

In Response to David Barrowclough and John Hallam's conclusions regarding 'The Devil's Footprints' on Apronful Hill, Pendle: An investigation into the Brythonic identity of East Lancashire.

**Submitted to University of Wales in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
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In Response to David Barrowclough and John Hallam's conclusions regarding 'The Devil's Footprints' on Apronful Hill, Pendle: An investigation into the Brythonic identity of East Lancashire.

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ABSTRACT

Lancashire folklore records a legend that footprints found in stone between the villages of Sabden and Pendleton were created by the Devil, who took the form of a giant and carried an apronful of stones with the intention of destroying Clitheroe Castle. Unfortunately, he failed. The stone that he threw missed the mark, and his apron-strings snapped leaving the pile of stones known as Apronful Hill. This legend is considered here in the context of historical and literary sources, accompanied by an analysis of place names and other legends. Whilst the initial investigation by David Barrowclough and John Hallam tentatively concluded a connection with Scandinavian rock art and mythology, a possible connection with Celtic mythology has been suggested here.

(Word count: 16, 209 including abstract).

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Introduction: The Legend of the Devil's Footprints on Apronful Hill

Apronful Hill is a crag on the southern face of Pendle Hill, an isolated western Pennine in East Lancashire. It stands proud at 707 metres tall and is famous as being home to the Pendle Witches, as well as being the birthplace of the Quaker movement.¹ The current county of Lancashire is positioned within the northwest of England. It is bounded to the south by Cheshire, to the east by Yorkshire, and to the north by Cumbria. Its most westerly boundary is the Irish Sea.²

Given its history, it is unsurprising that Pendle Hill is home to many myths and legends. One of these is however of particular interest, since the most extensive investigation into its origin places it as Scandinavian in origin.³ John T. Fielding in 1905 recorded the earliest version of the legend. It was told as follows:

The Devil was coming with an apronful of stones for the purpose of knocking down Clitheroe Castle. He was coming from Accrington way. He stepped from Hambledon to a large block of sandstone lying on Cragg's farm, above Sabden. From here he stepped to the Apronful Hill, above Wellsprings, leaving his footprints on the stones at Cragg's Farm. Being now in sight of Clitheroe Castle, he took one of the stones he was carrying, and threw it towards the Castle, but just then his brat string broke and all the

¹ Britannica Online, *Pendle Hill* <<https://www.britannica.com/place/Pendle-Hill>> (Accessed on 2 January 2023).

² Visit Northwest, *Map of Lancashire* <<https://www.visitnorthwest.com/counties/lancashire/>> (Accessed on 2 January 2023).

³ David Barrowclough and John Hallam, 'The Devil's Footprints and Other Folklore: Local Legend and Archaeological Evidence in Lancashire', *Folklore* 119:1 (2008). pp. 96 – 100.

remaining stones fell to the ground, where they still lie as they fell. The stones he threw fell short of the Castle and landed near the church in Pendleton.⁴

A slightly later version is found in the work of Wilf Self Weeks, which reads as:

The legend is that the Devil was one day coming with an apronful of stones for the purpose of knocking down Clitheroe Castle. He stepped from Hambledon Hill to Craggs, where he left his footprints... His next step was to "The Apronful". Here, being in view of the castle, he took one of the stones and threw it at the castle, but in the act of throwing his "brat string broke" and all the stones he was carrying were tumbled to the ground. The stone which he threw fell short of the mark and may be still seen lying on the ground just above Pendleton, with some marks upon it, which are said to be the prints of his fingers.⁵

What is of paramount interest regarding the legend, which may be of medieval origin, is the association of footprints with the character of the Devil as giant.⁶ Rock carvings of human feet are archaeologically rare in the British Isles, with this example being located 'nearly half a mile north-east of the ruins of Cragg's Farm at the Deerstone rocks,' on Pendle Hill.⁷ They are found 'on the flat upper surface of an angular shaped block of stone', with the sizing given by Wilf Self Weeks correlating well with more recent investigations: they are indeed 'about 2ft 6

⁴ John T. Fielding, 'A Record of Rambles, Historical Facts, Legends and Nature Notes', *The Rambler* 2:4 (1905) p. 14.

⁵ Wilf Self Weeks, 'Some Legendary Stories and Folklore from the Clitheroe District', *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* 34 (1916). p. 86.

⁶ John Hallam, 'The Pendleton Legend, Craggs Farm Footprints and Apronful Hill', *Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* 91 (1995) p. 141.

⁷ James L. Forde-Johnston, 'Megalithic Art in the North-west of Britain: The Calderstones, Liverpool', *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 2 (1957). p. 34; David Barrowclough and John Hallam, 'The Devil's Footprints and Other Folklore: Local Legend and Archaeological Evidence in Lancashire', *Folklore* 119:1 (2008). p. 96.

ins long, and about 6 ins wide.’⁸ The stone which ‘fell short of the mark’ is no longer to be found, although John Hallam reports that in 1968 a burial urn was discovered to the west of the village of Pendleton, which was later found to be accompanied by two others. These held ceremonial offerings along with extracts of bone cremations and were found within a cairn or stone circle dating to the Early Bronze Age, thus mirroring archaeological findings recorded elsewhere on the island of Britain.⁹

The most extensive investigation into ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’ has been conducted by David Barrowclough and John Hallam, who identify only three other examples of this motif in Britain and Ireland.¹⁰ They tentatively conclude that they are dated from the Bronze Age, and that the associated mythology is Scandinavian in origin, basing their deductions upon the apparent inversion of the footprints and the relevance of this to the belief that the dead occupied a parallel underworld in northern Scandinavian lore.¹¹ Findings by Richard Bradley are taken as supporting the belief that the dead necessarily needed to travel from high places to the seas below, in order to begin their journey by boat to the underworld.¹² The problem, however, is that whilst one footprint certainly faces up-hill, the other does not face the direction of the sea. Nor does it particularly overlook a river in Pendleton, as claimed within Barrowclough and Hallam's analysis.¹³

⁸ David Barrowclough and John Hallam, ‘The Devil’s Footprints and Other Folklore’, (2008). p.96; Wilf Self Weeks, ‘Some Legendary Stories and Folklore from the Clitheroe District’, *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* 34 (1916). p. 86.

⁹ Wilf Self Weeks, ‘Some Legendary Stories’, (1916). p. 86; David Barrowclough and John Hallam, ‘The Devil’s Footprints and Other Folklore’ (2008). p. 96.

¹⁰ David Barrowclough and John Hallam, ‘The Devil’s Footprints and Other Folklore’ (2008). p. 97.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 96 - 99.

¹² *Ibid.*, p.99.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 99 – 100. The proposed ‘river’ at Pendleton is only a minor waterway (known as Pendleton Brook) that gained visual prominence in modern times, when its embankments were fortified. For example, see: Ordnance Survey Guides, *Pendleton, Ribble Valley* (2020) <<https://getoutside.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/local/pendleton-ribble-valley>> (Accessed on 1 February 2023).

Thus, in the words of the folklorist Jeremy Harte, ‘names, like stories are linguistic performances,’ through which ‘allusions to goblins, giants and the Devil derive from playful story-telling rather than supernatural belief, while the names of landmarks are used as pegs on which to hang local legends.’¹⁴ The problem is, therefore, that whilst the folkloric legend to be investigated here is embedded within the landscape of Norman Britain, it fails to tally with the archaeological dating of the said footprints, and the historical sources relating to the locality.¹⁵ Therefore, it could be suggested that, in positing a Scandinavian origin to the legend of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’, Barrowclough and Hallam do not satisfactorily consider the plethora of myths and legends surrounding giants and Devils in Celtic folklore, along with its historical location within Yr Hen Ogledd (The Old North). Hence their conclusions were perhaps reached somewhat prematurely, and so this thesis proposes to carry out a more thorough investigation into the background of East Lancashire.

¹⁴ Jeremy Harte, ‘Names and Tales: On Folklore and Placenames’, *Folklore 0* (2019) p. 1.

¹⁵ Clitheroe Castle is a Norman motte and bailey castle. See: CastleUK.Net, Clitheroe Castle (2014) <https://www.castleuk.net/castle_lists_north/103/clitheroe.html> (Accessed on 2 February 2023).

The Brythonic Basis of East Lancashire: The Historical Context and Archaeological Evidence in the North

What is culture, and is it in any way linked with locality? Traditional anthropologists define the term as ‘the complex whole’ which governs the way of life of society, thus leading to the question ‘what is society?’¹⁶ Is society to be viewed at the macro level, in a way akin to that of the Celto-Mania movement?¹⁷ Or is it more micro, more small-scale, and more particular to a given location?

Such questions are incredibly pertinent when attempting to interpret legends of place. Indeed, folklorists such as Karl Sinnhuber have long recognised the inter-relationship between stories and geographical boundaries.¹⁸ Thus, whilst common themes exist – as identified by Stith Thompson’s *Motif-Index of Folk Literature* - it is always necessary to examine the culture of the people of a particular place, in order to elicit meaning and likely origin.¹⁹ However, when studying people of the past, particularly when those people inhabited a time which used to be known as the Dark Ages, this can be particularly problematic. This issue is fully acknowledged within Celtic Studies and has led to a thorough debate on the nature of people, and their relationship to language and culture.

The basic divide stems from whether language equates with culture, with the work of John Koch seeming to offer a sensible compromise. He fully acknowledges that ‘cultural identity – Celtic or any other – is an elusive and mercurial property,’ and yet believes that ‘language is

¹⁶ Edward Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (Murray Press: London, 1871). p. 1.

¹⁷ This divide is summarised well by Patrick Sims Williams, who critiques the various contributions regarding what counts as ‘Celticity.’ See Patrick Sims Williams, ‘Celtomania and Celtoscepticism’, *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 36 (1998). pp. 1 – 35.

¹⁸ Karl A. Sinnhuber, ‘On the relations of Folklore and Geography’, *Transactions of the Folk Belief Society: LXVIII*: 3 (1957). p. 385.

¹⁹ Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature: A Classification of Narrative Elements of Folktales, Ballads, Myths, Fables, Medieval Romances, Exempla, Fabliaux, Jest-Books and Local Legends* (Bloomington: Indiana, 1958).

arguably the most scientific, measurable and generally tractable *index* of Celticity.’²⁰ Furthermore, archaeologists such as Barry Cunliffe have provided support for this view from their own perspective. Cunliffe reminds us that ‘Celt’ was a word used from the sixth century by Roman and Greek writers, and that whilst it was a ‘convenient and generalising term,’ it did refer to native peoples living west of the Alps.²¹ Thus, alongside linguistics, archaeological evidence can be used to assess the degree of interconnectedness between people of different geographical locations.²² It can give indications of culture. Hence, from this viewpoint, in order to begin to establish the likely origins of local legends, it is necessary to examine the language and archaeology of the inhabitants – particularly when the legend is pegged upon local landmarks. Through such an approach, legends can be located within their wider context, and this context can accordingly be tied to place.

The complication occurs when the landmarks in question span the ages. Barrowclough and Hallam’s investigation into the Devil’s Footprints on Apronful Hill concludes that they are found in an area which ‘is typical of early Bronze Age burial cairns,’ and yet the legend itself cannot have been created in its current form prior to the building of Clitheroe Castle circa 1186.²³ Consequently, a vast timescale could be investigated in order to gain a holistic overview. Such a deep-dive would be particularly exhaustive however, and thus it is to primarily necessary to develop an understanding of the time period between approximately 400 C.E. and 1150 C.E: the times from which our earliest writings of the ‘indigenous tradition’

²⁰ John Koch, ‘Celtic from the West meets Linguistics and Genetics’, in *Exploring Celtic Origins* by Barry Cunliffe and John Koch (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2019). p.19. Italics my own.

²¹ Barry Cunliffe, ‘Setting the Scene’, in *Exploring Celtic Origins* by Barry Cunliffe and John Koch (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 20019). p. 1.

²² Barry Cunliffe, ‘Setting the Scene’, (2019). pp. 1 – 2.

²³ David Barrowclough and John Hallam, ‘The Devil’s Footprints and Other Folklore’ (2008). p. 96; Historic UK, *Clitheroe Castle by Miriam Bibby* (2020) < <https://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryMagazine/DestinationsUK/Clitheroe-Castle/#:~:text=Built%20in%201186%20by%20Robert,the%20second%20smallest%20in%20England.>> (Accessed on 21 December, 2022).

refer to the north of Britain, to the time when Norman culture became somewhat embedded.²⁴ Such an analysis could yield important findings regarding the potential historical location of Pendle Hill in the current county of East Lancashire within the dynamic social and political divides over time. An analysis of this kind has yet to be conducted, as many scholars of Celtic Studies note with frustration that they are hampered by a lack of sources which make specific reference to the north at the micro-level.²⁵ The consequence of this has been a lack of understanding of the boundaries which were of importance to our ancestors, leading to a variety of competing conclusions regarding the geographical reaches of the Brythonic people of the north of England.

David J. Breeze sheds light upon the pre-history of the north, by outlining the reach of the Brigantes.²⁶ From Ptolemy, writing circa 140 C.E. we know that their territory stretched ‘from sea to sea’ in the north, and from Tacitus we learn that they were the largest populated tribe in Britain.²⁷ Thus, one has the first mentions of an identifiable group of northern people, whose territory possibly spanned both sides of the Pennines, and who acted as a form of confederacy or overlordship.²⁸

²⁴ Tim Clarkson, *The Men of the North: The Britons of Southern Scotland* (Edinburgh: John Donald Short Tun Press, 2010). p. 11. A more vast time-scale could be investigated, beginning in the Bronze Age when the Devil’s Footprints are hypothesised to have been carved, however due to the word limitations of this thesis, alongside the limited archaeological excavations in the area of East Lancashire, it has been decided to begin at the times when written sources became available.

²⁵ For example, see McCarthy, M, ‘Rheged: an Early Historical Kingdom near Solway’, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquities in Scotland* 132 (2002). p. 357.

²⁶ David J. Breeze, ‘Civil Government in the North: the Carvetii, Brigantes and Rome’, *The Dorothy Charlesworth Memorial Lecture* (2008). p. 64.

²⁷ Ptolemy, *Geographia* II 3, 2. <

https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Gazetteer/Periods/Roman/Texts/Ptolemy/2/2*.html> (Accessed on 21 December 2022); Tacitus, *Agricola* 17, 2. < <https://elfinspell.com/ClassicalTexts/TacitusAgricola/Part2.html>> (Accessed on 21 December 2022).

²⁸ David J. Breeze, ‘Civil Government in the North’(2008). p. 66.

Prior to the Roman conquest of Britain however, what is known is limited. Tribal boundaries referenced by John Koch indicate that during the sub-Roman period the Pennines, Cumbria, Galloway and Man comprised Rheged to the north-west and Elmet to the south-east, with Bernicia lying to the north-east and Gododdin to the north, and yet classical sources indicate that they did not live together harmoniously before the conquest.²⁹ Indeed, Gildas makes reference to the coming of the Romans, whom he sees as carriers of the ‘fierce flame,’ who subdued the unruly natives.³⁰ We know that Rome’s conquest of the island of Britain began in 43 C.E., and that suggestions of a negotiated agreement with the Brigantes may explain why the region to the north of the Humber and Mersey remained unconquered for some time.³¹ Breeze concludes therefore that the Brigantes were most likely to be centred in Western Yorkshire, which is of great interest, given that parts of East Lancashire – including Pendle Hill - bordered what was known as the West Riding of Yorkshire prior to the boundary changes of 1974, with the Forest of Pendle being described as stretching ‘from the Yorkshire border in the east’ during the seventeenth century.³² From 71 C.E. to 74 C.E. , following the natives’ deposition of the northern queen Cartimandua, who had entered into a treaty with Rome, Brigantia was invaded, before being further crushed between 79 and 82 C.E., resulting in the establishment of a series of Roman forts.³³ Curtailed freedoms were later solidified by the

²⁹ John Koch, *An Atlas for Celtic Studies: Archaeology and Names in Ancient Europe and Early Medieval Ireland, Britain and Brittany* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2007). s. 21.3 https://www.academia.edu/7520298/An_Atlas_for_Celtic_Studies_Archaeology_and_Names_in_Ancient_Europe_and_Early_Medieval_Ireland_Britain_and_Brittany> (Accessed on 12 November 2022). https://www.academia.edu/7520298/An_Atlas_for_Celtic_Studies_Archaeology_and_Names_in_Ancient_Europe_and_Early_Medieval_Ireland_Britain_and_Brittany> (Accessed on 12 November 2022).

³⁰ Six Old English Chronicles, *The Works of Gildas translated. By J.A. Giles* (1848) https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Six_Old_English_Chronicles/The_Works_of_Gildas#28 (Accessed on 23 December 2022).

³¹ Warwick Classics Network, *Cartimandua and the Brigantes* (2012) < <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/classics/warwickclassicsnetwork/romancoventry/resources/interactions/civitates/cartimandua/>> (Accessed on 1 February 2023).

³² David J. Breeze, ‘Civil Government in the North’, (2008). p. 66; North Yorkshire County Council, *Historic Map of the West Riding of Yorkshire 1834* (2018) < <https://archiveshop.northyorks.gov.uk/historic-maps/M100-1.html>> (Accessed on 30 December 2022); Mary Brigg, ‘The Forest of Pendle’, *Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* (1961). p. 65

³³ Tim Clarkson, ‘The Men of the North’, (2010). p. 17.

construction of a network of roads, and culminated in the erection of Hadrian's Wall around 122 C.E., following insurgence by the inhabitants of the north.³⁴ Whilst the purpose of the wall is uncertain, it was enhanced by the Antonine Wall circa 140 C.E., and thereafter the north was subjugated.³⁵ The area thus became known as Britannia Inferior, being further divided in the fourth century so that the previous territory of the Brigantes came under direct military rule, overseen by the York Sixth Legion.³⁶ This militarisation meant that few civitates were created – the only known ones were found within York, Aldborough, Carlisle and Corbridge – and that the north was indeed seen as inferior to the more cosmopolitan and self-governing south.³⁷ Indeed, it can be seen that right until Rome relinquished authority in the early fifth century, the area was perceived to be one which required intervention.³⁸

However, the lasting impact of Romanisation in the area surrounding East Lancashire is a matter of debate, with understanding often being 'hampered by the paucity' of documentary and archaeological evidence.³⁹ Yet, given that tribal boundaries were quick to re-emerge in the wider area, it might not have been as uniform as the school textbooks would have one believe.⁴⁰ Indeed, whilst Rome might have provided a steady and calm period for the inhabitants, the existence of a major Roman road and several associated forts within the region implies otherwise and indicates a strong sense of identity and a resentment of 'foreign' rule.⁴¹

³⁴ Ibid., p. 18.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 19. The purpose of Hadrian's Wall may have been to disrupt communication or to deter further attacks from the north, both encouraging assimilation. See: Richard Hingley, *Hadrian's Wall: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). pp. 13 – 16.

³⁶ Tim Clarkson, 'The Men of the North', (2010). p. 21.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 21.

³⁸ Richard Hingley, *Hadrian's Wall: A Life* (2012). p. 153.

³⁹ David Johnson, *New Light on the "Dark Ages" in North Craven* (Skipton: Yorkshire Dales Landscape Research Trust, 2019). p. 1.

⁴⁰ John Koch, *An Atlas for Celtic Studies: Archaeology and Names in Ancient Europe and Early Medieval Ireland, Britain and Brittany* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2007). s. 21.3 <
https://www.academia.edu/7520298/An_Atlas_for_Celtic_Studies_Archaeology_and_Names_in_Ancient_Europe_and_Early_Medieval_Ireland_Britain_and_Brittany> (Accessed on 12 November 2022).

⁴¹ T.T. Wilkinson, 'On the Roman Topography of East Lancashire', *The Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* (1865) pp. 263 – 270. <https://www.hslc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/17-15-Wilkinson.pdf> (Accessed on 21 January 2023).

This sense of identity can be examined archaeologically, with ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’ forming part of a larger site known as locally ‘The Devil’s Apronful.’ This is believed to be formed of two barrows close together, one of which is a ring cairn and the second being an 18-metre-wide embankment.⁴² Excavations have also revealed what is possibly a Bronze Age hillfort less than four miles away from Apronful Hill at Portfield Bar, which comprised an enclosure of the western flatlands, protected by banks and ditches, thus implying the need for defence. Nine Bronze Age artefacts were discovered, with the addition of flint objects implying that the site may well have been settled in the Neolithic Age. Furthermore, later excavations revealed Roman-era pottery, alongside medieval ware, thus implying continuity of habitation into and beyond the Roman era.⁴³

This early occupation tallies with that of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’ temporally, with a pack-horse route that is still in use over the hills perhaps having pre-historic origins, and larger roads currently being investigated under the Roman banner, thus demonstrating communication at least as early as the Roman period.⁴⁴ Indeed, it is presently thought that the Roman road may have linked with that of the major Roman Fort of Bremetennacum, and that it continued in an easterly direction towards York.⁴⁵ In a similar direction is Worsaw Hill, near Downham, where

⁴² Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership, *Prehistoric Mysteries of Pendle Hill* (2022) < <https://www.pendlehillproject.com/prehistoric-mysteries> > (Accessed on 21 February 2023).

⁴³ Historic England, *Portfield hillfort* (1996) <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1013608?section=official-list-entry> (Accessed on 22 February 2022).

⁴⁴ Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership, *Roman Road Excavation – Summary* (2021) < https://www.pendlehillproject.com/sites/default/files/docs/NAA%20RR%20Excavation%20summary_branded.pdf > (Accessed on 12 February 2022).

⁴⁵ Lancashire Evening Telegraph, *Dig underway for Roman Road evidence near Pendle Hill*, by Peter Magill (2022) www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/20294988.dig-underway-roman-road-evidence-near-pendle-hill/ (Accessed 12 February 2023). See also Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership, *Prehistoric Mysteries of Pendle Hill* (2022) < <https://www.pendlehillproject.com/prehistoric-mysteries> > (Accessed on 21 February 2023). The major Roman fort is in Ribchester, some 11 miles east of Apronful Hill. All distances are calculated via a walking route which negates the need for reliance on modern roadways.

a Bronze Age burial monument has also been discovered, within sight of Apronful Hill itself.⁴⁶ This in itself could be indicative of the culture of the Bronze Age inhabitants of the British Isles whereby ancient monuments were often placed within sight of each other, perhaps indicating cultural and geographical continuity.⁴⁷

In the context of Bronze Age discoveries in the area, it is interesting perhaps to consider the rarity of carvings of feet in the British Isles, with Forde-Johnston noting that only three others are known, two of which are in the north.⁴⁸ The most extensive work has been conducted on those at Calderstones, near Liverpool, which are seen to over-look the River Mersey, and comprise ten carvings of shod human feet, dated from the late Neolithic to early Bronze Age.⁴⁹ Whilst they have been historically associated with Druids and ‘the religious wants of our early ancestors’, Barrowclough and Hallam note their similarity with rock art in Sweden, where they appear in pairs and are humanoid in size.⁵⁰ Those on Apronful Hill, however, are much larger, and thus the use of superficial similarities to support either the ownership of the carvings themselves, or the mythological basis of the legend, seems to be a reach too far. Indeed, Muiris O’Sullivan somewhat more sensibly suggests that publications of descriptive information regarding decorated stones have advanced greatly in recent years, and that whilst the Calderstones site does not readily fit within the ‘standard Irish tradition’, it does have features in common with another Scottish passage tomb, which therefore places it within the native

⁴⁶ The Journal of Antiquities, *Worsaw Hill Burial Mound* (2016) <https://thejournalofantiquities.com/2016/07/01/worsaw-hill-burial-mound-near-downham-lancashire/> (Accessed on 19 February 2022).

⁴⁷ Nick Patterson Michael Isakov and David Reich, ‘Large Scale Migration into Britain During the Middle to Late Bronze Age’, *Nature* (2022). p. 1.

⁴⁸ James L. Forde-Johnston, ‘Megalithic Art in the North-west of Britain: The Calderstones, Liverpool’, *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 2 (1957). p. 34

⁴⁹ James L. Forde-Johnston, ‘Megalithic Art in the North-west of Britain’, (1957). p. 34.

⁵⁰ J. Romilly Allen, ‘The Calderstones, Near Liverpool’, *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 44: 1 (2017). p. 77. David Barrowclough p. 97.

historical context.⁵¹ Accordingly, the location of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’ in close proximity to other Bronze Age remnants which themselves are indicative of styles native to the island of Britain, does suggest that the culture of East Lancashire - if one can extract culture from stone – was not that of Scandinavian descent. It seems simpler to accept the suggestions of the classicists: that the north was populated by the Celts.

It could indeed be this culture that needed to be crushed by the Romans, with the Brigantes possibly being in-situ for some time. Therefore, the Roman road indicates a need for policing, with an interesting hypothesis coming from F.A. Bruton. He suggests that the flatter lands in the west of Lancashire were a means by which the native allies communicated northerly during the Roman period.⁵² Indeed, the ‘Antonine Itinerary’ refers to a north-south route, which could be taken to support such a conjecture.⁵³ Communication needed to be quashed if control was to be maintained in the north. Posing as a ‘boundary state’ therefore, where brief respite could be gained before approaching the Picts of the true north, the area around Lancashire could have acted as a provisional frontier to dispel the masses.

Despite this, the potential Roman road from Ribchester to York seems to have had few associated encampments, as suggested by limited archaeological finds. Indeed, after the site at Portfield Bar, it seems that the next settlement was at Bomber Camp, ⁵⁴ near Gisburn, some nine miles from Apronful Hill and twelve miles from Portfield Bar.⁵⁵ This may imply that the area was sparsely settled within the Roman period, or conversely may simply mean that it was

⁵¹ Muiris O’Sullivan, ‘Approaches to Passage Tomb Art’, *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 116 (1986). p. 71. 81.

⁵² F.A. Bruton, *Lancashire* (London: AC Black, 1921). p. 37

⁵³ The Roads of Roman Britain, *The Antonine Itinerary* (2018) <https://roadsofromanbritain.org/antonine.html> (Accessed on 21 February 2023).

⁵⁴ The Journal of Antiquities, *Bomber Camp, Gisburn, Lancashire* (2012). thejournalofantiquities.com/2012/06/27/bomber-camp-gisburn-lancashire/ (Accessed on 15 February 2023).

⁵⁵ The Journal of Antiquities, *Bomber Camp, Gisburn, Lancashire* (2012). thejournalofantiquities.com/2012/06/27/bomber-camp-gisburn-lancashire/ (Accessed on 15 February 2023).

an area below the level of the elite, and thus any evidence of inhabitation was less likely to survive the realms of time. Indeed, the term ‘archaeological site’ is a modern creation, with the transformation of an area from inhabited landscape to an archaeological site needing necessarily to involve remains and belongings which stand the longevity test.⁵⁶ It may be that around Pendle, this has not happened. Furthermore, it may be that archaeology experiences a bias against the northwest of England, perhaps in the face of finite resources. According to Mike McCarthy, this issue has some degree of pertinence in terms of northern history, in that changing boundaries over time have impacted on perceived ownership, and therefore the investment of resources.⁵⁷ Indeed, except for Bremetennacum, the sites within East Lancashire are largely under-excavated, with Peter Addyman concluding that there was ‘hardly an excavated house’ in 1972.⁵⁸

In view of this, a logical place to shed further light on northern England in the sub-Roman period would be with historical sources. However, history is often recorded in the language and from the perspective of the victorious, and so the study of history and language must necessarily diverge. Very few of our most ancient sources are written in the vernacular language of the oldest inhabitants – the Celts – and what does exist is by no means free of subjectivity. Yet, from the laborious process of triangulating these ancient sources, it is possible to build up a fairly continuous picture of life in the British Isles at the macro level from the times of the Roman abandonment to the present day. The micro level on the other hand is somewhat more complex to understand, especially when the area of interest is that of northern

⁵⁶ Gabriel Moshenska, *Key Concepts in Public Archaeology* (London: UCL Press, 2017). pp. 73 – 74.

⁵⁷ Mike R. McCarthy, ‘Rheged: An Early Historic Kingdom near the Solway’, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquarians of Scotland* 132 (2002). Pp. 357 – 388.

⁵⁸ Peter Addyman, ‘The Anglo-Saxon House: A new review’, in *Anglo-Saxon England* by P Clemoes (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1972). p. 306. His comment was, however, regarding the West Riding of Yorkshire, but changing boundaries make it relevant to East Lancashire history.

England, and the north-western regions (where Lancashire is located) in particular. What is known is sparse and requires a grasp of numerous languages.⁵⁹

What is known of the north of England is that it was a place of turmoil throughout the times of interest, although the sources themselves do require further commentary. One of the earliest sources of information at the macro level comes from the Latin *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae*.⁶⁰ Written by a Romano-British monk named Gildas, it is believed to be the one of the few extant accounts of life in sub-Roman Britain, and is thought to have been written around 540 C.E.⁶¹ Yet, it is potentially biased and fails to give valuable information at the micro level, despite Gildas' suggested birthplace in the north.⁶² Thus it is from another existing source of information – the *Annales Cambriae*- that knowledge must be gleaned.⁶³

The *Annales Cambriae* exist in three manuscripts, with Manuscript A (c. 1100 -1300) believed to form the master-copy.⁶⁴ A Brythonic source of information, the *Annales* begins its recording of history in 444 C.E, but it is not until 613 C.E that northern Britain receives a mention, and so in and of itself it cannot plug the gaps in northern history.⁶⁵ Additionally, the widely-circulated *Historia Brittonum* (beginning of ninth century C.E.), attributed to Nennius, shows a bias against the Britons that echoes that of Gildas, with the prologue asserting that 'the

⁵⁹ To some extent, this is still the case. However, in recent years much work has been translated into English, thus making Latin, Goidelic and Brythonic sources more accessible.

⁶⁰ The Ruins of Britain.

⁶¹ E.A. Thompson, 'Gildas and the History of Britain', *Britannia* 10 (1979). p. 203; British Library, *Gildas' The Ruin of Britain* < <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/gildas-the-ruin-of-britain> > (Accessed on 21 July 2022). Although traditionally referred to as Romano-British however, the matter that Gildas referred to Ambrosius Aurelianus as the last of the Romans, it is perhaps probable that he considered himself British.

⁶² E. A. Thompson 'Gildas and the History of Britain', *Britannia* 10 (1979). p. 203; The Life of Gildas records his birth as being in Scotland, although Andrew Breeze believes that it was most likely to have been around Arclid, Cheshire.

⁶³ The Welsh Annals

⁶⁴ John Williams, *Annales Cambriae* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). pp. ix – xxx.

⁶⁵ Medieval Sourcebook, *Annales Cambriae*(2020) < <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/annalescambriae.asp> > (Accessed on 3 January 2023).

teachers here had no skill nor did they set down any records in their books about this island of Britain.’⁶⁶ Yet, like the *Annales, Historia Brittonum* does pay heed to the plight of the northern Britons, and so these two sources – despite their limitations – are often cited as being central to the efforts of understanding northern Britain during the fifth and early sixth centuries.⁶⁷ They are supported and chronologically extended by *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* (c. 892) alongside the writings of The Venerable Bede (c. 673–735) and Geoffrey of Monmouth (c. 1095–1155). Each tells the history of Britain from their own viewpoint, but the triangulation of recordings yields some potential truths for northern history.

It is known from Gildas that soon after the departure of the Romans, ‘the Picts and Scots, like worms which in the heat of the mid-day come forth from their holes, hastily land again in their canoes.’⁶⁸ Their previous attempts had been repelled by a legion from Rome, but on this occasion their attacking ‘towards the extreme north as far as the wall’, meant that the returning invaders were met by a ‘panic struck company’ who offered a poor defence, and fled.⁶⁹ It is assumed that the wall mentioned here is Hadrian’s Wall, and thus one has an early mention of turbulence in the northern territory, believed by scholars to have taken place in the late 440s C.E.⁷⁰ We have also from Gildas the earliest reference to the request by the British leader Vortigern for help from the Saxons ‘to repel the invasions of the northern nations,’ although in

⁶⁶ *Historia Brittonum* was known to exist in some form in approximately forty manuscripts. See: *Historia Brittonum, Manuscripts* (2021) < http://www.historiabrittonum.net/?page_id=39#:~:text=Over%20forty%20manuscripts%20are%20known,even%20if%20only%20in%20part.> (Accessed on 13 March 2023); Henry Marsh, *Dark Age Britain: Some Sources of History* (Broadstone: Dorset Press, 1987). p. 66.

⁶⁷ Flint Johnson, ‘The Sources of Contributors of the Northern memorandum and its Heir’, *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 91: 1 (2019). p. 111.

⁶⁸ The Project Gutenberg Ebook, *On the Ruin of Britain* by Gildas, translated by J.A. Giles (1999). <<https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/1949/pg1949.html>> (Accessed on 12 January 2023).

⁶⁹ The Project Gutenberg Ebook, *On the Ruin of Britain* by Gildas, translated by J.A. Giles (1999). <https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/1949/pg1949.html> (Accessed on 12 January 2023).

⁷⁰ E. A. Thompson ‘Gildas and the History of Britain’, *Britannia* 10 (1979). p. 203

most manuscripts he did not name him directly.⁷¹ Thus, the situation in the north was such that it was felt necessary to invite ‘a hateful race to God’ to a Christianised island: mercenaries were needed in the north. The island was once again under attack.⁷²

Following the departure of the Romans, the Anglo-Saxons arrived on the island of Britain in 440 C.E. according to *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.⁷³ Initially invited to quell the whiffs of insurgence, sources of British and Romano-British origin would have us believe the tale that is so often told of new arrivals: that they invited their families and took over the islands. The overall picture from such sources is that Vortigern invited the Saxons under Hengist to help defend the island from invasions from the north, and that the British leader subsequently fell in love with Hengist’s daughter, which resulted in a marriage and the gift of the kingdom of Kent.⁷⁴ Thereupon followed the arrival of kinsmen and their families, so that by 600 C.E. – as a consequence of much expansionist combat - their grip on Britain was secure.⁷⁵

With specific reference to the north of England, one can glean that numerous battles followed Anglo-Saxon settlement, resulting in the occupation of the lands of Bernicia by Ida initially, with their full integration with Deira occurring during the reign of Ecgrith, between 670 and

⁷¹ Referred to as *superbus tyrannus* by Gildas: the reference to Vortigern’s plea for help is recorded by Nennius, Bede, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles and William of Malmesbury. Vortigern was a British leader who ‘has had a bad press’ for his supposed role in authorising the first Saxon settlers in fifth century Britain. See C.A. Raleigh Radford, ‘Vortigern’, *Antiquity* XXXII (1958). pp. 19 – 32; The Project Gutenberg Ebook, *On the Ruin of Britain by Gildas*, translated by J.A. Giles (1999). <https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/1949/pg1949.html> (Accessed on 12 January 2023).

⁷² The Project Gutenberg Ebook, *On the Ruin of Britain by Gildas*, translated by J.A. Giles (1999). <https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/1949/pg1949.html> (Accessed on 12 January 2023).

⁷³ The Medieval and Classical Literature Library, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle Part 1: AD 1 – 178 translated by J.A. Giles and edited by Douglas B. Killings* (1996). < <http://mccllibrary.org/Anglo/part1.html> > (Accessed 20 December 2022). The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is a collection of Old English annals, believed to have been created around the ninth century, and later updated until 1154 C.E.

⁷⁴ Henry Marsh, *Dark Age Britain* (David and Charles, Newton Abbot: 1970). p. 75.

⁷⁵ Medieval Sourcebook, *Nennius: Historia Brittonum, 8th century* (2022). < <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/nennius-full.asp> > (Accessed on 20 December 2022).

685 C.E.⁷⁶ The newcomers thus continued to expand and were victorious, acquiring the whole of the north of England and southern Scotland and uniting it into the greater kingdom of Northumbria. From Welsh poetry we know that Ida the Flamebearer was the Angle warlord who founded Bernicia in 547 C.E. whilst his grandson later brought Deira under his control in 604 C.E.⁷⁷ Furthermore, Bede often mentioned Bamburgh as the kingdom's 'royal city', which appears to be supported by newly emerging archaeological evidence, including the preliminary findings from 'The Bamburgh Castle Research Project' which indicates the re-use and expansion of Roman sites, with the rectangular formation radio-carbon dating indicating potential sixth century use.⁷⁸ The *Life of Wilfred* also sheds interesting light upon the area of Pendle in particular, in that it shows how the saint was endowed with lands around the River Ribble, which flows southwards from its head in North Yorkshire into Lancashire. The contentious inclusion of Caetlaevum in his land allocation possibly sites Pendle within his boundaries, thus firming up support for its inclusion within the Anglo-Saxon kingdom c. 669 C.E.⁷⁹ This is further supported through knowledge of the Battle of Whalley, which occurred in 798 C, E., as the consequence of an emerging conspiracy against Northumbria headed by a Saxon known as Wada.⁸⁰ The potential identification of his name with Waddow (Wada's Hill) and Waddington (farmstead of Wada) nearby possibly site the region as being external to Northumbria prior to the battle, in which Northumbria was victorious, and Wada fled.⁸¹

⁷⁶The Oxford Companion to British History, *Kingdom of Deira* (2020) , <<https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095707789;jsessionid=20AF4B7D62D8B813E6CEE99299FF810B>> (Accessed on 21 December, 2022).

⁷⁷ The Old North, *The Battle of Argoed Llwyfein by Taliesin* (2015) <<http://www.theoldnorth.co.uk/arguet-llwyfein/>> (Accessed on 25 March 2023).

⁷⁸ Eric A. Powell 'Stronghold Kings in the North' (2016). p. 58; Cline Waddington and David Passmore, 'A Kingdom Born and Lost AD 410 – 1066', *Archaeology and Environment in Northumberland: Till-Tweed Studies* 2 (2012). pp. 294 – 297.

⁷⁹ B Colgrave, *The Life of Bishop Wilfred by Eddius Stephanus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927). pp. 35 – 37. Caetlaevum translates as Catlow and there are two Catlows within the vicinity of the Ribble, one being in the Forest of Bowland to the north, and one being in Burnley to the south. Both are similar distances from the river itself.

⁸⁰ D.P. Kirby, 'The Battle of Whalley 798 A.D, *The Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* (2017). p. 181.

⁸¹ 'The Battle of Whalley' (2017) p. 184.

Therefore, the matter that the area was excluded from the *Tribal Hidage*, believed to have been created on behalf of Offa as a tribute list, towards the end of the eighth century, does not necessarily mean that the area was considered to be either beyond the reach of Anglo-Saxon territory, or merely wasteland. It might be that it was a contested borderland, thus indicating the fragile geo-politics of the lands throughout time.⁸²

Accordingly, the picture of the north of England from before the arrival of the Romans, to the times of the well-established settlement patterns of the Anglo-Saxons is one of dynamic upheaval. However, it is a rare phenomenon in which porous boundaries lead to consistent animosity. The work of Barry Cunliffe, for example, notes the importance of trade amongst different peoples, and so it is not too surprising to learn of a marriage between Oswy, a young prince of Northumbria and the granddaughter of Rhun of Rheged circa 642 C.E.⁸³ Such events make one wonder if some of the source entries exaggerated affairs in the north, together creating a picture of lawlessness and barbarianism that simply did not exist.⁸⁴ Indeed, it could be that the annexation of the north-west of Britain and the south-west of Scotland by the Anglo-Saxons of Northumbria after the middle of the seventh century may have been a consequence of marriage alliances and allegiances rather than the previously assumed invasion and conquest model, with cultural differences becoming blurred in a process referred to as ethnogenesis by Nicholas Higham.⁸⁵ John Koch supports such a hypothesis, suggesting that ‘we should reject the idea of the Anglo-Saxon conquest as a dark-age ethnic cleansing’, and focus instead upon large scale strategic activity of the Vortigern-Hengist model.⁸⁶ However, regardless of the

⁸² Cyril Hart, ‘The Tribal Hidage’, *Transactions of the royal Historical Society* 21 (1971). pp. 133 – 134. Interestingly, the whole of Cornwall is also excluded.

⁸³ This is known from both the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles and Bede.

⁸⁴ A matter also evidenced by reference to the baptism of Edwin of Northumbria by Rhun in 627 C.E.

⁸⁵ Nicholas Higham, *Ecgfirth: King of the Northumbrians, High-King of Britain* (London: Paul Watkins, 2015). p. 53.

⁸⁶ John Koch, ‘The Place of Y Gododdin in the History of Scotland’, *Celtic Connections: Proceedings in the Tenth International Congress of Celtic Studies* 1 (1999). p. 202.

mode of transition, it is known that a key northern leader, Urien of Rheged was killed around 585 C.E.⁸⁷ Thus, given that the marriage recorded by Nennius took place some fifty years later, one can assume that during the intervening period, his kingdom remained unconquered: it would be a foolish prince to marry the daughter of the defeated, after all.

Yet, according to scholars such as Nora Chadwick, such a picture of harmless assimilation is unlikely to have exerted much lasting influence. Indeed, she notes how in the early days, the Saxon occupation of the north under Ida may have lacked the numbers and associated power to expand their kingdom.⁸⁸ *Historia Brittonum* supports this assertion, with Nennius' entries of their attack by a native Northern alliance.⁸⁹ Conversely, Chadwick then explains how under the reign of Æthelfrith matters changed, with the Battle of Chester – believed to have resulted in a Saxon victory c. 616 C.E. - being part of a series of struggles against the 'Men of the North,' in a tactic later expanded by his successor Edwin.⁹⁰ Such expansionism on the part of the Anglo-Saxons was, according to Bede, relentless: Æthelfrith was seen to be 'exterminating or enslaving people.'⁹¹ This continued until at least 633 C.E. when Cadwallon, who had previously been unprepared to submit to Northumbrian rule according to the *Annales Cambriae*, united with Penda, an Anglo-Saxon king of Mercia c. 632 – 655 C.E., and killed Edwin in Northumbria.⁹² Yet, as late as 678 C.E. the boundaries were still permeable, with Bede indicating that Northumbria eventually extended to Galloway and the Solway Firth in the

⁸⁷ Kenneth Jackson, *Language and History in Early Britain* (Edinburgh: 1953). p. 707.

⁸⁸ Nora Chadwick, 'The Battle of Chester' in *Celts and Saxons: Studies in the Early British Border* by Kenneth Jackson, Peter Blair, Bertram Colgrave, Bruce Dickins, Joan and Harold Taylor, Christopher Brooke, and Nora Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963). p. 184.

⁸⁹ Medieval Sourcebook, *Nennius: Historia Brittonum, 8th century* (2022). <<https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/nennius-full.asp>> (Accessed on 20 December 2022).

⁹⁰ Nora Chadwick, 'The Battle of Chester', (1963). p. 184.

⁹¹ Medieval Sourcebook, *Bede: Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation* <<https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/bede-book1.asp>> (Accessed on 27 January 2023).

⁹² Medieval Sourcebook, *Bede: Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation* <<https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/bede-book1.asp>> (Accessed on 27 January 2023).

west, as evidenced by the establishment of an English bishopric at Whithorn in 731. C.E.⁹³ It was within this context that Lancashire existed.

Such historical entries are supported through the analysis of pre-Norman stone crosses on the northern border. Joan and Harold Taylor, for example, conclude that the Anglican kingdom of Northumbria is likely to have expanded to the western seaboard, with crosses existing from the reign of Æthelfrith indicating an early settlement pattern, which precedes the times in which it is known that Edwin occupied the more westerly Isle of Man before being defeated by Penda and Cadwallon.⁹⁴ Furthermore, despite the death and defeat of Edwin, this occupation trend continued, with the ruined chapel of Saint Patrick at Heysham, and numerous crosses ranging from Heversham to Lancaster being cited as evidence up to at least the tenth century.⁹⁵ Such findings could explain why Symeon of Durham (d. post 1129) made reference to Tilred, who was an English abbot of Heversham, and why the ‘Men of the North’ seem to disappear from records, after their prominence in genealogical records and historical sources, as the main resistance movement against the aggressive warfare of the Northumbrians.⁹⁶

Thus, it does seem to appear that from 731 C.E at the latest, when the English bishopric was established in the north-west, the greater area within the north of England was under Anglo-Saxon control. Internal battles may have persisted, but either assimilation or annihilation of Brythonic people had occurred to a large extent. Indeed, it would perhaps have made sense for the expansionists to utilise the pre-existing east-west and north-south Roman roads to facilitate

⁹³ Joan and Harold Taylor, ‘Pre-Norman Churches of the Border’, in *Celts and Saxons: Studies in the Early British Border* by Kenneth Jackson, Peter Blair, Bertram Colgrave, Bruce Dickins, Joan and Harold Taylor, Christopher Brooke, and Nora Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963). pp. 212.

⁹⁴ Joan and Harold Taylor, ‘Pre-Norman Churches of the Border’, (1963). pp. 225 – 226.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 225 – 226.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 225; 13 genealogies for the ‘Men of the North’ exist in MS Harleian 3839, believed to be written circa 1100 C; Nennius tells of the 5 Anglican kings and their battles with the British chieftains. See: Medieval Sourcebook, *Nennius: Historia Brittonum, 8th century* (2022). < <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/nennius-full.asp> > (Accessed on 20 December 2022).

their conquests, and from such a view-point, Lancashire was incredibly vulnerable. Precisely how vulnerable is not recorded in the 'histories', and thus it is from other sources that this information must be gleaned.

However, given the tentative conclusions of David Barrowclough that the legend of '*The Devil's Footprints*' might be of Scandinavian origin, it is necessary to provide a balanced analysis.⁹⁷ The Ribble Valley has long been recognised as providing an important travelling route for early settling Scandinavians.⁹⁸ By the 840s C.E it is known that the early Scandinavians were 'firmly entrenched in Iceland', operating out of Dublin, amongst other places.⁹⁹ After a series of raids, in 876 C.E. Halfdan 'established his men in the area' of York, securing a base which continued under their control until the Norman Conquest, which led to the development of the current town of Clitheroe around its Norman castle. Therefore, the River Ribble, with its estuary being on the opposite side of the Irish Sea to the port of Dublin, provided an easy means of communication across the otherwise inhospitable Pennines, as evidenced in part by the Viking Cuerdale Hoard, and suggested by the knowledge that between the years of 903 and 917 C.E. 'the Hiberno-Norse community was in exile,' having been expelled from Dublin in 902v C.E.¹⁰⁰ In such circumstances, it makes logical sense that a not insignificant proportion 'made their way across the Pennines to swell the ranks of their fellows in York.'¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ David Barrowclough and John Hallam, 'The Devil's Footprints and Other Folklore' (2008). pp. 96 - 99.

⁹⁸ Stephen E. Harding, David Griffiths and Elizabeth Royles, *In Search of the Vikings: Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Scandinavian Heritage of North-West England* (Manchester: CRC Press, 2018). Kindle E-Book.

⁹⁹ Denise Kenyon, *The Origins of Lancashire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991). p.109.

¹⁰⁰ Denise Kenyon, *The Origins of Lancashire* (1991). p.110.

¹⁰¹ O Corrain, Donnchadh, 'Vikings in Ireland and Scotland' (1998). p. 296. Denise Kenyon, *The Origins of Lancashire* (1991). p.110.

Accordingly, it is feasible to place Scandinavian exiles in the area of Pendle Hill, although the stone crosses evidencing Scandinavians in Pendle communities are lacking.¹⁰² Furthermore, it is supposed that such parties were ‘less likely to have shown an interest in Lancashire since the region was relatively poor,’¹⁰³ and so the deviation from the naturally occurring valley route to York into the uplands of Lancashire makes little sense.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, whilst the theoretical association of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’ with Scandinavian influence does seem to have some historical-geographical basis, with ‘thwaite’ surnames amongst others indicating that settlement continued in the area, the suggestion that they would be found on Apronful Hill seems less credible.¹⁰⁵

Thus, rather than ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’ being likely to be a legend of Scandinavian origin, whose markings represent the associated view of the underworld, the study of historical sources supported by archaeological analysis as relevant appears to indicate that this is unlikely. What seems more likely is that the legend gained its origins in turbulent times, in an area which bisected changing boundaries, and whose inhabitants may have held on to their former Brythonic identity.

¹⁰² Joan and Harold Taylor, ‘Pre-Norman Churches of the Border’, (1963). pp. 210 – 257.

¹⁰³ Denise Kenyon, *The Origins of Lancashire* (1991). p.109.

¹⁰⁴ Indeed, genetic evidence indicates that a significant minority of the population along the coastline of West Lancashire and the Wirral show genetic structures of past Scandinavian descent. See Georgina Bowden, Patricia Balaresque, Turi King and Patrick Wait, ‘Excavating Past Population Structures by Surname: The Genetic Legacy of Vikings in Northwest England’, *Molecular Biology and Evolution* 25: 2 (2008). p. 301.

¹⁰⁵ Surname Database, *Thwaite* < <https://www.surnamedb.com/Surname/Thwaite> > (Accessed on 30 January 2023).

The Brythonic Basis of East Lancashire: A Study of Language and Literature in the North of England.

Historically, the philologist Eilert Ekwall, writing at the beginning of the twentieth century, notes that ‘the county of Lancaster developed out of the post-Conquest honour of Roger of Poitou.’¹⁰⁶ Indeed, numerous entries in the *Domesday Book* show Rogerus Pictavensis being in possession of manors in various parts of England, including Lancaster.¹⁰⁷ Eilert Ekwall, supported by Henry Wyld, goes on to describe how Lancashire was thus divided into ‘at least two districts’ – those lands north of the River Ribble, and those between the Ribble and the River Mersey.¹⁰⁸ Interestingly, the ecclesiastic governance of both areas varied, thus creating ‘parts historically unconnected,’ and evidenced via the :Lancashire dialect.¹⁰⁹ In the nineteenth century, Alexander John Ellis, for example, divided the county into four distinct local tongues, three of which were termed ‘North Midland’, and one ‘Northern.’ The areas around Pendle Hill were classified as ‘Western Northern Midland’, a rhotic dialect with a patterning also observed in Southwest England and Ireland, indicating perhaps that some degree of communication had continued throughout the ages, possibly in relation to trade.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ Eilert Ekwall, *The Place-names of Lancashire* (Manchester: The University Press, 1922). p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ V.H. Galbraith, ‘The Making of the Domesday Book’, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961). pp. 187 – 188. Roger of Poitou was also known as Rogerus Pictavenis.

¹⁰⁸ Henry C. Wyld and Tom O. Hirst, *The Place Names of Lancashire*, (London, Franklin Classics, 1911). p. 1; Eilert Ekwall, *The Place-names of Lancashire*, (Manchester: The University Press, 1922). p. 1.

¹⁰⁹ Eilert Ekwall, *The Place-names of Lancashire*, (1922). p. 1. Lancashire also later became further divided in order to create the metropolitan boroughs of Liverpool and Manchester. See also Denise Kenyon, *The Origins of Lancashire* (1991). p. 1.

¹¹⁰ David Costa and Raffaele Serra, ‘Rhoticity in English, a Journey Over Time Through Social Class: A Narrative View’, *Frontiers in Sociology* 7 (2022).

<<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fsoc.2022.902213/full>> (Accessed on 23 January 2023). At the time of writing, this was relatively uncommon in England, with most dialects being non-rhotic. A rhotic dialect is one in which the ‘r’ is still pronounced in all spoken language, in comparison with non-rhotic, in which the ‘r’ is dropped if it follows a vowel and is not followed by another vowel.

Charles O'Donnell believed that a great part of the English population was of Celtic descent, and whilst modern scholars, including the eminent Kenneth Jackson, accept that such a view was and still is 'incapable of proof,' it is now accepted that Brittonic was spoken 'from the Firth of Forth in the north to what is now known as the West of England.'¹¹¹ Citing the ease of land contact between 'all those in which the indigenous British tongue was dominant', Alan Thomas observes that despite limited verification of its usage in the wild, uplands terrains, the evidence that there is 'suggests that the language spoken in all areas was relatively uniform in structure.'¹¹² Thus, similarities enough existed between the languages of Cumbric and Kernowek for them both to be deemed Brythonic, supporting the notion of a language continuum.¹¹³

Throughout the Saxon incursions, the area of Britain north of the Ribble and Humber, and south of the Firth of Forth became known as the kingdom of Northumbria.¹¹⁴ Jackson notes that people of these lands referred to themselves as *Brythons*, before later adopting the signifier *Cumbri*, as recognised by the county Cumbria.¹¹⁵ According to John Koch, *Cumbric* was the precise Brythonic language spoken in the area that was once Yr Hen Ogledd, with place-name evidence suggesting that it may have been spoken as far south as Pendle.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Kenneth Jackson, 'Angles and Britons in Northumbria and Cumbria' in *Angles and Britons*, O' Donnell Lectures (1963: Cardiff, University of Wales Press). p. 60. Alan Thomas, 'The Welsh Language' in Donald MacAulay, *The Celtic Languages* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2004). p. 251

¹¹² Alan Thomas, 'The Welsh Language' (2004). p. 251.

¹¹³ Indeed, this same language was also spoken in Brittany and survives today as Breton. See Jacques-Yves Mouton, 'In Quest of an Ancient Breton Literature', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 30 (2010). pp. 148 – 156. Kernowek is Cornish. See Siarl Ferdinand, 'A brief history of the Cornish Language, its revivéal and its current status', *Journal of Interdisciplinary Celtic Studies* 2 (2013).

¹¹⁴ Kenneth Jackson, 'Angles and Britons in Northumbria and Cumbria' (1963). p. 60

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p. 61. Before the 1974 boundary changes, the county was known as Cumberland and thus the same recognition still applies.

¹¹⁶ John T. Koch, *Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopedia* (Cardiff: ABC-Clio, 2005). pp. 515 – 516; Alan James, 'The Brittonic Language in the Old North: A Guide to Place-Name Evidence', *Scottish Placename Society* (2020). p. 5.

What arose from the creation of the previously mentioned ‘new territory’ of Lancashire, however, was an interesting variation in place names, and consequentially numerous scholars have been keen to investigate this. The county title of Lancashire itself is taken from its then principal town of Lancaster, which includes a corrupted derivation of the Latin suffix *castrum*, signifying an encampment, following the probable Brythonic name for the River Lune.¹¹⁷ It is notable also that the newly created Hundreds of Lancashire were bisected by parishes with natural boundaries, which arguably had greater micro-influence in a county in which there was still ‘no political unity’ by the eleventh century.¹¹⁸ This lack of political unity would indeed make perfect sense, given that historical records might place Lancashire on the boundary of various tribes throughout the sub-Roman period, namely those of Rheged, the regio Dunutinga and Elmet, and formerly Brigantia.¹¹⁹ This matter could have relevance, given the suggestion that the River Ribble formed the northernmost boundary of the kingdom of Mercia around the turn of the tenth century, indicating that regular upheaval was likely, due to the expansionist regime.¹²⁰ It may have been of crucial geopolitical importance.

Thus, whilst Jeremy Harte notes that ‘pre-occupations with phonology and the lexicon can divert attention away from what we might call the story-telling content of names’, there is certainly value to identifying the linguistic origins of the names themselves, in that they hint at the linguistic identity of the inhabitants at the time of naming.¹²¹ From his analysis of the county of Lancashire overall, Ekwall concludes that there is evidence of Briton, Anglian and

¹¹⁷ Keith Johnson, *The History of the Early English* (London: Routledge, 2016). Ebook available online < <https://routledgetextbooks.com/textbooks/9781138795457/chapter3.php> > (Accessed on 21 January 2023). The derivation of the River Line itself may arise from *lōn*, meaning full or abundant.

¹¹⁸ Denis Kenyon, *The Origins of Lancashire* (1991). p. 151, p. 139.

¹¹⁹ John Koch, *An Atlas for Celtic Studies* (2007). s. 21.3

¹²⁰ D. Griffiths, ‘The North-West Frontier’, in *Edward the Elder 899 – 924* by N.J. Higham and D.H. Hill (London: Routledge, 2013). p. 169.

¹²¹ Jeremy Harte, ‘Names and Tales: On Folklore and Placenames’, *Folklore 0* (2019) p. 1; Britannica, *Toponymy* (2021) <https://www.britannica.com/science/toponymy> (Accessed 12 November 2022).

Scandinavian influence, with his understanding being that ‘the British (or probably British) names are not evenly distributed.’¹²² His findings hint at a localised impact of historical events, and certainly give Celtic scholars a licence to engage in this legitimate area of research. Indeed, Andrew Breeze argues that a ‘harvest of minor toponyms’ in Lancashire is essentially ‘the most promising way’ in which ‘historical and linguistic researchers’ can advance their understanding of ‘the survival of the British in early England.’¹²³

‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’ on Apronful Hill are located geographically just beneath the ‘spine’ of Pendle, to the south. The surrounding towns and villages fall within the current boroughs of the Ribble Valley and Pendle.¹²⁴ As late as 1633 the area of Pendle was described as being ‘wild, bleak and barren’, occupied by a geographically isolated population who were a ‘wretchedly poor and uncultivated race’ and amongst whom ‘much of the old character of its population remains.’¹²⁵ Current data for the borough highlights that it ranks within the ten percent most deprived authorities in the England.¹²⁶ The Ribble Valley, on the other hand, has always been more affluent, illustrating that the county is still besieged by its former internal boundaries.¹²⁷ The whole area is also bisected by the River Ribble, with its tributaries of the Calder and the Hodder.¹²⁸ Accordingly, there is a need for a focus upon micro-identities within landscape, which may reveal a more localised picture, particularly because it has long been

¹²² Eilert Ekwall, *The Place-names of Lancashire*, (1922). p.225. Ekwall’s linguistic analysis indicates that he uses the term Briton to be synonymous with Brythonic. His methodology involved surveying Ordnance Survey maps and local pronunciations and his work is still used by scholars today.

¹²³ Andrew Breeze, ‘Britons in West Derby Hundred, Lancashire’, *Northern History*, XLIV: 2 (2007). pp. 199 – 203.

¹²⁴ Lancashire County Council, *Local Authority Profiles* (2022) < <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/area-profiles/local-authority-profiles/>> (Accessed on 1 December 2022).

¹²⁵ Thomas Potts, *The Wonderful Discoverie of Witches in the Countie of Lancaster*, (London: Amazon Press, 1633). p. 13.

¹²⁶ Lancashire County Council, *Pendle District* < <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/area-profiles/local-authority-profiles/pendle-district/>> (Accessed on 1 December 2022).

¹²⁷ Britannica, *Ribble Valley* by Chelsey Parrott-Sheffer < <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ribble-Valley>> (Accessed on 1 December 2022).

¹²⁸ Ribble Rivers Trust, *Our Catchment* (2021) < <https://ribbletrust.org.uk/about-us/our-catchment/>> (Accessed on 3 December 2022).

observed that the naming of geographical features can hint at early historical identities: it is often here that ‘survivals of names of Celtic origin are to be found.’¹²⁹

The River Ribble rises near Ribbleshead in North Yorkshire, and joins the Irish Sea near Preston, Lancashire.¹³⁰ It was first recorded as being known as the *Rippel* from the Latin life of Saint Wilfred circa 715 C.E. before being replaced by *Ribbel* in 930.¹³¹ Although its etymology is obscure, it has long been linked by Celtic scholars to *Bel*, with Ptolemy’s *Belisama* being deemed to be implicated in its naming.¹³² This is strengthened when one considers the Indo-European root *bhel*, which means shining, and thus makes the Ribble comparable in meaning to the Welsh Afon *Arwy* – the shining one.¹³³ Andrew Breeze however argues that the common Celtic prefix *ri* – which in toponyms has an boasting function – might be taken to mean *very*, and that the second element cannot be *bel*, due to the lenition in late British.¹³⁴ Indeed, the pronunciation has softened, which does seem to make *bel* appear unlikely.¹³⁵ Accordingly, his analysis tentatively concludes that the reconstructed primitive Cumbric *pel* contextually suits the Welsh *pwyll*, meaning ‘wisdom, sense,’ and thus we ‘can feel sure that the Ribble has a Celtic name,’ possibly meaning ‘*Great Wisdom*’.¹³⁶

¹²⁹ G.B.G. ‘English River Names: Review’, *The Geographic Journal* 73: 5 (1929). p. 464.

¹³⁰ Ribble Rivers Trust, *Our Catchment* (2021) < <https://ribbletrust.org.uk/about-us/our-catchment/> > (Accessed on 3 December 2022); The distance from Apronful Hill is 4.4 miles via a downhill route to the north. Thus, the area occupies the geo-political northern boundary of the kingdom of Mercia.

¹³¹ Breeze, Andrew, ‘Yrechwydd and the River Ribble’, *Northern History* 47:2. p. 324

¹³² A.L.F. Rivert and Colin Smith, *The Place-Names of Roman Britain* (London: Batsford Press, 1979). pp. 267 – 268. Ptolemy is known to have shown a tendency to name significant places and therefore the association of the deity Bellissima with a river could have been linked to its perceived power by the ‘native’ inhabitants, particularly given the view of Gildas that they worshiped rivers and springs. See Breeze, Andrew, ‘Yrechwydd and the River Ribble’, p. 325.

¹³³ Breeze, Andrew, ‘Yrechwydd and the River Ribble’, p. 325.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 326.

¹³⁵ Although there is always the possibility of lost folk memories.

¹³⁶ Breeze, Andrew, ‘Yrechwydd and the River Ribble’, p. 327; The distance from Apronful Hill is 4.6 miles via a downhill route, to the west.

The River Calder rises on Heald Moor, to the south of Apronful Hill, and joins the River Ribble near Whalley.¹³⁷ It was first recorded in 1193 as *Caldre*.¹³⁸ Its aetiology is believed to be Brythonic, possibly linked to the Welsh *caled*, meaning rough or fast flowing, and *dwfr* meaning water.¹³⁹ This identification is supported by flood data, which shows that ‘there is a long history of flooding within the Calder CFMP area.’¹⁴⁰

The River Hodder is also a tributary of the Ribble.¹⁴¹ It rises in the Forest of Bowland, to the north of Apronful Hill, and joins the Ribble near Whalley.¹⁴² It was first reliably named *Hoder* circa 1240, and is linked to the Celtic term *dubron*, meaning water, by Ekwall.¹⁴³ This analysis is supported by Alan James’ extensive analysis in *Brittonic Language in the Old North*.¹⁴⁴

Thus, the major rivers within the locality of Apronful Hill on Pendle Hill are Brythonic in their naming, whilst the River Mersey to the south is seen to be Old English, indicating that the southerly modern metropolitan district of Liverpool was well within the cultural boundaries of Mercia, but that East Lancashire was perhaps not.¹⁴⁵ However, this naming pattern is repeated elsewhere in England, and so in and of itself it cannot be taken as solid evidence for the Celtic

¹³⁷ The distance from Apronful Hill is 4.6 miles via a downhill route, to the west.

¹³⁸ Eilert Ekwall, *The Place-names of Lancashire* (1922). p.66.

¹³⁹ Ibid., p.66.

¹⁴⁰ Environment Agency, ‘Calder Catchment Flood Management Plan’, (2010). p. 1. < https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/289374/River_Calder_Catchment_Management_Plan.pdf> (Accessed on 3 December 2022).

¹⁴¹ The distance from Apronful Hill is 10 miles via an undulating route to the west.

¹⁴² Ribble Rivers Trust, *Our Catchment* (2021) < <https://ribbletrust.org.uk/about-us/our-catchment/>> (Accessed on 3 December 2022).

¹⁴³ Eilert Ekwall, *The Place-names of Lancashire* (1922). p.139.

¹⁴⁴ Alan, James ‘Brittonic Language in the Old North’ (2019). p. 154.

¹⁴⁵ Eilert Ekwall, *English River Names* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928). p. lxi. Indeed, whilst Peter Arrowsmith suggests that the Mersey was the boundary between Mercia and Northumbria, the Brythonic naming of the major riverways in East Lancashire would suggest otherwise. See: Peter Arrowsmith, ‘Stockport; A History’ *Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council* (1997). p. 21.

occupation of the lands at the time of either the creation or the development of the legend of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*.’¹⁴⁶

Smaller waterways may yield answers, however. Ekwall observed that whilst the differential availability of Old English charters made it impossible to draw conclusions with certainty, evidence from Lancashire indicated that ‘many names of small streams’ were of pre-English origin, with Scandinavian names being common in areas where the Scandinavians were known to have settled.¹⁴⁷ Of interest, therefore, is the patterning of the second element – the use of the generic terms for waterway – for it is often this which has the greatest illuminating power to indicate the longevity of encampments. What can be seen within the vicinity of Pendle Hill is that the south is populated with brooks and wells, which are seen to be Old English, whilst the areas to the north house more becks and gills, which are seen to reflect Scandinavian naming.¹⁴⁸ Illustrating this are Badger Well Water which feeds into Sabden Brook, itself a tributary of the Ribble to the south, and Skirden Beck to the north, which is formed from New Gill Beck and Grunsagill Beck and is later joined by Monubent Beck before uniting with other becks on its own journey to the Ribble.¹⁴⁹ What appears to be indicated here is the precise uneven settlement patterns observed by Ekwall’s place-name analysis, alongside the notion that it would make little sense for fleeing Scandinavians to venture over the uplands to settle.

¹⁴⁶ The juxtaposition of Brythonic and Old English naming within a locality may rather imply differential affluence levels, in that the latter had embodied the language of the ‘invaders’ as a method of social, political and economic advancement, whereas the former had not.

¹⁴⁷ Eilert Ekwall, *English River Names* (1928). p. lxi. p. xlvi-xlvii.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. xlvi – xlvii.

¹⁴⁹ Sabden Folk Page, *The Mystery of Badger Well Water* by D.G. Trimby <http://www.sabden.f2s.com/badger_well/page_1.htm> (Accessed on 12 December 2022); Ekwall concludes that Skirden Beck is clearly of Scandinavian form: Eilert Ekwall, *English River Names* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928). p. 368; Catchment Data Explorer, *Skirden Beck* (2022) <<https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/WaterBody/GB112071065570>> (Accessed on 13 December 2022).

It would be a useful exercise to triangulate this brief harvest of toponyms with that of literary sources; however, perhaps because of the ‘peculiarities of dialect’ of the inhabitants of what is often known as the Forest of Pendle, there are no extant sources available from which to glean insight regarding cultural heritage throughout the ages.¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, Ekwall advocates that people of a more primitive area were likely to have shown greater diversity of language and thus several names may have existed for the same waterways, all simply meaning stream or something similar.¹⁵¹ Indeed, Carol Hough argues that models of language contact allowed for the survival of original names amongst incoming settlers and indigenous populations only when their roles as labels are clear, with Richard Jones commenting further on their function as transmitting Traditional Ecological Knowledge.¹⁵² Thus, it could be that the original naming of minor waterways was ‘semantically opaque’ to settlers and so, as John Collis argues, ‘where no literary evidence survives, place-name evidence is the only means of documenting earlier languages and language change.’¹⁵³

Research by the present author shows a pattern of Anglo-Saxon settlement, with the only Brythonic place-name being Pendleton.¹⁵⁴ Interestingly, the hybridisation of the old Brythonic name for *hill* with the Old English word for *settlement* may possibly indicate an early

¹⁵⁰ Thomas Potts, *The Wonderful Discoverie of Witches in the Countie of Lancaster* (1633). p. 13.

¹⁵¹ Eilert Ekwall, *English River Names* (1928). p. li.

¹⁵² Carol Hough, ‘Celts in Scandinavian Scotland and Anglo-Saxon England’ in *Language contact and development around the North Sea*, by Merja Stenroos, Martii Makinen and Inge Sæverheim (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 2012). p. 3; Richard Jones, ‘Responding to Modern Flooding: Old English Place-Names as a Repository of Traditional Ecological Knowledge’, *Journal of Ecological Anthropology* 18 (2016). pp. 1 – 27.

¹⁵³ Carol Hough, ‘Celts in Scandinavian Scotland and Anglo-Saxon 2012). p. 3; John Collis, *The Celts: Origins, Myths, Inventions* (Stroud: Tempus, 2003). p. 208. The notion that the ‘original’ stream names may have been semantically unclear sits well with the observations surrounding the continued existence of the peculiarities of dialect during the Pendle Witch Trials and triangulates with the existence of the rhotic element in the dialect. Thus, this could lead to the conclusion that new signifiers were adopted in order to apply meaning, and that those recorded were those of the victorious (and literate).

¹⁵⁴ Wordpress, *In response to David Barrowclough and John Hallam (2008) regarding The Devil’s Footprints on Apronful Hill, Pendle*. By Jessica Cornthwaite (2022) < <https://wordpress.com/post/pendleedgedwellers.wordpress.com/117> > (Accessed on 24 December 2022). Pendleton is seen as deriving from the Brythonic *pen* and being later hybridised by the addition of the suffix *tun*, of Old English meaning

encampment of Anglo-Saxons in the area, supporting the observations of historical authors that Northumbria spread from coast to coast, with Pendle perhaps being tied to Wilfred.¹⁵⁵ If this were the case, it would make sense that the place names echo their presence and would possibly triangulate with the dialectical observations of Alexander John Ellis.¹⁵⁶ However, there are also some place names of potential Scandinavian origin, indicating possible support for the conclusions of David Barrowclough and John Hallam. Interestingly, two of these are housed within the legend of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*.’

Ekwall notes how the northerly town of Clitheroe has been hybridised with the addition of the Old Norse *haugr* to mean hill or rock, thus describing the *clud* or rock which formed the first element of the name in Old English to describe the location of the current Norman castle.¹⁵⁷ Unsurprisingly, archaeologists believe that a Saxon predecessor to the existing castle may have existed, possibly constructed from wooden materials, and thus the language blend could indicate the dominance of the incoming Scandinavian population.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, the southerly village of Sabden could also potentially house an Old Norse origin, as Henry Wylde noted how its first recording as *Sapenden* could be explained via the use of the associated term *sappi*, accompanied by the Old English *denu* – meaning Spruce Valley.¹⁵⁹ If such etymology were true, this could make semantic sense in terms of the legend. One would have an outsider approaching from Accrington to attack the Scandinavian settlement of Clitheroe, but necessarily needing to venture through the dangerous area of Sabden.¹⁶⁰ The Devil, however,

¹⁵⁵ David Johnson, *New Light on the “Dark Ages” in North Craven* (Skipton: Yorkshire Dales Landscape Research Trust, 2019). p. 2.

¹⁵⁶ Alexander J. Ellis, *On Early English Pronunciation, Volume V* (, 2018). pp. 329 – 351.

¹⁵⁷ This in and of itself is of great interest and indicates a strong Saxon and Norse presence prior to the Norman invasion, which is generally credited as creating the town. Good.

¹⁵⁸ Oxford Archaeology North, *Clitheroe Castle, Clitheroe, England: Archaeological Building Investigation* (Oxford: English Heritage, 2008). p. 3

¹⁵⁹ Henry Cecil Wylde, *The Place-Names of Lancashire: Their Origins and Their Meanings* (London: Constable and Company, 1911). p. 249. The closest settlement to Apronful Hill

¹⁶⁰ Accrington is believed by Ekwall to be entirely of Old English naming. See Eilert Ekwall, *The Place-Names of Lancashire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1922). p. 89.

as is often the case with enemies recorded in lore, was unsuccessful in his mission, and thus the legend could have the value of solidifying the esteem of the in-group whilst mocking and demonising the outsider.¹⁶¹ Such a theory could be supported by the matter that smaller waterways alongside other place names to the north of Apronful Hill also indicate Scandinavian origin, namely the naming of the Forest of Bowland deriving from the Old Norse *boga*, meaning bend in a river.¹⁶² However, such attributions are not undisputed, and it is also of interest that the linguistic patterning of origin in Clitheroe and Sabden show reversals. Indeed, Ekwall himself casts doubt upon the attribution of *sappe* in Sabden to Old Norse, believing it to derive from the Old English terms *sappe* and *leah*, whilst the existence of the Welsh name river *Cletwr*, which possibly stems from *caled* and *dwr*, sheds uncertainty upon his attribution of the first element of Clitheroe to Old English, particularly given its nearby location to the River Calder.¹⁶³ Therefore perhaps the couching of the legend within known geographical boundaries was too simplistic an analysis.

Hence, what is known for certain is that naming conventions in the area surrounding Apronful Hill show settlement patterns which support those of the classical and historical sources. They indicate that – like much of the north – the region experienced demographic change throughout the ages, and accordingly hint that legend may have a variety of origins. Indeed, Pendle Hill itself has relatively recently received local news attention for meaning ‘hill hill hill.’¹⁶⁴ Whilst tabloid press can at times be mistaken, analysis does show that Pendle Hill contains the

¹⁶¹ In such a scenario, the mythology surrounding the footprints would be of Scandinavian origin.

¹⁶² North Craven Heritage Trust, *Mapping the Lordship of Bowland* (2015) <<http://www.northcravenheritage.org.uk/NCHTJ2015/2015/Bowland/Bowland.html>> (Accessed on 12 February 2023).

¹⁶³ Eilert Ekwall, *The Place-Names of Lancashire* (1922). p. 80. Nigel Callaghan, ‘Cwmni Cletwr – a case study of a successful Welsh rural social enterprise’, *Cwmni Cymunedol Cletwr Cyf* (2017). p. 4.

¹⁶⁴ The Burnley Express, *Pendle Hill = Hill Hill Hill*, by Tony Cooper (2014) <<https://www.burnleyexpress.net/news/opinion/letters/pendle-hill-hill-hill-hill-2640512>> (Accessed on 3 November 2022).

Brythonic ‘*pen*’, to which the Saxons added ‘*hill*’, before it was later corrupted from Pennehill to Pendle Hill.¹⁶⁵

This, alongside the attribution of the Mersey to Old English, likely places East Lancashire in the early historical north, leading Alan James to argue that Pendle Hill might have acted as a dividing line in Saxon times.¹⁶⁶ A similar suggestion was made by Andrew Breeze with regard to its northern counterpart of Pen-y-Ghent, and therefore both could have originally been named to mean ‘boundary point.’¹⁶⁷ The boundary here could have been the point at which the Mercian dialects of the southern area of the county lost their influence, with the River Ribble also at times acting as a terminus.¹⁶⁸

None of this is known with any degree of certainty, however, and so, when language itself cannot find the answer, literature might, as ‘characters who have their origins in the Old North can be found in many places throughout the extant body of medieval Welsh literature.’¹⁶⁹ Could the vernacular literature of the island reveal more nuanced information regarding the ancient boundaries within which Lancashire sat? According to John Humphreys Parry, ‘of all the ancient poets of Wales Taliesin has decidedly acquired the pre-eminence in popular replete’, and so it makes sense to begin here.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁵ *Pen* as signifying hill in Old Welsh. See also: Lancashire County Council, *A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire – Landscape Character Assessment* (2000) p. 12. See also Geoffrey Leech, ‘The unique heritage of place-names in Northwest England’, *Lancaster University Journal* (2006). p. 11.

¹⁶⁶ Alan, James ‘Brittonic Language in the Old North’ (2019). p. 233. Note here that *pen* can also taken to mean end, and thus Pendle Hill could have indicated the end of the range of power.

¹⁶⁷ Andrew Breeze, ‘Three Celtic Toponyms: Setantii, Blencartha, and Pen-y-Ghent’, *Northern History* 43: 1 (2006). p. 163; Alan, James ‘Brittonic Language in the Old North’ (2019). p. 233.

¹⁶⁸ Such an argument could be supported by the previous dialectical divisions observed by Alexander Ellis. See: Ellis, Alexander J, *On Early English Pronunciation, Volume V* (London: Forgotten Books, 2018). pp. 329 – 351; Geoffrey Leech, ‘The unique heritage of place-names in North West England’ (2006). p. 7.

¹⁶⁹ Celeste L. Andrews, ‘What Did Cynddelw Know About the Old North?’, *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 39 (2019). p. 39.

¹⁷⁰ John Humphreys Parry, *The Cambrian Plutarch* (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1834). p. 41.

Taliesin was a poet or bard of the late sixth century, and a contemporary of a neighbouring poet from the Gododdin, known as Neirin or Aneirin.¹⁷¹ We know of Taliesin's work from the scholarship of Edward Lhuyd, who published inventories of ancient Welsh manuscripts in his 1707 *Archaeologia Britannica*.¹⁷² Here, listed as item 26, one finds 'Llyvr Taliesin' – 'The Book of Taliesin.'¹⁷³ It is from this poetry – which comprises some of the oldest poems in Wales, many attributed to a poet called Taliesin who praised northern royalty during the sixth century - that we learn about Urien of Rheged, who is supposed to have been the poet's royal patron.¹⁷⁴ Urien is believed to have been the leader of the northerly kingdom of Rheged, which seems to have disappeared almost as quickly as it appeared, and which is known of elsewhere only in the Triads of Britain and in the poetry of Llywarch Hen.¹⁷⁵

The context for the relationship between Taliesin and his patron is perhaps provided by *Historia Brittonum*, which includes 'a short list of the great poets of Britain around the time of the consolidation of Anglian territories under King Ida (who died c. 559.)'¹⁷⁶ Taliesin is included, and his praise poetry thus firmly places him within the north. Urien himself has been located within / identified with Catraeth, Aeron, Llwyfennydd and Erechwydd, which are believed by many to represent Catterick, the Aire Valley, Lyvennet Valley in Cumbria, and the

¹⁷¹ Medieval Sourcebook, *Nennius: Historia Brittonum, 8th century* (2022). <

<https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/nennius-full.asp>> (Accessed on 20 December 2022).

¹⁷² Marged Haycock, *Legendary Poems from the Book of Taliesin* (Aberystwyth: CMCS Publications, 2015).

p.1.

¹⁷³ Marged Haycock, *Legendary Poems from the Book of Taliesin* (Aberystwyth: CMCS Publications, 2015).

p.1.

¹⁷⁴ The National Library of Wales, *Book of Taliesin* (2022) < <https://www.library.wales/discover-learn/digital-exhibitions/manuscripts/the-middle-ages/book-of-taliesin#?c=&m=&s=&cv=&xywh=360%2C1180%2C598%2C518>> (Accessed on 13 January 2022);

The National Library of Wales, *Book of Taliesin* (2022) < <https://www.library.wales/discover-learn/digital-exhibitions/manuscripts/the-middle-ages/book-of-taliesin#?c=&m=&s=&cv=&xywh=360%2C1180%2C598%2C518>> (Accessed on 13 January 2022);

Tim Clarkson, *The Men of the North* (2010). p. 67.. It is found in Peniarth MS 2, dated from the first half of the fourteenth century and there are four other known works recorded by the same scribe, who was believed to have been the single hand responsible here.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., pp. 67 – 68. Llywarch Hen is seen to be a ninth century figure and was believed by some to be the cousin of Urien.

¹⁷⁶ Gwyneth Lewis and Rowan Williams. *The Book of Taliesin: Poems of Warfare and Praise in an Enchanted Britain* (London: Penguin Classics, 2020). p. xix.

Solway Firth, or low-lying Yorkshire wet-lands respectively.¹⁷⁷ If one were to plot these locations on a map, it would be clear to see their relationship to East Lancashire: they surround it from the north, east and west.

Therefore, whilst there is not a specific mention of areas close to East Lancashire in the praise poetry itself, it is within this context – both geographically and politically – that it was located. It is here that one finds the part of Britain previously referred to as Yr Hen Ogledd – the Old North. John Koch notes how the area comprised

Elfed, Gododdin, Rheged, Ystrad Clud (Strathclyde, partly synonymous with Cumbria), as well as lesser kingdoms or sub-kingdoms, such as Aeron, probably in the south-west of Scotland, Manaw and Lleuddiniawn (Lothian), probably both subdistricts of the northern Gododdin.¹⁷⁸

He further adds to his description a minor Brythonic kingdom named ‘county of Dunaut,’ regio Dunutinga, possibly the current Dent in the western Yorkshire Dales, and Bernicia and Deira, based upon their Brythonic naming.¹⁷⁹ His belief is that in sub-Roman Britain they were largely fractured, although they worked together as coalition forces at times, including under Urien.¹⁸⁰ It is thought by others however that Celtic traditions remained strong in much of Yr Hen Ogledd, due in part to its early self-government during Roman rule, with the later reliance on tribal groups of native leaders.¹⁸¹ Accordingly, although Lancashire – and its various townships

¹⁷⁷ Gwyneth Lewis and Rowan Williams. *The Book of Taliesin* (2020). pp. xxi – xxii.

¹⁷⁸ John Koch, *Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopaedia* (Cardiff: ABC Clio, 2005). p. 904.

¹⁷⁹ John Koch, *Celtic Culture* (2005). p. 904.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 904.

¹⁸¹ Jones, Michael, ‘The Failure of Romanisation in Celtic Britain’, *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 7 (1987). p. 96.

– rarely receives consideration in historical geographical mapping, the fact that the boundaries of Yr Hen Ogledd stretched throughout the north of England necessitates its inclusion.

Yet, this raises what is perhaps the most pertinent question of all. What precisely were the boundaries of each of these districts, and did any of them comprise the area currently known as East Lancashire? John Koch, in *Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopaedia* makes the effort to clarify that The Old North does not just mean northern Britain south of the Forth: rather it is those areas distinct from the most northerly regions of Wales that were ‘inhabited by Britons, rather than by Picts, Scots, or Anglo-Saxons.’¹⁸² Elfed is identified as Elmet, and believed to be situated around the present-day city of Leeds, Gododdin is to the north-east, Ystrad Clud is in the north and is the present-day Strathclyde, whilst Aeron is likely to be the current county of Ayrshire.¹⁸³ Since none of these include the modern county of Lancashire therefore, the answer must lie with either Rheged or regio Dunutinga.¹⁸⁴

In such circumstance, it is often helpful to examine data pictorially. Koch's *An Atlas for Celtic Studies* aims to shine a new light on the subject by presenting data in such a manner.’¹⁸⁵ However, even he fails to fill the gaps in knowledge surrounding the ancient historicity of Lancashire with precision, probably due to the lack of archaeological and linguistic data available. He does however place Rheged around Carlisle and the Solway Firth.¹⁸⁶ However, Tim Clarkson notes that the notion that Rheged lay primarily around the Solway area emerged because of the acceptance of a ‘factoid.’¹⁸⁷ This, he argues, stemmed from the interpretation of

¹⁸² John Koch, *Celtic Culture* (2005). p. 903.

¹⁸³ Ibid., p. 397; p. 638; p. 904; p. 354. Some scholars locate Aeron in the Aire Valley, West Yorkshire, but place-names indicate an affinity to Elmet. See also John Koch, *Atlas for Celtic Studies* (2006). s. 21.3

¹⁸⁴ John Koch, *Celtic Culture* (2005). p. 904.

¹⁸⁵ Oliver Buchsenshutz, ‘Review: An Atlas for Celtic Studies: archaeology and names in ancient Europe and Early Medieval Ireland, Britain and Brittany’, *Antiquity* 82:318 (2008). p. 1142. John Koch, *Atlas for Celtic Studies* (2006). s. 21.3.

¹⁸⁶ John Koch, *Atlas for Celtic Studies* (2006). s. 2.

¹⁸⁷ Tim Clarkson, *The Men of the North* (2010). p. 68.

a few lines from a poem by Hywel ab Owain in the twelfth century which translate into English as:

How far from Ceri to Carlisle?

I mounted my bay from Maelienydd

*To the land of Rheged, by night and day.*¹⁸⁸

Clarkson argues that the usual interpretation that this equated Rheged with Carlisle and consequently the Solway Firth is misguided, and that what it really meant to convey was Gwynedd's reputation as a 'twelfth century manifestation of Urien's Kingdom' – a land of heroes, rather than a land physically by the sea of Carlisle.¹⁸⁹ John Koch, on the other hand, believes that the poem in and of itself provides the 'best evidence' for Rheged's location, and thus whilst the matter is still unresolved, it is notable that Clarkson's intention was to locate Rheged within the current realms of Scotland.¹⁹⁰ Archaeological support does lean towards the supposed location around the wider Solway Firth, with place name evidence being utilised by some to link *Dunregate* in etymology to 'Fort of Rheged.'¹⁹¹ Chris Bowles and Ronan Tools' investigation appears to have possibly unearthed its headquarters in a fortified hillfort at Trusty's Hill in Galloway, for which radio-carbon dating and the findings of a single bead indicate an original settlement pattern pertaining to the fourth century B.C.E., before the

¹⁸⁸ Tim Clarkson, *The Men of the North* (2010). p. 68. Hywel ab Owain was prince of Gwynedd in 1170 and was known also as a poet.

¹⁸⁹ Tim Clarkson, *The Men of the North* (2010). pp. 68 – 69.

¹⁹⁰ Tim Clarkson, *The Men of the North* (2010). p. 69. John Koch, *Celtic Culture* (2005). p. 1499.

¹⁹¹ Scottish Place-Name Society, General Survey of Dumfries and Galloway (1926) <<https://spns.org.uk/resources/history-of-the-celtic-placenames-of-scotland/general-survey-of-dumfries-and-galloway>> (Accessed on 12 January 2023). It is located between Stranraer and Dumfries, and so forms the north-western boundary of the Solway.

location was abandoned, later to be inhabited and fortified from the fifth century C.E. onwards.¹⁹² Furthermore, Pictish symbols found, that are associated with royalty elsewhere in Scotland and may have been left following raids, have led to speculation that this was indeed ‘the headquarters of the Brittonic kingdom of Rheged.’¹⁹³ Such a finding would make sense with regards to the regularity of the recorded Northumbrian incursions. Furthermore, the view that Trusty’s Hill acted ‘at the apex of a complex hierarchical settlement pattern that may well have extended north into Ayrshire and east into Dumfriesshire and Cumbria,’ does not necessarily negate the importance of the Solway Firth and Carlisle, but rather may indicate shifting allegiances and comradeship patterns stemming from years of subjugation.¹⁹⁴

‘*Gweith Gwen Ystrad*,’ attributed to Taliesin, is often used in order to make claims on territorial locations within the north. It is essentially a poem in which Urien commanded a force of Britons to repel an attack against Pictish raiders, who came ‘in hosts like waves rolling over the lands.’¹⁹⁵ Morris-Jones accordingly sites Gwen Ystrad as Wensleydale, in the current North Yorkshire, approximately thirty miles north of Apronful Hill and, whilst it is believed by W.J. Watson that this cannot be the case due to the reference to the sea, it is an interpretation that has gained some credibility.¹⁹⁶ This acceptance was perhaps due to the champions being described as ‘men of Catraeth’¹⁹⁷ and so being associated with Catterick in North Yorkshire, implying a geographical proximity that enabled mutual support.¹⁹⁸ Indeed, the reference to ‘Catraeth’, and its associated ‘Battle of Catraeth’ which made its fame in ‘*Y Gododdin*’ by

¹⁹² Ronan Toolis and Christopher Bowles, *The Lost Dark Age Kingdom of Rheged: the Discovery of a Royal Stronghold at Trusty’s Hill, Galloway* (London: Oxbow Books, 2017). Kindle Ebook.

¹⁹³ Weiss, Daniel ‘Lost Kingdom of the Britons’, *Archaeology* 70:5 (2017). p. 32.

¹⁹³ Alan, James ‘Brittonic Language in the Old North’ (2019). p. 234.

¹⁹⁴ Ronan Toolis and Christopher Bowles, *The Lost Dark Age Kingdom of Rheged* (2017). Kindle Ebook.

¹⁹⁵ John Morris-Jones, ‘Taliesin’, *Society of Cymmadorion* XXVIII (1918). p. 168.

¹⁹⁶ W.J. Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1926). pp. 344 – 345.

¹⁹⁷ John Morris-Jones, ‘Taliesin’, *Society of Cymmadorion* XXVIII (1918). P. 162.

¹⁹⁸ Rachel Bromwich, ‘The Character if the Early Welsh Tradition’, in *Studies in Early British History* by Nora Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954). pp. 83 – 135.

Aneirin, does lead one to draw such a conclusion, thus possibly placing Apronful Hill within proximity to the most notorious sub-Roman kingdoms in Britain. Archaeologically, Catterick was clearly of importance throughout this era as highlighted by new discoveries, with the finding of a silver snake-like ring indicating that the area enjoyed great wealth, whilst a pewter inkpot and several styli show that the town was a key administration centre, with a literate population.¹⁹⁹

However, as with most matters relating to early history, interpretation rarely achieves consistent support, and thus Andrew Breeze accepts Thomas Stephens' analysis that the battle took place in Winster, near Windermere in Cumbria, placing Apronful Hill almost fifty miles to the south.²⁰⁰ If this were the case, whilst it certainly places Urien around the area of Carlisle as opposed to Galloway, it might need to be accepted that East Lancashire was indeed a lawless state, spanning the peripheries of various stronger kingdoms but being incorporated into none.

It is therefore perhaps wise to look at other developments in order to understand the ancient past. Analysis of the emergence of the modern political entity of Cumbria can for example yield valuable information, in that it could be argued that by stemming from the root stemming from 'Cymry' it also hints at emerging political allegiances between Rheged and the neighbouring Strathclyde, at a time when sections of Brythonic speakers south of the Solway Firth survived continued Northumbrian attacks in the early tenth century.²⁰¹ Thus, we have a potentially expanding and steadfast area of resistance in the north-west of England, potentially

¹⁹⁹ Historic England, *New discoveries shed light on Romans in Northern England* (2017) <<https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/news/new-roman-discoveries-northern-england/>> (Accessed on 15 February 2023).

²⁰⁰ Andrew Breeze, 'Urien Rheged and the Battle at Gwen Ystrad', *Northern History* 52: 1 (2015). pp. 9 – 19.

²⁰¹ Charles Phythian-Adams, 'Land of the Cumbrians'. in David Rollason, *Northumbria 500–1100: The Creation and Destruction of a Kingdom* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 249–50. This argument would make sense given the suggestion that Anglo-Saxons made use of previous Roman roads, which themselves were suggested to have been in-situ in order to quell communication with the north.

reflecting self-designation, and mirroring the tenth-century text *Armes Prydein*, which proclaimed ‘Cornyw a Chludwys eu kynnwys genhyn.’²⁰² Hence, whilst Henri Hubert’s assertion that the ancient Celts were ‘inter-connected’ to the point that ‘Celtic peoples living far apart’ experienced a ‘sense of oneness’ may be a little far-fetched, it may be that even in the eleventh century there existed a community of Britons in the north-west of England and the south-west of Scotland who self-identified as not yet English, and who still shared commonalities with their ‘comrades’ in Scotland, Cornwall and Wales.²⁰³ The survival beyond the eighteenth century of the Cumbric language in the form of the ‘shepherd’s score’ indicates that there may be a kernel of truth in this proposition.²⁰⁴ The inhabitants of north-west England shared language features in common with their Welsh and Cornish counterparts, despite centuries of turmoil, internally as well as at the hands of numerous newcomers to the lands.²⁰⁵

Nonetheless, East Lancashire has not yet, in truth, been located with any degree of historical accuracy within the later kingship boundaries of Yr Hen Ogledd. The matter that it borders the West Riding of Yorkshire to the east may mean that it was subsumed within the wider affinities of Elmet, or the porous nature of Rheged may have seen it transition in loyalty to the realm of Urien, because of the impact Romanisation. Yet, what is known is that the styles of buildings in Lancashire echo those of Ireland, the Isle of Man, Cumbria and the west of Scotland,²⁰⁶ whilst the open field system known to exist around the Pennines is also shared with these regions, apart from Man.²⁰⁷

²⁰² ‘The men of Cornwall and of the Clyde will be made welcome among us.’ See Ifor Williams (ed.) and Rachel Bromwich (tr.), *Armes Prydein: the Prophecy of Britain* (Dublin, 1982), pp. 2–3; Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons* (London: Oxford University Press, 2014). p. 529.

²⁰³ Henry Hubert, *The Greatness and Decline of the Celts* (London: Routledge, 1934). p. 188.

²⁰⁴ The shepherd’s score is a rhythmic counting system often used in agricultural sales, for example at sheep auctions. John Koch, *Celtic Culture* (2005). p. 516.

²⁰⁵ John Koch, *Celtic Culture* (2005). p. 516.

²⁰⁶ English Heritage Policy department, *Historic Farmsteads* (2006) < <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-farmsteads-preliminary-character-statement-north-west/historic-farmsteads-north-west-part2> > (Accessed on 23 January, 2023).

²⁰⁷ John Koch, *Celtic Culture* (2005). p. 684. This potentially signifies Goidelic influence.

An alternative potential signifier for the location may, however, have been regio Dunutinga.²⁰⁸ References in the *Annales Cambriae* track the descendants of Coel, believed to be the ancestors of the ‘Men of the North’ and, although unheard of elsewhere and so impossible to confirm reliably, the *Life of Wilfred* cites a great grandson of Coel known as Dunawd, believed possibly to have been the namesake of the regio, although the name is not rare.²⁰⁹ Furthermore, regio Dunutinga is located in the southern Yorkshire Dales, just thirty-six miles to the north of Pendle Hill, via a series of old packhorse routes through the Forest of Bowland and Ingleton. Tim Clarkson also raises awareness of the little-known region of Calchfynydd, the domain of a king called Cardod known from ‘Bonedd Gwyr y Gogledd.’²¹⁰ Translated as lime stone or chalk mountain, it is typically identified with Kelso, thus placing it within the wider boundaries of Y Gododdin.²¹¹ One cannot help but recall how Pendle Hill was named three times, however, and that its geological formation is primarily of limestone.²¹² Indeed, Pendle Hill has been seen as an important meeting point throughout the ages, and consequently it would not be too great a reach to see it being named as a smaller kingdom of Yr Hen Ogledd. Such suggestions however cannot be verified, and the argument forwarded by Clarkson that Cynfelyn was listed in the genealogies as Cadrod’s father, and was associated with the archaeological ruins around Roxborough, despite lacking a ‘territorial ephiphet’ does seem to be compelling.²¹³ Yet,

²⁰⁸Ibid., p. 458

²⁰⁹ Medieval Sourcebook, *Annales Cambriae* < <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/annalescambriae.asp> > (Accessed on 21 December 2022); John Koch, *Celtic Culture* (2005). p. 458.

²¹⁰ Tim Clarkson, *The Men of the North* (2010). pp. 37 – 38. Rachel Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein* ((Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2017). pp. 256 – 257.

²¹¹ Tim Clarkson, *The Men of the North* (2010). pp. 37 – 38. The attribution is based upon the linguistic analysis that Kelso was first recorded as Calkou, meaning chalk height.

²¹² Lancashire Geological Society, *Field Guide to the Geology and Quaternary History of Pendle Hill*, by Alan Harrison (2015) [http://www.lancashire-geologists.co.uk/ESW/Files/Pendle_Hill_\(final_-_full_size\).pdf](http://www.lancashire-geologists.co.uk/ESW/Files/Pendle_Hill_(final_-_full_size).pdf) (Accessed on 31 January 2023).

²¹³Tim Clarkson, *The Men of the North* (2010). p. 38.

additional research indicates that Roxburgh was inhabited by the Anglo-Saxons, and thus the answer remains hidden within the realms of time.²¹⁴

Hence, whilst it is impossible to revert to historical records of land habitation in order to locate the tribal and kingship affinities of the inhabitants of East Lancashire with precision, what is clear is that they inhabited an area which after the Roman Conquest was quite possibly either contained within, or bordering, Rheged, Elmet, regio Dunutinga or Calchfynydd: and most likely within the wider confederacy of the Brigantes, prior. Its Celticity is assured, and thus the fact that the legend of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’ is tied to a site which displays Bronze Age cairns seems to imply that the associated legend – at the reductionist and scientific level – is of probable Celtic or Brythonic origin, although likely to have undergone changes thereafter.

Allusions to the necessity to guard against such changes come from the *Triads of Britain*, which seem to indicate the geographical spread of power of King Arthur, with ‘Pen Rhionydd’ being named his northern kingdom, leading Rachel Bromwich to suggest a possible location in Galloway, although she acknowledges that it is ‘one of the lost place names of the British kingdoms in the Old North.’²¹⁵ This mention of a division of power within the islands is of great interest, given that there is consensus that the activities set out within the poems, triads and *Historia Brittonum* refer chronologically to the sixth and seventh centuries CE, around the time of the Saxon incursions in the north.²¹⁶ Thus, although triangulation in a strict geographical sense escapes analysis, what is clear is that Lancashire fell within a wider area which had undergone substantial changes and yet was still regarded within the realms of

²¹⁴ Waddington, Cline and Passmore, David, ‘A Kingdom Born and Lost AD 410 – 1066’, *Archaeology and Environment in Northumberland: Till-Tweed Studies 2* (2012). pp. 294 – 297.

²¹⁵ Rachel Bromwich, *Tioedd Ynys Prydein: The Triads of the Island of Britain* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2014). pp. 1 – 4.

²¹⁶ David Dumville, *Britons and Anglo-Saxons in the Early Middle Ages* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1993). pp. 73 – 74; Dictionary of Welsh Biography, *Taliesin* < <https://biography.wales/article/s-TALI-ESI-0575> > (Accessed on 4 February 2022).

Brythonic power. Like ‘Pen Rhionydd,’ its place-names may be lost, but it was still housed within the geo-political climate of Yr Hen Ogledd.

However, Tim Clarkson notes that the successor states of Rome may well have needed strength to evolve into kingdoms, and so the possibility that some areas remained as ‘wastes’ throughout the sixth and seventh centuries should not be overlooked.²¹⁷ Indeed, the *Tribal Hidage* failed to allocate a tribute value to East Lancashire, whilst the *Domesday Book* later recorded numerous areas around Pendle in such a manner, and so the continual reference to poverty throughout the ages may provide support for such a conclusion.²¹⁸ That re-emerging elites would require person-power once Rome had relinquished her authority is probable, and the limited number of civitates in the north would likely have impacted upon its availability in some areas.²¹⁹ Furthermore, it is possible that after centuries of rule, many northerners had come to abhor ‘Britishness’: something which could indeed have been possible within Lancashire, which was heavily ‘policed’ by a network of forts and roads.²²⁰ Such a disregard for a former British identity could indeed have led to a loss of folk memory.²²¹ Thus, rather than the legend of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’ reflecting old recollections of Celtic identity, it could indeed have been a relatively new construction, originating much later than the early historic period, due to changing allegiances caused by centuries of flux and change.

²¹⁷ Tim Clarkson, *The Men of the North* (2010). p. 30.

²¹⁸ Cyril Hart, ‘The Tribal Hidage’ (1971). pp. 138 – 157; National Archives, *The Domesday Book* (2022) < <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/domesday/>> (accessed on 21 December 2022); The Domesday Book Online, Lancashire (2019) < <http://www.domesdaybook.co.uk/lancashire.html>> (Accessed 1 February 2023). The area was also recorded as being poor during the Pendle Witch Trials.

²¹⁹ The traditional term ‘manpower’ has been avoided here due in part to the perceived power of Cartimandua in the north meaning that the exclusion of women is unrepresentative in a historical sense.

²²⁰ Roman Roads Research Association, *The Roman Roads of Britain: Lancashire* (2018) < <https://www.romanroads.org/gazetteer/lancspages.html>> (Accessed on 4 February 2023); Landscape Britain, *Roman Sites in Lancashire* (2020). < <https://www.landscapebritain.co.uk/features/lancashire/roman-sites/>> (Accessed on 4 February 2023). By Britishness it is meant former ‘Celtic’ identity.

²²¹ Brendan McMahon, *A Wreck Upon The Ocean: Cornish Folklore in the Age of the Industrial Revolution* (Everttype: Truro, 2015). p. 33.

Yet, even though elements of Lancashire – and East Lancashire around Pendle Hill in particular – may have failed to evolve into the mighty kingdoms of poetry and Triads, archaeological evidence indicates that it has been inhabited throughout the ages. The previously mentioned Bronze Age cairns show early occupancy patterns, whilst the Roman roads and forts imply the need to police a population. The longevity of river names indicate that their meanings as signifiers were passed to new settlers, and the hybridisation of place-names shows that ownership was sought throughout different time periods. Although seen to be wasteland at a macro-level of analysis, by those who sought to assess wealth and land assets, people lived there, albeit possibly in poverty.²²² In such situations, there is potentially less need immediately to accept the language of the conquerors, and micro communication can continue as usual. It may therefore have been that the native language continued in the face of geographical isolation, based on modern studies of linguistic diversification.²²³

Accordingly, whilst the position of Lancashire within Yr Hen Ogledd is continually secured, its precise position within the sub-Roman kingdoms remains elusive, failing to be further illuminated by analysis of language and literature. What is clear, however is that the major Roman road in the area closely follows the present-day A59, and that this was the likely pathway of the Scandinavian route to York, as evidenced by the linguistic origins of the *Clitheroe* settlement, and other place-names along the way. Whilst it has previously been argued that it would make little sense for the new community to venture into the wilds of the Pennines, the northerly aspect of the road – in what would have been Yorkshire prior to the

²²² National Archives, *The Domesday Book* (2022) < <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/domesday/> > (accessed on 21 December 2022).

²²³ Cecilia Padilla-Inglesias, Erik Gjesfjeld and Lucio Vinicius, ‘Geographical and social isolation drive the evolution of Austronesian language’, *PLoS ONE* 15 (2020). p. 1

boundary changes of 1974 - contains flatter, richer and more fertile ground.²²⁴ It is here that one finds the Forest of Bowland: the place of the ‘becks,’ with pollen profiles indicating a gradual and localised settlement pattern, in which new-comers from the ‘Viking invasions’ settled alongside the existing population and caused little environmental degradation.²²⁵ Thus, whilst it appears that people of Scandinavian origin did indeed inhabit areas of Lancashire within the Middle Ages, their patterns of settlement do not seem to lend support to the hypothesis that it was their mythology that led to the formulation of the legend of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*.’ If it were to be of received opinion that the legend was not of Celtic origin, it would perhaps make more sense to attribute it to the early English linguistic heritage of the area, given that the Devil came from the Old English *Accrington*, rested in the Old English *Sabden*, and attacked the newer Scandinavian community of *Clitheroe*.²²⁶ However, the inclusion of the ‘castle’ confuses matters, particularly if it is indeed the current standing Norman castle. Furthermore, hints within the legend suggest that it may indeed be more primitive than has previously been assumed, and that its current place-pegs may hide an older origin.

Indeed, the mention of ‘Deerstones Rocks’ within the legend could prove to be of vital importance as, whilst the deer motif most certainly occurs in Bronze Age rock art in Scandinavia, it could also be a story from the oldest of times, brought to the islands with the migration from the Steppes.²²⁷ Providing an argument in total opposition to the recency hypothesis of Jeremy Harte, such a proposal would see the legend as a distant folk-memory,

²²⁴ Family Search, *England County Boundaries: National Institute* (2012) < [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/England_County_Boundaries_\(National_Institute\)](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/England_County_Boundaries_(National_Institute))> (Accessed on 13 January 2023).

²²⁵ Mackay, Anson and Tallis, John, ‘The recent vegetational history of the Forest of Bowland, Lancashire, UK’, *New Phytologist* 128: 3 (1994). p. 571.

²²⁶ Eilert Ekwall, *The Place-Names of Lancashire* (1922). p. 89.

²²⁷ Michael Ranta, Peter Skoglund, Tomas Persson and Jan Gjerde, ‘Hunting Stories in Scandinavian Rock Art: Aspects of Tellability in the North versus the South’, *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*, 39: 3 ((2020). p. 228; Joan Aruz, *The Golden Deer of Eurasia* (New York: Yale University Press, 2000). p. 58.

moving with the people from their ancient Ice Age roots. Indeed, deer mythology is strong in the realms of Siberia, and so by its location near the Deerstone Rocks, '*The Devil's Footprints*' could be seen to contain elements of general folkloric beliefs of Indo-European origin. However, it also brings to mind one of the most notorious giantesses of the British Isles: the Cailleach, a well-known character in place name stories.²²⁸ Thus, it makes sense to end with a study of legends of the island of Britain itself.

²²⁸ Sharon Macleod, 'A Confluence of Wisdom: The Symbolism of Wells, Whirlpools, Waterfalls and Rivers in Early Celtic Stories', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 26 (2006). p. 346.

The Brythonic Basis of East Lancashire: Myths and Legends of the Devil and Giants in the British Isles.

It was after the fall of Troy. Britain was then called Albion and was ‘uninhabited, except for a few giants.’²²⁹ The fate of the island was thankfully sealed when Brutus slayed them, and thus renamed the land in his glory.

The pseudo-historical *Historia Regum Britanniae*, written by Geoffrey of Monmouth during the mid-twelfth century, perhaps provides one of the first recorded legends of giants roaming the island of Britain. Now recognised as a general folkloric theme, we occupy a society in which stories of giants have become intertwined with those of the devil, so that at times they can be rather hard to separate.²³⁰ Indeed, with regard to the legend of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’, the two are very clearly meshed, in that Apronful Hill lies just below the spine of Pendle Hill to the south, and thus only a giant would be able to see over this to attack the castle.

Michael Serres notes how stone can be seen as both ‘preceding and buried by language:’ stone monuments can be seen as the agents through which history can be constructed and reconstructed, instructing society to remember what has been preserved throughout the ages.²³¹ What appears to be worthy of remembrance regarding ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’ is that of the presentation of the Devil as both a creator of the lands and as a giant, unsuccessful other. He marched to the area of Pendle from the ‘foreign’ lands of Accrington, creating a rocky mound

²²⁹ Sacred Texts, *Geoffrey of Monmouth’s Histories of the Kings of Britain*, translated by Sebastian Evans (1904) < <https://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/eng/gem/gem02.htm> > (Accessed on 23 September 2022).

²³⁰ Jeremy Harte, ‘Names and Tales: On Folklore and Placenames’, *Folklore 0* (2019) p. 5.

²³¹ Catherine E Karkov, ‘Alternative Histories: Phantom Truths in Stone’ in *Vera Lex Historiae? Construction of Truth in Medieval Historical Narrative* by Catalin Taranu and Michael J. Kelly (Online: Punctum Books, 2019). p. 141.

as part of his failed mission. His intentions were uncharitable at best, and wicked at worst. He left his mark, and then was gone, never again to return to Apronful Hill or Deerstone Rocks.

The tale is clearly a legend. It is different from fairy tales in that it presents as ‘actual local fact’ and has a historical setting that is probably derived from an oral society.²³² Legends are seen to evoke rational wonder and are different from mythology in that they are supposed to have a historical basis, rather than being primarily symbolic and often Otherworldly in function. Both are seen to be a genre of folklore, being shared by a group of people and encompassing cultural traditions and beliefs that, in the case of legends, are said to have taken place within human history.²³³

Legends featuring the Devil are relatively common in England. Locally, one finds ‘*The Dule Upon Dun*’ in Chatburn, which follows the ‘be careful what you wish for’ motif, whereby a tailor makes a regrettable pact with the Devil in order to enhance his riches, and only manages to outwit him by enlisting the help of a local hermit.²³⁴ Slightly further afield and following a similar theme, the old folktale of reciting the Lord’s Prayer backwards in order to invoke the Devil was recorded in a Burnley schoolhouse, with the Devil leaving a black mark on the flags as evidence of his appearance, before the boys ‘became alarmed and began to hammer him down with the poker and tongs.’²³⁵ This motif is absent within ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*.’ Generally, in England, the Devil is often regarded as a comic or lonely figure, engaging in

²³² Fox (1999) in Jeremy Harte, ‘Names and Tales’, (2019) p. 7.

²³³ New World Encyclopedia, *Folklore* (20220 <
<https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Folklore#Legend>> (Accessed 20 February 2023).

²³⁴ John Harland, *Lancashire Legends* (London: Forgotten Books, 2019) p. 81. Chatburn is 4.1 miles from Apronful Hill.

²³⁵ John Harland, *Lancashire Legends* (2019) p. 81. Jessica Lofthouse also notes that this exact legend was recorded at Clitheroe Grammar School, with the boys being inspired by their Burnley counterparts. See: Jessica Lofthouse, *North Country Folklore* (London: Robert Hale, 1976). p. 54. Burnley is 7.2 miles from Apronful Hill.

minor misdemeanours and tending to be unsuccessful in his plight.²³⁶ Whilst the Devil as comically unsuccessful can clearly be observed within the legend in question, two notable facets are absent: that of Devil as giant and as a creator of landscapes. Indeed, Stith Thompson notes how in the wider geographical sense he is known to sit on stones and create mountains, at times leaving indentations.²³⁷ This element is certainly missing within other legends from East Lancashire, in that the Devil who tempted the tailor in Chatburn was certainly humanoid in appearance, and thus to draw conclusions from Devil tales alone would be foolish.²³⁸

Within a thirty-mile radius of Apronful Hill there are several tales of giants, most of which follow similar themes. Indeed, whilst Leslie Grinsell notes that there are twenty English places named after giants, it is interesting that some of them are clustered in or around East Lancashire.²³⁹ On Ilkley Moor, there is the ‘Great Skirtful of Stones’ accompanied by the ‘Mini Skirtful.’²⁴⁰ Both are believed to be Bronze Age cairns, although local legends attribute their existence to the giant Rombald and his wife, who stomped over the moorland, with the wife occasionally either dropping stones from her skirt, or throwing them at her husband after a quarrel.²⁴¹ Likewise, on Pen-y-Ghent there is a round barrow known as ‘Giant’s Grave,’

²³⁶ The Guardian, *Cloven Country by Jeremy Harte review – in search of England’s devil* (2022) < <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2022/dec/23/cloven-country-by-jeremy-harte-review-in-search-of-englands-devil> > (Accessed on 13 February 2023); Jessica Lofthouse, *North Country Folklore* (1976). pp. 47 – 86.

²³⁷ Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature: A Classification of Narrative Elements in Folk-Tales, Ballads, Myths, Fables, Medieval Romances, Exempla, Fabliaux, Jest-Books, and Local Legends* (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1958). p. 98. 113 - 114.

²³⁸ Jessica Lofthouse does recount other local tales of the devil, in which he is the builder of bridges, for example, Yet the implication is that he is humanoid in size. See: Jessica Lofthouse, *North Country Folklore* (1976). pp. 47 – 86.

²³⁹ Leslie Grinsell, *Folklore of Prehistoric Sites in Britain* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1976). Kindle Ebook.

²⁴⁰ Stone Circles UK, *Great Skirtful of Stones* (2008) < <http://www.stone-circles.org.uk/stone/greatskirtful.htm> > (Accessed on 3 December 2022).

²⁴¹ On Landscape, *In Rombalds Wake by James Elkington* (2020) < <https://www.onlandscape.co.uk/2020/04/in-rombalds-wake/> > (Accessed on 3 December 2022); Jeremy Harte, ‘Names and Tales’ (2019) p. 8.

believed also to date from the Bronze Age.²⁴² Excavation revealed two burial cists and fragments of human bones, whilst the legend is that they are the graves of the ancient giants of the valley.²⁴³ Similarly, in Todmorden the legend surrounding the natural Pennine ‘Bridestones’ attributes them as the home of giants Nan Moor and Jack Stone, whilst also acknowledging a potential link with previous Gaelic giantesses of the land.²⁴⁴ Barrowclough and Hallam refer to several other examples, including ‘Sampson’s Bratful’ and ‘Old Wife’s Howes’, both in the north-west of England.²⁴⁵ The role of giant as creator of landscapes in the areas in and around East Lancashire therefore is clear to see, leading one to analyse the existence of such tales elsewhere in the Brythonic-speaking regions.

Onomastic tales are those which apply names to places and derive from the Greek *onomastikos*, meaning to name.²⁴⁶ Common in *The Mabinogi*, *Culhwch ac Olwen* and much Arthurian literature, the tales attach stories to landscape features, so that their naming is illuminated and makes cultural and linguistic sense, implying ownership. They are ‘a constant reminder of the significance of place and the legends attached to it.’²⁴⁷ *The Mabinogi* alone contains a plethora of onomastic tales, with W.J. Gruffydd arguing that the landscape itself is the central character of the tales, used as a peg for its ‘mystical roots’ in the Late Bronze Age.²⁴⁸ Whilst this view is largely discredited, the tale of Gronw Bebr in the ‘Fourth Branch’ somewhat illustrates its

²⁴² Ancient Monuments, *Round barrow known as Giant’s Grave, Pen-y-Ghent Fell* (2009) < <https://ancientmonuments.uk/108751-round-barrow-known-as-giants-grave-pen-y-ghent-fell-halton-gill#.YTUuezP3PY>> (Accessed on 14 December 2022).

²⁴³ The Northern Antiquarian, *Giants’ Graves, Halton Gill, North Yorkshire* (2008) < <https://megalithix.wordpress.com/2008/10/09/giants-graves/>> (Accessed on 14 December 2022).

²⁴⁴ The Journal of Antiquities, *The Bridestones, near Todmorden, West Yorkshire* (2016) < <https://thejournalofantiquities.com/2016/08/31/the-bridestones-near-todmorden-west-yorkshire/>> (Accessed on 14 December 2022).

²⁴⁵ David Barrowclough and John Hallam, ‘The Devil’s Footprints’ (2008). p. 95.

²⁴⁶ Collins Dictionary, *Onomastic* (2019) < <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/onomastic>> (Accessed on 16 February 2023).

²⁴⁷ Sioned Davies, *The Mabinogion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). p. xv.

²⁴⁸ Mabinogi.Net, Chapter 1 (no date) < https://www.mabinogi.net/sections/ch%201/Structure_of_this_book.pdf> (Accessed on 17 February 2023).

onomastic basis, with Blodeuedd's lover rising from a hill named Bryn Cyfergyr after throwing a spear at her husband.²⁴⁹ According to John Bollard the hill is translated as 'the Hill of the Exchange of Blows' and is accompanied nearby by 'Gronw's Stone Slab', taken to be the place where he tried to protect himself following the repercussions of his actions.²⁵⁰ Sioned Davies expands further upon this onomastic basis, asserting that the major plots in the 'First Branch' can be understood by employing the three corresponding explanations: namely, why Pwyll was called Head of Annwfyn, the first instance of the 'Badger in the Bag' game, and how Pryderi got his name.²⁵¹ Furthermore, Jerry Hunter argues that 'a complete examination of the onomastic content of *Kulhwch ac Olwen* would be a very great undertaking' given the extent of the 'diverse play on proper nouns,' whilst Oliver Padel, regarding Arthurian legends, demonstrates how they should probably be seen as central, with prehistorical remains and natural rocks often claiming fundamental roles.²⁵² Indeed, the hunt for Twrch Trwyth, assisted by Arthur in *Culhwch ac Olwen*, describes geographical tracking in great detail, thus applying legendary activities to place, in a form that is still well known today, with safaris even being offered to tourists.²⁵³

The motif of a giant with an apron-full of stones creating landscape features is also to be found within other Celtic language speaking areas of the British Isles. In Wales, for instance, one finds 'Bwlch y Ddeufan,' created by a married giant and giantess, the latter of whom had carried the smaller of the rocks in her apron whilst her husband held two large boulders under

²⁴⁹ Patrick K Ford, *The Mabinogi and other Medieval Welsh Tales* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1977). p. 105.

²⁵⁰ John Bollard, 'Landscapes of The Mabinogi', *Landscapes* 10: 2 (2009). p. 14.

²⁵¹ Sioned Davies, *The Mabinogion* (2007). p. xv.

²⁵² Jerry Hunter, 'Dead Pigs, Place Names and Sir John Rhys: Reconsidering the Onomastic Elements of *Kulhwch Ac Olwen*', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 11 (1991). p. 27; O.J. Padel, 'The Nature of Arthur', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies*, 27 (1994). pp. 14.

²⁵³ The enchanted boar, who is also known of from *Historia Brittonum*. Patrick K Ford, *The Mabinogi and other Medieval Welsh Tales* (1977). pp. 141 – 156. Welsh Overland Safari, *The Legend of Twrch Trwyth* (2022) <http://www.welshoverlandsafari.com/news/2016/12/17/the-legend-of-twrch-trwyth> (Accessed on 17 February 2023).

his arms.²⁵⁴ Having set off from Chester en-route to Anglesey, the giants became lost and emptied their rocks onto the ground in dismay.²⁵⁵ Like ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*,’ the former apron contents can still be seen today. Similarly, in Cornwall, there is ‘The Apron String’, an onomastic tale which tells of the creation of a green-stone mound by giants. Comoran and Cormelian had intended to build their own giant’s hill, as was the vogue of the time, when the husband became rather lazy. Tired of the long journey required to fetch the necessary granite from the moorland, Cormelian succumbed to temptation and smuggled a lump of green rock into her apron, only to find that she was caught by her husband and thereafter her apron-strings broke, leaving the green lump near to the shoreline, still visible at low tide.²⁵⁶ Such tales clearly echo that of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*.’ The giants are clumsy rock-carriers who are responsible for landscape formation. In the words of B.C. Spooner regarding Cornwall, ‘there is hardly a prehistoric hill – or cliff-fortification or earthwork thereabouts, whose lordly inhabitants and builders were not thought of as giants by the people of the country-side.’²⁵⁷ To some extent, the same could be said for that area of northern Britain that spans East Lancashire and the nearby realms within Yorkshire.²⁵⁸

Yet, despite the ancient feelings evoked by such legends, Jeremy Harte argues that giant folklore and naming in England is a relatively recent phenomena, only becoming popular after 1600 C.E. although it was evident much earlier in Europe:

²⁵⁴ Pass of the Two Stones. It is located on a mountain pass in Conwy.

²⁵⁵ Ifor Jackson, *Anglesey: Myths, Legends and Other Tales* (Cardiff: The Captain’s Library, 2018). pp. 22 – 23.

²⁵⁶ The Cornwall Heritage Trust, *Giants of the Mount* (2022) <

<https://www.cornwallheritagetrust.org/learn/resources/stories-and-rhymes/giants-of-the-mount/>> (Accessed on 14 February 2023).

²⁵⁷ B.C. Spooner, ‘The Giants of Cornwall’, *Folklore* 76: 1 (1965). p. 16.

²⁵⁸ Jessica Lofthouse recounts giant legends from the additional following places, all of which are located within sixty miles of Apronful Hill: Saddleworth Moor, Addleborough, St Bees Head, Kirksanton, Beacon Fell, the Kirkstone Pass and Darwen Moor. See: Jessica Lofthouse, *North Country Folklore* (1976). pp. 130 – 136.

After a long period in which people did not name landscape features after mythological beings, they began to name places after giants and after the Devil, who in landscape features is more of a giant than a fiend.²⁵⁹

Indeed, Harte notes that the image presented is always the same: that of a vast being who hurled hills into position and carved out the valleys at a time when the world was young. Yet, whilst the tales sound ancient, it is Harte's contention that they are not.²⁶⁰ He maintains that the distribution of this motif across 'a small area, the rock-strewn uplands of the Pennines, suggests that it was recorded not long after it became popular,' because if there had been a time-lag between 'diffusion and collection' the expectation would be that the story would have spread further throughout northern England.²⁶¹ Indeed, support for such a suggestion comes unexpectedly from Barrowclough and Hallam, who accept that the legend could have entered circulation after the castle was damaged during the civil war, in 1644.²⁶²

This necessarily leads to an analysis of the supposed purpose of legends, particularly those which come to be seen within the realm of folk belief. Are they to be seen as evidence for the actual presence of the characters in question, or are they merely tales designed both to denigrate outgroups and to deliver moral codes to the masses?²⁶³ Indeed, did those original creators of the legend of '*The Devil's Footprints*' actually believe that he once stood there? Whilst it might seem more appealing to argue it unlikely, one must be mindful that even some medieval historians believed that Britain was once populated by giants, and that the nature of legends is

²⁵⁹ Jeremy Harte, 'Names and Tales' (2019) p. 7.

²⁶⁰ Jeremy Harte, 'Names and Tales' (2019) p. 7.

²⁶¹ Ibid., p. 8. Note the wider distribution observed by Jessica Lofthouse however, which could be seen to discount the hypothesis of Harte.

²⁶² David Barrowclough and John Hallam, 'The Devil's Footprints' (2008). p. 94.

²⁶³ The 'be careful what you wish for' motif regarding the Devil could be analysed from the latter point of view by employing a Marxist perspective, thus encouraging people to be 'satisfied with their lots' as given by God.

that they often evolved out of the oral tradition, which according to Sioned Davies signifies ‘collective memory.’²⁶⁴ Therefore, analysts must avoid applying the scientific paradigm to retrospective information and consider taking the tales at face value. Folk-tales may reflect pre-Christian practises or assert quite the opposite – a religious dismissal and marginalisation of the old faith.

This function of marginalisation and replacement is exemplified when one considers the lore surrounding a mythological female figure known as the *Cailleach*, with the similarities potentially negating Harte’s recency argument. Gearóid Ó Cruailaoich argues that evidence from pre-history and mythology indicates that ‘cults of a mother-Goddess type prevailed throughout the continent’ of Europe, with archaeological findings such as the Plague of the Triple Mothers alongside others to some extent supporting this view.²⁶⁵ It is believed by Proinsias Mac Cana that, at least in Ireland and Scotland, the *Cailleach* personified this, possibly being indicative of what Jaan Puhvel referred to as a trans-functional goddess who was a ‘soil-based, fertility-oriented deity.’²⁶⁶

The *Cailleach* is known in Irish and Scottish traditions as a ‘supernatural female elder’ associated often with landscape features such as mountains and lakes, ‘whose shape she has moulded and whose location she has fixed.’²⁶⁷ An abundance of stories exist which ascribe landscape features to acts of her creation – often accidentally and at times haphazardly – and thus clear links can be observed between her lore, and that of the giant Devil in the north of England. ‘*Cailleach Bhearra’s Shower of Stones*,’ for example, tells how a rock-pile in County

²⁶⁴ Sioned Davies, *The Mabinogion* (2007). p. xiii.

²⁶⁵ Gearoid O Cruailaoich, *The Book of the Cailleach: Stories of the Wise Woman healer* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2003). p. 25; Miranda Green, *The Gods of the Celts* (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1993). pp. 78 – 94.

²⁶⁶ Proinsias MacCana, *Celtic Mythology* (Feltham: Middlesex. 1983) pp. 92 – 93; Gearoid O Cruailaoich, *The Book of the Cailleach* (2003). p. 28; Jaan Puhvel, *Comparative Mythology* (Baltimore: JHUP, 1989). p. 62. The geographical boundaries of the *Cailleach* would make sense when one considers the division of the proto-Celtic language into Goidelic and Brythonic, in that the *Cailleach* was the ‘goddess’ of the Gaels.

²⁶⁷ Gearoid O Cruailaoich, *The Book of the Cailleach* (2003). p. 28.

Galway was created by a rock-throwing fight between her and another Cailleach, whilst Otta Swire recounts folktales from the Isle of Skye, which tell of the Cailleach creating Scotland by ‘dropping into the sea a creel of peat and rock which she had brought with her from the north.’²⁶⁸ Indeed, Gerald Murphy notes how she was known to have ‘dropped cairns on to hills in Meath out of her apron, was responsible for moving islands in west Kerry,’ and ‘built mountains from rocks carried in her creel in Scotland.’²⁶⁹ Like the Devil of Apronful Hill, she even left her footprints - on Ben Cruachan in Argyll.²⁷⁰ Thus, it appears that the themes represented by the figure of the Cailleach closely mirror those observed within the tales of the giants in the north of England and other Brythonic language areas: they are giants who carry rocks (often in their aprons) and use these in a haphazard way to create landscape features. Furthermore, Soria d’Este notes how she is often associated with deer, pasturing and protecting her herds from the excessive hunting of the greedy.²⁷¹

However, it must be noted that despite the location of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’ near the Deerstone Rocks, the tales in northern England pertain largely to male figures and fail to mention the Cailleach by name. So, at the very least the legend of Apronful Hill must have undergone some form of cultural evolution which its potential Irish and Scottish counterparts evaded. Interestingly, the explanation for this might be found within the literature of the Cailleach herself: that as an adversary to the ‘new’ Christian ethos of the islands, she became somewhat antagonising and necessarily redundant in her role as a sovereign deity. In the tale of ‘*The Cailleach Bhearthach*,’ for instance, we learn that Saint Patrick killed the old hag by

²⁶⁸ Gearoid O Cruaíoch, *The Book of the Cailleach* (2003). pp. 104 – 105; Otta Swire, *Skye: The island and its legends* (Edinburgh: Origin, 2018). pp. 20 – 21.

²⁶⁹ Gerard Murphy, ‘The Lament of the Old Woman of Beare’, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy: Archaeology, Culture, History, Literature*: 55 (1953). p. 84.

²⁷⁰ Otta Swire, *Skye* (2018). p. 182.

²⁷¹ Sorita d’Este, *Visions of the Cailleach: Exploring the Myths, Folklore and Legends of the pre-eminent Celtic Hag Goddess* (London: Avalonia Press, 2009). Kindle Ebook.

causing her to ‘disappear in a red flash and that was the end of her.’²⁷² The new Christian order was unsympathetic to the ancestral heritage of Ireland: ‘displacement and expulsion’ can be seen in action.²⁷³ Indeed, the tale of ‘*The Cailleach Bhearra and Saint Caitairn*’ solidifies such a view, by casting the Cailleach in the role of a villain, and utilising onomastic techniques to explain how the saint justifiably ‘turned her into a bare, grey pillar-stone ... and she is there from then until the Last Day.’²⁷⁴ Thus, a large number of Cailleach stories are tainted with Christian symbolism and cast her in the role of a savage brute.²⁷⁵ Her strengths as creator of the landscape and protector of the wilderness are replaced with the mere ability to locate lost items.²⁷⁶ Primarily, she is simply a witch who casts curses, in many ways similar to the Devil, with malicious intent.²⁷⁷

Thus, could it be that representations of the Devil in northern English legends and folklore illustrate an example of lost folk-memory? Indeed, it is clear in the above tales that the once almighty symbol of feminine Otherworldly power has been demoted to that of a mere mortal figure in opposition to the Christian community. No longer is she the personification of divinity in female form: she now embodies evil intentions and is perishable, often being killed by the hands of praise-worthy saints. That these very saints could have also killed a Cailleach of Apronful Hill certainly seems possible, particularly given their proximity to the Deerstone Rocks, and the view that one of the functions of folkloric legends is to lecture on morality: a matter also noted in ‘*Cailleach Bhearthach*’ which tells of ‘the heartbreak and regret’ that she experienced for failing to attend mass more than twice in her life-time.²⁷⁸ Furthermore, research

²⁷² Gearoid O Cruaíoch, *The Book of the Cailleach* (2003). p. 144.

²⁷³ Ibid., p. 145.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 146.

²⁷⁵ The matter that the Cornish giant Cormoran was killed by Jack the Giant Slayer may also be taken to evidence this.

²⁷⁶ For example, see ‘Maire Ní Chearbhaill and the heifer’ in Gearoid O Cruaíoch, *The Book of the Cailleach* (2003). pp. 185 – 186.

²⁷⁷ For example, see ‘Cairn Tighearna’ in Gearoid O Cruaíoch, *The Book of the Cailleach* (2003). pp. 204 – 208.

²⁷⁸ Gearoid O Cruaíoch, *The Book of the Cailleach* (2003). pp. 163 – 165.

shows how Catholicism seemed to hang on tenaciously following the Reformation in the sixteenth century, which might explain why the antagonist is the Devil himself, rather than a giant figure, in that he is a distant folk memory of times of religious turbulence.²⁷⁹

Folk-memory is defined by the Cambridge Dictionary as ‘the knowledge that people have about something that happened in the past because parents have spoken to their children about it over many years.’²⁸⁰ If it were to be the case that people around East Lancashire experienced a loss of folk-memory, one would therefore expect to find significant population differences between the residents of Scotland and Ireland, and northwest England. Certainly, differences are reflected to some extent in the number of hybrid place names, but the changes ought also to be noticeable on a demographic level, particularly given the view that folk-memory gives a glimpse of ‘the remote past’ and so hints at current identity in relation to place.²⁸¹ What is notable immediately is that the north of England did not suffer - in the late medieval periods - anything similar to what was experienced in the Highlands of Scotland or the island of Ireland. Political upheaval forced clearances and mass population exodus were not a feature of life in the area, and thus to some extent it could be that the retention of folk-memory in Ireland and Scotland can be seen as an act of defiance. ‘Ireland’s rich and varied oral traditions have had an important influence on its modern culture,’ and to some extent can be seen as a destabilising force which continues to present alternative forms of knowledge and ways of being.²⁸² Gaelic Scottish culture has long experienced a prideful nationalism, often in the face of invasion and annexation by perceived colonial forces.²⁸³ Northwest England – and Lancashire in particular

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²⁸⁰ Cambridge Dictionary, *Folk Memory* <<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/folk-memory>> (Accessed on 14 February 2023).

²⁸¹ J.A. Macculloch, ‘Folk Memory in Folk Tales’, *Folklore*: 60. No 3. pp. 307 – 315.

²⁸² H.F. Khasawneh, ‘The Irish Oral Tradition and Print Culture’, *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 103: 49 (2014). p. 82.

²⁸³ Silke Stroh, *Gaelic Scotland in the Colonial Imagination: Anglophone Writings from 1600 to 1900* (Northwest University Press: 2017). pp. 113 – 140.

– has possibly occupied the peripheries throughout the ages, and in the early industrial age saw a vast increase in its population due to the cloth industry, essentially changing it from rural wastelands to the centre of trade.²⁸⁴ Perhaps due to the combination of the early historicity of Lancashire, combined with the brisk and rapid process of industrialisation and population expansion, its folk-memory has died. Many residents of Lancashire are not ‘of the land’ throughout the ages.²⁸⁵ The people therefore are less concerned with ‘memory politics’ than their counterparts in Ireland and Gaelic Scotland, and so the mythological origins of their legends have been forgotten entirely: ‘the hardy race’ was more concerned with the Industrial Revolution.²⁸⁶

This argument for a localised loss of folk-memory can be supported via the legend surrounding Jeppe Knaves’ grave, which like subject of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’ has been classified as a Bronze Age cairn.²⁸⁷ Despite its ancient history, the local legend maintains that it is the grave of a nobleman turned thief, who was beheaded in 1327. Due to local disputations regarding ownership of the disgraced body, Jeppe Knaves was buried on the boundaries of Wiswell and Pendleton – on the ridge of the hill.²⁸⁸ Thus, whilst the additional Scottish tradition of the Fomorian devil-like giants also employs onomastic devices to attribute legend to place, the difference is that such tales seem to incorporate elements of older mythology.²⁸⁹ Such is the case with the giant of Norman’s Law in Fife, for example, who was said to have thrown a

²⁸⁴ M. Rose and M. Parsons, ‘The neglected legacy of Lancashire cotton: industrial clusters and the UK outdoor trade, 1960 – 1990, *LUMS Working Papers* (2005). pp. 1 – 2.

²⁸⁵ R. Lawton, ‘Population trends in Lancashire and Cheshire from 1801’, *The Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* (1961). p. 191.

²⁸⁶ Aleida Assman, *Cultural Memory and Western Civilisation: Functions, Media, Archives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). p. 5; F.A. Bruton, *Lancashire* (London: AC Black, 1921). p. 37.

²⁸⁷ The Journal of Antiquities, *Jeppe Knaves Grave, Sabden, Lancashire* (2013) <https://thejournalofantiquities.com/2013/10/10/jeppe-knaves-grave-sabden-lancashire/> (Accessed on 22 February 2023).

²⁸⁸ Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership, *Prehistoric Mysteries of Pendle Hill* (2022) < <https://www.pendlehillproject.com/prehistoric-mysteries>> (Accessed on 21 February 2023).

²⁸⁹ The Fomorians were regarded as a race of giants in Irish mythology who were portrayed regularly as hostile and opponents of the Tuath De Danann. See John Carey (2006) ‘Fomoiri’ in John T Koch, *Celtic Culture*. p. 762.

boulder over the River Tay to attack the giant of Law Hill, but – like the Devil in Lancashire – he found that his aim fell short, and so the ‘*Devil’s Stane*’ lies there to this day.²⁹⁰ In fact, many ‘boulder-flinging giants’ were found throughout highlands and western Scotland, thus complementing the views of Gearóid Ó Cruailaoich that they were a feature of Gaelic tradition.²⁹¹ Indeed, according to Donald MacKenzie, many of these giants were female, with numerous hills and boulders being formed by them. Even the Bible acknowledges the existence of ‘giants on the earth’ in the early days of its existence, and therefore it seems to be a theme that continued its existence into the Christianised world.²⁹²

However, a notable point is that not only do these legends incorporate mythological origins, but they also stem from Gaelic culture, within a language which separated from Brythonic around 1000 B.C.E. (although estimates vary).²⁹³ Whilst this might seem to be problematic at first glance, it is clear from a simple analysis of literature that communications existed between the two branches of Celtic languages and culture, as evidenced throughout Welsh prose and poetry. The ‘Second Branch of the Mabinogi,’ for example, tells of a ‘wedding of convenience between Branwen and Matholwch, a king of Ireland’ whilst the tale of ‘Culhwch ac Olwen’ recounts Arthur’s journey throughout Britain, Brittany and Ireland, and ‘Preideu Annwfn’ echoes early Irish sources.²⁹⁴ Locally, Roger Martlew notes that ‘The Druids Altar’ just off-route to Ilkley from East Lancashire, mirrors the Bronze Age four-poster stone circles frequently found in Scotland, thus indicating a tenuous link that coheres astronomically with

²⁹⁰ Donald MacKenzie, *Scottish Folklore and Folk Life* (Glasgow, 1935). p. 102.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

²⁹² Bible Gateway, Genesis 6 (2018) <

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%206&version=NIV>> (Accessed on 13 March 2023).

²⁹³ D.B. Gregor, *Celtic: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Oleander Press, 1980). p. 17.

²⁹⁴ Patrick K Ford, *The Mabinogi and other Medieval Welsh Tales* (London: University of California Press, 1977). p. 57; Patrick K Ford, *The Mabinogi and other Medieval Welsh Tales* (1977). pp. 151 – 153; Marged Haycock, *Legendary Poems from the Book of Taliesin* (Aberystwyth: CMCS Publications, 2015). p. 433.

Pendle Hill, in that the southernmost moon aligns with its outline.²⁹⁵ But perhaps most significantly, the legend itself refers to the apron as a ‘brat’, which Barrowclough and Hallam themselves acknowledge to be an example of the Lancashire dialect which stems from Old Irish origins.²⁹⁶ The linguistic leap might not be a reach too far.

Accordingly, it becomes clear that Jeremey Harte’s analysis of giants in folklore from a specifically English perspective is perhaps too narrow in its focus, with similarity in themes indicating that it would be best to consider the legends within the realm of the Insular Celtic tradition. This argument is solidified when considering folklore which paralleled the legend of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’, which tallies with the views of the cleric Thomas Potts that Pendle Forest was an area in which ‘superstition still clings to the hoary hill tops and rugged slopes ... and the voices of ancestral tradition are still heard to speak from the depth of its quiet hollows’ - thus potentially implying cultural continuity.²⁹⁷ Indeed, Wilf Self Weeks records interesting folk-beliefs for Lancashire, including how it is ‘generally considered unlucky to see a new moon for the first time through glass.’²⁹⁸ Such folk-beliefs have clear correspondences within the other Insular traditions such those collected by the Schools’ Irish Folklore Scheme, including the belief that when you see a new moon you should bless yourself, or else will be beholden with bad luck.²⁹⁹ The possibility that the legend of ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’ is in fact ‘Celtic,’ therefore, must not be discounted.

However, such conclusions fail to consider the supposed mythological aspects of the legend as reported by David Barrowclough, who argues that the inversion of the footprints represents the

²⁹⁵ R. Martlew, ‘The Druid’s Altar: A Scottish Stone Circle in Craven’, *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 82 (2010). pp. 59 – 72; Upper Wharfedale Society, *Druids Altar* (2003) < <https://uwfs.org.uk/druids-altar/>> (Accessed on 25 February 2023).

²⁹⁶ David Barrowclough and John Hallam, ‘The Devil’s Footprints’ (2008). p. 95.

²⁹⁷ Thomas Potts, ‘The Wonderfull Discoverie of Witches in the Countie of Lancaster’, p. 14.

²⁹⁸ Wilf Self Weeks, ‘Things seen through Glass’, *Folklore* Vol 31 (1920). pp. 237 – 238.

²⁹⁹ Irish Archaeology, Lucky and Unlucky Signs: Folklore from Co. Kerry (2015) < <http://irisharchaeology.ie/2015/05/lucky-and-unlucky-signs-folklore-from-co-kerry/>> (Accessed on 24 February 2023).

belief that the dead occupied a parallel underworld in Scandinavian lore.³⁰⁰ Indeed, it is clear to see that within Scandinavian folk-culture the giant plays a key role. In Old Norse mythology the world was believed to be created by giants, who came to be seen as the enemy of the gods and so were often sought after by the gods in order to enhance their status.³⁰¹ The prophecy of Ragnarök maintains that the giants will march against the gods in a final battle, which will lead to the end of the world.³⁰² More recently, the giant has been seen in a similar role to that of the Cailleach: as an enemy of the church, whilst the Old English poem ‘Beowulf’ shows that the tradition was embodied on the British Isles.³⁰³ Consequently, Jessica Lofthouse argues that the ‘Great Skirtful of Stones’ may have Scandinavian origins, citing that a giant was buried there after dying in battle against the Britons of Elmet,³⁰⁴ whilst Andrew Breeze identifies the naming of Pen-y-Ghent as Scandinavian.³⁰⁵ Gearóid Ó Cruaíaoich thus accepts that some aspects of the Otherworldly female emerged as a consequence of the cultural mixing-pot, in which ‘Norse cosmology in its personification of the forces of wild nature’ has been significantly underacknowledged.³⁰⁶

Yet, if one were to propose such a Scandinavian source, it would surely be rash to fail to consider the ‘elephant in the room’ – the Norman link. Undeniably, it is easy to discount this as a perversion of meaning, as stories do indeed evolve over time, and yet it seems somewhat

³⁰⁰ David Barrowclough and John Hallam, ‘The Devil’s Footprints’ (2008). P. xxx

³⁰¹ Kuusela, Tommy, ‘Halls, Gods and Giants’, in *Merovingian and the Viking Scandinavia*, ?ed. by Klas Edholm, Peter Rova, Andreas Nordberg, Olof Sundqvist, Torun Zachrisson (Stockholm: Stockholm University Press, 2019). pp. 25 – 53.

³⁰² Henry Adams Bellows, *The Poetic Edda* (1936) < <https://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/poe/poe03.htm> > (Accessed on 24 February 2023).

³⁰³ Kuusela, Tommy, ‘Halls, Gods and Giants’, in *Merovingian and the Viking Scandinavia* by Klas Edholm, Peter Rova, Andreas Nordberg, Olof Sundqvist, Torun Zachrisson (Stockholm: Stockholm University Press, 2019). pp. 25 – 53; Poetry Foundation, *Beowulf* translated by Frances B. Gummere (2003) < <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/50114/beowulf-modern-english-translation> > (Accessed on 15 February 2023).

³⁰⁴ Jessica Lofthouse, *North Country Folklore* (London: Robert Hale, 1976). pp. 129 – 130.

³⁰⁵ Andrew Breeze, ‘Three Celtic Toponyms: Setantii, Blencartha, and Pen-y-Ghent’, *Northern History* XLIII (2006). pp. 162 – 165.

³⁰⁶ Gearóid Ó Cruaíaoich, *The Book of the Cailleach* (2006) pp. 83 – 84.

premature to close the case without giving it adequate consideration, particularly given the view that much early medieval Welsh literature contained themes which pertained to the Norman ‘other.’ Joseph Shack, for instance, argues that the First and Third Branches of *The Mabinogi* portray ‘the factitious political situation confronting the medieval Welsh from the arrival of the Normans on the Marches during the late eleventh century,’ a view to some extent complemented by Sioned Davies’ that *The Mabinogi* was committed to paper between ‘the end of the eleventh and beginning of the fourteenth centuries,’ at a time when the Welsh were experience rapid social change, and were struggling to combat the societal transformations that were occurring as a consequence of the Anglo-Norman invasions.³⁰⁷ In a similar vein, Gwyneth Lewis and others argue that ‘Preiddeu Annwyfn’ from the *Book of Taliesin* reflects a resentment of the Benedictine houses that accompanied the castles and settlements of the Marches, as a result of the Norman Conquest.³⁰⁸ Thus, it may well be a mistake to ignore the mention of the Norman Castle in ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*.’ Indeed, the matter that it is the focal point of animosity may be of central concern and indicate that the legend originates from a period substantially earlier than assumed by Harte. Marged Haycock is of the belief that suggestions that ‘Preiddeu Annwyfn’ was written before the eighth century are debatable, whilst Oliver Padel suggests that it fits within the pre-Galfridian context of Arthurian literature which predated Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britanniae*, completed in 1139 C.E.³⁰⁹ Sioned Davies argues that *The Mabinogi* in its form as seen in the *White Book of Rhydderch* indicates a date of 1350, although the tales have their roots in the earlier oral tradition.³¹⁰ Such suggested datings could certainly allow for ‘*The Devil’s Footprints*’ also to be viewed within

³⁰⁷ Joseph Shack, ‘Otherworld and the Norman Other: Annwfn and its colonial implications in the First Branch of the Mabinogi’, *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium*: 35 (2015). p. 172; Sioned Davies, *The Mabinogion* (2007). p. xvii.

³⁰⁸ Gwyneth Lewis and Rowan Williams, *The Book of Taliesin: Poems of Warfare and Praise in an Enchanted Britain* (London: Penguin Classics, 2020). p. xxiii.

³⁰⁹ Oliver J. Padel, *Arthur in Medieval Welsh Literature* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013). pp. 56-71.

³¹⁰ Sioned Davies, *The Mabinogion* (2007). p. ix.

this genre of Norman ‘other’, thus leading to the tentative conclusion that the tale should be read literally: the locals did not like to Norman encroachment on their territory.

Unfortunately, this argument is to some extent circular – for who were the locals? Whilst the Welsh had a shared sense of the past, despite the absence of political unity, the same cannot necessarily be concluded regarding East Lancashire itself, despite the northern poetic tradition.³¹¹ Indeed, its absence within the literature may indicate its physical exclusion. The inhabitants of East Lancashire south of Pendle Hill may have submitted to Roman rule and consequently come to despise their Britishness, thereby readily identifying with the incumbent Anglo-Saxons, as potentially suggested by place name analysis. The legend, like the naming of its many villages, may be of Anglo-Saxon or later Scandinavian origin.

Yet, the evidence does not suggest this, and nor do the legends. It points to a more or less consistently inhabited landscape in which the native population experienced a series of upheavals and yet retained their dialect and their stories. They simply forgot the older mythology. Thus, in the words of Nora Chadwick, it may be tentatively concluded that, ‘I firmly believe myself that the predominant element in the population (of England) is Celtic. I am aware that proof is not possible, and therefore I may not be able to persuade you to hold the belief that I hold.’³¹²

³¹¹ Sioned Davies, *The Mabinogion* (2007). pp. xvii – xviii.

³¹² Nora Chadwick, ‘The British or Celtic Part of the Population of England’, in *Angles and Britons*, O Donnell. *Lectures* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1963). p. 111.

Conclusion

‘More perhaps than any other physical feature of the county, Pendle Hill typifies Lancashire to Lancashire men.’³¹³ She is ‘a monster couchant,’ ‘a sublime expression of gigantic power,’ and ‘a living creature stretched in sleep.’³¹⁴ Her triple naming indicates that she was seen to be ‘the’ hill: the heart of the county, despite occupying the boundaries.³¹⁵ This theme of boundary occupation runs throughout the analysis of the historical sources, language and literature pertaining to East Lancashire. It prevents ease of application and halts the formulation of crisp conclusions regarding the historicity of the lands. However, what is clear is that the lands must have been held within Yr Hen Ogledd, with the five Roman stations lying within its remit being in existence either to quell dissent or to prevent the inhabitants' continued communication along the western flatlands with the ‘Cymry’ further north. Standing proud along the banks of the River Ribble, the perceived northernmost point of the realms of Mercia, Pendle Hill most possibly acted as a frontier of sorts, in a region that has been ‘utilised again and again for an invading force or a military expedition.’³¹⁶

Throughout the seventeenth-century Witch Trials her people were viewed as backwards and inferior, and yet the Quakers' religious movement was formed out of her beauty.³¹⁷ So often, progress leads to the denigration of the native inhabitants, and it takes outsiders to realise the beauty in the mysticism. This beauty is echoed in the legend of ‘*The Devil's Footprints*’: a tale from the former Brythonic-speaking lands that embodies themes and motifs in common with the other ‘Celtic’ regions of the islands of Britain. That it perhaps echoes an older mythology

³¹³ F.A. Briton, *Lancashire* (London: AC Black, 1921). p. 37.

³¹⁴ F.A. Briton, *Lancashire* (1921). p. 323.

³¹⁵ Ibid p. 323.

³¹⁶ Ibid p. 38.

³¹⁷ Thomas Potts, *The Wonderful Discoverie of Witches* (2011); George Fox University, *George Fox and the Quaker (Friends) Movement* (2020)

<[https://www.georgefox.edu/about/history/quakers.html#:~:text=Historians%20mark%201652%20as%20the,A nd%20it%20did.](https://www.georgefox.edu/about/history/quakers.html#:~:text=Historians%20mark%201652%20as%20the,A nd%20it%20did.>)> (Accessed 20 February 2023).

is possible, and almost probable, and yet – to some extent – this is not even the central point. For, couched within the ‘native’ animosity towards the Norman Conquest, on plain reading the legend makes perfect sense. Allusions to Scandinavian under-worlds are an unnecessary deviation, and Anglo-Saxon place names offer a pointless diversion. Like their Welsh counterparts, the local population found the Norman occupation to be antagonising: a step too far. The Devil, as a representative of the people at large, marched from Accrington and settled on Apronful Hill near Deerstone Rocks to mount his attack. That he was unsuccessful is a feature of history. But that he tried, in a manner reflective of those in Brythonic poetry and prose, is a feature of folk-memory that remains to this day.

‘Dear Devil,

Thank you for trying.’

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