrast between the number of finds recovered from upland and lowland zones could also be explained by differences in subsistence activity between the two areas.

Because of the inherent bias of the data, it is not possible to define the nature of a site on the basis of the number of finds it has produced, but merely to record it as a find-spot where one or a number of artefacts have been recovered. For example, the area around Blackstone Edge has produced a particularly high density of material, but this probably only reflects the results of the intensive surveys carried out by the Littleborough Archaeological Society (LAS 1972; 1976). Similarly, only flints dating to the later Mesolithic period have been plotted, since there is very little material which can definitely be attributed to the earlier phase, and the find-spots are in exactly the same locations as those of the subsequent phase.

Typological analysis of artefacts suggests that the British Mesolithic period can be divided into two phases, the transition occurring sometime around 6500 BC. The earlier phase was characterised by the so-called 'obliquely-blunted' microliths, which functioned as projectile points and barbs for wooden arrows and harpoons. The later phase saw the introduction of a more extensive range of smaller microlithic forms. In this region these two chron-

ological phases are also represented by broad- and narrow-blade industries respectively (Buckley 1924). Although open to criticism (Pitts and Jacobi 1979), this distinction serves as an additional means of defining the two phases. The greater proportion of the finds from Rochdale are of the narrow-blade type, which may reflect an overall growth in population during this period (Jacobi 1976) or may simply indicate that the local area was inhabited to a greater extent at this time. Buckley divided the later Mesolithic narrow-blade industries into three distinct groups: that dominated by small scalene triangles, as represented by the assemblage from Windy Hill 5; a second group characterised by straight, rod-like microliths, blunted along one or both sides, as represented by the assemblage from Dean Clough; and a third group dominated by trapezoids. Classification of the material in the survey was made using the following categories: microliths, flakes, flake-fragments, blades, blade-fragments, bladelet-fragments, scrapers, micro-burins, and cores (see Wymer 1977).

The narrow-blade industries appear to have been worked in better-quality translucent flint, which may have derived from the Lincolnshire or Yorkshire Wolds, or from drift deposits on the Yorkshire coast. Barnes (1982, 33) tentatively suggests that a source of flint may have been available on the 'old' Lancashire coast prior to its submergence by rising sea levels. Many examples were manufactured from chert, which is found in local Pennine limestone areas. The availability of flint and chert may have been an important influence on the size of territory exploited by Mesolithic communities. However, it is possible that the material was transported by other mechanisms such as gift exchange, or by small groups venturing out of their territory to collect the raw material.

Location of sites appears to be principally on hilltops and south-facing slopes, in areas providing good visibility and natural shelter. The rock-shelters at Lighthazzles Reservoir and Robin Hood Rocks, from which high densities of artefacts have been recorded, are good examples of protected sites of this sort. Areas overlooking spring-heads and water sources, which would have been attractive to wild animals, must have been equally attractive to human hunting-groups.

As suggested earlier, it is possible that one specific locality functioned as a home base, where such domestic activities as the preparation of skins and the working of bone and antler took place. At these sites we would expect to find such artefacts as scrapers and burins, but this is clearly not the case in the uplands around Rochdale. Instead these areas produce assemblages which consist primarily of hunting equipment: microliths, a few flakes and blades struck from cores using a punch or hammer-stone, and microburins, which are by-products of the manufacture of microliths. At Black Castle Clough, a large scatter of flakes and other pieces of flint, forming a discrete concentration, may have been the remains of a working floor. Further evidence of a working area where artefacts were prepared was observed at Great Hill. A waste-flake from the site was found to fit perfectly onto the core from which it had been removed.

The low number of cores produced from the area is not entirely unexpected. A highly-valued core from which good-quality flints could be prepared would no doubt have been carried from one place to another, to be finally discarded when it was no longer considered of use. Microliths however, are occasionally found in isolation from other worked material. The excavation by Buckley on White Hill of a row of microliths lying in a straight line has led to the suggestion that these were, in fact, barbs set into the wooden shaft of a weapon which had been lost (Petch 1924, 29). Hearths have occasionally been observed with working-floors and burnt stone (LAS 1976), suggesting the possibility of flints having been worked with fire.

Most sites in the upland area of Rochdale appear to have been limited in size; they were possibly hunting camps, occupied by a small number of individuals using temporary or natural shelters. It is feasible however, that more permanent sites were located at lower altitude, functioning as home bases and occupied for longer periods of time by a larger section of the community.

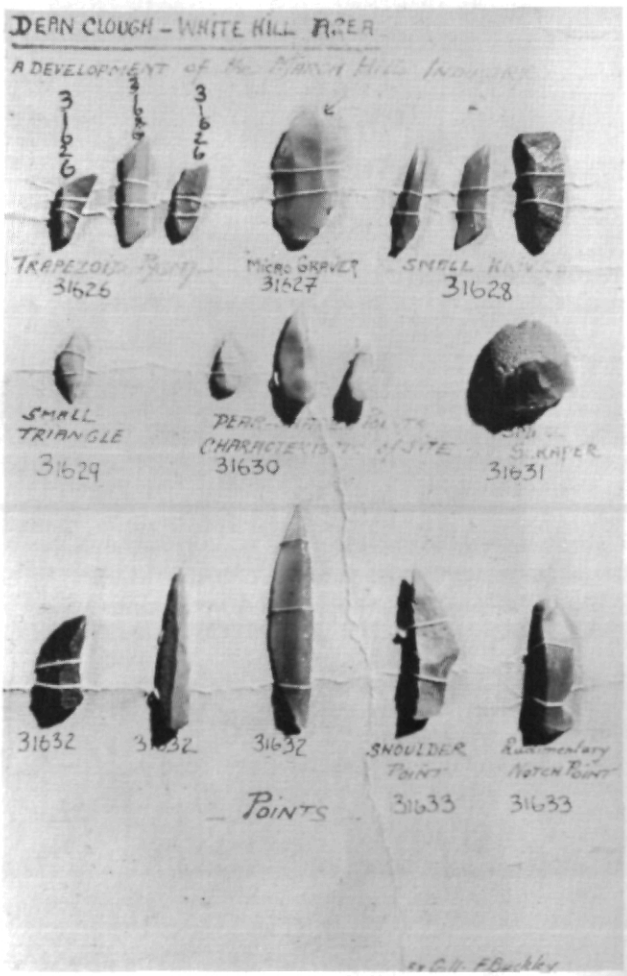

Plate 3 Part of Francis Buckley's flint collection, 1920s

THE NEOLITHIC AND BRONZE AGE

The development of social, economic and religious systems; the use of pottery and metal; and the construction of burial mounds and other ceremonial monuments.

Major technological innovations occurred throughout the Neolithic and Bronze Ages, and these were associated with changes in economy and society. The Neolithic (c3200-2000 BC) began with the introduction of rudimentary agriculture, involving the domestication of animals and the cultivation of cereals, and leading to the development of more settled semi-agrarian communities.

A greater area of lowland forest probably had to be opened up for agricultural purposes, and it was during the Neolithic period that polished or ground stone axes first appeared. Flint axes have been found at Newhey and Wardle, a black stone axe at Hollingworth, and a green stone axe at Castle Hill.

However, the results of pollen analysis at Rishworth Moor (Bartley 1975, 379) indicate that forest clearance was probably very limited in that area during the Neolithic. The continued deterioration in the climate inhibited occupation of the uplands and brought about further changes in vegetation. Such changes also occurred as a result of the activity of human groups. Arrowheads dating from this period, found mainly in the upland regions, indicate that hunting must have continued to supplement the diet. These flint arrowheads were carefully pressure-flaked into leaf-shaped and transverse forms.

Although there is a total absence of monuments and settlements of Neolithic date from Rochdale, archaeological evidence from other areas of the country indicate that there was probably a substantial increase in population-density and a change in the structure of society. The construction of burial and ceremonial monuments would have involved the organisation of communal labour, possibly by part-

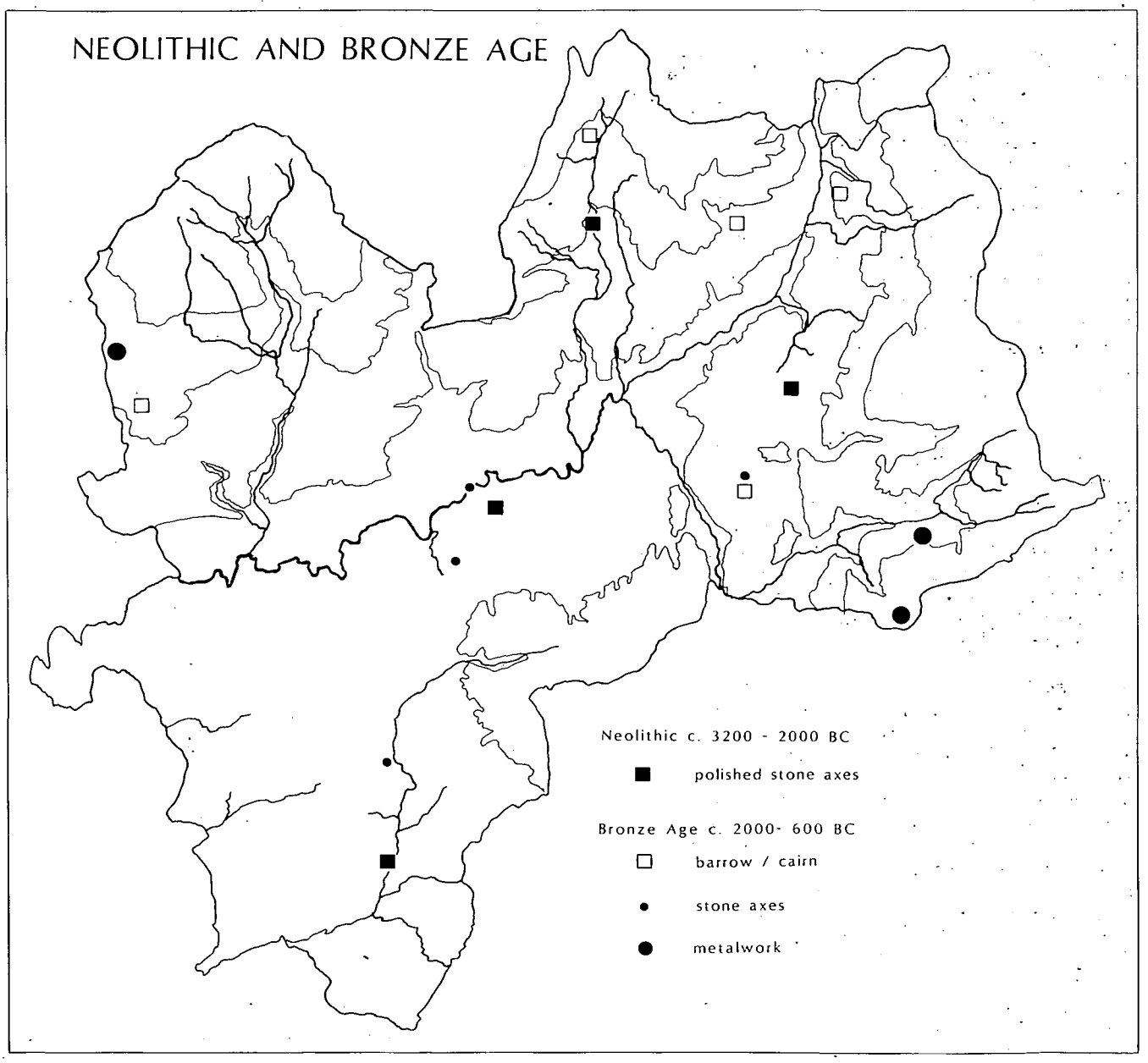

Fig 4 Rochdale : Neolithic and Bronze Age

icular individuals. Burial was in collective tombs, where the remains of adults and children, probably from all levels of society, were placed. Other ceremonial monuments such as causewayed enclosures were probably multi-functional, serving as a focal point for economic, social, ceremonial and ritual activities. The rituals which took place at these monuments were probably associated with more than one religion, encompassing for example the worship of ancestors, belief in the after-life and fertility-cults: of particular importance to primitive farming communities.

The Neolithic period saw the development of social hierarchies, with divisions of labour to provide for the requirements of both the immediate family and the wider community. The evolution of craft-specialisation, the production of tools, pottery and decorative items, and the exploitation of the materials necessary to produce such artefacts, occurred at this time. The movement of such products as flint and stone axes over considerable distances also took place.

The Beaker Phase, named after the characteristic drinking cup or beaker usually placed in graves, marks the transitional period between the Neolithic and Bronze Age (c2100-1700BC). During this phase the knowledge of metalworking was introduced into Britain, probably from the Continent. In the Rochdale area, the grave-goods and method of cairn construction at Wind Hill, Heywood have been attributed to the Beaker Phase (Tyson 1980, 14). The earthen cairn was defined by an almost circular kerb of horizontal slabs, opening to the east onto a rectangular 'courtyard' area, similarly enclosed by stones. A flint knife, a pebble hammer and a 'V'-bored jet button were recovered from the centre of the cairn. A few small pieces of unworked flint were recovered from the courtyard area, and four scrapers from outside the cairn itself. The use of upright stone slabs is seen as a continuation of Neolithic building techniques; however, the extension of the courtyard at Wind Hill may post-date the construction of the main cairn and possibly reflects use over a long period of time.

During the Neolithic there was widespread use of collective tombs. This concept was replaced later by burial in single graves, possibly reflecting a change in social attitudes away from communal society and towards reverence for the successful or powerful individual.

The Bronze Age (c 2000-600 BC) witnessed the widespread use of bronze for casting implements and objects, for both utilitarian and ceremonial use. The metalwork from Rochdale consists of unassociated casual finds, and reflects the bronzeworking traditions of Northern Britain. A palstave - a type of axe with flanges and a stop-ridge - recovered from Ashworth Moor, Heywood is of an early unlooped type, dating to the Middle Bronze Age. It has a shield-shaped panel below the stop-ridge and a narrow cutting edge. The irregularity of the casting-seam has led to the suggestion that the two moulds used in the casting process were of different depths (Tyson 1980, 36). A palstave from Crompton Moor (Davey and Forster 1975, no 51) and a socketed spearhead from Piethorn (Barnes 1982, 108) date from the Middle and Late Bronze Age respectively. A stone axe-hammer found in the old bed of the River Roch at Oakenrod has clearly-marked ridges on both sides, which are thought to indicate that the implement was made in imitation of a cast metal one. This fact is unusual in itself and the object may possibly, therefore, have been of some ceremonial significance.

A number of barrows dating from the Bronze Age still survive in the district. Hades Hill, Wardle consisted of a stone cairn with a sandstone kerb. Excavated in 1898 (Sutcliffe 1898-1900), it produced a collared urn, decorated with rope impressions in a chevron pattern and containing cremated human bone and burnt flint implements. Also found were animal bones, charcoal, and a number of flints. At both Hades Hill and Wind Hill there were no remains of pits or cists, though stone-filled hollows were found at Wind Hill. The composite cairn of earth and stone at Hades Hill was also possibly modified and enlarged after the initial construction (Barnes 1982, 55). At Lowhouse, Milnrow, a cremation in an urn was placed in a rough cist, accompanied by a perforated stone axe-hammer or battle-axe (Platt 1898-1900). A round barrow with a central cist at Snoddle Hill, Littleborough produced a number of flints and a shale armlet. A barrow at Shore also contained an urned cremation and some small pieces of flint. There is also a possible Bronze Age barrow at Ryecroft Hall.

A number of artefacts manufactured from raw materials which originated some distance from Rochdale have been recovered in the area. In particular, the jet buttons from Knowl Hill and Wind Hill probably came from sources in the east of the country.

The remains of settlements and associated field-systems outside the Rochdale area indicate the existence of permanently-settled farming communities during the Bronze Age (Fleming 1978; Hart 1981, 63). Metal finds from Lancashire are largely distributed on the gravel and alluvial deposits, possibly indicating a preference for well-drained soils which would have provided suitable sites for settlement and agriculture (Davey 1976, 12).

Throughout the Neolithic period and Bronze Age there was a greater intensification of land use.

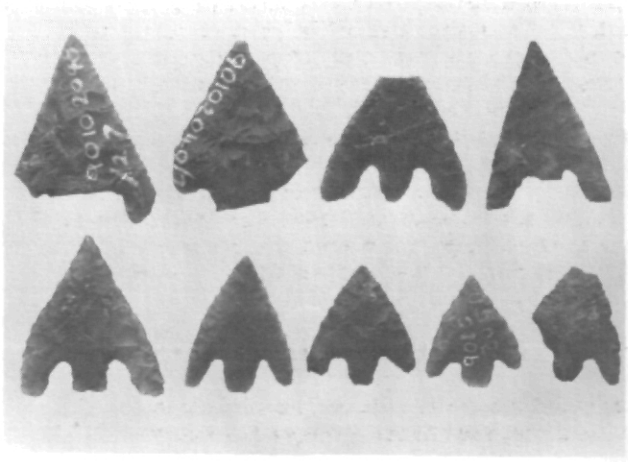

Plate 4 Barbed-and-tanged arrowheads from Rochdale

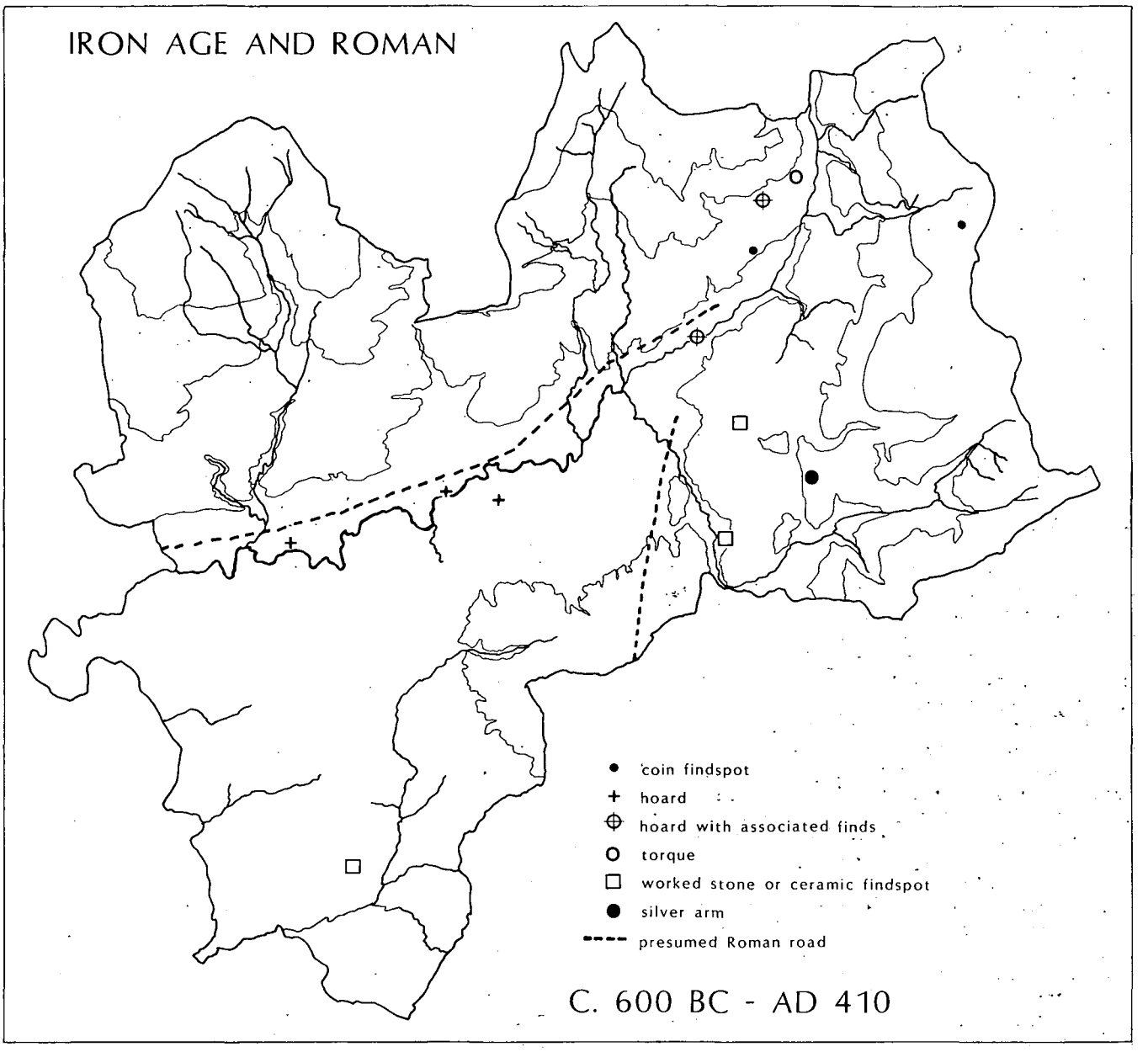

Fig 5 Rochdale : Iron Age and Roman

This was the result of improved technology, such as the introduction of the plough. The increase in population-density possibly necessitated a more controlled management of the land, which in turn brought about the existence of permanent settlements and field enclosures. Hillforts such as Mam Tor in Derbyshire (Coombs 1976) first began to be constructed at this time. Land ownership and control over the exploitation of resources possibly resulted in the accumulation of wealth by certain individuals. By the Late Bronze Age, tribal societies were beginning to become established in Britain, laying the foundations for the developments of the Iron Age.

THE IRON AGE AND ROMANO-BRITISH PERIOD

Early Celtic society; the arrival of Roman 'civilisation'; the Roman transport network.

The Celtic Iron Age in Rochdale is represented by only one archaeological find: the bronze torque found at Mowroad in Calderbrook in 1832 (Fishwick 1889, 5). Apart from this chance find by a workman, none of the features of settlement normally assigned to this period, such as field-systems or hut-circles, have been detected. The rapid urban expansion of the late 19th century has undoubtedly destroyed much of the lowland evidence, however further systematic survey of the upland areas and less developed valleys could still reveal evidence of Iron Age settlement.

Nothing is known of the social or economic development of the area throughout this period: it was technically prehistoric in the sense that no written records exist. All that can be said is that, at the time of the Roman invasion, Rochdale was controlled by the Brigantes; a large Celtic tribal group which controlled all of the north and west of the country (Jones 1974, 1). After the Romans had gained control of the south, the Brigantes formed a buffer-state between the Romanized tribes and the more hostile Caledonian Celts

in the north. The status of the Brigantes was officially that of a 'client' kingdom. However, factional feuding within the tribe led to civil war, and the Romans took the opportunity to intervene and ultimately, under Agricola, to occupy the whole territory of the Brigantes. Rochdale, as part of this territory, was certainly under direct Roman control by AD 70.

The hoard of early Roman coins from Castlemere, discussed below, could represent the concealed wealth of a local chieftain during the final years of independence of the client kingdom of the Brigantes. However, it is not until the imposition of Roman government in the area that any evidence for occupation has been uncovered.

Roman occupation in the south-east of Lancashire is well attested by excavations at Manchester (Jones 1974) Castleshaw (Thompson 1967), and Wigan (Chapter 4 above). In addition the GMAU Sites and Monuments Record contains references to 110 Roman finds and sites within the county. Within Rochdale district coins, coin-hoards, pottery and tiles have been found, as well as a possible Roman spearhead, the much-disputed road leading over Blackstone Edge, and the silver arm from a statue found at Tunshill.

Excavations at Manchester indicate settlement, initially of a military nature, from the last quarter of the 1st century AD (Walker 1985) and a civilian settlement which rapidly developed to service the garrison. The native British population of the area is unlikely to have been much affected by the Roman presence. Certainly any food surplus produced would have been consumed by the Roman troops, but the native population with its subsistence economy would have responded slowly to the pressures of the Roman system. The early Brigantian tribal confederation would not have had a money economy, and the use of coinage would have spread slowly in such communities. The earliest Roman coinage to be found in Rochdale was the Castlemere hoard of 1896 (Harrison 1896, 11; Fishwick 1889, 11), which contained a sizeable number of coins dating to the reign of the Emperor Claudius (AD 41-59). Although full details of this hoard are not recorded, it seems unlikely that it would have been deposited much later than the Conquest. It was probably deposited by one of the more wealthy of the Celtic inhabitants of south-western Brigantia, during the tribal civil war which precipitated Roman intervention in the north of Britain.

A number of presumed Roman finds in Rochdale are insufficiently documented to place them accurately within the period of Roman occupation. In the early 19th century, during the construction of Stubley Hall, Littleborough, "an urn containing Roman coins, and a Roman cup" were found, and again in Littleborough at Town House in 1883 Roman coins and tiles were reputedly found. In 1898 an iron spearhead, nine inches long and presumed to be Roman, was found on Blackstone Edge (TLCAS 1898). In 1926 Richmond reported two coins of Vespasian (AD 69-79) having been found near Blackstone Edge Road (Richmond 1926-28, 84): presumably brought to his notice as he was surveying the road itself.

The two best documented hoards are the latest in date. At Plumpton House in 1856, a hoard was found which was recorded in some detail (Harland 1856, 236; Harrison 1896, 13; TLCAS 1891, 166). The hoard, of about 1000 coins, was found in a red-brown coloured jar, around 18 inches high and 9 or 10 inches wide at the middle, but narrowing at the neck and foot. Observers at the time estimated that the jar would have had a capacity of around half a gallon. The coins recorded were those of Gallienus (AD 260-68), Marius (AD 268), Salonina (AD 268), Victorinus (AD 269-71), Tetricus (AD 261-73), Claudius Gothicus (AD 268-70), Aurelian (AD 270-75), and Probus (AD 276-82). There are two possible reasons why a coin-hoard should have been deposited at the end of the reign of Probus. Around AD 280, the governor of Britain revolted and was defeated by one of Probus' most renowned generals, Victorinus (Seeck 1921, 385). It is possible that the hoard was hidden by a local inhabitant, frightened by the military activity at the time. After the reign of Probus the Emperor Diocletian (AD 282-305) instituted widespread reforms of the economic system, and issued a revalued coinage. It seems that at such times hoards of the old, devalued coinage were often hidden in the hope that they could be used at a later date. Either of these alternatives is equally possible.

At Underwood in 1804 a 'small iron box' containing coins of Tacitus (AD 293-305), Maximian (AD 286-305), and Diocletian (AD 282-305) was found (Fishwick 1889, 11, 20). Probably the most famous Roman artefact to be found in Rochdale, however, was the Tunshill Arm. This was unearthed in 1793 by quarry workers (Fishwick 1889, 12). The arm is 240mm long and of pure silver, solid at the hand but hollow along the arm. In the 19th century a small plaque was associated with it, inscribed with the dedication "To the victory of the VI Legion Victrix, Valerius Rufus discharges his vow". It is possible that this is a modern addition, and that the original statuette need not therefore have had any connection with the 6th legion. As no detailed record of the conditions and location of the find was ever made, it is impossible to say whether the arm originated from the site at Tunshill, or whether it had been brought in from elsewhere. Amongst the various possible interpretations are that it was an object of plunder, lost by a group moving across the Pennines, or that it came from a rural temple or nearby shrine. The Tunshill Arm was recently acquired from a private collection by the British Museum; however an electrotype copy is on display in Rochdale Museum.

In 1926 Professor Ian Richmond put forward evidence for a possible Roman road on a line from Manchester to Blackstone Edge, and argued that the paved road there was of Roman date (Richmond 1926-34, 41). Closer analysis of the historical evidence, however, suggests that the paved road over Blackstone Edge is of much later date and this is discussed more fully below (Appendix 1). However, Richmond also suggested the existence of a road, traceable through documentary evidence, at Buersil and Firgrove. The distribution of coin-hoards, which reason suggests would not have been deposited far from a road or habitation, also implies a route following the high ground to the north of the River Roch, and travelling westwards from Littleborough towards the Roman road from Manchester to

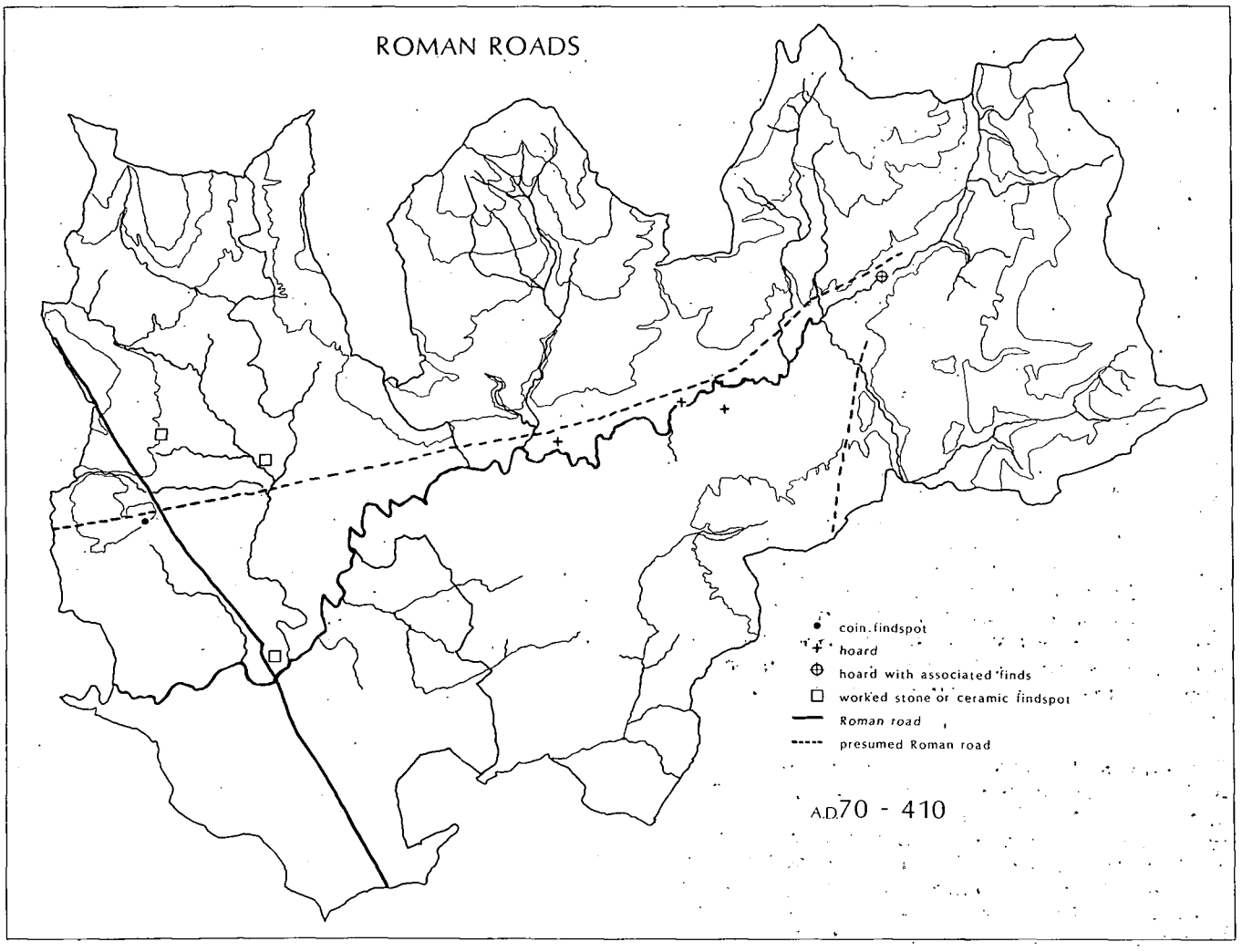

Fig 6 Rochdale : Roman roads

Ribchester. The evidence from work in the Midlands (Margary 1973, 176; Viatores 1964), and a logical appraisal of settlement-patterns generally, suggests that a greater density of roads would have existed in the Manchester area than is currently known. For the period from the Roman invasion of Brigantia in the late 1st century AD until the end of the 3rd century AD, only two coins of Vespasian have been found to indicate that the area was inhabited. It seems likely that a closer examination of the uplands, and of those valley bottoms which have not yet been built over, will reveal Iron Age and Roman settlement sites that have eluded the somewhat random efforts of earlier researchers.

THE DARK AGES

The departure of the Romans; the Celtic successor kingdoms; the border warfare of Mercian Saxons and Northumbrian Scandinavians.

In Rochdale, the archaeological record of the period popularly known as the Dark Ages is remarkable mainly for its absence. For a period of 600 years, from the end of direct Roman rule at the beginning of the 5th century AD until the domination of the area by the Norman aristocracy, no archaeological trace of human activity has been discovered.

There have been no chance finds of pottery or coins such as are so commonly found in the Roman period. During the early part of the period the use of coinage and pottery was probably limited. With the collapse of central control by the Roman administration, the economic system suffered a rapid decline and was replaced by a barter economy; such an economy was unable to support the large-scale industrial production of pottery that had characterised the Roman period. The result is that such coarse pottery as survives is almost impossible to place in a typological or chronological sequence. No structural remains have been observed, possibly because of a lack of systematic exploration of the area. Much of the early settlement-pattern probably now lies under built-up areas, and is therefore not susceptible to detection by techniques such as aerial photography. There is a considerable body of evidence for this period in the form of place-names; however the use of this material is fraught with difficulties, not least of which is that names must be traced back to their earliest forms, and the lack of such evidence before the late medieval period is therefore a severe limitation.

The history of this period in Northern Britain is, for the most part, badly understood. With the exception of the work of Morris (1973), there has been little attempt to use the historical data available in the Welsh and Saxon sources to their best advantage. The Welsh histories are almost invariably genealogically-based, and almost impossible to relate to geographical locations. The Anglo-Saxon

Chronicles are only a record of certain key events, most of which did not affect this area. Although nothing specific to Rochdale is yet known, Morris' historical sequence can be taken as the context in which to place events in the Rochdale district.

At the beginning of the 5th century, the Roman system of civil and military administration was still intact. The Duke of the Britains (Dux Britanniarum) controlled the territory south of Hadrian's Wall, probably as far as the Humber and the Mersey, and was based at York. The holder of the post seems to have been called Coelestius or Coelius, and is remembered in Welsh as Coel Hen. He was the founder of the British dynasty which ruled the north until the last Celtic kingdom, Elmet, came under Northumbrian domination around AD 617.

Around AD 500 the territory of Coel Hen was split in two, with the west (Lancashire and Cumbria) forming the kingdom of Reged. Throughout the century the territory was further split, as kings divided their lands between their heirs. By AD 530 Reged appears to have been divided into northern and southern parts, corresponding more or less to Cumbria and Lancashire respectively, while Pabo ruled the Pennines and the North East, and Eleutherius ruled in York.

In AD 580 the Bernician Saxons took York from the British, and over the next 20 years the northern Celtic states were gradually destroyed by Bernician and Deiran Saxon armies, and finally by both groups together, united under Aethelfreth as Northumbria. By AD 604 the only remaining independent northern kingdom was Elmet, but around AD 617 Cerdic, the last British king in northern England, was defeated by Edwin, king of the Northumbrians, and Elmet was finally absorbed into Northumbrian territory.

The Northumbrians seem, however, to have had little control or influence over southern Reged. During the 7th century Mercia, the powerful midland Saxon kingdom, extended its settlements into the area as

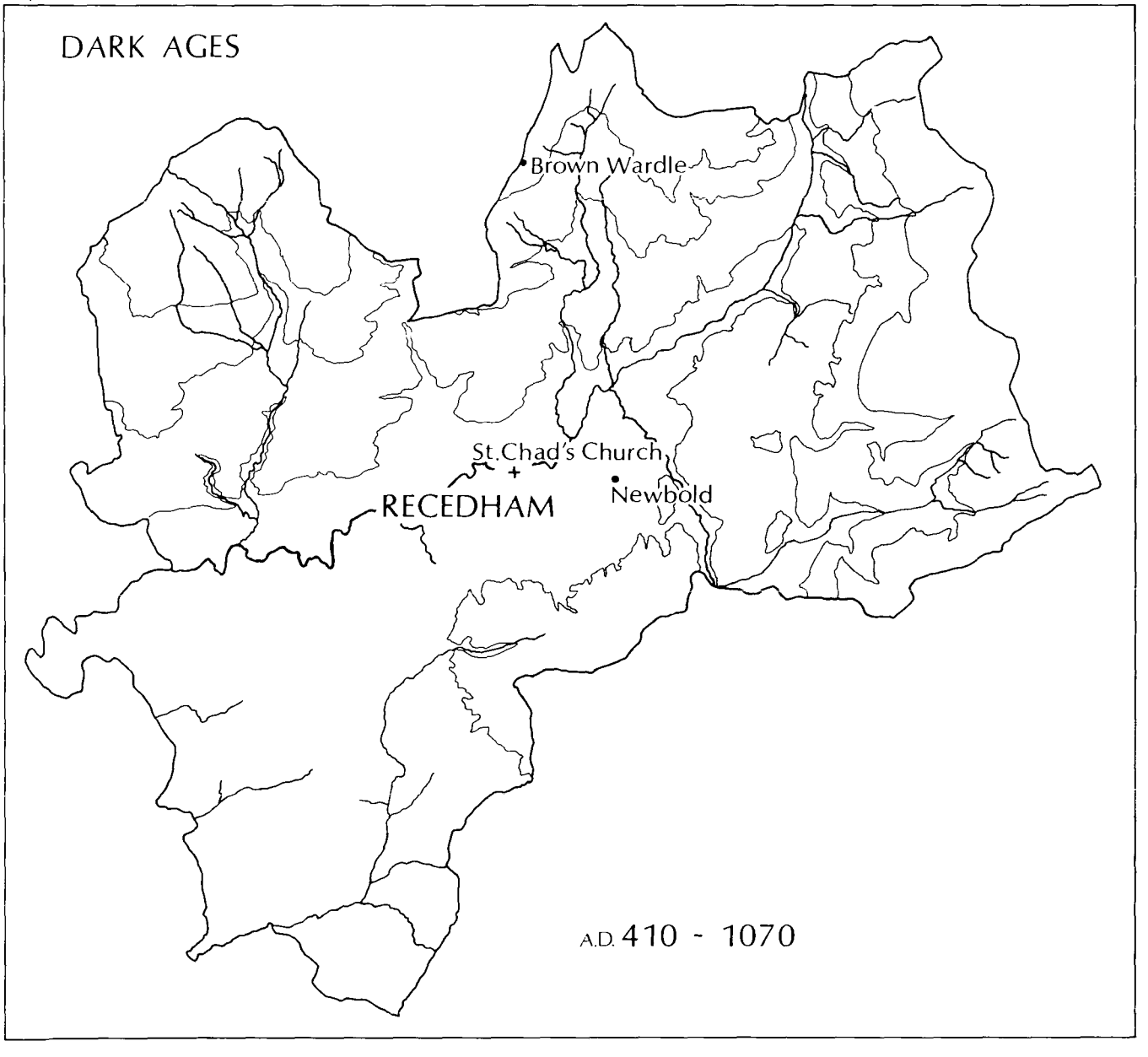

Fig 7 Rochdale : Dark Ages

far north as the Ribble and the South Pennines, and Lancashire became a frontier zone between the two powers. Mercian power declined and finally disappeared at the end of the 8th century, and over the next century Scandinavian power was in the ascendant. By the 10th century however, Northumberland had become so weak that the British kingdom of Strathclyde was able to extend its control down the Pennines as far south as Leeds.

In AD 1066 William invaded England, and by AD 1070 his army had driven through to Northumberland, pillaging and laying waste much of the countryside. When he had consolidated his hold on the country, William ordered a survey of all lands and livestock in his new kingdom. It is at this point that Rochdale first appears in the historical record, and it is at the same time that the archaeological record once again becomes visible. The Domesday Book records land holdings both before the Conquest under Edward the Confessor and after the Conquest. It lists Rochdale as one of the holdings of Gamel the Thane, who also held land in Elland and who was one of 21 thanes in the manor of Radcliffe. Gamel held two hides of land in Recedham (Rochdale), and was free of all customs except six: theft, Heinfare, Forestel, breach of peace, not keeping the term set him by the reeve, and continuing a fight after an oath given to the contrary. The fine for these was forty shillings. (Beaumont 1863, 81).

After the Conquest and the division of the land amongst the Norman overlords, the manor of Radcliffe was held as part of the lands of Roger de Poictou. Under him, instead of the 21 thanes, only five men listed as 'knights' held land. One of these was a Norman and the remainder were Saxons, including Gamel, who now held two carucates of land. In addition, the manor had three freeholders, 30 villeins, nine bordars, one priest and ten serfs. It is possible that the priest was the priest of St Chad's.

Much has been published on the interpretation of place-names and their use in tracing Saxon settlement or British survival. However the main criterion is that the name should be of proven antiquity. It is difficult or impossible to trace many of the place-names in Rochdale much earlier than the inquisitions of the 17th century, however by analogy with other place-names in the area, some suggestions can be made. Brown Wardle may preserve the British Bryn (hill), especially as there are other possible British names in the vicinity such as Cowm (valley) and Brown Hill. The original name of Rochdale, Recedham, may preserve the name of Reged and mean 'the village of the people of Reged'. During the inter-kingdom wars in the 6th century Rochdale would have been on or near the border between Reged and the Pennine kingdoms of Pabo and his successors. Lying as it does close to three routes over or through the Pennines it is likely to have been of some significance, since the warfare of the Celtic kingdoms was predominantly concerned with raiding rather than territorial invasion or gain. By the 7th century Rochdale was again on a border, this time between Mercia and Northumbria, and the presence of the name Newbold is taken by some historians to indicate a defended Mercian frontier settlement (Baines 1868, 27).

The dedication of Rochdale Parish Church, St Chad's, may indicate an early foundation (Fishwick 1889, 27). St Chad was the Saxon Bishop of Lichfield in AD 673. It is also worthy of note that in Late Saxon England the title 'thane' was limited to those who possessed at least five hides of land and a church, although Gamel's church could equally well have been located in Elland. Certainly by 1194 Geoffrey, Dean of Whalley, held the church of Rachedam for life (Hulton 1847-9), although it is impossible to say how long the church had been standing prior to this date. In the yard of St Chad's, at the top of the slope down to the valley of the River Roch, is a flag wall of considerable antiquity. No evidence is available to date it, but its technique of construction may point to an early date. Most flag walls in the area are made of stone flags sunk into the ground and either unconnected or else joined with metal ties, or displaying holes for rope ties in their edges. The wall at St Chad's has the flags morticed into stone pillars, while the ground level appears to have been raised considerably since the wall was erected. It is a feature of early Saxon stone architecture that the forms and techniques used imitate those of woodworking, and it is therefore possible that the flag wall at St Chad's is of Saxon date. It is however unlikely that this can be proved, and so whether or not it is the only monument in Rochdale dating from the 'Dark Ages' is likely to remain a mystery.

THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

The rise of Rochdale as a market town; the beginnings of the textile industry.

It is in the medieval period that the social and political structures of modern Rochdale had their roots. The township boundaries were formalised, often through legal disputes, and the pattern of land ownership gradually changed from one of feudal tenure to one of copyhold ownership. The modern borough comprises the major part of two ancient parishes, Rochdale and Middleton, as well as smaller portions of several others. The borough includes the townships of Alkrington, Ashworth, Birtle with Bamford, Blatchinworth and Calderbrook, Butterworth, Castleton, Heap, Hopwood, Middleton, Thornham, Tonge, Wardle, Wardleworth and Wuerdle, the majority of the large township of Spotland, and parts of Chadderton, Great Heaton, Little Heaton, and Pilsworth.

After the Norman Conquest, Gamel continued to hold land under Roger de Poictou. In 1080, Roger was deprived of his estates and they were distributed to Gilbert de Lacy, Henry de Saville, and the Elland family (Fishwick 1889, 14-16). In 1272 Henry de Lacy granted the 'serjeancy of his frank court of Rachedam' to Adam de Balshawe and in 1311, on the death of the last male heir of the de Lacy's, the manor passed to Henry, Earl of Lancaster. The manor remained with the Earls of Lancaster until the end of the 15th century. The serjeancy passed through the hands of John de Balshawe, John de Radcliffe, and finally in 1430 to Sir John Byron, whose descendants held the estates for several centuries. In the north-west of the borough the de Saville family continued to be of importance throughout the medieval period (Fishwick 1889, 17-30).

The Knights of St John of Jerusalem held land in the district, though it is unclear from surviving documents from whom they gained possession of their estates. In 1274 they claimed by a charter of 1253 the right of trial of thieves, the holding of assizes of bread and ale, and the erection of a gallows in their fee. Local tradition claims that the commandery collected the rents for their estates at Butterworth Hall (Fishwick 1889, 113).

It is necessary to place events occurring in the district in their wider historical context. Around the time of the Conquest, the population of the country had increased substantially (Reynolds 1977, 46), resulting in the expansion of rural communities and towns, and the subsequent movement into marginal areas by the clearance or 'assarting' of new land. Enclosure of common land for arable and pastoral use was also taking place, although mainly in the lowland areas.

The founding of parish churches and chapels was evidence of a stable and growing population, while the establishment of castles, halls and religious houses was an indication of an increase in wealth. Labour intensification, greater food production, and increased revenues derived mainly from rents and taxes, were required to support such complex institutions. About 1350 this situation was coming to an end, with a contraction in the size of the population due to the Black Death; the recovery of economic and social systems after the plague was often gradual.

A change from pastoral to arable land-use, and a later reversion to pastoral have been seen as a reflection of these trends in population levels. This model is applicable to much of England, but how far it can be applied to the Rochdale district is difficult to assess. The climate and geography of the area were probably unfavourable to the production of grain on a large scale. A landscape dominated by steep-sided valleys and waterlogged ground would certainly have been more suitable for

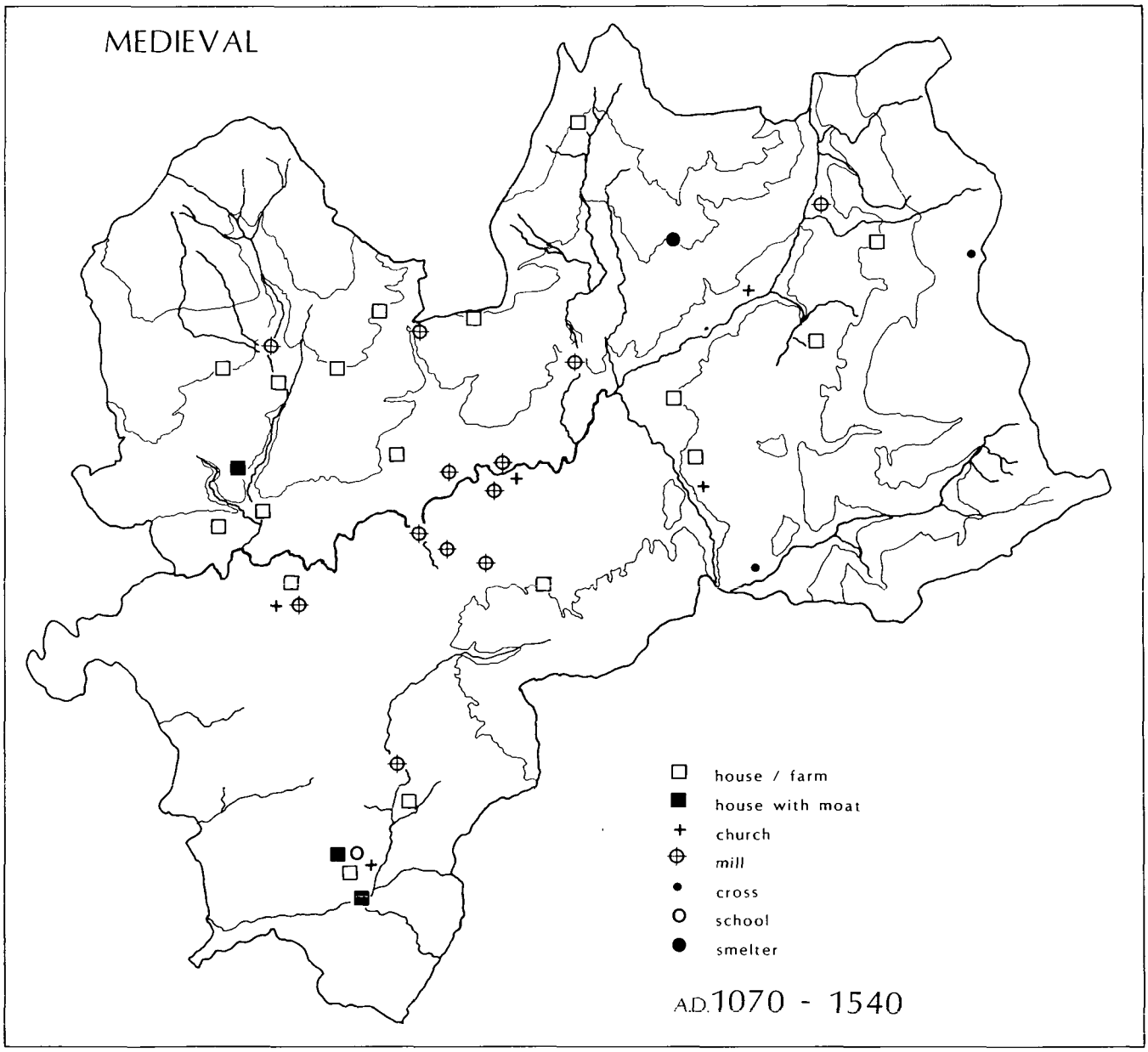

Fig 8 Rochdale : Medieval

stock-rearing, although cultivated plots must have existed in the low-lying areas. The presence of corn-mills (Maxim 1914-16) is evidence of the cultivation of grain in the district, since it is unlikely that corn would have been brought great distances to be milled. The River Roch and its tributaries supplied the necessary source of water to power corn-mills at Ashworth, Brimrod, Buckley, Greenbooth, Heywood, Rochdale, and Sudden.

In 1340, to finance the war with France, Edward III authorised a tax on the amount of wool and corn produced. Although only half the size of Rochdale, the return for the parish of Poulton-le-Fylde was much greater. It is likely that land was less productive in Rochdale and that greater areas of the parish remained uncultivated, whilst a large part of the area was probably still used by the lord of the manor to hunt deer and other game. In 1361 Henry, Duke of Lancaster, had offenders brought to trial for trespassing in his 'free chaces' of Rochdale and elsewhere (Fishwick 1889, 34). These chases are frequently referred to as 'forests', though this should not be confused with woodland, which it is fairly clear would by this date have been restricted to the more sheltered land in the valleys.

There appears to have been a change in emphasis from cattle- to sheep-rearing towards the end of the period. Whether this was due to economic factors and the increasing demand for wool for domestic manufacture, is not known. By the 15th century the production of wool was becoming a well-established industry. The town of Rochdale, as the market-centre, was supplied by satellite hamlets which processed the wool themselves. The fulling-mill at Ashworth no doubt processed locally-produced cloth.

The use of pack-horse routes increased as a means of transporting goods from small producers to neighbouring markets and merchants. One of the most famous of these existed over Blackstone Edge. As early as the 13th century, reference can be found to the upkeep and maintenance of this 'causeway'. The Aiggin stone, which can still be seen today, was one of a series of guide-stones marking the route across the moor. It is incised with a pre-Reformation cross and the initials IT.

The occurrence of such names as 'Henry the dyer', 'John the smith', 'Hugh the miller', and 'William the tunnewright' (Fishwick 1889, 288, 290), in the tax assessments of the 1336 Lay Subsidy, provides us with an indication of the types of trade practised in the Rochdale area. Early evidence for the extraction and smelting of iron-ore can be seen in the Final Concords of 1253, where Robert de Flayneburg and others were permitted to "put up forges and dig for iron and steel ore to supply them on moors and in woods of Hunworthfield". Such industries would have been on a small scale, with bloomeries located near the woodlands for fuel, and producing iron which was made into finished products by local blacksmiths. An iron-ore mine in Whitworth is recorded as being worked in 1338 (Tupling 1927, 28).

The economic expansion brought about by increased internal and external trading, which was due in part to craft-specialisation and the need for a production surplus, is reflected in the granting of royal charters to hold markets and fairs. In 1241 Edmund de Lacy was granted the right to hold a weekly market on Wednesdays in Rochdale, and an annual fair in October on the Feast of St Simon and St Jude (Fishwick 1889, 17). One of the functions of the weekly market was to redistribute locally-produced goods, while the fair traded in more exotic commodities, often originating from abroad (Coates 1965, 92-111). The site of the market in Rochdale has altered on a number of occasions, the early markets probably being held in Church Stile, where the cattle fairs were once held.

In a charter of about 1170 Adam de Spotland granted land to the church of St Chad's in Rochdale. Somewhat later Robert de Whalley, who died before 1193 and was rector of Rochdale, executed a deed concerning the transference of land in the district. Between 1224 and 1238, Stanlaw Abbey became the owners of both the vicarage and the rectory, but in 1296 Stanlaw Abbey and its lands, including the church of 'St Cedde de Rach', was taken over by the Abbey at Whalley (Hulton 1847-9).

Little now remains of the original structure of the church, though it is clear that alterations were made in the 15th century; it is possible that its Perpendicular features were added at this date. In 1487 the Trinity Chapel was added at the east end of the south aisle, while a second chantry dedicated to St Katherine is recorded in 1516 (Fishwick 1889, 132).

There are several other churches and chapels dating from this period in the area. In 1471 the Abbot of Whalley granted a licence to the inhabitants of Butterworth and Hundersfield to erect a new chapel at Littleborough. A chapel was built at Milnrow shortly after 1496, and that at Whitworth was constructed in 1529, to be rebuilt at a later date as the parish church (Fishwick 1889, 164). The earliest mention of a rector at St Leonard's, Middleton, is in a deed of the 12th century, in which Roger de Middleton made a grant to Geoffrey, Dean of Whalley. Among the witnesses was 'Adam, Priest of Middleton' (Cleworth 1904). It is possible that the western arch of the church dates to around 1200. A second rebuilding took place in 1524, when a window commemorating the victory of the battle of Flodden Field was inserted in the

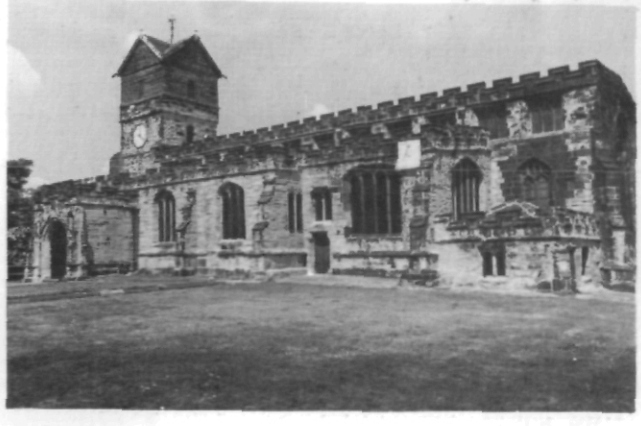

Plate 5 Middleton Parish Church

south wall. It depicts Sir Richard Ashton with his wife Anna, and the body of archers he raised and equipped, kneeling in church before going to war. Middleton also had an endowed free grammar school as early as 1412, and the later buildings of this school still survive.

It is possible that the township of Castleton took its name from the castle which once stood on the raised area now known as Castle Hill. No mention is made of it in the Domesday Book, so it is possible that even by this date the castle had fallen into disuse. However frequent references to Castle Hill and Castle Fields are to be found in the charters of the 12th century. Recent excavations on the presumed site of the outer bailey have shed little light on the problem. Little remains of the castle now, the earthworks having been considerably mutilated by 19th century development. However, a plan of the earthworks produced in 1823 (Fishwick 1889, 9) appears to depict a castle of motte-and-bailey type, with earthen ramparts probably originally surmounted by a wooden palisade and tower.

THE EARLY POST-MEDIEVAL PERIOD

The end of the feudal system; protestantism and puritanism; the eve of the industrial revolution.

By the end of the medieval period Rochdale had become an established market-centre with a fair, although it was still not strictly a town, but rather a fusion of parts of the townships of Castleton, Spotland and Wardleworth. To the south, Middleton was the other main centre of growth in the early modern period. Both towns were centres of the woollen trade, and the agriculture of the area had moved from arable to pastoral, and from cattle- to sheep-raising.

The importance of sheep, and to a lesser extent cattle, and the central role of the woollen industry, continued well into the modern period. Likewise, many of the families which were powerful in the medieval period continued to be influential. The Byron family for instance, continued to hold power in Rochdale. In 1462 Sir Nicholas Byron became lord of the manor, and the lordship remained with the family until 1823, when the poet Lord George Byron, Baron Rochdale, sold it to James Dearden of 'The Orchard'. Other notable families which continued to have influence in the area were the Asshetons of Middleton, the Holts, and the Savilles.

Many of the farms and halls of the 16th and 17th centuries can be traced back to the medieval period, as can the families that lived in them. The mills that had been built on the River Roch and its tributaries continued to play an important part in the life of the district. A number of corn-mills were converted for the fulling of woollen cloth, and others were built especially for this purpose.

The major political events of the period, the Reformation and the Civil War, found Rochdale displaying solid protestant and puritan sympathies. In this it was typical of those parts of the country where trade and industry were beginning to grow. Those who displayed independence in their economic activities also displayed it in their political and religious sympathies. Rochdale formed part of that area of South-East Lancashire and the West Riding whose interests lay firmly in trade. It was sharply demarcated from those parts of Lancashire and Yorkshire which looked with more favour upon the 'Old Faith' and the cause of the throne.
In 1537, however, the immediate effect on Rochdale of the reforms of Henry VIII was the dissolution of Whalley Abbey, a wealthy Cistercian house which held extensive lands in Rochdale parish. These lands passed to the crown, who sold them or granted them to loyal supporters. In this way for example Spotland Manor came in 1541 to Thomas Holt of Grizlehurst. The right to appoint the vicar of the parish church also passed to the crown, and in 1547 Edward VI granted these rights and the revenue of the parish to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer.

Rochdale parish was one of the largest in Lancashire, and the vicar was an extremely important local figure. The church itself was the major meeting-point for Rochdale, and the importance of the church and growing prosperity of the parish is shown by its acquisition of an organ in 1552: then one of only two in Lancashire. It is significant then, that there was a series of puritan clergymen as vicars. Richard Midgley (vicar 1561-95) was a moderate puritan, but his son Joseph was so zealous that he was deprived of his living in 1606 following an enquiry held by royal commissioners sent to put down puritan irregularities. A later vicar, Robert Bathe, was another staunch puritan and presbyterian.

Rochdale was spared any direct involvement in the Civil War (see Appendix 2), but its parliamentary sympathies were clear. In March 1642, all males in the parish over the age of eighteen signed the Protestation: resolving to maintain the protestant religion, to defend king and parliament, and the rights and liberties of the subject. In 1643 Robert Bathe signed the Solemn League and Covenant.

Captain Schofield of Rochdale was one of the officers of the parliamentarian garrison of Bolton, beseiged by the king's forces in 1643. In general, puritan families like the Chadwicks and the Halliwells appear to have avoided becoming involved in the war, though in 1629 Jordan Chadwick of Healey Hall had denied that his land was held of the king and was fined £10. Edmond Butterworth of Belfield Hall, a staunch puritan, was fined £12 10s for refusing a knighthood, but the Butterworths were a divided family and Edmond's younger brother Alexander fought for the king and helped to defend Lathom House in 1645. In 1650 he was fined £3 6s 8d and his support for the king left him in possession of only a horse and his clothes.
The most prominent person on either side from the Rochdale area was Sir Ralph Assheton, a descendent of the Assheton who had led his Middleton men to Flodden Field. He commanded at the siege of Bolton and fought a series of battles against the king's forces in the following years. It is recorded that Robert Bathe and the people of Rochdale held a service in the parish church in thanksgiving for Assheton's victory over the Earl of Derby.

Even at the Restoration in 1660 there was a last

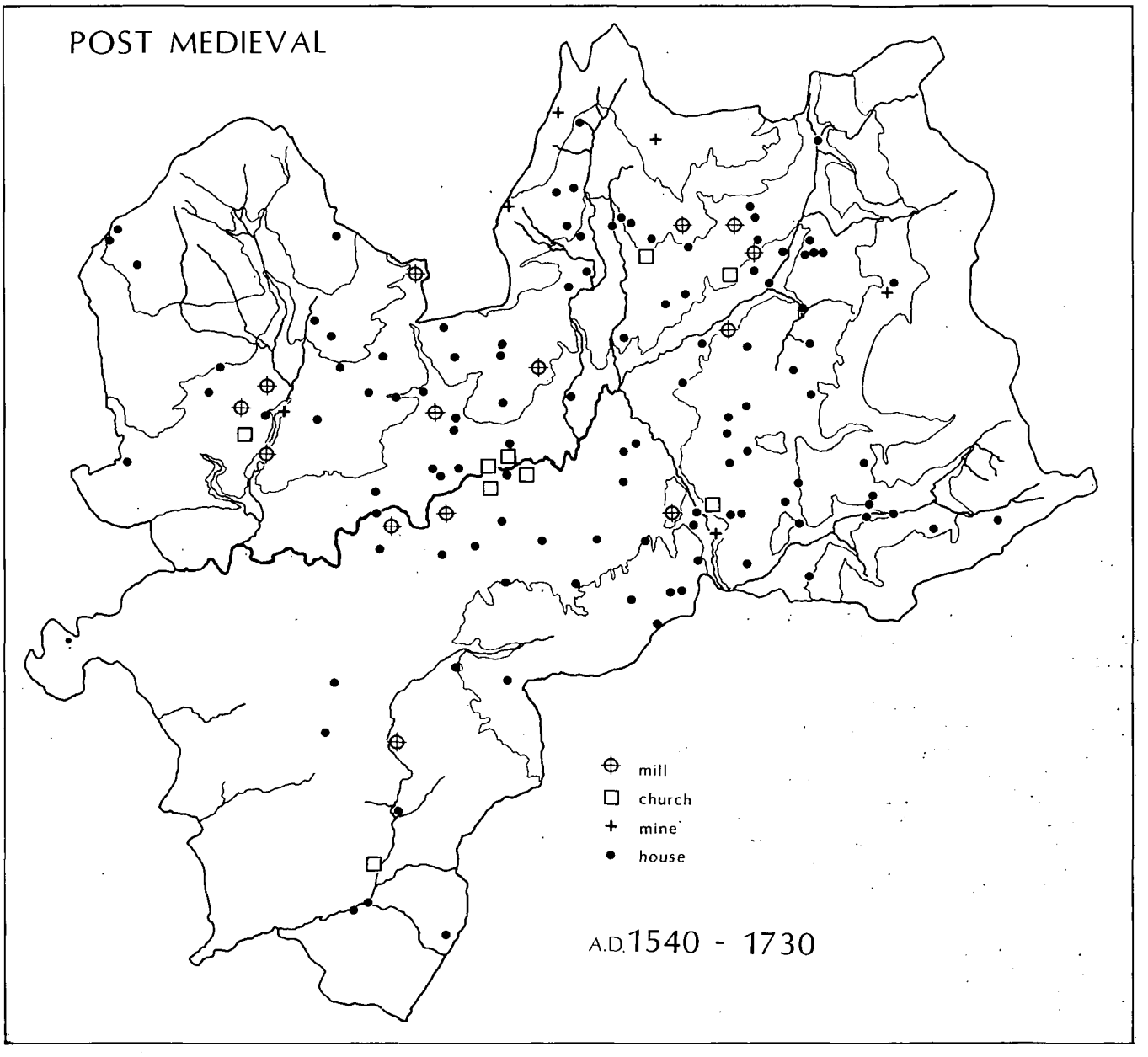

Fig 9 Rochdale : Post-Medieval

defiant act of rebellion when Henry Kershaw, acting as trumpeter when Charles II was proclaimed monarch, was killed by a shot in the head. The identity of the assassin was never revealed. In 1662 Robert Bathe refused to conform to the Act of Uniformity, and was removed after 28 years as vicar. His departure marked the end of an era of political and religious rebellion in Rochdale.

By the late 17th century Rochdale was a fairly prosperous town. The Hearth Tax of 1666 recorded 1267 hearths, and most of the wealthy families, such as the Holts, Butterworths, Schofields, Gartsides and Chadwicks, dealt in wool. In 1668 at Healey Hall there were gold and silver lace curtains and a 'pair of harpsichalls'. In 1676 John Gregory, Gentleman, of Rochdale, died leaving £2626.

Clear evidence of the growing wealth of the community is reflected in the establishment of charities and chapels, and in the rebuilding of the parish churches. Heywood Parish Church, though medieval in origin and rebuilt in the Victorian period, displays some 17th century features, such as a sundial of 1686. St Chad's in Rochdale was already rebuilt around 1558 and in 1660 the steps were built (or rebuilt) with stone from Blackstone Edge. Further rebuilding is indicated by datestones of 1688 and 1700 (VCH 5 1911, 194).

Education was increasingly valued and was the object of bequests. Middleton Grammar School, established by Bishop Langley in 1412, survived the Reformation and was further endowed in 1572 by Alexander Nowell, a former pupil. The schoolhouse, which survives to the present day, was rebuilt in 1597 (VCH 5 1911, 159-60). Around 1690 a school was instituted at Littleborough Chapel, and Rochdale Grammar School was built c1564-5. The Chadwicks of Healey Hall and a Mr Lynney bequeathed funds to the school in 1682 and later. In 1669 a solicitor, Jeremy Hargreaves, left £20 to the grammar school in order to help fund the teaching of writing.

Wills also indicate the wealth of the gentry at

Plate 6 17th century date stone, Watergrove reservoir

this time. Charles Holt of Stubley for example left silver plate in his will, and funds were often left to the poor, as by James Wolfenden of Hades in 1688 and John Brearley of Spotland in 1692. By 1697 there were several doctors in the parish (Taylor 1956).

One of the most obvious indicators of prosperity was the building and rebuilding of the homes of the gentry and yeoman-farmers of the area. This reminds us that whatever the importance of trade and manufacture, society was still essentially dependent upon agriculture.

Many of the notable halls of the local gentry were rebuilt in the 17th century, and some, such as Tonge Hall, originated then. Handle Hall was built in 1610 on land taken from the waste. Other halls of this period are Clegg (1600), Chadwick (1620), Butterworth (1630) and Coptrod (1672) as well as Stubley, Oakenrod and Hopwood. Clegg Hall is particularly interesting in that it shows signs of having been influenced by the fashion for 'classical' motifs, and is a move away from the vernacular tradition to the architect-designed house.

The same is true of farms. Of more than 70 farms in Rochdale Borough which survive from this period, two-thirds have good evidence, in the form of date-stones for example, of building or rebuilding in the 17th century. It should be emphasised too that it is highly likely that many of these, if not most, originated before the 17th century. However, only seven can definitely be dated to the 16th century and only ten to pre-1500. Of the latter, seven were rebuilt between 1600 and 1700. Examples include Lightowlers, Barthouse, Wildhouse, Small Shaw, and Whitaker farms.

Also surviving from this period are the remains of a stone barn near Catley Lane Head, dating from before 1624 and now converted to a house. Carr Farm dated 1622 has a shippon (cowshed) of the same period, as does Benthouse. At Rayton, Hunger Hill and Hill Top Farm, Littleborough are the remains of ridge-and-furrow: relics of arable field-systems that were abandoned with the change to sheep farming at this period.

During the 16th century there was a prolonged series of conflicts between the Byrons, who sought to enclose land, and the tenants and landowners who opposed them. In 1519-20 the first Sir John Byron enclosed part of Buersil Common with a dyke, which was pulled down by women and children in a 'peaceable manner'. Incidents like this happened often, and in some cases led to violence. In 1595 the Byrons and the Holts fought with swords over rights of pasturing sheep on land which the farmer had enclosed (Taylor 1956, 29-30). Enclosure of waste continued in the 17th century, but less contentiously; Wadsworth (1923-5) has suggested that this was in part because the smallholders attached less importance to their rights of pasture now that a greater part of their income was derived from the production of cloth.

The coal industry was never as important in Rochdale as in other parts of South Lancashire. Some small-scale mining had been carried out in the medieval period and in 1580 a mine was recorded at Knowle House, near Littleborough. The survey of 1610 recorded mines at Butterworth Common near Milnrow, Crook Hill, and at Brown Wardle, where quarrying for stone was also carried out. These sites were active until the early 19th century, as was the pit at the Trough in Spotland. In 1626 a female collier, Alice Wolstanholme, is noted disapprovingly as having destroyed much timber for 'supplying of her pits' at Wardle (Taylor 1956).

The growth of the woollen industry was the most important feature of this period. By 1547, this trade was described as 'very considerable', and an act of 1566 provided that the Aulnager for Lancashire (a royal overseer of the trade) should have deputies in Blackburn, Bolton, Bury, Manchester and Rochdale. A document of 1586 shows that families of traders would send one of their number to London to act as agent. Arthur Healey of Rochdale for example sent 14 pieces of cloth to Roger Healey of London. The conveyance cost 11s 4d and the cloth was to be sold for £20. Some idea of the scale of the trade is given by the case of 1586-7, in which two Rochdale mercers owed a Manchester merchant no less than £800 for cloth.

When the monopoly on the dyeing of cloth held by the Merchant Adventurers Company was published in the early 17th century, several dyers came to Rochdale. At the end of the 16th century cotton was

Plate 7 Healey Dell Mill, Whitworth

introduced to Lancashire, but Rochdale remained a centre of the woollen industry as well, and maintained close links with the West Riding of Yorkshire. A number of medieval mills continued in use. At least eighteen mills can be identified as having existed at some time during the 16th and 17th centuries and at least four of these dated from the medieval period. The Hopwood Hall Mill occupied a site used for grinding corn since 1307, and continued in use until 1882; Buckley Mill, also of 14th century date, was still in use in 1626; Heywood and Rochdale Mills likewise continued to grind corn in the 16th century.

Healey Dell Mill became a fulling-mill in 1636, and the present derelict building was constructed in 1676. Broadley Mill, recorded as a corn-mill in 1556 and 1610, had become a fulling-mill by 1626. Oakenrod Mill was a corn-mill before 1557,and a fulling-mill by 1606. By the beginning of the 17th century, fulling-mills had also been built at Falinge and at Haworth Hall, Wardle, and there were bleach-houses at Buersil, Butterworth, and Spotland.

At this period the roads were of very poor quality, and the burden of maintenance fell upon the parishes through which they passed. Wool was conveyed by pack-horse along narrow stone-flagged roads, those crossing the Pennines being of particular importence. Apart from Blackstone Edge (Appendix 1) remains of such roads can be seen at Tunshill, near Milnrow, and at Reddyshaw Scout: a particularly fine example of a pack-horse road, leading to Todmorden and Burnley.

THE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD

The development of large-scale industry; the importance of textiles; the transport revolution.

In the early 18th century Rochdale was well-established as a centre of the woollen trade, but its scale was still small by later standards. The Rochdale of 1700 has been described as a 'large village', with a population of around 8000 (Robertson 1889, 151). Celia Fiennes, writing in 1700, described Rochdale as a "pretty neat town built all of stone". It was not long after this, in 1708, that the Union Flag Hotel (now Lloyds Bank) was built in Yorkshire Street. This was a good example of early 18th century architecture, uncommon in the north and a clear indication of Rochdale's prosperity. In 1724 Daniel Defoe visited Rochdale and described it as "a good market town, and of late much improved in the woollen manufacture, as are also the villages in its neighbourhood". Another indication of growing population and prosperity was the building in brick, in 1739, of St Mary's Church Rochdale, though most of the present structure dates from a rebuilding of 1911.

It was of course the woollen industry which was the basis of Rochdale's wealth. In 1750 Pococke said of Rochdale, "they have a large manufacture of blankets, baies and shaloons" and in 1778 Rochdale was described as "famous for cloth". It was said that "every considerable house is a manufactory and is supplied with a rivulet or little stream, without which the business cannot be carried on ... not a beaggr or idle person to be seen". However even by

Plate 8 Lloyd's Bank, Rochdale, built in 1708

1770 Middleton had no more than about 20 dwellings.

The woollen trade was carried on by individual spinners and weavers in their own homes. Wool was given out by the clothier who paid them for spinning and weaving. Within the family there was a division of labour: women spun while men wove, with the assistance of the older children. Younger children, from four to nine years of age, would card wool or wind the thread onto bobbins (Wadsworth 1923-5). Many of those who worked at spinning and weaving would also have small farms, though this became less common later as the industry developed. Weavers' cottages, with their distinctive top storey for the workroom, can still be seen at Littleborough. Good examples can be seen at Smithy Bridge Road, New Road, Smithfield and Salley Street.

The only centralised part of the industry was fulling, which was carried out in water-powered mills. It was these which formed the core of the woollen-mills which developed when mechanisation took place in the 19th century. There was generally a time-lag between the application of a new mechanical technique in the cotton industry, and its adoption by the woollen industry. After fulling, mechanisation was next applied to the carding process, though as late as the 1830's all other processes were still carried out by hand. In 1833 only two Rochdale mills wove by powered machinery.

Wadsworth (1935-7) suggests a pattern by which mechanisation, usually powered by water-mills,

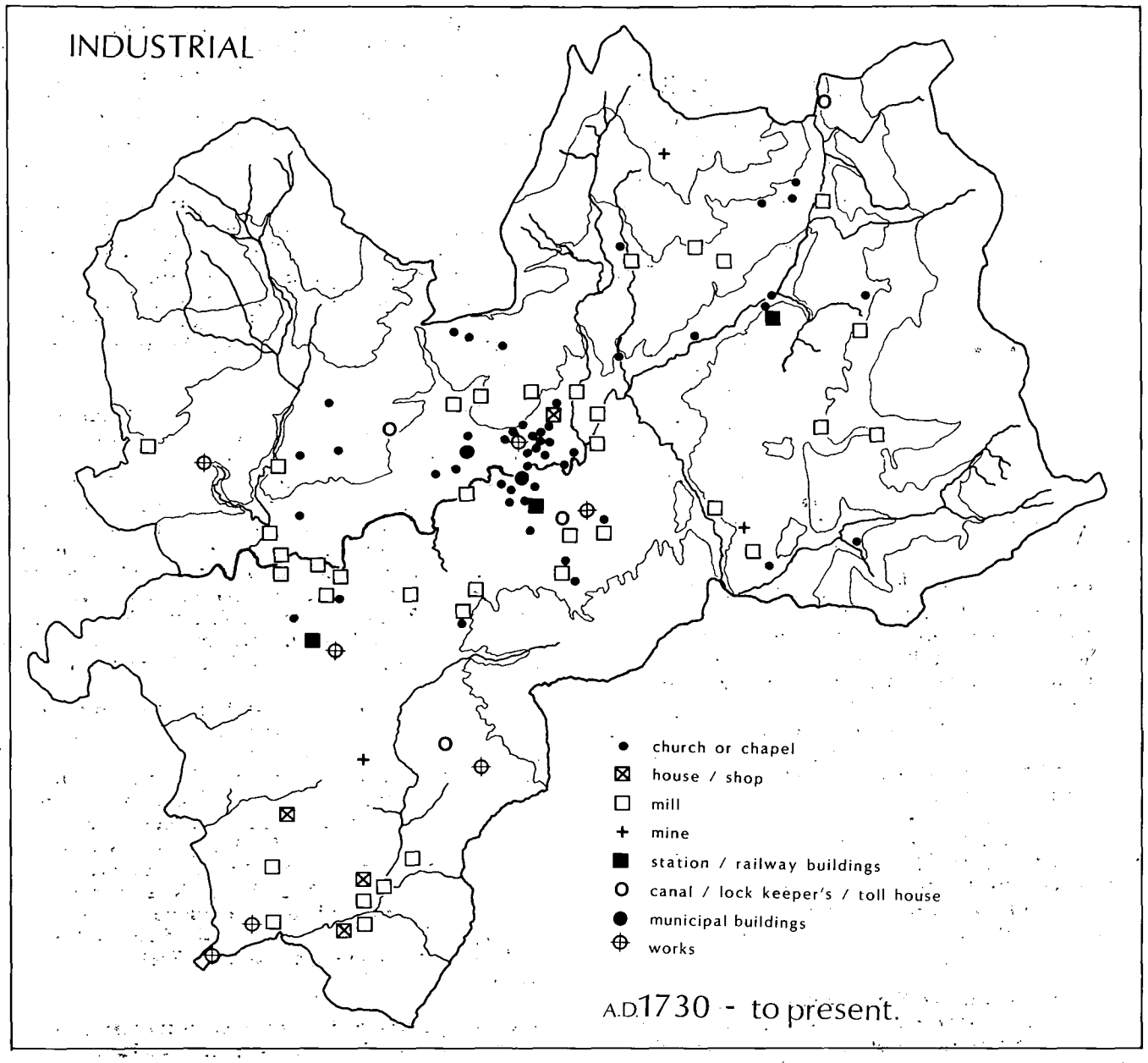

Fig 10 Rochdale : Industrial

spread through the Lancashire textile industry: from fulling-mills to wool and cotton carding-mills, thence to cotton-spinning, then after about 1825 to cotton-weaving, and finally to the spinning and weaving of wool. One particularly successful aspect of the woollen industry in Rochdale was the manufacture of flannel. This had been a staple as early as 1558, and by 1825 with the beginnings of mechanisation 8000 flannel pieces were produced per week. In 1856 when Rochdale was incorporated, it was stated that the town produced nine-tenths of all flannel produced in England. It retained this position until the 1870's when cotton-spinning, using the ring-spinning technique, became the town's principal industry. The silk industry came to Middleton in about 1778, though it had been carried out in Salford from 1670 and in Manchester from at least 1640. After a rapid spread it seems to have declined by the end of the 18th century, perhaps because of the greater opportunities for profit in the cotton industry. It revived in the 19th century however, and in 1832 there were 2121 silk-looms in Middleton and the surrounding area. In 1840 it was estimated that in the township of Middleton silk-weaving occupied 1000 women, 700 men and 300 young people. The trade reached a peak around 1860 and afterwards declined and disappeared.

The cotton industry was finally getting a foot-hold in the valley of the Roch at about the same time. The first cotton-mill in Rochdale itself was built in 1791, and the 'Universal British Directory' of 1792 records seven 'cotton manufacturers', or employers of hand-loom weavers. In 1799 the spinning-frame was introduced, and in 1802 the Hanging Road Factory was established, for many years the biggest in town. By 1825, Baines' Directory gives 39 cotton-spinners; mills were now being built with steam engines so that they could be sited where convenient rather than being restricted to sites next to a stream (Wadsworth 1935-7).

By 1841 employment in the textile industries of

Plate 9 Ellenrod ring mill

Rochdale was 15,000, as compared to 25,000 each in Oldham and Bury and 40,000 in Manchester. Of this 15,000, nearly half were engaged in mills spinning coarse cotton thread, but over a quarter were in the woollen industry: a fact which distinguished Rochdale from the rest of Lancashire. The remaining quarter of the workforce worked in mills which combined the spinning and weaving of cotton.

Between 1839-41 and 1844-5, a further 500 horse-power was put into the textile industries of Rochdale, a figure exceeded only by that of Manchester. The textile industry gave rise to bleaching-, printing- and dyeing-works, and the growth of spinning and weaving also led to the development of firms supplying machinery, and so to general engineering-works. It also gave rise to an increased demand for coal, although this was in large part supplied by the Lancashire coalfields west of Manchester. Local mining continued on a relatively modest scale, however. A colliery wage book of 1772 records that in that year an under-looker received 10 shillings per week, a collier 6s 8d for 5 days work, a carpenter 8s for 6 days, and a gin driver 4s per week. A working day was twelve hours long.

The other great innovation of industrial society was the growth of transport, both as a stimulus to development and as a result of it. The growth of the woollen trade and the increase in wheeled traffic had placed a severe strain on the existing road system. Roads had to be straightened and enlarged and bridges rebuilt: Lever Bridge in Middleton was enlarged in 1733 (and again in 1856), and Heap Bridge over the Roch was rebuilt in 1776-7.

To meet the increasing burden of maintaining roads, turnpike trusts were established. Eventually there were eleven in Rochdale, set up in the second half of the 18th century and the first quarter of the 19th. One of the earlier, and more important, was that on the line of the modern A671 from Burnley to Manchester via Rochdale. This was turnpiked in 1754-5. The first stage-coach ran from Rochdale to Manchester in 1790. Toll-houses were built at the junction of the Halifax and Todmorden Roads in Littleborough, and at the junction of the Reddyshaw Scout Road and Calderbrook Road.

Work began on the Rochdale Canal in 1794, on a route by John Rennie. It reached Todmorden in August 1798, and Rochdale in December of that year, and the complete Leeds link was opened in December 1804. When finished the canal had 56 locks up to West Summit from Manchester, and a further 36 locks down to Sowerby Bridge, and was 33 miles long. It can still be traced over its entire length, though it is not all navigable. Good examples of its 92 locks are the Long Lees, Higher Boarshaw and Slattocks Locks.

The former Drake Street Basin in Rochdale has been filled in but a stone warehouse survives. The basin at Boarshaw Lock, also filled in, was connected by tramroad to the collieries. Many canal bridges survive; particularly notable is that at March Barn Road near Arrow Mill, which crosses the canal at a 60 degree angle. Another skewed bridge is that at Castleton.

Like the canal, the railway came to Rochdale as part of a scheme to link Manchester and Leeds. Work began in 1837 and was completed in 1841. Local lines came later; that from Rochdale to Oldham for example was opened in 1863, and Rochdale to Facit in 1868. Rochdale's original station of 1839, near the present goods-yard, was replaced in 1887-91 and was modernised in the 1970's. Heywood station, built in 1848 on the line to Bury, was closed in 1970 and allowed to fall derelict. Nearby was the terminus basin of the Heywood branch of the Rochdale Canal, opened in 1834 and now filled in.

The present Littleborough station dates from the late 19th century. Just north of it is the southern portal of Summit Tunnel. When it was opened in 1841 it was the longest railway tunnel in Britain, measuring 2885 yards long. The engineers were George Stephenson and T L Gooch, and the cost was £251,000. It is lined with 5-10 rings of brickwork, and 14 shafts were sunk for the excavations, the deepest being 320 feet. On the surface, numerous spoil heaps mark the line of the tunnel. Other notable railway monuments are the Spodden Viaduct and the eighteen-arch, stone-built Rochdale Viaduct.

The first passenger trams began to operate under steam power in 1883. Services ran to Oldham and Bury as well as to the outlying districts. The trams were taken over by the corporation in 1902,

Plate 10 Hollingworth Lake : originally built to feed the Rochdale Canal

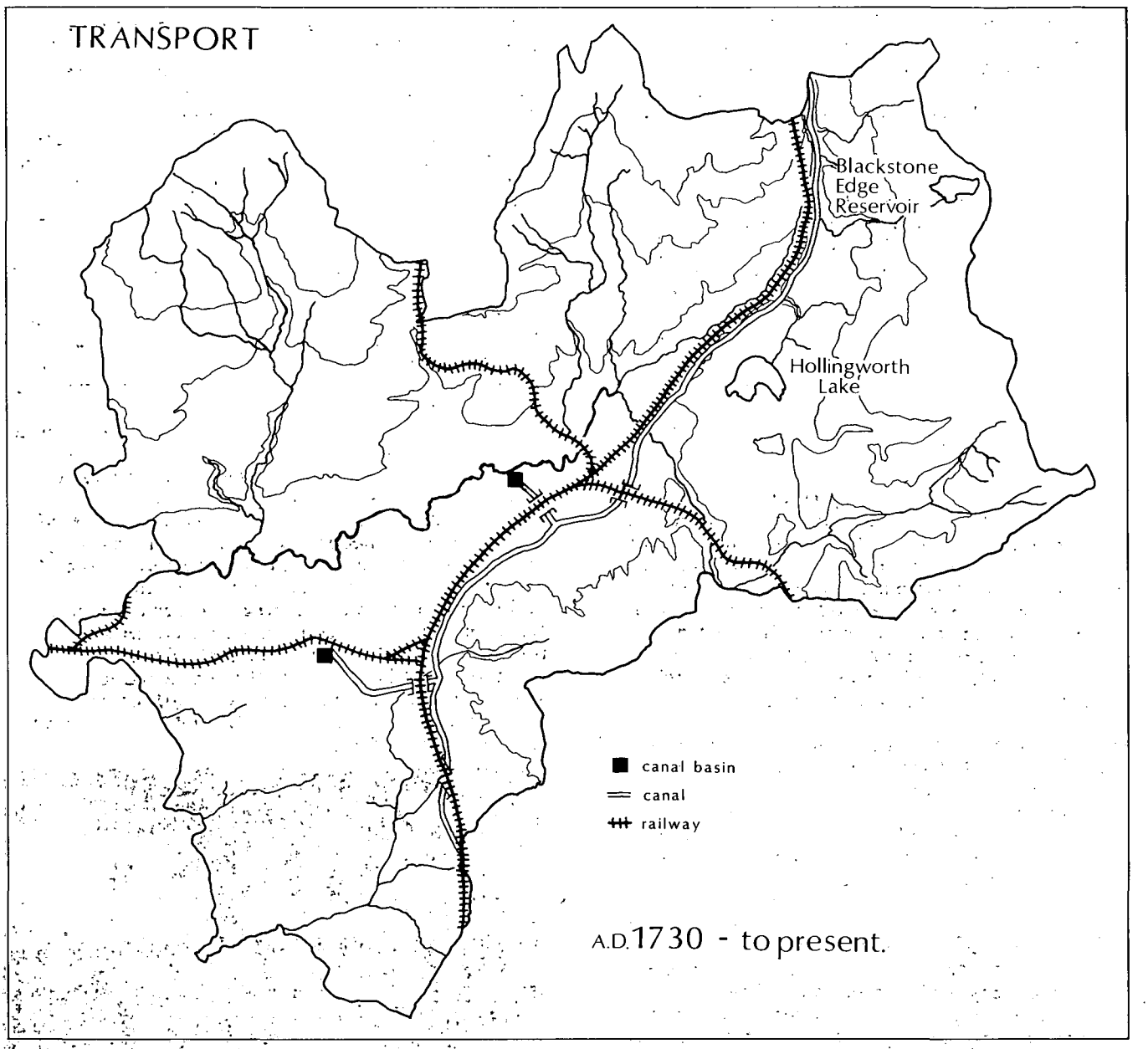

Fig 11 Rochdale : transport

and between 1902 and 1905 electricity replaced steam. The first corporation buses ran in 1926, at first on routes not served by trams, but by 1932 they had replaced all the trams.

THE FUTURE

It is obvious that our archaeological knowledge of the Rochdale district is limited in nature and biased towards certain areas. The value of a Sites and Monuments Survey is that it points out the inherent limitations and biases, and allows a strategy for future work to be developed. There are two separate archaeological problems to be approached: the problem of the buried evidence and the problem of the surviving standing structures. The remains of early human activity, from the final phase of the last glaciation to the end of the medieval period, spanning over 9000 years, are for the most part buried under the ground. We can only understand them by intensive controlled excavation or by extensive field survey. Little modern controlled excavation has taken place in Rochdale, and this is partly due to the fact that 19th century urban expansion may have destroyed much of the archaeological record. It is also true that without adequate survey we cannot tell where we should be digging for the best results. Extensive survey has been carried out by enthusiasts of one particular period in a limited number of locations, and so we have for example a very good idea of human activity in the Mesolithic period on the Pennine uplands. Unfortunately, other periods and other areas have not received similar treatment. The evidence of more modern human activity, from the end of the medieval period to the present day, generally remains above ground: whether as surviving structures, as fragments incorporated into later structures, as relict street- or field- patterns, or in historical records. The rate of urban development since the 1940's has meant that many of these post-medieval structures have been destroyed, and although occasional work has been carried out on a local basis, no assessment of the scale of survival

across the whole district has been made. Archaeologists are concerned with the physical evidence of past human activity, and although large quantities of documentary evidence survive from the post-medieval period, analysis of the surviving physical structure can often shed light on social relationships and working methods.

The majority of finds from the early prehistoric period are stone tools and flint-working debris, collected from the Pennine uplands. Archaeological traces are rarely visible above ground; however, field survey on the fringe of the alluvial deposits of the Roch Valley might reveal evidence of Mesolithic lake-side summer settlements, or more permanent Neolithic settlements. Controlled excavation of upland sites might reveal the remains of temporary camps, but this would require the most stringent application of modern archaeological techniques.

Very few finds from the late prehistoric period have been made in the Rochdale area, although there is no reason to believe that settlement was wholly absent. Preliminary random field survey has revealed possible Iron Age field-boundaries on the uplands, although a more detailed exploration would be needed before these could be fully authenticated. Certainly, field survey across the whole district might well reveal traces of late prehistoric settlement and agricultural activity.

It is obvious from the amount of Roman material from Rochdale that there was a reasonable level of settlement in the area during the Roman period. It is unlikely that structural remains will have survived, since much of the modern or 19th century development has taken place on those sites which the Roman inhabitants would themselves have favoured. A close watch on development around known find-spots may, however, reveal fragmentary structural evidence sufficient to indicate the form and extent of settlement. The evidence for roads in the area remains sketchy, and a programme of selective trenching across presumed road lines could do much to enhance our knowledge. Of course the results of such a programme would need to be regularly published to be of any value: a factor often overlooked in the past.

There is such a dearth of evidence from the post-Roman period that the discovery of any material would enormously increase our knowledge. Nineteenth century development has probably destroyed any evidence of settlement around St Chad's, and the other possible settlement-sites are all heavily overbuilt. The nature of Saxon domestic architecture is such that there is less chance of survival than with Roman structures. It seems unlikely that there was any settlement outside the areas now covered by modern development, and so field survey is unlikely to reveal any traces of Saxon occupation. Late Celtic farms would be reasonably likely to show up during field survey, provided the sites had not continued in use into the medieval period, as such continuity would inevitably destroy the early features.

For the most part the remains of the historic period have been well recorded in Rochdale and Middleton. Starting with the 19th century work of Baines and Fishwick, local historians have produced publications on various aspects of the history of the district. It is very much to be hoped that this tradition will continue, though it is imperative that future work is supplemented by the highest standards of drawn and photographic record. With the rapid change in the fabric of our towns brought about by large-scale development, what might seem commonplace may suddenly become rare, or may disappear altogether.

In discovering, preserving and presenting the history of the district, it is important that as many groups as possible are involved, in order that 'history' does not simply become the preserve of specialists, to the exclusion of the rest of the population. Buildings and monuments of interest may be safeguarded by Listing and Scheduling, which affords them some legal protection from destruction or alteration, while areas of importance can be designated as Conservation Areas with the same result. It is important that local authorities should acknowledge their role in the protection of the heritage. Although individuals or groups are charged with the daily maintenance and upkeep of buildings of historic value, it is the local authority which holds the power and responsibility for conservation, through its various planning functions. For the heritage of a district to be safeguarded it is important that conservation should be seen not as a separate issue, but as an integral and relevant part of the wider function of development control.

Plate 11 St Chad's Rectory, now Rochdale Museum

APPENDIX 1: BLACKSTONE EDGE ROAD

The paved road over Blackstone Edge was first surveyed in detail by I A Richmond in 1923 (Richmond 1923-5). During the survey, Richmond cut a section across the road, similar to one illustrated in Baines' History of Lancashire. The road is shown as a single layer of stone blocks, laid directly on the peat, contained by vertically-set kerb-stones, and retained by the pressure of a small bank of stone rubble. The stone blocks are of various sizes but they are invariably set on edge. The kerb-stones are around 150mm wide and up to 600mm long. Down the centre of the road runs a channel formed of large stone blocks, 600mm to

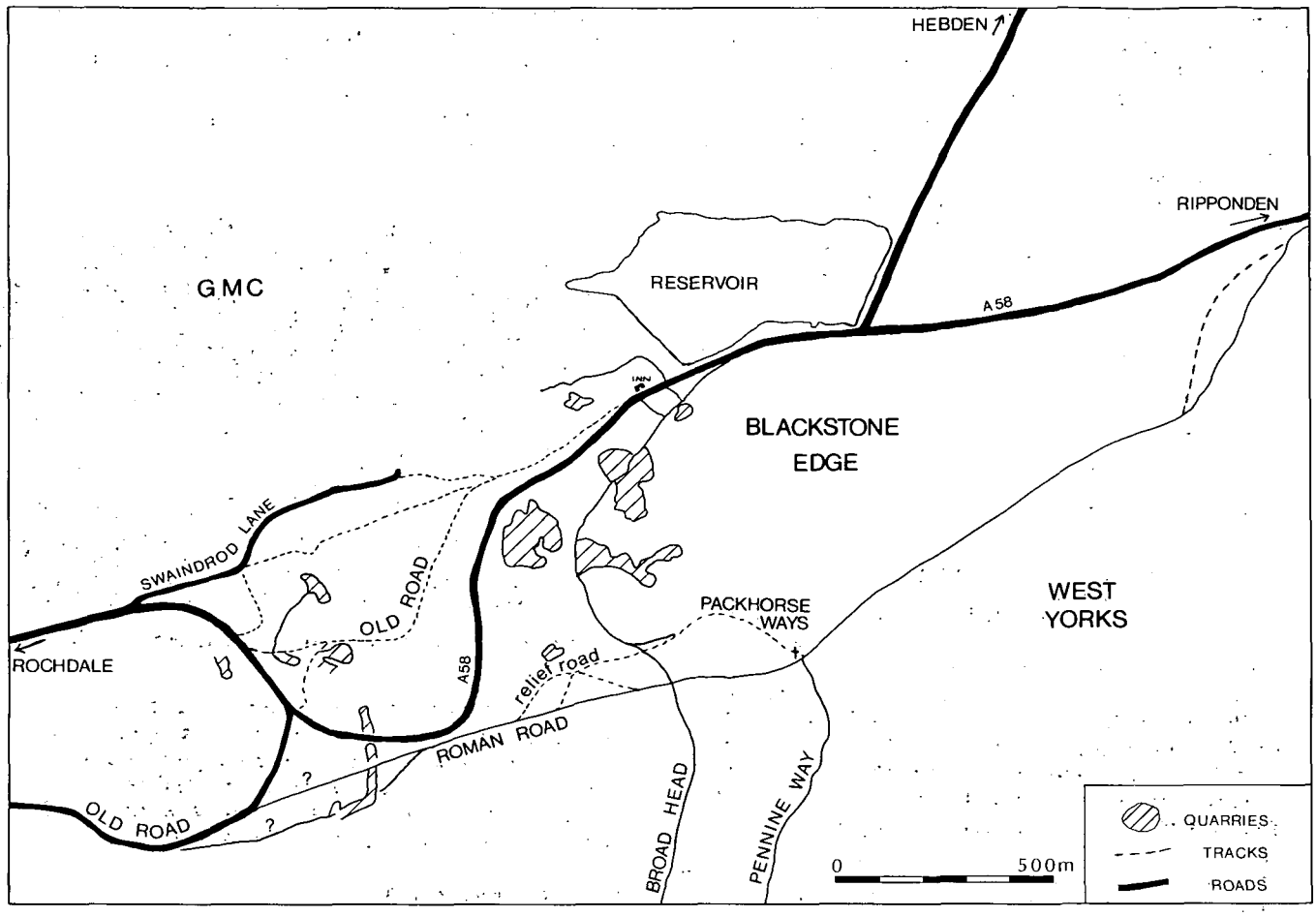

Fig 12 Blackstone Edge roads

750mm wide, and up to 650mm long. The road runs in a straight line up a steep gradient that reaches 1 in 4 in places; however the tight packing of the stones and occasional transverse ribs seem effectively to hold the undisturbed surface in place.

The road is presumed to start at Windy Bank, Littleborough, although no evidence can be seen until Lydgate, where traces of a possible causeway start at Oil Mill and curve north-eastwards towards the foot of Blackstone Edge. The ascent of the Edge commences at a visitors' car park, but the first hundred metres of the surface have been eroded or deliberately robbed, and nothing remains but a swathe of deeply-cut water courses. It is not until the steepest part of the hill that the paving survives.

At about 300m OD, a loop road can be seen breaking away to the north. This road takes a zig-zag course to avoid the steepest slope and returns to the road at around 410m OD. This loop is unpaved except for the first few metres at its upper end, and does not possess a central trough. Around 425m OD, the paving is cut by the Broadhead Drain, constructed to feed Blackstone Edge Reservoir. This was built in the early 19th century to supply the Rochdale Canal, which runs along the valley below. Above this point the pavement appears here and there, although in some places bedrock seems to serve the same purpose, and some patches have eroded completely. At the summit the road passes the Aiggin Stone, and some enigmatic 'entrenchments', and then crosses the county boundary at about 445m OD. From this point the pavement, where it exists, remains largely covered by peat.

The Roman Road

Whitaker (1773) claimed that the road formed part of a routeway supposed to have run from the Roman camp at Manchester into Yorkshire. This theory, combined with Stukeley's earlier suggestion that a Roman road must have traversed the Pennines around Blackstone Edge, led many Victorian antiquaries to assume that the paved road was of Roman origin. In 1835, Baines reported in his History of Lancashire that a Roman road appears to have traversed Castleton from the south-west to the north-east, connecting the Roman forts of Manchester and Ilkley. By 1879, Colley-March appears to have examined the road closely, describing it in detail in a lecture to the Rochdale Literary and Scientific Society in that year. He made particular mention of the central groove, which he believed had been made for the purpose of skidding the brake wheels of wagons going down the steeper sections of the road. He also suggested as alternatives that the groove might have been worn by the feet of wagon-horses or have served as a drainage-channel, although he doubted the latter as the road had a pronounced camber. In 1883 Brierley was sufficiently convinced of its origin to state that "there can be no doubt that the road is Roman", and cited roads in Syria, Pompeii, Rome, Turin and Brindisi, as being of similar construction (Brierley 1883).

In the same year the Lancashire and Cheshire Anti-

quarian Society met to discuss the road. At this meeting, Fishwick agreed with Colley-March, but said that he believed it unlikely that the central trough had been carved out, rather that it had worn away with the skidding of the wheels. Watkin maintained that the central groove was for the use of a three-wheeled trolley or similar vehicle, though he admitted that skidding probably also played a part. Colley-March believed that the construction of the road would have been so costly that it "could hardly have been the work of other than a wealthy and imperial power" and suggested that the road's antiquity was proved by the numerous alterations and deviations to the original route. The name given to the eastern portion of the road, 'Devil's Pavement', supported this thesis, showing that "its structure was so different from the familiar pack-horse tracks of the district, that it was supposed to have been the work of supernatural power" (Colley- March 1883).

In 1907, White, lecturing in Oldham, reiterated the evidence for the road having a Roman date: that its antiquity was shown by its being covered with vegetation, that it was paved, and that the Romans were "great road makers". He admitted that this evidence was certainly not conclusive and pointed to its unique character as possible evidence of its non-Roman origin, claiming that it was "highly improbable that a race who made such a great number of roads should make one of a very elaborate and special nature and never repeat it again".

In 1922 Taylor and Collingwood wrote in the Journal of the Society for Roman Studies, that they believed the road was built around AD 125. A year later, at the invitation of the Rochdale Literary and Scientific Society, Richmond carried out an extensive survey of the road. He discussed the camber and drainage-ditches, and made a detailed study of the 'relief road'. He suggested that the latter was built to allow horses and carts to 'by-pass' the steepest part of the ascent, and went on to argue further that such a device would be superfluous throughout the post-Roman and medieval period, when transport in this area was generally by foot or pack-horse.

Margary (1973) cited it as a well-preserved example of a Roman road, and discussed one of similar construction at Doctor's Gate, Glossop; however, this has since proved to be of later origin (Hart 1981). A number of finds of Roman material, including coins, coin-hoards and tiles, have been made in the Littleborough area. These are sufficient to indicate, if nothing else, a reasonable degree of activity in the area in Roman times. No datable stratified finds have been made in association with the road, since no controlled excavation has been carried out on it.

The Danish Road

Little is known of Scandinavian activity in this area during the early medieval period. Certainly contact occurred between the Vikings of Dublin and York, and this affected all of Northern England. As a result, some speculation has occurred on the possibility of the Blackstone Edge road having a Danish origin, prompted by the local name 'Danes Road' at Rishworth. In 1907 Dr A C White postulated that the road with its central groove was built for the purpose of permitting portage from rivers draining into the Irish Sea to those draining into the North Sea. In the ancient world, such activities were reasonably commonplace, the most well-known example perhaps being the regular haulage of

Plate 12 The paved road at Blackstone Edge

ships across the Isthmus of Corinth in ancient Greece. The Eastern Vikings, or Varengians, certainly carried out large-scale portage of ships in Russia, but it is open to question whether the Vikings were capable of such a feat of engineering as the construction of the Blackstone Edge Road.

The Medieval Road

References to a road over Blackstone Edge start to appear in the late 13th century. In 1285, Richard Wood complained to the Sowerby constables about the state of the road over 'Blackesteynegge', and in 1291, Richard de Radcliffe and Hugh de Elland were given permission to levy custom on goods carried over the Edge for two years, for the purpose of repairing and maintaining 'the causeway across Blackesteynegge'. There is, however, no way of saying with certainty to which of the several roads now in existence over the Edge this referred.

Throughout its course up the western slope of the Edge, the paved road is duplicated by one or more pack-horse roads. In 1923, Richmond suggested that these roads must post-date the paved road and predate the Reformation. The evidence for this is that they deviate from, and return to, the line of the main paved road, and that their junction at the summit is marked by a way-marker, The Aiggin Stone, bearing a cross and the letters I and T, in a pre-Reformation style. Richmond therefore suggested that the pack-horse road was that with which Richard de Radcliffe and Hugh de Elland were involved.

The Post-Medieval Road

A meeting of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society in 1883 conjectured that the paved road first came to notice (ie was rediscovered) during the Civil War, when the people of Manchester hired a German mercenary, John Rossworm, to defend the area for Parliament (Appendix 2). Rossworm built defences at Blackstone Edge and further south

at Bleakedgate Moor, and installed a garrison on top of the Edge to protect South-East Lancashire against the royalist forces of the Earl of Newcastle.

An argument for the post-medieval origin of the paved road has been presented by H C Collins. He asserts that one of the first tracks over Blackstone Edge was constructed by Gamel the Thane, since it would be natural to build a track or road connecting his lands in Rochdale and Elland. Collins believes that this road would have been paved, but argues that by 1690 the volume of traffic over the Edge would have increased to such an extent that a 2-3 ft wide causeway would have been inadequate to accommodate carts requiring an 8ft span. To support this theory he makes reference to the employment at the time of a certain Joshua Stanton for 2 months' daywork on the track. The Sowerby constables reported that the military traffic was sufficient for them to provide six horses from Sowerby Bridge and a further thirteen horses and two carts for the military.

In 1734, a Turnpike Act was passed which gave powers "to widen the existing road over the craggy mountain of Blackstone Edge", because the existing road "is narrow, deep, ruinous, and impassable for wagons, carts, and other of the many heavy carriages frequently passing that way". The Act claims that the alterations would be "extraordinary, and by methods contrary to the normal custom of the law". Such an extensive rebuilding would hardly seem necessary if the paved road were already in existence.

Further Acts were passed in 1754 and in 1765, the latter giving powers to sell the existing road if a new road would solve the problem of the gradient. If the paved road was in use at this time, the slope would certainly have been too steep for heavily-laden carts. In 1766 a further Act of Parliament granted permission to build "a new circuitous road at a different lower place", and this is probably the route now known as the Blackstone Edge Old Road.

Archaeological Research

The only work of a systematic nature that has been recorded and published, is that of Richmond (1923-5). This is a general survey of the road and associated pack-horse ways, a discussion of the Aiggin Stone, and of comparable roads. Even the most obvious features have gone unrecorded. The structures on the summit, variously referred to as a 'circular Roman fort' and 'entrenchments', could apply equally well to any of the current theories. They could be a medieval custom-house and toll-bar, Colonel Rossworm's Civil War fortifications, an early post-medieval bull-ring, or the wheel-house of a chain and counter-weight incline mechanism. A preliminary survey in March 1984 suggests that much more work could profitably be done on this feature. The Scheduled road is only a part of a complex series of routeways, all designed to solve the same problem. The correct chronological relationship of these elements is not completely clear, although it is known that the A58 fits the requirements of the 1799 turnpike and therefore that Blackstone Edge Old Road dates to around 1768.

The 17th century route seems to have passed by the Aiggin Stone, provided that the 'entrenchments' which appear on the 1st edition OS map are such. From the position of these works it is not clear, however, whether they are guarding the pack-horse way or the road, and it is equally unclear whether the road is earlier than the pack-horse route or later. Added to this is the problem of where precisely the 1734 turnpike road ran. Clearly such problems are only likely to be resolved by systematic and intensive field survey.

APPENDIX 2: ROSSWORM AND THE MILITARY WORKS OF 1643 AT BLACKSTONE EDGE

John Rossworm (or Rossworme) was a German mercenary who had served in Ireland as a military engineer for the English Crown. Thus he had more military knowledge and experience than most Englishmen, and perhaps some knowledge of the modern 'scientific' styles of fortification being developed on the Continent which had, as yet, little influence in the British Isles. The possession of continental experience was an important factor in the emergence of leaders in the early days of the Civil War. Fairfax, Goring and Prince Rupert had served under Frederick Henry of Nassau. Skippon and the Earl of Leven had been prominent in the service of Sweden. Rossworm was only one among several foreign military engineers who served for Parliament or King.

As well as playing a prominent part in the defence of Manchester against the attacks of Lord Strange in September 1642, Rossworm remained in Preston to fortify it after its capture by parliamentary forces in January 1643. He was also responsible for fortifying Liverpool in May of that year. In July 1643, after the success of Newcastle at Adwalton (or, according to Rushworth, Atherton) Moor, Rossworm was sent to "reconnoitre and strengthen the positions of Blackstone Edge and Blackgate, by which Lord Newcastle must approach Manchester. Considerable works of defence were erected, two pieces of ordnance mounted, and strong garrisons posted. Newcastle, hearing that the positions were impregnable, relinquished the project and went to the siege of Hull".

These works were Rossworm's fourth exercise in fortification at least, and he may have engineered other works in Ireland or on the Continent. We can speculate about the extent of Rossworm's knowledge of continental developments, but we can assume the works on the Lancashire/ Yorkshire borders to have been competently done, if not 'impregnable'. Rossworm's own account may be quoted, though should not perhaps be taken at face value:

> "I informed myself of the nature of the passes, by which the enemy could most easily come in upon us, and finding them capable of sudden fortification... I quickly helped nature with art, strengthening Blackstone Edge and Blakegate and manning them with soldiers to prevent the Earl's dangerous approach, by which means being diverted like an angry storm with a gust, he went to the siege of Hull, if he had gotten in amongst us, we were... in a manifest danger of being overrun..." (Palmer 1822).

Another near-contemporary account ('A discourse ...') records that:

> "There was a strong guard kept by the Lancashire forces at a passage into both counties, at a place called Blackston Edge for that winter the Caviliers possest much of this side of Yorkshire, as Leeds, Halifax, Wakefield, Bradford and other places all up to Yorke, for the Earle of Newcastle having driven the Lord Fairfax from Tadcaster, and beaten our Lancashire forces as Wiskett Hill, they had all that country at Command, which feared our Lancashire Commanders lest they should fall down hither. Therefore, (as much as was possible) to prevent them and to be a warning to us was that Guard kept all that winter. Having provisions... out of... sequestered Popist goods. For this very yeare 1643 began the ordnance of sequestration to be put in practice upon the estates of Delinquents and Papists." (Beaumont 1864).

This was probably written by Edward Robinson, a gentleman of Lancashire who served as a major in the parliamentary army. The two accounts are certainly compatible but the differences are interesting. Rossworm is talking about a positive deterrent exercised over a short period, perhaps only two or three weeks. The second account plainly describes a guard maintained over many months, even while Newcastle's forces were occupied before Hull and elsewhere. We should remember that Rossworm's account was written in 1649, the second of three pamphlets of broadsides designed to draw attention to his grievances against Manchester and Parliament for failure to pay a reward for his services. It is quite clear that Rossworm is trying to give maximum emphasis to his undoubtedly-significant role in the war in the North West. Even if we accept that Newcastle's forces could have "overrun" the Rochdale-Manchester area "if he had gotten in amongst us", it is by no means clear that it was Rossworm's fortifications which averted this threat.

Our other major source of information is a collection of excerpts from contemporary newletters (Ormerod 1844):

Certaine Informations, No 26, July 17th. "July 13th... that they have placed a garrison of 1200 men in Rochdale, and 800 more upon Blackstone Edge, to guard the passage into their country."

Perfect Diurnal, No 4, July 17-24th. "July 17th... Manchester men, it is this day certified, have secured the passage from Yorkshire into their countie, with two pieces of ordnance and a strong garrison".

Certaine Informations, No 27, July 17-24th. "Advice from Manchester that Newcastle had lately sent 200 horses to break through the passage at Blackstone Edge... but with no successe, for their garrison in that place slew and tooke some of them and sent back the rest to tell their fellows that they will hardly have passage that way, because it is naturally so strong that five hundred men can keep 1,000, neither is that way fit either for carriages or ordnance".

Continuation of Special Passages, No 51, July 20th "... a repulse to the domineering Popish army in the north, upon their attempt at the passage at Blackston... that they tooke about four troopes of their horse and forced the rest to a retreat... that the Manchester men are so little in fear of the Popish army, that they have sent a greate part of their forces to joyne with Sir William Brereton in the beseiging of Chester." July 27, confirmation of defeat of Newcastle.

Certaine Informations, No 28, July 31st. "That some of Newcastle's forces had been defeated in Lancs. near Colne; some slain and about 40 taken".

Parliament Scout, No 7, August 10th. Manchester sends out forces towards Yorkshire, to take in some small places upon the frontiers.

Certaine Informations, No 30, August 14th. Accounts from travellers that Lancashire is quiet since they beat the Newcastellians from Colne, Clitheroe, and Thornton.

These extracts provide us with further information as to the forces on Blackstone Edge, and also raise interesting questions. If there was a skirmish on Blackstone Edge notable enough to be mentioned in the London newspapers, why is it omitted from 'A discourse...' and even by Rossworm, trying to make the most of his contribution to parliament's cause? Why mention the fortifications but not the men who fought there?

It is at least possible that Newcastle's movements around Colne, Clitheroe, and Thornton were his main attempt to get into Lancashire. As parliament was now in such a position of strength in the county since the victory of Whalley in April, it would have been reasonable for the royalists to have sought first to re-establish their position in central Lancashire around Preston and the Ribble Valley, before attempting the puritan strongholds of South-East Lancashire around Bolton and Manchester.

However, there is little evidence of heavy fighting at this time. The Parish Register of Colne records the burial of only 3 soldiers in 1643, on the 16th August, 3rd September, and 30th November; yet the defeat of royalist forces at Colne had taken place by 31st July when it was reported in the London papers. Similarly, there are burials described only as of "a poore souldier" at Rochdale on July 16th, 30th and 31st, which might tie in with a skirmish at Blackstone Edge in the middle of the month. Medical facilities being rudimentary, it must have been quite common for men to linger in pain for a week or more before finally succumbing to their wounds.

Newcastle issued a summons to the men of Manchester to submit, but this was rejected in a letter dated from Rochdale. It is most likely that Newcastle had no serious intention of moving into Lancashire. His victory at Adwalton was less than overwhelming and he would have been aware that most of the Manchester men who had fought so hard at Adwalton were waiting for him west of the Pennines, and likely to prove stouter in defence of fixed positions than they had in the open field. Since the Fairfaxes had fled to Hull it would have been more

satisfying to follow them, since their capture would have deprived parliament of valuable leaders in the future.

Gardiner (1886-91) points out the importance of local feeling among forces of both sides, who were often reluctant to leave their own counties undefended. This would have been increased among Newcastle's Yorkshire levies by the threat to their own homes if a 'rebel' force should break out of Hull. Such feelings could well have been strong enough to constrain Newcastle. He was also distracted by events further south. Vicars (1646) quotes a letter from Oliver Cromwell saying that Newcastle's army appeared before Gainsborough following its capture by parliament, causing the parliamentary forces to withdraw.

It is possible then that at Blackstone Edge there was merely a skirmish, rather than a serious attempt to break through. We may imagine a small body of horsemen skirting the defended area out of gun-shot, before returning to report to Newcastle. Reports of this and the fortifying of the Edge may have been confused in London with events in the Ribble/Calder Valleys: a more likely scene for a serious breakthrough from the east (cf the events leading to the Battle of Preston, 1648). Alternatively, the reputation Manchester had gained in 1642 together with the papers' need for a victory, may account for some exaggeration. This may explain the silence of 'A discourse...' and of Rossworm himself on the matter. Not even the ingenious German would pretend that there had been a major fight on the Edge, hence his talk of a storm being diverted by a gust.

A plan of Rossworm's fortifications at Liverpool suggests that he did not follow, either through lack of knowledge, inclination, time or material, the more sophisticated models of fortification developed on the Continent. This should warn us against expecting at Blackstone Edge (and Bleakedgate Moor too) anything more than the most rudimentary 'sudden fortification'.

The Edge is mentioned once more in connection with the Civil War. It seems it lay on the route of a Scottish army marching from Hereford to prevent a royalist move into the North of England in August 1645.

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