An Interdisciplinary Historical Semantic Study of the Old English Word *Burh*

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October 2020

Abstract

This thesis explores the meaning and uses of Old English *burh*, which broadly denotes 'a fortified place'. As well as being a very common and productive word in Old English, *burh* holds great significance for historical and archaeological studies, and features especially in discussions about the Alfredian defence system against the Vikings, the development of manorial sites and the rise of urbanism. Despite this, *burh* has never before received a thorough, dedicated semantic study, and this thesis aims to fill this gap in the scholarship by studying the word through a whole-corpus, context-based and interdisciplinary methodology. Alongside the exploration of *burh*'s meaning, this thesis has created a new historical semantic methodology, both to handle the 3730 instances of the word and also to create a productive bridge between linguistic study and, particularly, archaeology. One of the means of managing the data size was to split the corpus into six major text groupings, which form the basis of my main chapters of analysis. Within this framework, *burh* has been considered within the context of linguistic, textual, historical and physical evidence from various angles and perspectives, with this pluralistic methodology allowing for a multi-faceted understanding of the word. It is hoped that the methodology can offer a blueprint for future interdisciplinary historical semantic studies. This thesis shows that *burh* is a word broad in denotation, but rich in connotation, which changes both diachronically and, more strikingly, synchronically. Indeed, the conclusions about *burh* will show how text types and topics can impact our understanding of Old English vocabulary generally.

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Report 8: Miscellaneous

Report 9: Appendix Meta-Data

Acknowledgements

I have been incredibly lucky throughout the course of my PhD to have been helped and encouraged by many wonderful people. I do not have space here to thank everyone who deserves it, but will highlight those who have had a particular impact on my experience.

My most significant thanks naturally go to my exceptional supervisors, Professor Elizabeth Tyler and Dr Aleksandra McClain, who have supported me hugely from application all the way to submission. I am so grateful for their kind encouragement at all stages and for all that I have learnt from them. I am also indebted to Dr Kate Giles, who stepped in as my temporary supervisor in 2017, and to Dr Matthew Townend, who has acted as an insightful thesis adviser throughout.

I was incredibly fortunate to be the recipient of a Wolfson Postgraduate Scholarship in the Humanities, and I am incredibly thankful for the confidence shown by the Wolfson Foundation in the value both of my own research and that of the Humanities in general. I have also received excellent training and support from the White Rose College of the Arts and Humanities, especially in terms of the internship at Lotherton Hall which I was able to do as part of my studentship. At Lotherton Hall, my thanks go particularly to Stephanie Davies. Through Elizabeth Tyler, I was also given the phenomenal opportunity to be affiliated with the Centre for Medieval Literature, and I believe that I have been shaped as a scholar by the interdisciplinary, intergenerational and international community I was a part of in the CML.

My experience as a PhD student has been enriched by the many wonderful people with whom I have shared this process. Among the amazing medievalist community, I wish to thank especially PhDs Alana Bennett, Alicia Maddalena, Kate Rich, Robert Pecksmith, Luke Giraudet and Rebecca Searby for their support and friendship. I am also grateful to Dr Lydia Zeldenrust and Dr Divna Manolova, who have not only been true friends, but also academic big sisters to me. Special mention also goes to Rebecca Simpson, who is an excellent academic friend and a first-rate flatmate. I must also thank the administrative staff at the CMS: particularly Gillian

Galloway, but also Brittany Scowcroft, Harriet Tang Evans and Timothy Rowbotham.

Outside of the university, I have had many people help keep me sane over the years. Caroline Bower has been an unwavering supporter of my work, even though bemused and amused by my interest in such a niche topic. I also owe a great deal of my physical and mental health to the York School of Defence, where I was able to work out a lot of thesis stress. Thank you also particularly to Christopher Halpin and Lauren Ireland of the YSD for their firm friendship.

I am also grateful to all those who proofread chapters of my thesis (Alicia Maddalena, Kate Rich, Alana Bennett, Robert Pecksmith, Rebecca Simpson, Rosalind Stokeld and Justin Stokeld). All remaining errors are my own.

Last, but by no means least, I must thank my wonderful parents, Rosalind and Justin. They have supported my academic endeavours for as long as I can remember and have always encouraged me to pursue my research goals. I am particularly grateful for the more tangible support they gave me during the pandemic in the last seven months, while I was unexpectedly locked down at home. This thesis wouldn't exist without you both.

Author's Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

Abbreviations

BH	*The Burghal Hidage* (see *Rec 26.1* in Report 1)
ChronB	Simon Taylor, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, Vol. 4: MS. B (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1983)
ChronG	Angelika Lutz, *Die Version G der angelsächsischen Chronik: Rekonstruktion und Edition* (Munich: Verlag Wilhelm Fink, 1981)
Chronicles	*The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*
DOE	*The Dictionary of Old English*
DOE Corpus	*The Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus*
HE	The Venerable Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*
LawAbt	*Laws of Æthelberht*; F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* (Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1903–16): 3–8
LawAð	*Að*; F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* (Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1903–16): 464
LawHad	*Hadbot*; F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* (Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1903–16): 464–8
LawHl	*Laws of Hlothere and Eadric*; F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* (Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1903–16): 9–11
LawMirce	*Mircna laga*; F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* (Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1903–16): 462

LawNorðleod	*Norðleoda laga*; F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* (Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1903–16)
OE	Old English
OEB	The Old English translation of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*
OE Boethius	The Old English translation of Boethius's *Consilatione philosophiae*
OE Dialogues	The Old English translation of Gregory the Great's *Dialogi*
OE Orosius	The Old English translation of Orosius's *Historiarum adversum paganos libri VII*
OE Pastoral Care	The Old English translation of Gregory the Great's *Liber regulae pastoralis*
OE Soliloquies	The Old English translation of Augustine's *Soliloquia*
Sawyer 5	Æthelberht, king, to Mellitus, bishop, and St Paul's minster; grant of land at Tillingham, Essex; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 8
Sawyer 53	Oshere, king of the Hwicce, to Cuthswith, abbess; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 85

Sawyer 86	Æthelbald, king of Mercia, to Mildrith, abbess, and her familia in Minster-in-Thanet; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 149
Sawyer 88	Æthelbald, king of Mercia, to Ealdwulf, bishop, and the church of St Andrew (Rochester); Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 152
Sawyer 91	Æthelbald, king of Mercia, to Eadburga, abbess, and her familia in the minsters of St Mary and SS Peter and Paul, Thanet; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 177
Sawyer 95	Æthelbald, king of Mercia, to Cyneburg; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 153
Sawyer 98	Æthelbald, king of Mercia, to Milred, bishop, and St Peter's Minster, Worcester; remission of the toll due on two ships at London; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon*

	History, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 171
Sawyer 103a	Æthelbald, king of Mercia, to Ingwald, bishop of London; grant of toll from one ship; S. E. Kelly, 'Eighth-Century Trading Privileges from Anglo-Saxon England', *Early Medieval Europe* 1 (1992): 27
Sawyer 103b	Æthelbald, king of Mercia, to Ingwald, bishop of London; grant of the toll on one ship; S. E. Kelly, 'Eighth-Century Trading Privileges from Anglo-Saxon England', *Early Medieval Europe* 1 (1992): 25–6
Sawyer 170	Coenwulf, king of Mercia, to Wulfred, archbishop; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 340
Sawyer 208	Burgred, king of Mercia, to Alhhun, bishop (of Worcester); Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 492
Sawyer 346	Alfred, king of the English and the Saxons, and Æthelred, subregulus et patricius Merciorum, to Wærferth, bishop of Worcester; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 561

Sawyer 1040	King Edward to Westminster Abbey; R. Widmore, *An Enquiry into the Time of the First Foundation of Westminster Abbey* (London: J. Stagg in Westminster Hall, 1743), Appendix no. 2
Sawyer 1043	King Edward to Westminster Abbey, First Charter; John Mitchell Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici*, 6 vols (London, 1839–1848), no. 824
Sawyer 1060	King Edward to Peterborough Abbey; John Mitchell Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici*, 6 vols (London, 1839–1848), no. 806
Sawyer 1194	Werenberht, minister and prefectus, to Werheard, priest and abbot; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 448
Sawyer 1260	Deneberht, bishop, and his familia at Worcester, to Wulfheard; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 308
Sawyer 1265	Wulfred, archbishop of Canterbury, to Christ Church, Canterbury; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 342

Sawyer 1279	Wærferth, bishop of Worcester, to Werwulf, presbiter; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 580
Sawyer 1328	Oswald, archbishop, to Brihtric; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 1293
Sawyer 1331	Oswald, archbishop, to Athelstan, his fidelis; John Mitchell Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici*, 6 vols (London, 1839–1848), no. 613
Sawyer 1349	Oswald, archbishop of York and bishop of Worcester, to Wulfflæd, matron; John Mitchell Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici*, 6 vols (London, 1839–1848), no. 644
Sawyer 1430	Settlement of a dispute between Heathored, bishop, and Wulfheard, son of Cussa, concerning land at Inkberrow and Bradley, Worcs.; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 256
Sawyer 1460	Record of a dispute between Athelstan, bishop (of Hereford) and Wulfstan and his son Wulfric, concerning

	land at Inkberrow, Worcs.; John Mitchell Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici*, 6 vols (London, 1839–1848), no. 898
Sawyer 1495	Æthelflæd to St Paul's minster, London; D. Whitelock, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Wills* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930), 66–7
Sawyer 1628	Alfred, king, and others to Plegmund, archbishop, and to Christ Church, and to Wærferth, bishop, and the church of Worcester; Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885–99), no. 577 and 578
Sawyer 1786	Cenred, king of Mercia, renews the sanctio of Æthelberht, king (of Kent), in favour of St Paul's, London; 'S 1786', *The Electronic Sawyer*, https://esawyer.lib.cam.ac.uk/charter/1786.html
Sawyer 1790	Offa, king of Mercia, extends the liberties of St Paul's; 'S 1790', *The Electronic Sawyer*, https://esawyer.lib.cam.ac.uk/charter/1790.html
Sawyer 1791	Ceolberht, bishop of London, and the community of St Paul, to Sigeric, minister of Wiglaf, king of Mercia; 'S1791', *The Electronic Sawyer*, https://esawyer.lib.cam.ac.uk/charter/1791.html

A Note on Formatting

For the purpose of this thesis, a number of specialised formatting choices have been made that require some explanation here.

This thesis relies significantly on the work of editors of Old English and Latin texts, and does not aim to correct any manuscript readings or standardise any spellings. For this reason, quotations from primary sources maintain the word division, spelling and capitalisation of the editions used. General references to an Old English or Latin term in their headword form, such as to the word *burh*, will appear in italics. Specific references to instances of a term within a text will appear in quotation marks as these constitute quotations from a primary source.

Double quotation marks will be employed when quoting from a primary or secondary source. Single quotation marks are used for three purposes. Firstly, they indicate quotations within quotations. Secondly, they signal general definitions of words or my own translations of words and phrases into modern English. Where another scholar's translation has been used, it will appear in double quotation marks with the relevant citation. Thirdly, single quotation marks highlight the use of a technical term in modern English. For example, the Old English term *burh* appears in italics, while the modern technical term 'burh' appears in single quotation marks. Although this particular distinction between double and single quotations is non-standard, it is used consistently throughout the thesis and helps differentiate quotations and linguistic explanations.

1 Introduction

> ᚹ [wynn] ne bruceþ ðe can weana lyt,
> sares and sorge, and him sylfa hæfþ
> blæd and blysse and eac **byrga** geniht.
>
> He experiences joy who knows little of woes, pain and sorrow, and who has for himself prosperity and bliss and also an abundance of ***burga***.[1]

This quotation, from ll. 22–4 of the Old English (henceforth OE) *Rune Poem*, gives little context to its use of *burh* (plural *burga*). It is clear that, in this situation, *burh* has positive connotations. However, what we might consider *burh* to denote physically is left open to interpretation, and that interpretation can vary considerably. Theodor Grienberger translates "byrga geniht" as "an abundance of cities," while Bruce Dickins suggests "a good enough house."[2] Maureen Halsall opts instead for "the contentment belonging to fortified communities," considering that the use of 'fortified community' to render *burh* "underlines the need for the protection of living in a strong and well-established settlement and avoids the misleading elegance of terms like 'cities' … and 'castles'."[3] The impact of choosing one of these translations over another is evident. We are led to interpret the passage,

[1] All translations in this thesis are my own, except where otherwise indicated. As this thesis constitutes a semantic study of the word *burh*, *burh* shall remain uninterpreted in my translations so as not to influence my own or the reader's analysis.
[2] Theodor Grienberger, 'Das Ags. Runengedicht', *Anglia* 45 (1921): 209; B. Dickins, *Runic and Heroic Poems of the Old Teutonic Peoples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), 15.
[3] Maureen Halsall, ed., *The Old English* Rune Poem (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 87, 119.

and the social perceptions behind it, very differently if we view the *burga* as private homesteads rather than vast urban settlements.

Yet *burh* is a word which is difficult to pin down, and scholars acknowledge that context is needed in order to decode its referent.[4] Its basic meaning is generally understood to be 'a fortified or enclosed place', but *burh* can refer to sites of various sizes, functions and forms, ranging from lordly residences, to Iron Age hillforts, to cities the size and importance of Rome.[5] The *Dictionary of Old English* (henceforth *DOE*), the most thorough and up-to-date dictionary available for the language, gives *burh* the following definitions:[6]

A. fortified enclosure, fortification
    A.1. stronghold, fortress, citadel
    A.2. fortified dwelling, estate, manor
B. town
    B.1. fortified town; generally, town or city; open burh 'unwalled city'
    B.2. *burga mann* 'townsman', here 'fellow citizen' (distinguished from a foreigner)
    B.3. plan or representation of a city
    B.4. in epithets for various cities

[4] See, for example, comments by F. M. Stenton, 'The Historical Bearing of Place-Name Studies: The Place of Women in Anglo-Saxon Society', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 25 (1943): 8; Gareth Williams, 'Military and Non-Military Functions of the Anglo-Saxon Burh, c.878–978', in *Landscapes of Defence in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. John Baker, Stuart Brookes, and Andrew Reynolds, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 28 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2013), 129–30.

[5] Simon Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 15 (2008): 246–50; Denis Ferhatović, '"Burh and Beam", Burning Bright: A Study in the Poetic Imagination of the Old English "Exodus"', *Neophilologus* 94, no. 3 (2010): 511; R. A. Hall, '*Burhs* and Boroughs: Defended Places, Trade, and Towns. Plans, Defences, and Civic Features', in *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1, http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199212149.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199212149-e-31; Simon Draper, '*Burh* Enclosures in Anglo-Saxon Settlements: Case Studies in Wiltshire', in *Sense of Place in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Richard Jones and Sarah Semple (Donnington: Shaun Tyas, 2012), 334.

[6] Angus Cameron et al., 'Burh', in *Dictionary of Old English: A to I Online* (Toronto: Dictionary of Old English Project), accessed 1 October 2020, http://tapor.library.utoronto.ca/doe/.

B.5. referring to specific cities
B.6. borough
B.7. in glosses
B.8. as a place name and as a place-name element

Traditionally, it is believed that the urban denotation developed in the late ninth and early tenth centuries, representing a semantic shift.[7] The endurance of both the manorial and the urban denotations of OE *burh* can be seen in its dual development into Middle English *bury*, often used in names of later medieval manor houses, and into Middle English *burgh* (primarily 'town, city', but also sometimes for 'castle, stronghold'), as well as the modern English *borough*.[8] Comprehending the denotational breadth and flexibility of *burh*, as well as the wide array of possible connotations it can have, becomes all the more relevant when considering the importance of the term to much place-name, historical and archaeological research.

However, dictionary definitions can only get us so far, and the word *burh* has not yet been the subject of a dedicated historical semantic study. We currently lack an understanding of how these different denotations and connotations are reflected throughout the whole corpus of OE writing. Furthermore, while scholars recognise that we need context to reconstruct *burh*'s meaning today, the fact that compositional context itself could shape the meaning of *burh* at the time of writing is little

[7] Stenton, 'The Historical Bearing of Place-Name Studies: The Place of Women in Anglo-Saxon Society', 8; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 245; Nicole Guenther Discenza, *Inhabited Spaces: Anglo-Saxon Constructions of Place* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 196–97.
[8] Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 243; 'Burgh', in *Middle English Dictionary - Middle English Compendium*, accessed 1 October 2020, https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/dictionary/MED6328/track?counter=1&search_id=4339644; 'Borough, n.', in *OED Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/21687?redirectedFrom=borough.

discussed. It is the aim of this thesis, therefore, to explore *burh* in a context-driven and pluralistic manner, providing new insights into the word which may be valuable for the *burh*-studies of other disciplines, as well as proposing a new historical semantic methodology for the age of interdisciplinarity.

1.1 Thesis Aims

This thesis constitutes a full-corpus, context-based and interdisciplinary study of *burh* in OE writings. The state of *burh* studies in previous scholarship will be explored in the next section, and the methodology, which was developed in response to fundamental challenges presented by the linguistic data, will be laid out in detail in Chapter 2. However, it is valuable here to outline the multi-layered objectives of this study, which can be split into three major research strands.

The first and most prominent of these questions is linguistic: what are the denotations and connotations of *burh* in OE written sources, and how is the word used? As the historiography will show, *burh* is important in several areas of scholarship and is analysed in relation to various types of settlement and fortification referents. As this thesis gives primacy to the word itself, it will be possible to explore how these different referents interact both in modern scholarship and in the primary data. The individual chapters will consider the meaning and use of *burh* across time, place and context within particular text groupings, and the

concluding chapter will reunite the corpus of evidence to produce a comprehensive chronology and conceptual map of *burh*'s meanings throughout OE writings.

The second strand deals with the development of a productive interdisciplinary methodology, most particularly between the disciplines of linguistics and archaeology. When studying a term denoting 'fortified settlement', careful use of archaeological data is vital. However, there are few modern precedents for historical semantic study which interacts reflectively with material evidence, and this thesis aims to act as a blueprint for how semantic studies might make meaningful use of archaeological and landscape-historical information in future research. This thesis also shows the value of linguistic analysis for archaeologists and historians themselves, and the ways in which a subtler understanding of contemporary vocabulary can shed new light on ongoing debates. This interdisciplinarity has been a defining part of the current study and its findings, and my research has benefitted greatly from collaborative supervision between the departments of English and Related Literatures and Archaeology. Indeed, this thesis not only shows the value of interdisciplinarity within a single scholar's work, but also highlights potential productive areas for collaborative research.

A crucial aspect of working between these disciplines, which is worth discussing explicitly here, is the terminology used for the periods and regions relevant to this area of scholarship. We are accustomed, especially in text-based disciplines, to refer to the 'Anglo-Saxon' period, or even to 'Anglo-Saxon England'. The term 'Anglo-Saxon' has been subject recently to public critique both for its homogenisation of diverse ethnicities, political units and eras, and for its modern

political connotations.[9] Typically, the term 'Anglo-Saxon' is used to refer to the whole period from c. 400–c. 1100, that is to say from the earliest Germanic migrants from the Continent to Britain and Ireland up to the Norman Conquest and its aftermath, forcibly tying the extremes of this period to the rise and fall of a perceived Germanic political dominance. By comparison to the more specific continental periods, such as 'Merovingian' and 'Carolingian', the term 'Anglo-Saxon' compresses a large and diverse timescale into one identity. Particularly in archaeology, the Anglo-Saxon period has been divided into Early (c. 400–c. 650), Middle (c. 650–c. 850) and Late (c. 850–c. 1066/1100). However, such terms are rarely used in text-historical scholarship as there is very little writing at all in the Early period, and little in the vernacular before the Late period. Such periodisation also disunites 'Anglo-Saxon' scholarship from continent-wide eras such as the High Middle Ages, creating a fiction of insular exceptionalism and Norman anticipation. The multifarious insufficiencies of the term 'Anglo-Saxon' and its sub-periods have been expressed especially thoroughly by Susan Oosthuizen, and it is clear that alternatives need to be found. Oosthuizen herself suggests renaming 'Early Anglo-Saxon' as 'late antique', 'Middle Anglo-Saxon' as 'early medieval' and 'Late Anglo-Saxon' as 'pre-Conquest'.[10] However, re-appropriating particularly 'early medieval' and 'pre-Conquest' for these very specific periods and purposes creates as many issues as it solves.

[9] See Susan Oosthuizen, *The Emergence of the English*, Past Imperfect (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2019), 3–6, as well as the rest of her book, for a deeper analysis of the issues with the term.
[10] Oosthuizen, 5.

In addition to issues of period compression, the phrase 'Anglo-Saxon' and especially 'Anglo-Saxon England' can superimpose a sense of unified nationhood onto an array of peoples of different ethnicities and, at times, different kingdoms. Talking about 'England' is a complicated matter, with no such political unity recognisable before the tenth century.[11] This issue is well addressed by Nicole Guenther Discenza, who argues that, though not always one kingdom, the 'Anglo-Saxons' recognised that they shared one faith and, most importantly for the present study, one language, even if in different dialects.[12] While this runs the risk of erasing the multilingualism inherent to the period, language certainly affected concepts of ethnicity and community in the Middle Ages, and in a study which focuses primarily on vernacular written sources, unity through language is a valuable touchstone.[13] However, there are many times in which it is essential to consider the distinction between findings from different kingdoms and regions at different times. Archaeologists commonly distinguish southern 'Saxon' from northern 'Anglian' sites, and historians will often refer to sources from relevant kingdoms such as Wessex, Mercia and Northumbria.

How we can combine more accurate geo-political terminology with more appropriate temporal and ethnic terminology is an ongoing debate in this area of scholarship, and the total overhaul of vocabulary needed is beyond the scope of this thesis. Although 'Anglo-Saxon' is a demonstrably problematic term, no

[11] See especially: George Molyneaux, *The Formation of the English Kingdom in the Tenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).
[12] Discenza, *Inhabited Spaces: Anglo-Saxon Constructions of Place*, 8.
[13] For medieval concepts of language and ethnicity, see Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950-1350* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1994), 197–220.

replacement(s) have yet been proposed which provide a suitable framework for the period in which OE was the dominant written vernacular language and its speakers the ruling classes. Furthermore, in an interdisciplinary study, it is important to find terms which are shared across the different relevant disciplines. Therefore, 'Anglo-Saxon' will be maintained in this thesis as a shorthand term to describe the overarching period of OE writing studied, although I acknowledge its deficiencies. However, this thesis will avoid the ambiguity of the all-encompassing phrase 'Anglo-Saxon England', and will aim, where feasible, to refer more specifically to the relevant regions and centuries. Meanwhile, I hope that interdisciplinary discussions can continue in the future to find new vocabulary that is suitable for all scholars wishing to refer accurately and comprehensively to this period and its peoples.

The final research question of this thesis is also methodological and focuses on how to manage a historical semantic dataset of this size and scope. Modern digital resources allow us to gather and manage much higher numbers of historical linguistic data than was previously feasible. *Burh* represents a common OE word with several thousand instances: a dataset too large for traditional word-by-word semantic analysis, but at the same time too small and varied for statistical methods from modern linguistics. This thesis, therefore, finds itself in an awkward space between qualitative and quantitative analysis, and the methodology was developed partly in response to this. The pluralistic methodology created provides the flexibility needed for the investigation of a word such as *burh*. Indeed, studying a word of this breadth and in this manner will be shown to offer not just insight into the individual word's meaning, but also wider conclusions about what was being

written in OE generally and the impact of such textual bias upon our understanding of OE as a whole language.

These three major research strands will be addressed, explicitly or implicitly, in each main chapter, and re-addressed comparatively in Chapter 9. Overall, this thesis aims to provide new insight into a word with a broad denotation and significant historical impact, but also to create a potential new path for future historical semantic research.

1.2 Previous Study of *Burh* and 'Burhs'

Burh is a word which has resonance in various areas of Anglo-Saxon scholarship. An overview of the different academic discussions in which the study of *burh* plays a role offers a schematic for the topics which will be addressed in this thesis, and shows the scope of the word more meaningfully than its dictionary definitions. This review of scholarship also shows why the word *burh* is an advantageous choice for a semantic study.

The foremost field of research in which *burh* is a crucial term is the archaeological and historical study of a progressive network of fortifications set up by King Alfred the Great and developed further by his children King Edward the Elder and Æthelflæd, Lady of the Mercians. The system was set up to defend Wessex and, later, western Mercia against Viking attacks, and its fortifications are typically

known by scholars as 'burhs'.[14] This has been a very productive area of scholarship, a thorough history of which would be impossible to lay out in this introduction.[15] I shall draw out here only those points which are relevant to the current thesis, namely issues surrounding the use of the modern term 'burh' and its problematic conflation with the use of *burh* in OE written sources.

The archaeological term 'burh' is used almost exclusively to refer to the (sometimes proto-urban) fortifications of the Alfredian defence system. The term is derived from, but to be contrasted with, OE *burh*, whose dictionary definitions alone attest to a wide range of meanings. While it is beneficial to have a unique shorthand term for such a specific set of fortifications, the use of 'burh' forcibly narrows the meaning of OE *burh*. Some scholars openly admit the linguistic complications that can arise from the use of 'burh', expressed most clearly and eloquently by David Hill and Alexander Rumble:

> The use of *burh* in past decades has come to have a semi-technical meaning for archaeologists but its use has serious drawbacks. It can have a range of meanings and this recent academic usage is nowhere defined. Old English usage could

[14] See, for example, comments by Oliver Creighton and Robert Higham, *Medieval Town Walls: An Archaeology and Social History of Urban Defence* (Stroud: Tempus, 2005), 57; Robin Fleming, *Britain after Rome: The Fall and Rise, 400–1070*, The Penguin History of Britain 2 (London: Allen Lane, 2010), 242–47; Margaret Worthington Hill and Erik Grigg, 'Boundaries and Walls', in *The Material Culture of the Built Environment in the Anglo-Saxon World*, ed. Maren Clegg Hyer and Gale R. Owen-Crocker (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015), 167–68; Hal Dalwood, 'Water, *Wics* and *Burhs*', in *Water and the Environment in the Anglo-Saxon World: Volume III of The Material Culture of Daily Living in the Anglo-Saxon World*, ed. Maren Clegg Hyer and Della Hooke, Exeter Studies in Medieval Europe (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2017), 190; Martin Carver, *Formative Britain: An Archaeology of Britain, Fifth to Eleventh Century AD*, Routledge Archaeology of Northern Europe 5 (London and New York: Routledge, 2019), 139.

[15] For thorough historiographies on this topic, see: John Baker and Stuart Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage: Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Viking Age*, History of Warfare 84 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 1–41; Matthew Blake and Andrew Sargent, '"For the Protection of All the People": Æthelflæd and Her Burhs in Northwest Mercia', *Midland History* 43, no. 2 (2018): 120–27.

> range from a meaning of 'pre-existing earthwork', through meanings concerned with 'fortification', 'stockaded enclosure', 'walled monastic site' to 'late Anglo-Saxon town'. In the Middle English period the word can be 'fortified manor-house' and 'major urban tenement'. The unfocused nature of the word is dangerous if the modern author has in mind a particular aspect of 'burh' which is unstated…[16]

Yet, even where scholars acknowledge the problems with the term 'burh', they generally continue to use it. In some cases, scholars even promote the use of 'burh', preferring it to modern terms such as 'fortification' or 'stronghold', which they believe to be too generic and to carry unprofitable connotations.[17] However, an argument of this thesis will be that the unconscious manipulation of *burh* into 'burh' has an impact upon scholars' ability to interact critically with uses of *burh* in the OE documentary sources they study. This issue is evident in the analysis of texts relevant to the 'burghal' network, and stretches out into interpretations of other texts throughout the whole OE corpus.

'Burghal' studies are very much an interdisciplinary province shared between history and archaeology, and many of the key excavated sites were identified from a few, select textual sources. Primarily, these written sources are a document known as the *Burghal Hidage* (henceforth *BH*) and the Edwardian and Æthelflædian years of

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[16] David Hill and Alexander R. Rumble, 'Introduction', in *The Defence of Wessex: The Burghal Hidage and Anglo-Saxon Fortifications*, ed. David Hill and Alexander R. Rumble (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 3; see also: Steven Bassett, 'Anglo-Saxon Fortifications in Western Mercia', *Midland History* 36, no. 1 (2011): 2 note 3; Hall, '*Burhs* and Boroughs: Defended Places, Trade, and Towns. Plans, Defences, and Civic Features', 15; John Baker, 'The Language of Anglo-Saxon Defence', in *Landscapes of Defence in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. John Baker, Stuart Brookes, and Andrew Reynolds, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 28 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2013), 67–68; Baker and Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage: Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Viking Age*, 38–40.
[17] Baker and Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage: Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Viking Age*, 40; Jeremy Haslam, 'The Burghal Hidage and the West Saxon Burhs: A Reappraisal', *Anglo-Saxon England* 45 (2016): 142 note 2.

the A, B, C and D manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* (henceforth *Chronicles*), as well as a few relevant charters.[18] Some scholars consider these written sources to offer only a "meagre contribution" to 'burghal' studies.[19] Nevertheless, these documents are often elementary in any 'burghal' research.

The *BH* is the most important text for 'burghal' studies, typically introduced in any publication as listing the hides of land necessary for the maintenance of a network of 33 'burhs'.[20] Although the text has been referenced since the sixteenth century, it was first brought to prominence by Maitland in 1897, and it is he who named it the *BH* and first explicitly referred to its sites as "national burgs."[21] As noted by John Baker, the *BH* itself never uses the term *burh* to describe the sites it lists;[22] *burh* appears in the text only in a handful of the 33 place names. What inspired Maitland first to call these 'burhs' is nowhere stated, but the most likely source of inspiration would be from the *Chronicles'* entries in the early tenth century,

[18] Barbara Yorke, 'West Saxon Fortifications in the Ninth Century', in *Landscapes of Defence in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. John Baker, Stuart Brookes, and Andrew Reynolds, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 28 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2013), 91–92; F. W. Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1897), 187–88; J. Brownbill, 'The Burghal Hidage', *Notes and Queries* 4 (1911): 2–3; Alexander R. Rumble, 'The Manuscript Evidence', in *The Defence of Wessex: The Burghal Hidage and Anglo-Saxon Fortifications*, ed. David Hill and Alexander R. Rumble (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 36–59; Nigel Baker and Richard Holt, 'The City of Worcester in the Tenth Century', in *St Oswald of Worcester: Life and Influence*, ed. Nicholas Brooks and Catherine Cubitt (London: Leicester University Press, 1996), 129–46.

[19] Quotation from Bassett, 'Anglo-Saxon Fortifications in Western Mercia', 5; see also Steven Bassett, 'The Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon Defences of Western Mercian Towns', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 15 (2008): 230–31; Jeremy Haslam, 'The Development of Late-Saxon Christchurch, Dorset, and the Burghal Hidage', *Medieval Archaeology* 53, no. 1 (2009): 97–98.

[20] See, for example David Hill, 'The Burghal Hidage: The Establishment of a Text', *Medieval Archaeology* 13 (1969): 84; Hall, '*Burhs* and Boroughs: Defended Places, Trade, and Towns. Plans, Defences, and Civic Features', 6.

[21] Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond*, 187–88; Early references are found in: Abraham Wheelock, ed., *Historiae Ecclesiasticae Gentis Anglorum Libri V a Venerabili Beda Presbytero Scripti.* (Cambridge: Roger Daniel, 1643); Thomas Gale, *Historiae Britannicae, Saxonicae, Anglo-Danicae Scriptores XV* (Oxford: Sheldon, 1691); George Hickes, *Georgii Hickesii... Dissertatio Epistolaris Ad Bartholomeum Showere* (Oxford, 1703); Wanley's *Catalogus* in George Hickes, ed., *Thesaurus Linguarum Septentrionalium*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1705), 219.

[22] Baker, 'The Language of Anglo-Saxon Defence', 68.

which describe Edward and Æthelflæd moving around their kingdom, building, fortifying or strengthening *burga* at various locations.[23] Although very few of the sites in the *BH* and the Edwardian/Æthelflædian annals overlap, the *Chronicles*' *burga* are nevertheless seen as an extension of the *BH* system into Mercia. Indeed, the presence of Mercian Buckingham, mentioned also in the *Chronicles* in 914 as a *burh* of Edward's, in the otherwise West Saxon *BH* fuels debates about the date and completeness of the *BH* itself, which is placed variously between the 880s and 919.[24] This thesis does not intend to add to the chorus of opinions regarding the date and function of the *BH*. Rather, the historiographical focus here on these texts is to

[23] J. Manley, ? '? *Cledemutha*: A Late Saxon Burh in North Wales', *Medieval Archaeology* 31, no. 1 (1987): 13–46; Jeremy Haslam, 'The Second Burh of Nottingham', *Landscape History* 9 (1987): 45–51; Richard Coates, 'Æthelflæd's Fortification of *Weardburh*', *Notes and Queries* 45, no. 1 (1998): 8–12; Lesley Abrams, 'Edward the Elder's Danelaw', in *Edward the Elder: 899–924*, ed. N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 138; Matt Edgeworth, 'Recent Archaeological Investigations in Bedford Town Centre: Evidence for an Early Northern Boundary?', *Bedfordshire Archaeology* 25 (2004): 190–200; Pauline Stafford, '"The Annals of Æthelflæd": Annals, History and Politics in Tenth-Century England', in *Myth, Rulership, Church and Charters: Essays in Honour of Nicholas Brooks*, ed. Julia Barrow and Andrew Wareham (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 97–107; David E. E. Pelteret, 'An Anonymous Historian of Edward the Elder's Reign', in *Early Medieval Studies in Memory of Patrick Wormald*, ed. Stephen Baxter et al. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 321–22; Scott Thompson Smith, 'Marking the Boundaries: Charters and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History*, ed. Alice Jorgensen, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 23 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010), 168–73; Bassett, 'Anglo-Saxon Fortifications in Western Mercia', 11; David Stone, 'Mutually Assured Construction: Æthelflæd's Burhs, Landscapes of Defence and the Physical Legacy of the Unification of England, 899-1016' (Exeter, University of Exeter, 2017); it is possible Maitland also noted Gale's 1691 appellation of the text as *Hidæ quorundam Burgorum; ex Cod. Scaccarii & Cottoniano*, with "Burgorum" representing a Latin loanword of OE *burh* or Middle English *burgh*, used for castles, fortresses and boroughs, although Gale's reasons for calling the text thus are even more obscure.

[24] H. M. Chadwick, *Studies on Anglo-Saxon Institutions* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1905), 206–7; Nicholas Brooks, 'The Unidentified Forts of the Burghal Hidage', *Medieval Archaeology* 8 (1964): 86–88; Hill, 'The Burghal Hidage: The Establishment of a Text', 91–92; Hill and Rumble, 'Introduction', 1; David Hill, 'Athelstan's Urban Reforms', in *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History 11*, ed. David Griffiths (Oxford: Oxford University School of Archaeology, 2000), 174; Creighton and Higham, *Medieval Town Walls: An Archaeology and Social History of Urban Defence*, 58; Baker and Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage: Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Viking Age*; Jeremy Haslam, 'Planning in Late-Saxon Worcester', in *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History 19*, ed. Helena Hamerow (Oxford: Oxford University School of Archaeology, 2015), 153–72; Haslam, 'The Burghal Hidage and the West Saxon Burhs: A Reappraisal', 144–46.

highlight the primacy of documentary sources in this area of scholarship, as well as the irregularity of contemporary labelling of such sites as *burga*.

Ever since Brooks began archaeological investigations of *BH* sites in the 1960s, defining what a 'burh' constituted through shared features of function and physical morphology has been at the heart of most 'burghal' studies.[25] However, the extreme heterogeneity of *BH* and Edwardian/Æthelflædian sites has often been noted, with Jeremy Haslam calling the group polythetic.[26] From a linguistic perspective, issues arise where studies treat inconsistently the vocabulary evidence of the documentary sources they rely upon. Sites not called *burga* in contemporary texts are regularly admitted into the set of 'burhs'. This is most clearly evident when considering the 33 sites of the *BH*, but we can see other instances where sites are called 'burh' with no linguistic precedent. For example, Chester is commonly seen as an Æthelflædian *burh* due to its mention in the 907 annal of *Chronicle* C, which nevertheless states only "Her wæs Ligcester geedniwod" ('here Chester was renewed'); and Haslam calls the twin fortifications either side of the Thames at Waltham Forest a "double burh," although the relevant description in *Chronicle* A 895 calls the defences "geweorc" ('works, constructions').[27] Indeed, tentative conclusions about the morphological

[25] Brooks, 'The Unidentified Forts of the Burghal Hidage'; Martin Biddle and David Hill, 'Late Saxon Planned Towns', *The Antiquaries Journal* 51, no. 1 (1971): 70–85; Jeremy Haslam, 'The Anglo-Saxon Burh at *Wigingamere*', *Landscape History* 10 (1988): 23–26; Richard Holt, 'The Urban Transformation in England, 900-1100', in *Anglo-Norman Studies XXXII: Proceedings from the Battle Conference 2009*, ed. C. P. Lewis (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2010); Baker and Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage: Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Viking Age*; Haslam, 'Planning in Late-Saxon Worcester'.
[26] Jeremy Haslam, 'Market and Fortress in England in the Reign of Offa', *World Archaeology* 19, no. 1 (1987): 86; quoting David Clarke, *Analytical Archaeology* (London: Methuen & Co., 1968), 37–38; see also Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 247; Bassett, 'Anglo-Saxon Fortifications in Western Mercia', 10; Baker, 'The Language of Anglo-Saxon Defence', 68; Blake and Sargent, '"For the Protection of All the People": Æthelflæd and Her Burhs in Northwest Mercia'.
[27] For Chester, see *ChronC* anno 907, as well as David Griffiths, 'The North-West Frontier', in *Edward the Elder: 899-924*, ed. N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 169; Jayne Carroll, 'Coins and the Chronicle: Mint-Signatures, History, and Language', in *Reading the*

nature of 'burhs' are sometimes used to find new, unrecorded sites, which are then themselves labelled as 'burhs'.[28] However, at the same time, some studies seek fine distinctions between the morphology of sites called *burga* in contemporary texts and those not, even while admitting *BH* sites to the set.[29]

Although the search for similarities and differences between related sites is valuable, the labelling of such sites by default as 'burhs' is problematic, as it is evident that the line between modern 'burh' and OE *burh* is often blurred. This blurring unconsciously narrows the way in which scholars view OE *burh*, impacting their critical analysis of contemporary texts and influencing conclusions about contemporary concepts. For example, in crediting Alfred with the innovation of the fortification system, he is also often credited with inventing the concept of the *burh*.[30] Other comments, although valid when considering just the sites of this system and their afterlives, can also appear to the uninitiated as blanket remarks on all *burga*. Tenth-century Worcester has been described as a small 'burh' and *BH* sites as early 'burhs'.[31] However, there is plenty of linguistic evidence which shows *burga*

Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History, ed. Alice Jorgensen, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 23 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010), 231; For Waltham, see *ChronA* anno 895 and Jeremy Haslam, 'Parishes, Churches, Wards and Gates in Eastern London', in *Minsters and Parish Churches: The Local Church in Transition 950-1200*, ed. John Blair (Oxford: Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, 1988), 38.

[28] See especially Haslam, 'The Anglo-Saxon Burh at *Wigingamere*'; Andrew Reynolds, 'Avebury: A Late Anglo-Saxon *Burh*?', *Antiquity* 75, no. 287 (2001): 29–30; Haslam, 'The Development of Late-Saxon Christchurch, Dorset, and the Burghal Hidage'; Jeremy Haslam, 'A Probable Late Saxon Burh at Ilchester', *Landscape History* 34, no. 1 (2013): 5–22.

[29] See, for example Blake and Sargent, '"For the Protection of All the People": Æthelflæd and Her Burhs in Northwest Mercia'.

[30] See, for example: Creighton and Higham, *Medieval Town Walls: An Archaeology and Social History of Urban Defence*, 57; Fleming, *Britain after Rome: The Fall and Rise, 400–1070*, 242; Paul Hindle, 'Roads and Tracks in Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Material Culture of the Built Environment in the Anglo-Saxon World*, ed. Maren Clegg Hyer and Gale R. Owen-Crocker (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015), 42; Dalwood, 'Water, *Wics* and *Burhs*', 190; Carver, *Formative Britain: An Archaeology of Britain, Fifth to Eleventh Century AD*, 139.

[31] Baker and Holt, 'The City of Worcester in the Tenth Century', 135; Williams, 'Military and Non-Military Functions of the Anglo-Saxon Burh, c.878–978', 131.

existed in various forms long before Alfred's reign and many of those sites would have been much smaller than Worcester.

The conflation of 'burh' with *burh* also leads scholars to read other texts through a *BH* filter: for example, fortifications built in eighth-century Mercia by Offa are interpreted as 'proto-burhs' with all the attendant social frameworks, due to a handful of statements including the word *burh* in charters of Offa; Athelstan's law codes, especially concerning mints in *burga*, are read in the light of the *BH* development and its urban afterlife; and Richard North and Michael Bintley attempt to date the typically un-dateable poem *Andreas* to Alfred's reign because of the poem's focus on the restoration to glory of the *burh* called Mermedonia.[32] However, in viewing other OE uses of *burh* through such a narrow lens, scholars can miss some of the subtle variations of meaning which offer fascinating insights into the word and Anglo-Saxon culture at large. This thesis will show that, even in those texts which are most central to 'burghal' studies, there are nuances of meaning in *burh* which can only be teased out through thorough linguistic investigation.

Another area of scholarship in which *burh* plays a role, and which is deeply connected to the development of the Alfredian defence network, is urbanisation in the Anglo-Saxon period.[33] Many of the *BH* and Edwardian/Æthelflædian fortifications later became centres of urban growth in Wessex and Mercia. In some sites, clear town planning has been recognised, and some scholars believe urban

[32] Haslam, 'Market and Fortress in England in the Reign of Offa'; Hall, '*Burhs* and Boroughs: Defended Places, Trade, and Towns. Plans, Defences, and Civic Features', 5; Hill, 'Athelstan's Urban Reforms'; Richard North and Michael D. J. Bintley, eds., Andreas*: An Edition* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016), 96.
[33] Fleming, *Britain after Rome: The Fall and Rise, 400–1070*, 247–68.

planning to have been an essential part of 'burghal' formation, with those 'burhs' that didn't become towns having in some way failed.[34] However, other scholars observe the heterogeneity of the formation, and thus also the likely purpose, of 'burhs', and argue that some were clearly intended only as urgent military fortifications, while others were better situated to become major economic centres.[35] Historians have often read the law code of Athelstan, which states that coins must be minted in a *burh*, as the next step in the network's development towards urbanism.[36] Furthermore, later *burh*-courts are also often associated with an urban elite, and their regional administrative power, however short-lived, is often seen as evolving out of the Alfredian and Edwardian 'burghal' network.[37]

Yet, the connection between *burga* and urbanity goes beyond discussions of the Alfredian defence network. Many sites across England, not part of the *BH*

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[34] Manley, ? '? *Cledemutha*: A Late Saxon Burh in North Wales', 43–44; Reynolds, 'Avebury: A Late Anglo-Saxon *Burh*?', 30; Haslam, 'A Probable Late Saxon Burh at Ilchester', 19; Jeremy Haslam, 'The Landscape of Late Saxon Burhs and the Politiics of Urban Foundation', in *The Material Culture of the Built Environment in the Anglo-Saxon World*, ed. Maren Clegg Hyer and Gale R. Owen-Crocker (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015), 181–215; Haslam, 'The Burghal Hidage and the West Saxon Burhs: A Reappraisal', 142 note 2.

[35] Richard P. Abels, *Lordship and Military Obligation in Anglo-Saxon England* (London: University of California Press, 1988), 69; Creighton and Higham, *Medieval Town Walls: An Archaeology and Social History of Urban Defence*, 58; Bassett, 'Anglo-Saxon Fortifications in Western Mercia', 2–3; Williams, 'Military and Non-Military Functions of the Anglo-Saxon Burh, c.878–978', 131–45; Stone, 'Mutually Assured Construction: Æthelflæd's Burhs, Landscapes of Defence and the Physical Legacy of the Unification of England, 899-1016', 18; Dalwood, 'Water, *Wics* and *Burhs*', 189–90.

[36] R. S. Kinsey, 'Anglo-Saxon Law and Practice Relating to Mints and Moneyers, with Particular Reference to the Mints of Chichester, London, Dover and Northampton and the Moneyer(s) Cynsige or Kinsey', *British Numismatic Journal* 29, no. 1 (1958): 14 note 1; Hill, 'Athelstan's Urban Reforms', 174–75; Jayne Carroll and David N. Parsons, *Anglo-Saxon Mint Names: I. Axbridge-Hythe*, English Place-Name Society Extra Series 2 (Nottingham: English Place-Name Society, 2007); Martin Carver, *Birth of a Borough: Archaeological Excavations, 1954-2004* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2010), 94; Martin Allen, *Mints and Money in Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1–4, 13; Tom Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 133, 245.

[37] Charles Insley, 'Assemblies and Charters in Late Anglo-Saxon England', in *Political Assemblies in the Earlier Middle Ages*, ed. Paul S. Barnwell and Marco Mostert, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 7 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2003), 9–50; Fleming, *Britain after Rome: The Fall and Rise, 400–1070*, 272–74; Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*, 133; Carver, *Formative Britain: An Archaeology of Britain, Fifth to Eleventh Century AD*, 275.

system, developed urban identities in the later Anglo-Saxon period and became associated with the term *burh* in contemporary texts and modern scholarship. The inhabitants of these important centres, such as London, York and Canterbury, are often referred to in administrative documents as *burhware* ('*burh*-residents'), interpreted as referring to 'citizens'.[38] Furthermore, onomasts (place-name scholars) notice that various new towns of the tenth and eleventh centuries changed their names to incorporate the element *burh*, such as Peterborough and Bury St Edmunds, evidently suggesting a contemporary connection between the term *burh* and a perceived shift in the nature of these settlements.[39] Outside of archaeological and historical studies, *burh* has also been recognised as connected with urbanism in more traditionally literary scholarship. It is often seen translating the Latin urban terms *urbs* and *civitas* throughout OE texts adapted from Latin, and especially in poetry there is a strong connection between the use of *burh* and city-imagery.[40] This thesis tests the assertion that the use of *burh* for 'town' began with the Alfredian foundations of the ninth and tenth centuries and the implication, therefore, that the idea of urbanism and its connection to the term *burh* was at the time bound up with concepts of this *BH* defence network.[41]

Beyond the Alfredian and urban studies, which have overwhelmed *burh* discussions, the word also appears as a description for elite secular residences, often

[38] F. E. Harmer, *Anglo-Saxon Writs* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1952), 53.
[39] Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 247.
[40] Discenza, *Inhabited Spaces: Anglo-Saxon Constructions of Place*, 11, 194–95; Hugh Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 18 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 40–47; Ferhatović, '"Burh and Beam", Burning Bright: A Study in the Poetic Imagination of the Old English "Exodus"'.
[41] Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 246 comments that the semantic shift in *burh* to include urban meanings can be traced back to the Alfredian defence network.

dubbed 'manors' or 'estate centres'.[42] Discussions about the lordly *burh* began in search of an Anglo-Saxon prologue to the Norman castle, but have since developed to consider elite secular *burga* in their own right.[43] Much of the key textual evidence cited for lordly *burga* are found in eighth- and ninth-century texts, such as early charters, the law codes of Ine and Alfred, which discuss the invasion of private property, including *burga*, and the *Chronicles*' narrative of Cynewulf's murder in a *burh* in 755.[44]

However, there are also clear indications of the persistence of the use of *burh* to refer to lordly residences throughout the Anglo-Saxon period and beyond. The place-name element *bury* appears in names derived from Anglo-Saxon urban tenements and later medieval manors.[45] Furthermore, possibly the single-most discussed example of *burh* in relation to lordly residences is in the eleventh-century

[42] See especially: Ann Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', in *Medieval Knighthood IV: Papers from the Fifth Strawberry Hill Conference 1990*, ed. Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey (Bury St Edmunds: The Boydell Press, 1992), 221–40; Helena Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society in Anglo-Saxon England*, Medieval History and Archaeology 194 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 109–19.

[43] E. Armitage, 'Anglo-Saxon Burhs and Early Norman Castles', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 34 (1900): 262; R. Allen Brown, 'An Historian's Approach to the Origins of the Castle in England', *Archaeological Journal* 126 (1970): 131–48 responding to ; Brian K. Davison, 'The Origins of the Castle in England: The Institute's Research Project', *Archaeological Journal* 124 (1967): 202–11, who himself writes a response as part of Allen Brown's article, stating that a lord's *burh* may not have looked all that different from a Norman castle at times; for comments on the need to study lordly *byrig* in their own right, see Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', 222.

[44] Most especially Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', 224; but see also Allen Brown, 'An Historian's Approach to the Origins of the Castle in England', 142; Lisi Oliver, *The Beginnings of English Law*, Toronto Medieval Texts and Translations 14 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 95; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 248; John Hines, 'Social Structures and Social Change in Seventh-Century England: The Law Codes and Complementary Sources', *Historical Research* 86, no. 233 (2013): 401; Yorke, 'West Saxon Fortifications in the Ninth Century', 101.

[45] Martin Biddle, 'Winchester: The Development of an Early Capital', ed. Herbert Jahkuhn, Walter Schlesinger, and Heiko Steuer, 2nd ed., vol. 1, Vor- Und Frühformen Der Europäischen Stadt Im Mittelalter (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975), 244–45; Robin Fleming, 'Rural Elites and Urban Communities in Late-Saxon England', *Past and Present* 141 (1993): 23–24.

social treatise *Geþyncðo*. Among its statements are listed the things necessary for a man to become a *þegn* ('a thegn, king's retainer'), which include a *burhgeat* ('*burh*-gate').[46] This passage has been much analysed from many perspectives. It is generally accepted that the *burh* in question is a lordly residence.[47] However, it is debated whether the *burh*-gate metonymically describes the whole *burh*-complex, or if it refers to a significant gatehouse which is a feature in its own right.[48] Some have even compared the *burh*-gate description with archaeological and art-historical evidence of Anglo-Saxon towers.[49] Indeed, such towers and gatehouses have at times been seen as representing a point of continuity between the Anglo-Saxon *burh* and the Norman castle, but Mark Gardiner warns against seeing the *burhgeat* as a forerunner for the later medieval keep.[50] Although less prominent in scholarship than the Alfredian and urban *burga*, uses of *burh* for high-status residences are still incredibly important and will feature significantly in parts of this thesis.

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[46] Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', 225.
[47] W. H. Stevenson, 'Burh-Geat-Setl', *The English Historical Review* 12, no. 47 (1897): 491; Andrew Rabin, ed., *The Political Writings of Archbishop Wulfstan of York*, Manchester Medieval Sources Series 11 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), 68–69 note 7.
[48] Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', 227; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 248; Gabor Thomas, *The Later Anglo-Saxon Settlement at Bishopstone: A Downland Manor in the Making*, CBA Research Report 163 (York: Council for British Archaeology, 2010), 196; Mark Gardiner, 'Late Saxon Settlements', in *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1–2, https://www-oxfordhandbooks-com.libproxy.york.ac.uk/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199212149.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199212149-e-12; Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society in Anglo-Saxon England*, 110.
[49] Derek F. Renn, 'Burhgeat and Gonfanon: Two Sidelights from the Bayeux Tapestry', in *Anglo-Saxon Studies XVI: Proceedings of the Battle Conference 1993*, ed. Marjorie Chibnall (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1994), 177–85; Thomas, *The Later Anglo-Saxon Settlement at Bishopstone: A Downland Manor in the Making*, 196.
[50] Allen Brown, 'An Historian's Approach to the Origins of the Castle in England', 141–42; 'Five Castle Excavations', *Archaeological Journal* 134, no. 1 (1977): 3; Charles Coulson, 'Cultural Realities and Reappraisals in English Castle-Study'', *Journal of Medieval History* 22 (1996): 173; Oliver Creighton, *Castles and Landscapes*, The Archaeology of Medieval Europe, 1100-1600 (London and New York: Continuum, 2002), 26; Gardiner, 'Late Saxon Settlements', 1–2.

Two further types of settlement referred to by *burh* are more rarely discussed, but of no less value to our understanding of the word. *Burh* is not only associated with secular sites: its use for monastic and other ecclesiastical complexes is also observable. Frank Stenton noted in 1943 that 'female personal name + *burh*' place names were more commonly used for monastic sites than secular ones.[51] However, it is particularly the work of John Blair that has brought the connection between *burh* and early minster sites to the fore. He notes that of the 10 Anglo-Saxon *burh* place names found in texts dated before 750, seven represent early minster sites.[52] He goes further, suggesting that before the mid-eighth century and the rise of Wessex, *burh* perhaps predominantly was used to signify monastic sites and was a "vernacular equivalent of *mynster* ['minster, mother-church']."[53] His ideas on the subject have been relatively influential, and this thesis will explore the evidence of ecclesiastical *burga* and their place in our understanding of the word. Most recently, Eleanor Rye and Tom Williamson have investigated East Anglian place names containing *burh*, showing that, at least in onomastic forms, the word was more commonly associated with monastic sites than has often been assumed.[54]

The final use of *burh* to be introduced here is for Iron Age hillforts, a type of referent only discussed in place-name studies. Many hillfort sites, particularly in the south-west of England, have names which contain the element *burh*, such as

[51] Stenton, 'The Historical Bearing of Place-Name Studies: The Place of Women in Anglo-Saxon Society', 9.
[52] John Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 250.
[53] Blair, 250, 269–70; Hall, '*Burhs* and Boroughs: Defended Places, Trade, and Towns. Plans, Defences, and Civic Features', 1.
[54] E. Rye and T. Williamson, 'Naming Early Monasteries: The Significance of *Burh* in East Anglia', *Medieval Archaeology* 64, no. 2 (forthcoming 2020).

Yarnbury, Chisbury and Yarborough.[55] In cases such as Yarnbury, the *burh* element alone is interpreted as referring to the Iron Age hillfort.[56] Chisbury makes for an interesting example as it appears as *Cissanbyrig* in the *BH*. Nicholas Brooks states that the "reasons for the choice of Chisbury as a burh are evident,"[57] even though the site was evidently already known by a *burh*-name, clearly in reference to the Iron Age hillfort there, showing further the issues of conflating *burh* with the Alfredian 'burh'. Yarborough derives from OE *eorðburh* ('earth-*burh*'), a common etymology for Iron Age hillfort place names.[58] It is particularly in exploring uses of this compound in boundary clauses that we can see evidence of Iron Age hillforts in OE writings, and the fact that this referent only appears in limited textual contexts is of key interest in a whole-corpus study.

Considering the importance of the term *burh* for such a wide range of scholarship areas, it is surprising that the word has not had more linguistic attention. Both Baker and R. A. Hall examine briefly the meaning of *burh*, but Baker deals only with *burh* as part of an article-length survey of various OE fortification terms, while Hall's is a brief article in an archaeological handbook.[59] Onomastic studies have had the most significant impact on our understanding of the word. Surveys of OE place names are quick to note the wide variety of potential referents of *burh*, covering all

[55] Kenneth Cameron, *English Place-Names* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1961), 112; Ian Burrow, *Hillfort and Hill-Top Settlement in Somerset in the First to Eighth Centuries AD*, British Archaeological Reports 91 (Oxford: B. A. R., 1981); Margaret Gelling, *Signposts to the Past: Place-Names and the History of England*, 3rd ed. (Chichester: Phillimore, 1997), 143; Baker, 'The Language of Anglo-Saxon Defence', 67.
[56] Cameron, *English Place-Names*, 112.
[57] Brooks, 'The Unidentified Forts of the Burghal Hidage', 78.
[58] Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 241.
[59] Baker, 'The Language of Anglo-Saxon Defence'; Hall, '*Burhs* and Boroughs: Defended Places, Trade, and Towns. Plans, Defences, and Civic Features'.

the settlement types which have been discussed in this historiography.[60] A few studies, notably the work of Simon Draper, have focussed specifically on *burh* place names, combining linguistic evidence with physical evidence in an interdisciplinary fashion which is very inspiring for the current study.[61] Such publications recognise the "multi-layered" nature of *burh*, which should not be "restricted by the narrow definitions of our modern words 'town', 'monastery' and 'fortress'."[62] But despite the great advances in our understanding of *burh* from such onomastic studies, they are not without their limitations. Many place-name studies are too broad in scope to give exhaustive attention to *burh*, and those onomastic studies where *burh* is the primary focus tend to look at only one region at a time. Furthermore, onomastics occupies an unusual position within linguistic study due to the unique status of proper names, which can become quite divorced from the original referents they once described. A thorough semantic study, which primarily takes into account those uses of a word which are active, common-noun descriptions, can give a very different insight into a word's meaning. Depending on the nature of the corpus, a semantic study can also give a more multi-faceted insight into a word that may only occur in place names under specific circumstances.

Thus far, *burh* has lacked a thorough semantic investigation. Indeed, OE buildings and settlement words in general have been understudied: the semantic

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[60] E. H. Gooch, *Place-Names of Lincolnshire: Their Historical Meaning and Origin* (Lincoln: Lincolnshire Chronicle, E. H. Gooch, Spalding, 1945), 12; Cameron, *English Place-Names*, 112–15; Gelling, *Signposts to the Past: Place-Names and the History of England*, 143.
[61] Barrie Cox, 'The Pattern of Old English Burh in Early Lindsey', *Anglo-Saxon England* 23 (1994): 35–56; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England'; Draper, '*Burh* Enclosures in Anglo-Saxon Settlements: Case Studies in Wiltshire'; Rye and Williamson, 'Naming Early Monasteries: The Significance of *Burh* in East Anglia'.
[62] Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 249.

field was noted as being in "urgent" need of review by Vic Strite in 1989 and the situation has changed little in the decades since then.[63] As has been mentioned above, the primary research aim of this thesis is to explore the meaning of *burh*. The study shall seek to understand better the denotation(s) of the word, that is to say its literal meaning and referents. However, of equal importance is the insight into the word's connotations: its secondary meanings, associated concepts and underlying ideas. It is particularly the connotations of *burh* which are often missing from a dictionary-style definition of the word, and which will be shown to vary so much according to context.

Indeed, context is one of the key aspects of this study. It is important to consider how the meaning of the word may have changed over time, but also across space, in different types of text and with different conceptual frameworks. This thesis does not intend to replace dictionary definitions or supplant the excellent work done by onomasts. Instead, it aims to create a richer and more nuanced understanding of the word which is of value to the linguistic study of OE, but also to all disciplines in which *burh* and its attendant concerns are of importance.

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[63] Vic Strite, *Old English Semantic-Field Studies*, American University Studies Series IV: English Language and Literature 100 (New York: Peter Lang, 1989), 55–56, 162, who cites; H. Jacobs, 'Die Namen Der Profanen Wohn- Und Wirstschafts-Gebäude Und Gebäudeteile Im Altenglischen: Eine Kulturgeschichtliche U. Etymologische Untersuchung.' (Kiel, 1911); T. L. Markey, 'Germanic Terms for Temple and Cult', in *Studies for Einar Haugen: Presented by Friends and Colleagues*, ed. Evelyn S. Firchow, Janua Linguarum. Series Maior 59 (The Hague: The Hague Mouton, 1972); K. Hume, 'The Concept of the Hall in Old English Poetry', *Anglo-Saxon England* 3 (1974): 63–74; K. P. Wentersdorf, 'Observations on the *Ruin*', *Medium Ævum* 2 (1977): 171–80; C. H. de Roo, 'Old English *Sele*', *Neophilologus* 64 (1980): 113–20; K. P. Wentersdorf, 'The Situation of the Narrator in the Old English *Wife's Lament*', *Speculum* 3 (1981): 492–516; since then only a few further studies have considered buildings vocabulary in Old English: Earl R. Anderson, 'The Uncarpentered World of Old English Poetry', *Anglo-Saxon England* 20 (1991): 65–80; C. P. Biggam, '*Grund* to *Hrof*: Aspects of the Old English Semantics of Building and Architecture', *Architectural History* 45 (2002): 49–65; Lori Ann Garner, *Structuring Spaces: Oral Poetics and Architecture in Early Medieval England*, Poetics of Orality and Literacy (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011).

The main body of the thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 2 lays out in detail the methodology which has been developed for this study, explaining key structures and concepts which underpin the thesis. The following six chapters contain the main analysis of *burh*, organised according to the text groupings established in Chapter 2.

2 Methodology

Unlike modern linguistic studies, historical semantics lacks access to native speakers who can participate in experiments or be recorded.[64] Instead, studies into historical languages such as OE rely on finite written corpora, for which no new material can be produced and which is not necessarily representative of the language as a whole.[65] In light of this, historical semantics has developed its own methodologies to combat the limitations imposed by studying dead languages. Over the past 150 years, the sub-discipline has changed a great deal in terms of methodology and even today no single approach has been agreed upon, with individual scholars often developing their own framework for analysis. This chapter will first lay out a historiography for historical semantic methodologies, particularly for OE semantics, in which many of the advances in this sub-discipline have been made.[66] Following this, the methodology which has been developed for this thesis

[64] Sharon Butler and Bruce Mitchell, 'Some Lexicographical Problems Posed by Old English Grammar Words', in *Problems of Old English Lexicography. Studies in Memory of Angus Cameron*, ed. Alfred Bammesberger (Regensburg: F. Pustet, 1985), 80; R. M. Hogg, 'Introduction', in *The Cambridge History of the English Language, Volume 1: The Beginnings to 1066*, ed. R. M. Hogg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 19–20; E. C. Traugott and R. B. Dasher, *Regularity in Semantic Change*, Cambridge Studies in Linguistics 96 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 15.
[65] D. A. Cruse, *Lexical Semantics*, Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 8–9.
[66] Particularly valuable historiography sources are to be found in: Klaus Faiss, *Gnade Bei Cynewulf Und Seiner Schule: Semasiologisch-Onomasiologische Studien Zu Einem Semantischen Feld*, Studien Zur Englischen Philologie, Neue Folge 12 (Tübingen: de Gruyter Mouton, 1967); Strite, *Old English Semantic-Field Studies*; D. Kastovsky, 'Semantics and Vocabulary', in *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, ed. R. M. Hogg, vol. 1: The Beginnings to 1066 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 290–407; Dirk Geeraerts, *Theories of Lexical Semantics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Matthias Ammon, 'Pledges and Agreements in Old English: A Semantic Field Study' (PhD thesis, Cambridge, University of Cambridge, 2011).

will be explained, proposing a new way of approaching historical semantics in the era of interdisciplinarity and digital humanities.

2.1 OE Semantics: Previous Scholarship

Historical semantic studies have changed a great deal since their inception in the historical-philological era of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The earliest examples were *kulturgeschichtliche-etymologische Untersuchungen* ('cultural-historical etymological studies'), which commonly researched OE vocabulary and tended to focus on concrete nouns, forming part of the *Wörter und Sachen* ('words and objects') movement.[67] Etymology and dictionary definitions were the major instruments of analysis in these studies, and "[n]ur selten fragen sie nach

[67] On this period of study, see: Ruth Schmidt-Wiegand, 'Wörter Und Sachen. Zur Bedeutung Einer Methode Für Die Frühmittelalterforschung. Der Pflug Und Seine Bezeichnungen', in *Wörter Und Sachen Im Lichte Der Bezeichnungsforschung*, ed. Ruth Schmidt-Wiegand, Arbeiten Zur Frühmittelalterforschung 1 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1981), 1–3; Geeraerts, *Theories of Lexical Semantics*, 1–45; Examples of these studies include: J. Hoops, 'Über Die Altenglischen Pflanzennamen' (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1889); R. Jordan, *Die Altenglischen Säugetiernamen* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1902); J. V. Cortelyou, *Die Altenglischen Namen Der Insekten, Spinnen- Und Krustentier*, Anglistische Forschungen 19 (Heidelberg: Winter, 1906); J. Geldner, 'Untersuchung Einiger Altenglischer Krankheitsnamen' (Würzburg, University of Würzburg, 1906); M. L. Keller, *The Anglo-Saxon Weapon Names Treated Archaeologically and Etymologically* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1906); J. J. Köhler, *Die Altenglischen Fischnamen*, Anglistische Forschungen 21 (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1906); W. Klump, *Die Altenglischen Handwerkernamen Sachlich Und Sprachlich Erläutert*, Anglistische Forschungen 24 (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1908); B. Fehr, *Die Sprache Des Handels in Altengland: Wirtschafts Und Kulturgeschichtliche. Beiträge Zur Englischen Wortforschung.* (St. Gallen: Honegger'sche Buckdruckerei, 1909); L. Graf, *Landwirtschaftliches Im Altenglischen Wortschatze: Nebst Einer Untersuchung Über Die Festländische Heimat Der Germanischen Besiedler Britanniens* (Breslau: Fleischmann, 1909); C. Brasch, 'Die Namen Des Werkzeuge Im Altenglischen: Eine Kulturhistorisch-Etymologische Untersuchung' (Kiel, University of Kiel, 1910); Jacobs, 'Die Namen Der Profanen Wohn- Und Wirstschafts-Gebäude Und Gebäudeteile Im Altenglischen: Eine Kulturgeschichtliche U. Etymologische Untersuchung.'; T. Kross, 'Die Namen Der Gefässe Bei Den Angel-Sachsen' (Kiel, 1911); F. Thöne, 'Die Namen Der Menschlichen Körperteile Bei Den Angelsachsen' (Kiel, 1912); R. Jente, *Die Mythologischen Ausdrücke Im Altenglischen Wortschatz: Eine Kulturgeschichtliche-Etymologische Untersuchung*, Anglistische Forschungen 12 (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1921).

der 'Bedeutung' eines Wortes."[68] Instead, the primary objective of studies in this era was the establishment of meaning change over time.[69]

Kulturgeschichtlicht-etymologische Untersuchungen were common until the 1930s, but they were not without contemporary criticism. Gustaf Stern, in particular, sought to counter their flaws and his 1921 work on OE and Middle English words for 'swift, swiftly' started to drive historical semantics in a new direction.[70] In contrast to the earlier historical-philological studies, Stern championed the combination of psychology and philology, between which he considered the study of individual words to be the borderground.[71] In further contrast to the other historical semantic studies of his time, he eschewed a reliance upon dictionaries and concerned himself principally with the denotation of the words. Despite this, Stern's study still began with the concept of 'swift, swiftly' and his main focus, like his contemporaries, was on the idea of meaning development over time. Indeed, this study is the forerunner for his 1931 work in which he categorised different types of meaning change.[72]

1931 also saw the publication of one of the most important works in the history of lexical semantics: Jost Trier's *Der deutsche Wortschatz im Sinnbezirk des Verstandes*.[73] Deeply influenced by structuralism, Trier saw languages as systems

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[68] Faiss, *Gnade Bei Cynewulf Und Seiner Schule: Semasiologisch-Onomasiologische Studien Zu Einem Semantischen Feld*, 3, 'only rarely did they inquire after the "meaning" of a word'; see also Kastovsky, 'Semantics and Vocabulary', 402; H. Schabram, 'Etymologie Und Kontextanalyse in Der Altenglischen Semantik', *Zeitschrift Für Vergleichende Sprachforschung* 84 (1970): 233.
[69] Geeraerts, *Theories of Lexical Semantics*, 25–26.
[70] Gustaf Stern, *Swift, Swiftly, and Their Synonyms: A Contribution to Semantic Analysis and Theory*, Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift 27 (Göteborg: Wettergren & Kerber, 1921).
[71] Stern, 1.
[72] Gustaf Stern, *Meaning and Change of Meaning: With Special Reference to the English Language*, Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift, 38.1 (Göteborg: Wettergren & Kerber, 1931).
[73] Jost Trier, *Der Deutsche Wortschatz Im Sinnbezirk Des Verstandes* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1931).

and introduced the idea of the lexical field, in which concepts were expressed by words in tight, closed mosaics of interlocking and interdependent meanings.[74] These particularly rigid ideas have been critiqued over the years, with languages being shown to have lexical gaps and vocabulary which does not tesselate perfectly.[75] Nevertheless, his work was a huge advance in semantics. From the theory of lexical fields have evolved semantic or conceptual fields (more flexible groups of words with shared meanings), the reality of which have been proven to some extent by neurological studies of aphasia.[76] Indeed, semantic fields still form the basis of many studies today.[77]

The 1960s saw another great step forward in historical semantic studies, particularly with the work of Hans Schabram, Klaus Faiss and Wolfgang Kühlwein, who were the key advocates of holistic and pluralistic approaches.[78] One premise of

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[74] Trier, 3; Kastovsky, 'Semantics and Vocabulary', 403.
[75] K. Ostheeren, 'Studien Zum Begriff Der "Freude" Und Seinen Ausdrucksmitteln in Altenglischen Texten' (Heidelberg, 1964); Faiss, *Gnade Bei Cynewulf Und Seiner Schule: Semasiologisch-Onomasiologische Studien Zu Einem Semantischen Feld*, 14–15; J. Deese, *Psycholinguistics*, Contemporary Topics in Experimental Psychology (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1970), 92; J. Lyons, *Semantics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 253; Geeraerts, *Theories of Lexical Semantics*, 56.
[76] A. Lehrer, *Semantic Fields and Lexical Structure*, North-Holland Linguistic Series 11 (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1974), 71; Ruth Schmidt-Wiegand, 'Historische Onomasiologie Und Mittelalterforschung', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 9 (1975): 49–78; H. Aertsen, 'Word Field Semantics and Historical Lexicography', *Folia Linguistica Historica* 9 (1989): 33–57.
[77] See also studies such as: Andreas Fischer, *Engagement, Wedding and Marriage in Old English*, Anglistische Forschungen 176 (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1986); C. P. Biggam, *Blue in Old English: An Interdisciplinary Semantic Study* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997); Ammon, 'Pledges and Agreements in Old English: A Semantic Field Study'.
[78] H. Schabram, *Superbia: Studien Zum Altenglischen Wortschatz* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1965); Faiss, *Gnade Bei Cynewulf Und Seiner Schule: Semasiologisch-Onomasiologische Studien Zu Einem Semantischen Feld*; Wolfgang Kühlwein, *Die Verwendung Der Feindseligkeitsbezeichnungen in Der Altenglischen Dichtersprache*, Kieler Beiträge Zur Anglistik Und Amerikanistik 5 (Neumünster: Karl Wachholtz Verlag, 1967); Wolfgang Kühlwein, *Modell Einer Operationellen Lexikologischen Analyse: Altenglisch 'Blut'*, Anglistische Forschungen 95 (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1968); see also: D. Bähr, 'Altenglisch "Aethele" Und "Freo", Ihre Ableitungen Und Synonyma Im Alt- Und Mittelenglischen: Wortgeschichtliche Studien Zum Wandel Des Englischen Freheitsbegriffes Im Mittelalter' (Berlin, Freie Universität-Berlin, 1959); H. A. Benning, *Welt Und Mensch in Der Altenglischen Dichtung: Bedeutungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen Zum Germanisch-Altenglischen Wortschatz*, Beiträge Zur Englischen Philologie 44 (Bochum-Langendreer: Pöppinghaus, 1961); G. König, 'Die Bezeichnungen Für "Farbe, Glanz, Und Helligkeit" Im Altenglischen' (Mainz, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität

such studies, in contrast to the Saussurian ideals of the previous era, was to combine those methodologies which had traditionally been kept separate, e.g. the diachronic and the synchronic.[79] Also to be united explicitly for the first time were onomasiology and semasiology: onomasiology begins with a concept and explores the terms used to express it, being the basic approach of *kulturgeschichtliche-etymologische Untersuchungen* and Trier's research, while semasiology starts with individual words and establishes their meanings, as employed by dictionaries and championed by Stern.[80] This multifarious methodology allowed for more holistic interpretations of words.

These studies also emphasised the importance of studying all possible instances of a word from the entire corpus of a language and the need for detailed contextual analysis of those instances, now seen as fundamental aspects of any historical semantic study.[81] Indeed, these principles were expanded upon by Andreas Fischer in his 1986 study of words for 'marriage, engagement'. For him, a historical semantic study should study each word from the following perspectives: its etymology; its place within its word-family; which texts it appears in, as well as their provenance, date and type; how many attestations the word has in each text

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Mainz, 1957); E. S. Dick, *Altenglisch 'dryht' Und Seine Sippe: Eine Wortkundliche Kultur- Und Religions-Geschichliche Betrachtung Zur Altgermanischen Glaubensvorstellung Vom Wachstümlichen Heil*, Neue Beiträge Zur Englischen Philologie 3 (Münster: Aschendorf, 1965).

[79] R. L. Miller, *The Linguistic Relativity Principle and Humboldtian Ethnolinguistics: A History and Appraisal*, Janua Linguarum. Series Minor 57 (The Hague: The Hague Mouton, 1968), 39–41; Ferdinand de Saussure, *Cours de Linquistique Générale*, ed. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye (Paris: Payot, 1916); Kühlwein, *Modell Einer Operationellen Lexikologischen Analyse: Altenglisch 'Blut'*; Faiss, *Gnade Bei Cynewulf Und Seiner Schule: Semasiologisch-Onomasiologische Studien Zu Einem Semantischen Feld*, 17.

[80] Faiss, *Gnade Bei Cynewulf Und Seiner Schule: Semasiologisch-Onomasiologische Studien Zu Einem Semantischen Feld*, 3; Kastovsky, 'Semantics and Vocabulary', 402.

[81] Schabram, *Superbia: Studien Zum Altenglischen Wortschatz*, 13–16; Faiss, *Gnade Bei Cynewulf Und Seiner Schule: Semasiologisch-Onomasiologische Studien Zu Einem Semantischen Feld*, 18–19.

and in the corpus as a whole; its co-occurrence with related words; the semantic-syntactic patterns in which the word appears; what its precise meaning is, established from context and, where possible, Latin sources; and its survival into later languages.[82]

Since the revolutionary work of Schabram and his contemporaries, pluralism of approach has become the norm for many historical semantic studies, but there is no single established methodology for the sub-discipline, and it continues to develop on the initiative of individual scholars. One historical semanticist of particular importance to the methodology developed for this thesis is Carole Biggam, whose work emphasises the value of interdisciplinarity for historical lexical studies. Philology and historical semantics had always been a fairly multidisciplinary endeavour, drawing together evidence from literature, history and linguistics, but Biggam's book on OE words for 'blue' brought interdisciplinarity explicitly to the fore.[83] In addition to literary and historical evidence, she draws on material from archaeological, geological and zoological research, among others, making use of all possible information which could illuminate the OE vocabulary. As she herself states: "[t]he basis of interdisciplinary semantics is the belief that the semantic study of a dead language needs all the help it can get."[84] Biggam's interdisciplinary methodology is particularly valuable to historical semantic studies of lexical items with physical referents, such as my own, and her study of OE words for 'blue' is the single most inspiring publication for the current thesis. Indeed, Biggam's later article

[82] Fischer, *Engagement, Wedding and Marriage in Old English*, 13.
[83] Biggam, *Blue in Old English: An Interdisciplinary Semantic Study*.
[84] Biggam, 27.

'*Grund* to *Hrof*' shows the value of interdisciplinary semantic study for OE buildings terminology.[85] The article is not a full semantic study, but acts rather as a proof of concept for the research of architectural and settlement vocabulary.

In more recent years, the growth of digital humanities has seen widespread changes in the means of gathering, storing and then analysing data. For OE researchers, the greatest step forward in terms of resources has been with the *DOE* project and its attendant corpus of OE texts.[86] The project was first conceived in the 1970s, with the aim being to produce a detailed dictionary of OE based upon a complete and categorised corpus, in which every OE text is given an individual code according to its mode of language, text type and other classifying features such as author, manuscript or date.[87] Certain subjective and impactful decisions are taken in the categorisation of texts within this corpus, e.g. the sharp delineation between poetry and prose following the traditional OE poetic corpus, but largely the categorisation offers scholars an orderly framework through which to understand and search the corpus. Since its publication, the corpus has been used as the primary source for gathering OE lexical data, and the current online database allows for ease of access and digital searches, greatly expediting the data-gathering process.

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[85] Biggam, '*Grund* to *Hrof*: Aspects of the Old English Semantics of Building and Architecture'.
[86] *Dictionary of Old English: A to I Online*, 2018; 'Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus', 2009, https://tapor.library.utoronto.ca/doecorpus/.
[87] Angus Cameron and Roberta Frank, eds., *A Plan for the* Dictionary of Old English (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973); Richard L. Venezky and Antonette diPaolo Healey, *A Microfiche Concordance to Old English*, Publications of the Dictionary of Old English 1 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1980); Angus Cameron et al., eds., *The Dictionary of Old English Corpus in Electronic Form* (Toronto, 1981); Ruth Möhlig-Falke, 'Using the Dictionary of Old English Corpus for Linguistic Analyses: A Basic Classification of the Textual Sources', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 116, no. 2 (2015): 395–96.

Derived from the *DOE* resources are the *York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Poetry* and the *York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose*, in which selections of OE texts are labelled with syntactical and morphological information.[88] Although highly valuable resources for syntactic and grammatical study, they represent only a portion of the OE corpus and are less suited to studies where full-corpus and contextual analysis are required, with the *DOE* corpus being a preferable resource for semantic research.[89] Other valuable resources now available for data-gathering are the *Thesaurus of Old English*, the *Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary*, and, of course, the *Oxford English Dictionary* itself.[90] All of these up-to-date online databases allow for a greater volume of data to be gathered at greater speeds than ever before, moving historical semantics into a new era.

In addition to aiding the gathering of data, digital tools and modern methods for analysis are also gaining currency in historical semantics. Kathryn Allan and Justyna Robinson's 2012 publication *Current Methods in Historical Semantics* brought together papers highlighting the progress of historical semantics in terms of sources, analytical models and theoretical frameworks.[91] Various of these papers explored the use of techniques and statistical models from modern linguistics for analysing

[88] The York-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Poetry, accessed 14 May 2020, https://www-users.york.ac.uk/~lang18/pcorpus.html; The York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose (YCOE), 2003, https://www-users.york.ac.uk/~lang22/YCOE/YcoeHome.htm.
[89] Möhlig-Falke, 'Using the Dictionary of Old English Corpus for Linguistic Analyses: A Basic Classification of the Textual Sources', 397.
[90] A Thesaurus of Old English, 2017, http://oldenglishthesaurus.arts.gla.ac.uk/; 'Historical Thesaurus', Oxford English Dictionary, 2020, https://www.oed.com/thesaurus; Oxford English Dictionary, 2020, https://www.oed.com/; Kathryn Allan, 'Using OED Data as Evidence for Researching Semantic Change', in *Current Methods in Historical Semantics*, ed. Kathryn Allan and Justyna A. Robinson, Topics in English Linguistics 73 (Berlin: de Gruyter Mouton, 2012), 17–39.
[91] Kathryn Allan and Justyna A. Robinson, 'Introduction: Exploring the "State of the Art" in Historical Semantics', in *Current Methods in Historical Semantics*, ed. Kathryn Allan and Justyna A. Robinson, Topics in English Linguistics 73 (Berlin: de Gruyter Mouton, 2012), 1–13.

historical data and indicated the value of such corpus-driven approaches for further research.[92] Even more recently, Silke Schwandt has demonstrated the value of using web corpora for gathering data and digital text-reading tools for indicating patterns of vocabulary use. She looks at the use of *virtus* in certain medieval Latin texts and visualises her data using *Voyant Tools*, a text-reading and analysis environment developed for the digital humanities.[93] Other text-analysis models developed for lexical research in computer science, which aim to use artificial intelligence to vectorise linguistic information and establish semantic relationships between words, may one day prove similarly useful in answering certain historical semantic questions.[94]

These recent studies show both the benefits and limitations of such methodologies. For example, Dirk Geeraerts, Caroline Gevaert and Dirk Speelman start with a hypothesis regarding the relationship between the words for 'anger' and the concept of violence throughout the history of English, allowing them to arrange their data in order to test the theory most efficiently.[95] They categorised texts according to language of origin and whether or not they treat a religious topic, as

[92] See, for example: Dirk Geeraerts, Caroline Gevaert, and Dirk Speelman, 'How Anger Rose: Hypothesis Testing in Diachronic Semantics', in *Current Methods in Historical Semantics*, ed. Kathryn Allan and Justyna A. Robinson, Topics in English Linguistics 73 (Berlin: de Gruyter Mouton, 2012), 109–31; Martin Hilpert, 'Diachronic Collostructional Analysis: How to Use It and How to Deal with Confounding Factors', in *Current Methods in Historical Semantics*, ed. Kathryn Allan and Justyna A. Robinson, Topics in English Linguistics 73 (Berlin: de Gruyter Mouton, 2012), 133–60; Eyal Sagi et al., 'Tracing Semantic Change with Latent Semantic Analysis', in *Current Methods in Historical Semantics*, ed. Kathryn Allan and Justyna A. Robinson, Topics in English Linguistics 73 (Berlin: de Gruyter Mouton, 2012), 161–83.

[93] Silke Schwandt, 'Digitale Methoden Für Die Historische Semantik: Auf Den Spuren von Begriffen in Digitalen Korpora', *Geschichte Und Gesellschaft* 44 (2018): 107–34; Stéfan Sinclair and Geoffrey Rockwell, Voyant Tools, 2020, http://voyant-tools.org/.

[94] Tomas Mikolov et al., 'Distributed Representations OfWords and Phrases and Their Compositionality', *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems* 26 (2013): 1–9.

[95] Geeraerts, Gevaert, and Speelman, 'How Anger Rose: Hypothesis Testing in Diachronic Semantics'.

well as separating instances of their lexemes which occur in contexts with or without violence. This required a defined hypothesis in advance, which is not always desired, especially in the case of an exploratory study such as the current thesis. Moreover, a perceived benefit of using computational or statistical models is often that they are more objective and reproducible.[96] Yet such arrangements of data require prior human intervention, and can presuppose fixed categories which are created subjectively and may not reflect a more subtle reality. We may ask, for example, what it means for a medieval text to be 'religious' or 'non-religious', and if a line can be drawn between the two. Furthermore, in the case of text-reading programmes such as *Voyant Tools*, it is necessary to have in advance annotated corpora which are readable by a computer.[97] While Schwandt makes use of a marked-up Latin database, no such database exists yet which can provide semantic labelling for the entire corpus of OE writings.

The progress in digital humanities has and will continue to have a marked impact upon historical semantic research, but these publications show that new methods are not equally applicable across all studies. Database corpora are only as useful as the questions asked of them and answers from analytical models only as good as the data fed into them. Statistical models tend to require clear and consistent parameters and sufficient data for their output to be useful. It is also important that enough data exists within each parameter framework so that results are not skewed. In fact, several of these studies emphasise the continued need for human intuition

[96] Sagi et al., 'Tracing Semantic Change with Latent Semantic Analysis', 161–62; Schwandt, 'Digitale Methoden Für Die Historische Semantik: Auf Den Spuren von Begriffen in Digitalen Korpora', 107–8.
[97] Schwandt, 'Digitale Methoden Für Die Historische Semantik: Auf Den Spuren von Begriffen in Digitalen Korpora', 109.

and analysis in this field.[98] Modern digital tools thus prove a valuable and progressive aid to more traditional historical semantic methodologies, rather than their replacement.

My own methodology has developed out of previous historical semantic scholarship and out of the specific needs and opportunities inherent to my particular study. The rest of this chapter explains the approaches this thesis has taken and lays out a guide for how the rest of the thesis will proceed.

2.2 Data Gathering and Presentation

The very first step in my methodology was to gather the necessary linguistic data, which was done using the *DOE Web Corpus* search.[99] As per the tenets discussed above, my study is whole-corpus and takes into account every instance of *burh* found in the OE written corpus (as maintained by the *DOE*), and the instances are catalogued in a relational database of my own design.

The total dataset contains 3730 individual instances of *burh.* However, this number is dependent upon the structural framework of the *DOE* and the decisions made by the project regarding what constitutes an individual text. Sometimes, the *DOE* classes two versions of a text separately, even if there are overlapping passages,

[98] Allan and Robinson, 'Introduction: Exploring the "State of the Art" in Historical Semantics', 6; Schwandt, 'Digitale Methoden Für Die Historische Semantik: Auf Den Spuren von Begriffen in Digitalen Korpora', 133.
[99] 'Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus'.

for example the two manuscript versions of Bishop Wærferth's translation of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*. This can result in examples of *burh* which can be seen qualitatively as duplicates of one another. Conversely, some texts are taken from critical editions, which have combined together the evidence of many different manuscripts: this can be seen most clearly with the many homilies of Ælfric, for which there are dozens of manuscripts with slight variation. There are also various texts which are generally considered to be singular wholes, which the *DOE* has broken down into separate constituent parts, for example the different books of the OE translation of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* (henceforth *HE*). This does not affect the number of instances of *burh* catalogued, but does impact the number of texts in which the word is perceived to occur.

Due to the scale and scope of this thesis, it is necessary to trust in the excellent work of the *DOE* and the editions upon which their corpus is based, with due consideration of the impact of their text divisions. The numbers quoted within this thesis, therefore, are based upon the sum total as found in the *DOE Web Corpus*, and are not always reflective of the linguistic corpus as taken from all angles. It is partly for this reason that purely numerical study of the data has been avoided in this thesis, and any statistical analysis provided will be presented within a clear framework which takes into account the potential for distortion.

This raw lexical data forms the very basis of my thesis, and a vital early step in my research was to design a relational database using Microsoft Access, where my data could be stored and queried according to my specific needs. Creating a database was a skill I needed to learn, and I was particularly aided in this by my

archaeology supervisor. The database structure I developed allowed me to manage information about individual instances, as well as their immediate linguistic context, the texts they occurred in and their position within the corpus, and the database grew in complexity as the project progressed. These categories allowed me to ask certain key questions of the database, for example showing me other words occurring with *burh* within a particular text, or all examples of *burh* within a particular section of the corpus. Below are some representative screenshots of the database, showing the table relationships, the structure of an individual table and the outcome of a query:

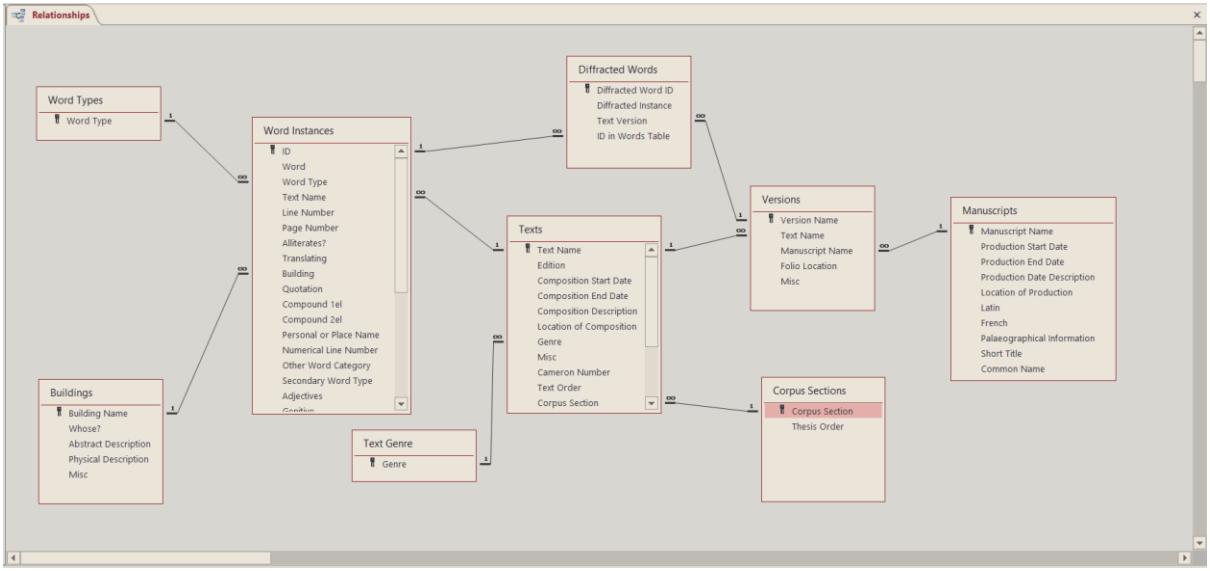
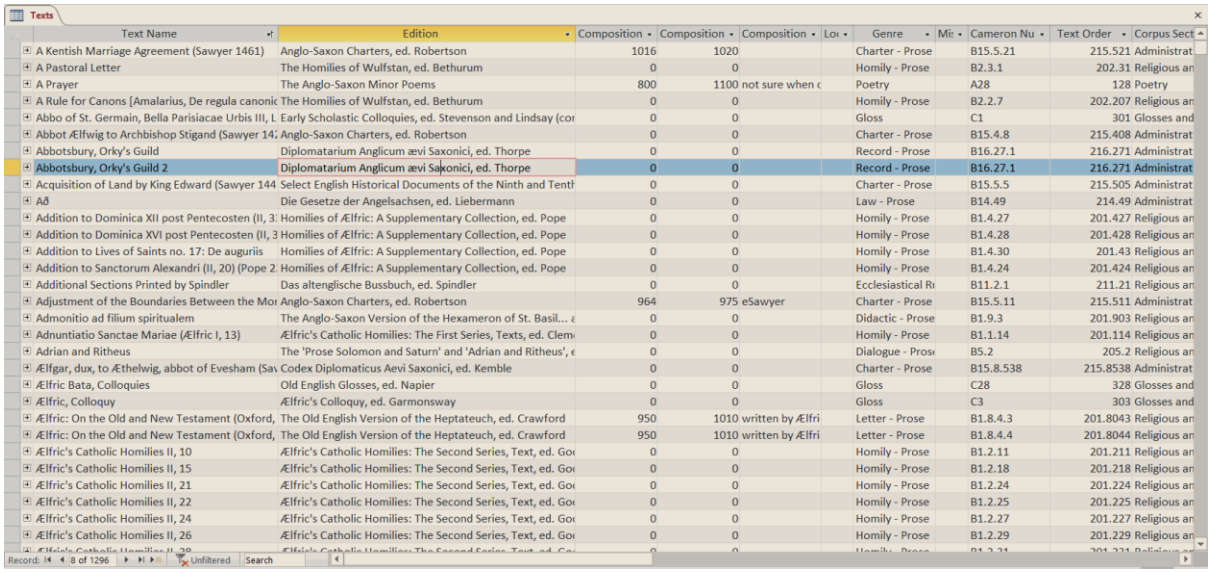
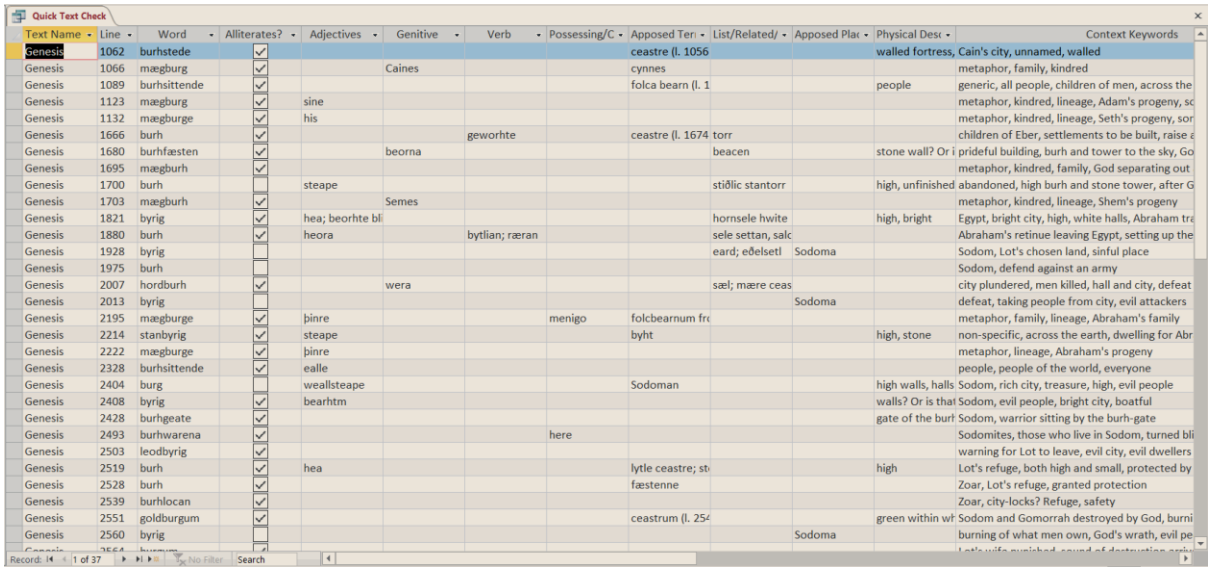


Fig. 1: Table relationships in thesis database



Text Name	Edition	Composition	Composition	Composition	Lor	Genre	Mir	Cameron Nu	Text Order	Corpus Sect
A Kentish Marriage Agreement (Sawyer 1461)	Anglo-Saxon Charters, ed. Robertson	1016	1020			Charter - Prose		B15.5.21	215.521	Administrat
A Pastoral Letter	The Homilies of Wulfstan, ed. Bethurum	0	0			Homily - Prose		B2.3.1	202.31	Religious ar
A Prayer	The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems	800	1100	not sure when c		Poetry		A28	128	Poetry
A Rule for Canons [Amalarius, De regula canonic	The Homilies of Wulfstan, ed. Bethurum	0	0			Homily - Prose		B2.2.7	202.207	Religious ar
Abbo of St. Germain, Bella Parisiacae Urbis III, L	Early Scholastic Colloquies, ed. Stevenson and Lindsay (cor	0	0			Gloss		C1	301	Glosses and
Abbot Ælfwig to Archbishop Stigand (Sawyer 14;	Anglo-Saxon Charters, ed. Robertson	0	0			Charter - Prose		B15.4.8	215.408	Administrat
Abbotsbury, Orky's Guild	Diplomatarium Anglicum ævi Saxonici, ed. Thorpe	0	0			Record - Prose		B16.27.1	216.271	Administrat
Abbotsbury, Orky's Guild 2	Diplomatarium Anglicum ævi Saxonici, ed. Thorpe	0	0			Record - Prose		B16.27.1	216.271	Administrat
Acquisition of Land by King Edward (Sawyer 144	Select English Historical Documents of the Ninth and Tenth	0	0			Charter - Prose		B15.5.5	215.505	Administrat
Að	Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen, ed. Liebermann	0	0			Law - Prose		B14.49	214.49	Administrat
Addition to Dominica XII post Pentecosten (II, 3	Homilies of Ælfric: A Supplementary Collection, ed. Pope	0	0			Homily - Prose		B1.4.27	201.427	Religious ar
Addition to Dominica XVI post Pentecosten (II, 3	Homilies of Ælfric: A Supplementary Collection, ed. Pope	0	0			Homily - Prose		B1.4.28	201.428	Religious ar
Addition to Lives of Saints no. 17: De auguriis	Homilies of Ælfric: A Supplementary Collection, ed. Pope	0	0			Homily - Prose		B1.4.30	201.43	Religious ar
Addition to Sanctorum Alexandri (II, 20) (Pope 2	Homilies of Ælfric: A Supplementary Collection, ed. Pope	0	0			Homily - Prose		B1.4.24	201.424	Religious ar
Additional Sections Printed by Spindler	Das altenglische Bussbuch, ed. Spindler	0	0			Ecclesiastical Ri		B11.2.1	211.21	Religious ar
Adjustment of the Boundaries Between the Mor	Anglo-Saxon Charters, ed. Robertson	964	975	eSawyer		Charter - Prose		B15.5.11	215.511	Administrat
Admonitio ad filium spiritualem	The Anglo-Saxon Version of the Hexameron of St. Basil... a	0	0			Didactic - Prose		B1.9.3	201.903	Religious ar
Adnuntiatio Sanctae Mariae (Ælfric I, 13)	Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The First Series, Texts, ed. Clem	0	0			Homily - Prose		B1.1.14	201.114	Religious ar
Adrian and Ritheus	The 'Prose Solomon and Saturn' and 'Adrian and Ritheus', e	0	0			Dialogue - Prose		B5.2	205.2	Religious ar
Ælfgar, dux, to Æthelwig, abbot of Evesham (Sav	Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici, ed. Kemble	0	0			Charter - Prose		B15.8.538	215.8538	Administrat
Ælfric Bata, Colloquies	Old English Glosses, ed. Napier	0	0			Gloss		C28	328	Glosses and
Ælfric, Colloquy	Ælfric's Colloquy, ed. Garmonsway	0	0			Gloss		C3	303	Glosses and
Ælfric: On the Old and New Testament (Oxford,	The Old English Version of the Heptateuch, ed. Crawford	950	1010	written by Ælfri		Letter - Prose		B1.8.4.3	201.8043	Religious ar
Ælfric: On the Old and New Testament (Oxford,	The Old English Version of the Heptateuch, ed. Crawford	950	1010	written by Ælfri		Letter - Prose		B1.8.4.4	201.8044	Religious ar
Ælfric's Catholic Homilies II, 10	Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series, Text, ed. Goc	0	0			Homily - Prose		B1.2.11	201.211	Religious ar
Ælfric's Catholic Homilies II, 15	Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series, Text, ed. Goc	0	0			Homily - Prose		B1.2.18	201.218	Religious ar
Ælfric's Catholic Homilies II, 21	Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series, Text, ed. Goc	0	0			Homily - Prose		B1.2.24	201.224	Religious ar
Ælfric's Catholic Homilies II, 22	Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series, Text, ed. Goc	0	0			Homily - Prose		B1.2.25	201.225	Religious ar
Ælfric's Catholic Homilies II, 24	Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series, Text, ed. Goc	0	0			Homily - Prose		B1.2.27	201.227	Religious ar
Ælfric's Catholic Homilies II, 26	Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series, Text, ed. Goc	0	0			Homily - Prose		B1.2.29	201.229	Religious ar

Fig. 2: Extract from 'Texts' table in thesis database



Text Name	Line	Word	Alliterates?	Adjectives	Genitive	Verb	Possessing/C	Apposed Ter	List/Related/	Apposed Plac	Physical Desc	Context Keywords
Genesis	1062	burhstede	☑					ceastre (l. 1056			walled fortress,	Cain's city, unnamed, walled
Genesis	1066	mægburg	☑		Caines			cynnes				metaphor, family, kindred
Genesis	1089	burhsittende	☑					folca bearn (l. 1			people	generic, all people, children of men, across the
Genesis	1123	mægburg	☑	sine								metaphor, kindred, lineage, Adam's progeny, sc
Genesis	1132	mægburge	☑	his								metaphor, kindred, lineage, Seth's progeny, sor
Genesis	1666	burh	☑			geworhte		ceastre (l. 1674	torr			children of Eber, settlements to be built, raise a
Genesis	1680	burhfæsten	☑		beorna				beacen		stone wall? Or i	prideful building, burh and tower to the sky, Go
Genesis	1695	mægburh	☑									metaphor, kindred, family, God separating out
Genesis	1700	burh	☐	steape					stiðlic stantorr		high, unfinished	abandoned, high burh and stone tower, after G
Genesis	1703	mægburh	☑		Semes							metaphor, kindred, lineage, Shem's progeny
Genesis	1821	byrig	☑	hea; beorhte bl					hornsele hwite		high, bright	Egypt, bright city, high, white halls, Abraham tra
Genesis	1880	burh	☑	heora		bytlian; ræran			sele settan, salc			Abraham's retinue leaving Egypt, setting up the
Genesis	1928	byrig	☐						eard; eðelsetl	Sodoma		Sodom, Lot's chosen land, sinful place
Genesis	1975	burh	☐									Sodom, defend against an army
Genesis	2007	hordburh	☑		wera				sæl; mære ceas			city plundered, men killed, hall and city, defeat
Genesis	2013	byrig	☐							Sodoma		defeat, taking people from city, evil attackers
Genesis	2195	mægburge	☑	þinre			menigo	folcbearnum fr				metaphor, family, lineage, Abraham's family
Genesis	2214	stanbyrig	☑	steape				byht			high, stone	non-specific, across the earth, dwelling for Abr
Genesis	2222	mægburge	☑	þinre								metaphor, lineage, Abraham's progeny
Genesis	2328	burhsittende	☑	ealle								people, people of the world, everyone
Genesis	2404	burg	☐	weallsteape				Sodoman			high walls, halls	Sodom, rich city, treasure, high, evil people
Genesis	2408	byrig	☑	bearhtm							walls? Or is that	Sodom, evil people, bright city, boatful
Genesis	2428	burhgeate	☑								gate of the burh	Sodom, warrior sitting by the burh-gate
Genesis	2493	burhwarena	☑				here					Sodomites, those who live in Sodom, turned bli
Genesis	2503	leodbyrig	☑									warning for Lot to leave, evil city, evil dwellers
Genesis	2519	burh	☑	hea				lytle ceastre; st			high	Lot's refuge, both high and small, protected by
Genesis	2528	burh	☑					fæstenne				Zoar, Lot's refuge, granted protection
Genesis	2539	burhlocan	☑									Zoar, city-locks? Refuge, safety
Genesis	2551	goldburgum	☑					ceastrum (l. 254			green within wh	Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed by God, burni
Genesis	2560	byrig	☐							Sodoma		burning of what men own, God's wrath, evil pe

Fig. 3: Extract from 'Quick Text Check' query looking at *burh* in *Genesis* in thesis database

The original database was set up specifically for my own analytical needs, and is not very readable in its current form to others: many fields exist only to aid sorting and filtering, while some other fields preserve information which is abstruse when considered in conjunction with the thesis discussion. Therefore, instead of presenting the entire database as my appendix, I have instead created reports, which are tailored for the checkability and reproducibility of my thesis findings. It is important

here to explain how this thesis will use the reports to refer to the texts and instances of *burh* discussed.

Due to the number of texts dealt with in this study, the short title codes assigned by the *DOE* will be used instead of the full text names: for example, the diploma which can be described as *Berhtwulf, king of the Mercians, to St Mary's, Evesham* or as *Sawyer 203* will be referred to as *Ch 203*. Report 1 provides an alphabetical list of the short title codes and provides their standard or descriptive titles as well as the edition in which the text can be found, according to the *DOE Web Corpus*. As mentioned above, the *DOE* sometimes splits texts into smaller components, giving them separate short title codes. For example, the OE translation of Bede's *HE* is split into *BedePref*, *BedeHead*, *Bede 1*, *Bede 2*, *Bede 3*, *Bede 3 (O)*, *Bede 4* and *Bede 5*, separating out the preface, headings, each book and the variant extract of the third book. Usually, however, the whole text is referred to by its common name the *Old English Bede*, abbreviated to *OEB*. In such cases, it is more reasonable to refer to the whole text by its common abbreviation and only use the short title codes when giving specific quotations. This shall be explained *in situ* where this is done.

Likewise, various OE texts not occurring in my *burh* dataset, as well as Latin texts, will be discussed in comparison to my *burh* data. In these cases, where necessary, abbreviations for the text titles will also be employed. Any abbreviations not part of my official dataset will be found in my abbreviations list at the start of this thesis. The subsequent seven reports present the instances of *burh* split into the corpus sections which form the basis of the chapters, and which are explained on pp.

78–86. Further information on how to read Reports 2–8 is found in Report 9: Appendix Meta-Data.

When an instance of *burh* is referenced in this thesis, it shall be identified by the code RX.Y, where X represents the report number and Y the row number as given in the report. For example, R7.15 refers to the instance "hordburh" found on row 15 of Report 7: Poetry. In order to see the use of the word in the context of a quotation, it is possible to search for the instance either in the *DOE Corpus* using the Cameron Number provided with each text code, or in the edition listed for the text in Report 1. This system allows for efficient identification of the many *burh* examples analysed throughout this thesis.

2.3 Analytical Approaches

Alongside whole-corpus research, other key tenets of a historical semantic methodology, as laid out in the historiography, are pluralism of approach, interdisciplinarity and context-driven analysis. I shall approach my data with a variety of methods and from a variety of perspectives in order to gain as thorough an understanding of its meaning as possible.

One of the first key ports of call in studying a word is to look at its etymology and cognates. It is likely that *burh* derives from the Proto-Germanic putative form **berg-an* ('to protect, shelter, keep safe'), although it is phonologically plausible that it

derives instead from **berga* ('mountain').[100] It has cognates in every Germanic language, which are consistent in their associations with concepts of settlement and fortification: Gothic *baurgs* ('fortified place, town'); Old Norse *borg* ('town, citadel, small hill'), which has survived with the meaning of 'castle' or 'town' into modern Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Faroese and Icelandic; Old High German and Old Saxon *burg* ('castle, town') which survive as modern German *Burg* ('castle, fortress') and Dutch *burch* ('castle, citadel'); and Old Frisian *burch* ('castle, town').[101] The etymology of the word and its reflex throughout Germanic languages suggests that 'fortification' or 'protective site' is an original and foundational denotation of the word.

As this study begins with a single word and explores its uses and meanings, it is predominantly semasiological in nature. However, there are also onomasiological aspects to the analysis in this thesis, as the evidence of *burh* will at times be compared to the evidence of other words within its conceptual field(s) of settlement and fortification. The OE word discussed most commonly in association with *burh* in this thesis is *ceaster*. It is defined as a 'fortified settlement, city, especially of Roman origin' and is a loanword from Latin *castra* (a plural form from *castrum*, but often used independently) meaning 'camp, fortification, walled town'.[102] Especially in OE texts with Latin sources, *ceaster* appears often in conjunction with or opposition to

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[100] Guus Kroonen, *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Germanic*, Leiden Indo-European Etymological Ditionary Series 11 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 85; 'Borough, n.'; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 240.
[101] Kroonen, *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Germanic*, 85; 'Borough, n.'; Geir T. Zoëga, 'Borg', in *A Concise Dictionary of Old Icelandic* (Minealo, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 2004), 63.
[102] Angus Cameron et al., 'Ceaster', in *Dictionary of Old English: A to I Online* (Toronto: Dictionary of Old English Project), accessed 17 August 2017, http://tapor.library.utoronto.ca/doe/; 'Castra', in *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2015), http://clt.brepolis.net.libproxy.york.ac.uk/dmlbs/Default.aspx.

burh, and it is a valuable point of comparison which helps to answer questions both about the meaning of *burh* and indeed of *ceaster* itself. Two other OE words of importance in this study are *fæsten* ('fastness, fortification') and *(ge)weorc* ('work, fort').[103] It will also be crucial to compare *burh* with the Latin terms it commonly translates. The most significant of these are *civitas* and *urbs*, both of which are used predominantly to describe urban centres. *Urbs* refers to a walled town or city and is often used to describe Rome;[104] *civitas* refers to a major town or city, but was also historically used to represent Roman freedom and citizenship.[105] Other OE and Latin vocabulary will also be discussed throughout the thesis and will be introduced when relevant.[106]

Diachronic and synchronic approaches are also combined in this study's analysis. The OE texts containing examples of *burh* range in date from the eighth century to as late as the twelfth century. Therefore, it is essential to consider how the

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[103] Angus Cameron et al., 'Fæsten', in *Dictionary of Old English: A to I Online* (Toronto: Dictionary of Old English Project), accessed 29 June 2020, http://tapor.library.utoronto.ca/doe/; Joseph Bosworth, 'Ge-Weorc', in *Bosworth-Toller's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*, ed. Thomas Northcote Toller and et al. (Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, 2010), http://www.bosworthtoller.com/016784.

[104] Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879); 'Urbs', in *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2015), http://clt.brepolis.net.libproxy.york.ac.uk/dmlbs/Default.aspx.

[105] Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, 'Civitas', in *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879), http://perseus.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/philologic/getobject.pl?c.2:2549.lewisandshort; 'Civitas', in *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2015), http://clt.brepolis.net.libproxy.york.ac.uk/dmlbs/Default.aspx.

[106] Where a term is presented with a definition from a particular dictionary, or where a term deserves particular focus and a thorough understanding of its meaning, specific dictionary citations of the individual entries will be provided. However, for the sake of efficiency, many terms appear throughout this thesis which are translated briefly with definitions which are much abridged from dictionary entries. In such cases, specific citations will not be given, but the dictionaries used throughout the thesis are: *Dictionary of Old English: A to I Online*; Joseph Bosworth, in *Bosworth Toller's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*, ed. Thomas Northcote Toller and et al. (Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, 2019), https://bosworthtoller.com/; *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2015), http://clt.brepolis.net.libproxy.york.ac.uk/dmlbs/pages/QuickSearch.aspx; Lewis and Short, *A Latin Dictionary*.

word's meaning may have changed over time and the role played by historical context. However, synchronic differences in terms of text type, location of composition, dialect, source material and form, among others, mean that time is by no means the only valuable factor of semantic change. Indeed, as this thesis will show, some types of text use *burh* fairly consistently across time but in great distinction to other contemporaneous text types.

Instances of the word must be considered in their context. From a linguistic perspective, we may look at the instance's morphology and its immediate clausal context. One of the most fundamental questions we can ask is whether the instance of *burh* forms part of a compound. In linguistics generally, compounding represents a "unique linguistic feature."[107] But it is an especially important factor in OE language and literature, appearing as a key element throughout the written corpus, offering aesthetic flexibility in verse and verse-like texts and providing a tool for the translation of Latin.[108] In the modern English word *teacup*, *tea* is the first element, qualifying the second element *cup*, which is the headword of the compound.[109] Where a word appears as the first element of a compound, it shows that the word can lend characteristics and specificity from its own denotation or connotations. Where the word appears as the second element of a compound, it can suggest that the word is too broad in denotation for the context, requiring closer definition, or

[107] Jonathan Davis-Secord, *Joinings: Compound Words in Old English Literature* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 25.
[108] Davis-Secord, 23–27, 36–70; John D. Niles, 'Compound Diction and the Style of *Beowulf*', *English Studies* 62 (1981): 490–92.
[109] For more on the structure of compounds see: Davis-Secord, *Joinings: Compound Words in Old English Literature*, 28; who also cites, among others: Theodor Storch, *Angelsächsische Nominalcomposita* (Strasbourg: Trübner, 1886); Charles T. Carr, *Nominal Compounds in Germanic*, St Andrews Publications 41 (London: Oxford University Press, 1939); Kastovsky, 'Semantics and Vocabulary', 362–77.

that the word offers a range of semantic possibilities, of which the first element may highlight only a small part.

Burh appears regularly in both positions, with 528 instances as the first element and 1054 instances as the second element out of the total 3730 instances databased. It is important to bear in mind that many of these examples, especially where *burh* is the second element, appear in repeated, common place names. These numbers are also not set in stone, as there are various examples of *burh* which, due to manuscript presentation and editorial decisions, appear to be in apposition with place names rather than part of the name as a compound. However, it is unclear whether a contemporary scribe or reader would have interpreted these instances of *burh* as part of the place-name lexeme or simply as an epithet. Nevertheless, the high number of cases where *burh* is used in a compound show that it is productive, both as a qualifier and, particularly, as a flexible headword which may be modified and characterised in various different ways. Throughout the thesis, compounds containing *burh* will be particularly considered, paying attention to the range of vocabulary both described by *burh* and describing *burh*, and the contexts within which these compounds appear.

Compounds are not the only way to qualify a word: adjectives and genitives also play an important role in characterising vocabulary. Much like the first element of a compound, an adjective lends specifying characteristics to a noun. *Burh* appears fairly commonly with adjectives, most especially in poetry and landscape descriptions of charters. Again, it will be valuable to consider what sorts of descriptions *burh* receives and in which contexts. *Burh* itself does not have an

adjectival derivative in OE which equates to the modern term 'burghal'. Where *burh* is used to describe another term, this is achieved either with compounding or the use of the genitive. The genitive is the grammatical case that shows a relationship of possession between two nouns, as in the phrases *cyninges burh* ('the king's *burh*') and *burge weall* ('the *burh*'s wall'). A genitive may also represent substance or quality, as in the phrase "on riðum meolce and hunies" ('in streams of milk and honey'), but there are no examples of *burh* used in this way.[110] Alongside these morphological and grammatical contexts, it is also important to take note of the other words syntactically related to *burh*. Verbs of which *burh* is the agent or object and other concepts to which *burh* is related through this action offer up rich and fundamental information about *burh*'s meaning and how it changes over time and context.

Another important question is whether an instance of *burh* is onomastic. Proper names have a special status within language study, often inviting specialised studies of their own, as we have already seen. Place names originate as active, 'common' descriptions of a site, but by the time a name is onomastic, the relationship between the name and the site has changed. A place name may preserve a now-obsolete description of a site or fossilise lost linguistic forms, as in the case of modern-day Canterbury, which is no longer recognisable as *Cantwarabyrig* meaning '*burh* of the inhabitants of Kent'. Otherwise, a place name may maintain recognisable and even relevant descriptions of a site, as in the case of modern-day Portsmouth, although it requires no active semantic choice by the user, who is "not … committed

[110] This quotation occurs in *Num* 16:13–4.

to, and is not presumed to assert, any literal meaning of or any entailments of" either the words 'port' or 'mouth'.[111]

How we can interpret *burh* changes where it appears in a common description as opposed to a place name, because the relationship between the user, the word and the referent itself is different in each case. This change over time from 'commonhood' to 'properhood' is known as 'onomastic divorce', but Richard Coates states that, frustratingly, this process is "never explained and not adequately theorized" in linguistic study.[112] Indeed, Coates argues that 'properhood' is often contextually defined, and he resists the idea of a clear mutual exclusivity between a common noun or noun phrase and a proper noun or noun phrase.[113] This contextual variation is of key interest to a semantic study, but also creates a degree of uncertainty when dealing with a historical language. To ascertain if a particular description of a site is onomastic requires both temporally and geographically local knowledge of the site and its appellation, something which OE studies lack.

Therefore, caution is required when dealing with many descriptions of *burh* sites which may, or may not, be place names. This is particularly apparent where working with charter boundary clauses, which are full of laconic landscape descriptions. Indeed, these site descriptions may have been interpreted differently by contemporary locals, the scribes copying the charters and later readers, adding layers of potential linguistic complexity to the analysis.[114] Even a clearly onomastic

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[111] Richard Coates, 'Singular Definite Expressions with a Unique Denotatum and the Limits of Properhood', *Linguistics* 38, no. 6 (2006): 1164.
[112] Coates, 1165–66; quotation from Richard Coates, 'Properhood', *Language* 82, no. 2 (2006): 367.
[113] This argument forms the basis of both Coates, 'Properhood'; and Coates, 'Singular Definite Expressions with a Unique Denotatum and the Limits of Properhood'.
[114] Coates, 'Properhood', 378; Kate Wiles, 'The Treatment of Charter Bounds by the Worcester Cartulary Scribes', *New Medieval Literatures* 13 (2011): 130–35.

form such as *Cantwarabyrig* can play a role in the semantic analysis of *burh* as a common noun. As the element *burh* was still recognisable in *Cantwarabyrig*, the place name may have played a reversed role, the relationship between the name and the site it described influencing contemporary understanding of *burh* on some level.

As there is already a significant body of onomastic scholarship on *burh*, this thesis will not focus explicitly on place names and will largely pass over place names used repeatedly across the OE corpus. However, place names will not be ignored in this thesis where they are relevant to the semantic discussion, and analysis of proper names, or potential proper names, will appear particularly in the sections on charter boundaries, the OE translation of Bede's *HE* and glosses or translations of Latin texts where *burh* is used as an epithet to Latin place names.

Personal names differ significantly from place names in terms of possible semantic analysis.[115] Many Anglo-Saxon personal names are formed of noun compounds, and *burh* is the most common second element in female personal names and often occurs as the first element in names for both sexes.[116] There are a total of 191 examples of *burh* in personal names across the OE corpus appearing particularly in saints' lives, the *Chronicles* and charters. Although incredibly important to cultural studies and prosopography, the study of personal names gives us little information which is of use to the study of *burh* in written OE. We can note that, among the other 32 second name-elements listed by Elizabeth Okasha in di-thematic OE women's names, there are several words which relate to defence and enclosures, e.g. *geard*

[115] John Insley, 'The Study of Old English Personal Names and Anthroponymic Lexika', in *Person Und Name: Methodische Probleme Bei Der Erstellung Eines Personennamenbuches Des Frühmittelalters*, ed. Dieter Geuenich, Wolfgang Haubrichs, and Jörg Jarnut (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1997), 148–76.
[116] Elizabeth Okasha, *Women's Names in Old English* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 70.

('yard') and *waru* ('protection'), and warfare and might, e.g. *gyþ/guþ* ('battle'), *hild* ('war'), *swiþ* ('strong') and *þryþ* ('force(s)').[117] Of all the second name-elements, *burg*, *gyþ*, *swiþ* and *þryþ* are the most common by a significant margin.[118] Despite the fact that Okasha interprets *burh* simply as 'dwelling', this general trend of personal-name evidence certainly indicates that the meaning of *burh* as a defensive enclosure is not out of place among other warfare-based name-elements. However, the use of *burh* in these personal names cannot easily be connected to context and certainly not to a physical settlement, but rather as part of a larger Common Germanic naming system.[119] Therefore, this thesis will acknowledge, but not study, personal names.

Considering the morphological role which *burh* plays, or the clausal context in which it appears, provides much rich information about *burh* as a semantic agent. However, the immediate linguistic context is only one of several layers of context into which we can place uses of the word. Within an individual text, we may ask how many examples of *burh* there are, what referents they describe and how these referents are otherwise presented throughout the text. Such information can give us insight into both the denotations and the connotations inherent to *burh*.

It is also important to frame analysis of *burh* within proficient understanding of a given text's history and place in modern scholarship. *Burh* occurs in a wide range of texts, and one of the key methodological challenges of this thesis has been to familiarise myself thoroughly with the fundamental scholarship of each relevant type of text, taking into account current debates about content, forms, composition

[117] Okasha, 55–64.
[118] Okasha, 70.
[119] Okasha, 117.

dates, composition location, purpose and transmission. Gaining an in-depth knowledge of the relevant texts required extensive, though essential, reading, and the understanding gained forms an important part of the success of this methodology.

This knowledge of the written sources is valuable not only for contextualising the use of *burh* within OE writings, but also for recognising the textual framework through which we understand OE generally. We cannot pass comment on the complete and spoken OE language, only what has been preserved in writings. This thesis will demonstrate that the OE language as we see it in extant texts has been impacted significantly by the choice of subject matter, the influence of Latin source material and the interests of the elite who wrote and read vernacular texts at the time. It will be shown that the overwhelming commonality of certain referents and connotations in the *burh* dataset are influenced by the typical topics of OE writings, and may not represent the predominant meaning of the word. By contrast, uncommon and incidental instances of *burh* often hint at wider usage of the word for certain referents in the spoken language.

Alongside the need to acquaint myself with various types of text, it was also important in this interdisciplinary project for me to learn the methodologies of other disciplines which were of most importance to the study of *burh*. As well as linguistic and textual context, the historical context in which instances of *burh* appear is likewise of importance. As we have seen in the review of *burh* scholarship above, research on the word feeds into debates about fortification, urbanism, high-status settlements and the Church. It is, therefore, imperative to consider uses of *burh*

against the political, social, economic and ecclesiastical backdrops which influenced written OE. Indeed, historical considerations often have a profound impact upon the analysis of *burh*, and on some occasions analysis of *burh* can inform historical debates.

The context of linguistic, textual and historical frameworks discussed so far tend to rely on written evidence, but as *burh* is a concrete noun with a physical referent, comparison with material evidence from archaeology, landscape history, art history and numismatics is also incredibly important. Of these disciplines, my analysis engages most with evidence from archaeology, but thus far the cooperation between archaeological and linguistic study has rarely been explicitly discussed or theorised.

In the late twentieth century, there was a fraught history of interaction between archaeology and history, with archaeologists often eschewing textual evidence.[120] Nowadays, archaeology is far more pluralistic in methodology and engages far more readily with written evidence where it is available, particularly using texts to locate sites for excavation.[121] This can be seen quite clearly in 'burghal' studies, which often rely upon linchpin texts to identify sites of likely value to the field.[122] There is still variation in the subtlety with which archaeologists use written material, with not enough credence always being given to the complex

[120] See, for example: D. P. Dymond, *Archaeology and History: A Plea for Reconciliation* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1974).
[121] Colin Renfrew and Paul G. Bahn, *Archaeology: Theories, Methods and Practice*, 6th ed. (London: Thames & Hudson, 2012), 43; John Moreland, *Archaeology and Text*, Duckworth Debates in Archaeology 5 (London: Duckworth, 2001), 16–18.
[122] David Hill and Alexander R. Rumble, eds., *The Defence of Wessex: The Burghal Hidage and Anglo-Saxon Fortifications* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996); Bassett, 'The Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon Defences of Western Mercian Towns'.

compositional circumstances in which texts were produced. However, some excellent examples now exist of subtle textual analysis paired with archaeological research.[123]

Vocabulary study, on the other hand, has not been as well developed in archaeological research, despite the fact that many publications both state and prove the value of terminological clarity for the study of material evidence.[124] The need for deft interaction with historical vocabulary is especially clear where scholars use modern terminology derived from OE, as we have already seen with the case of 'burh' in §1.2. There are archaeological and historical studies which have thought carefully and progressively about the impact of contemporary vocabulary, especially work by Della Hooke on the language and reconstruction of charter boundaries.[125]

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[123] See, for example: John Blair, 'Introduction: From Minster to Parish Church', in *Minsters and Parish Churches: The Local Church in Transition 950-1200*, ed. John Blair, Oxford University Committee for Archaeology Monograph 17 (Oxford: Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, 1988), 1–19; Richard Gem, 'The English Parish Church in the 11th and Early 12th Centuries: A Great Rebuilding?', in *Minsters and Parish Churches: The Local Church in Transition 950-1200*, ed. John Blair, Oxford Univeristy Committee for Archaeology Monograph 17 (Oxford: Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, 1988), 21–30; Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*; Mark Gardiner, 'Implements and Utensils in Gerefa and the Organization of Seigneurial Farmsteads in the High Middle Ages', *Medieval Archaeology* 50, no. 1 (2006): 260–67; Fleming, *Britain after Rome: The Fall and Rise, 400–1070*.

[124] See, for example: Sarah Foot, 'Anglo-Saxon Minsters: A Review of Terminology', in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester Univeristy Press, 1992), 212–25; John Blair, 'Debate: Ecclesiastical Organization and Pastoral Care in Anglo-Saxon England', *Early Medieval Europe* 4, no. 2 (1995): 193–96, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0254.1995.tb00067.x; Alexander R. Rumble, 'Notes on the Linguistic and Onomastic Characteristics of Old English *Wic*', in Wics*: The Early Medieval Trading Centres of Northern Europe*, ed. David Hill and Robert Cowie (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 1–2; Abigail Wheatley, *The Idea of the Castle in Medieval England* (York: York Medieval Press, 2004), 19–43; Stephen Moorhouse, 'Medieval Manorial Complexes in Yorkshire: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach', in *The Medieval Great House*, ed. Malcolm Airs and P. S. Barnwell, Rewley House Studies in the Historic Environment 1 (Donnington: Shaun Tyas, 2011), 214–23; Hall, '*Burhs* and Boroughs: Defended Places, Trade, and Towns. Plans, Defences, and Civic Features', 2–3; Baker and Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage: Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Viking Age*, 38; Dalwood, 'Water, *Wics* and *Burhs*'; Blake and Sargent, '"For the Protection of All the People": Æthelflæd and Her Burhs in Northwest Mercia', 120–21.

[125] Della Hooke, *The Anglo-Saxon Landscape: The Kingdom of the Hwicce* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985); Della Hooke, *Worcestershire Anglo-Saxon Charter Bounds*, Studies in Anglo-Saxon History 2 (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 1990); Della Hooke, 'Water in the Landscape: Charters, Laws and Place Names', in *Water and the Environment in the Anglo-Saxon World: Volume III of The Material Culture of Daily Living in the Anglo-Saxon World*, ed. Maren Clegg Hyer and

However, such studies do not, understandably, approach the terminological evidence with the same scale and rigour as would a semantic study.

By contrast, there is limited linguistic research which engages openly with archaeological study. The best examples are onomastic studies, which focus on linguistic data but make detailed use of material and historical evidence for identifiable sites. We have already seen examples of onomastic studies discussing *burh* place names, and the interdisciplinarity of such studies is influential on the current thesis.[126] However, onomastics, as has been discussed, holds a special place in linguistic study and place-name research does not and cannot follow the methodological tenets put in place by semantic studies of common nouns. Therefore, while I will take inspiration from the interdisciplinarity of onomastic studies of *burh* and will take into account the evidence of their findings, my thesis will provide a new insight by considering primarily the non-onomastic examples of *burh* in the OE written corpus.

Many strides have been taken forwards in terms of interdisciplinarity between archaeological and textual study, but it is likely that archaeologists now

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Della Hooke, Exeter Studies in Medieval Europe (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2017), 33–67; Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest'; John Blair, 'Hall and Chamber: English Domestic Planning 1000-1250', in *Manorial Domestic Buildings in England and Northern France*, ed. Gwyn Meirion-Jones and Michael Jones, Occasional Papers from the Society of Antiquaries of London 15 (London: Society of Antiquaries of London, 1993), 1–21; Anthony Quiney, 'Hall or Chamber? That Is the Question. The Use of Rooms in Post-Conquest Houses', *Architectural History* 42 (1999): 24–46, https://doi.org/10.2307/1568703; Gardiner, 'Implements and Utensils in Gerefa and the Organization of Seigneurial Farmsteads in the High Middle Ages'; Mark Gardiner, 'Buttery and Pantry and Their Antecedents: Idea and Architecture in the English Medieval House', in *Medieval Domesticity: Home, Housing and Household in Medieval England*, ed. Maryanne Kowaleski and P. J. P. Goldberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 37–65; Baker, 'The Language of Anglo-Saxon Defence'.

[126] Cameron, *English Place-Names*; Gelling, *Signposts to the Past: Place-Names and the History of England*; Carroll and Parsons, *Anglo-Saxon Mint Names: I. Axbridge-Hythe*; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England'; Draper, '*Burh* Enclosures in Anglo-Saxon Settlements: Case Studies in Wiltshire'.

have a better grasp of textual evidence than historians do of physical evidence.[127] It is important that I approach archaeological evidence with the same critical rigour as many archaeologists now approach texts. This requires both a subtle reading of archaeological reports, and also an awareness of the conflict between textual bias and archaeological bias, which impacts how written and material evidence can meaningfully interact. OE texts are limited both in their predominantly ecclesiastical and elite insight into Anglo-Saxon society and in the finite size of the corpus, and it is only through these limited surviving texts which we can attempt to reconstruct the OE language. Archaeological investigation, on the other hand, produces new findings every year, but there are also limitations on the sites which can be investigated. For example, some sites of interest are protected from invasive examination, while some sites referred to in OE texts cannot now be identified. Some sites which have been more thoroughly excavated only represent a small subset of places discussed in OE texts. Furthermore, many examples of *burh* referred to ancient and imagined sites, for which contemporary perceptions were created mostly through Latin texts. It is therefore vital that my analysis takes into account not only the complexities of archaeological research where an investigation has been carried out, but also how choices of site for archaeological investigation can potentially impact our interpretation of OE vocabulary.

[127] Aleksandra McClain, 'Theory, Disciplinary Perspectives and the Archaeology of Later Medieval England', *Medieval Archaeology* 56 (2012): 157.

2.4 Managing the Corpus

Alongside the complexities of pluralism and interdisciplinarity, this methodology also has to contend with a corpus of several thousand instances, which has necessitated certain innovations of process. Unlike many of the traditional historical semantic studies discussed in the historiography above, I could not do a primarily qualitative, instance-by-instance analysis, as this would constitute an unmanageable amount of work. However, the wide variety of dates, places, text types and other language-influencing factors in the corpus, as well as the desire for holistic and interdisciplinary study, make it unreasonable to rely on quantitative statistical models. Instead, the *burh* dataset required a methodology which innovatively combines qualitative and quantitative approaches, and dividing the corpus into meaningful sections within which more comparative and targeted analysis could be achieved seemed the most profitable way of managing the corpus.

The *burh* corpus went through several layers of analysis: following the creation of the database, there was a stage of primary analysis where each example of *burh* was considered within its linguistic context and compared with other instances in the corpus. While this primary analysis was superficial by comparison to the following richer, interdisciplinary analysis, it was essential for understanding the scope and nature of the *burh* corpus, allowing me to separate it into meaningful sections for analysis and highlighting examples of *burh* of most interest. Although the thesis cannot present analysis of every instance of *burh*, this initial primary

analysis means that every instance has been considered and only the most representative are discussed explicitly.

There are various analytical axes by which the corpus could have been split, for example chronology or location, but for the purpose of this study text type has proven to be the most valuable structure of organisation. Not only do types of text often share compositional features such as form, purpose and style, they also often share modern scholastic frameworks. I am actively choosing to use the term 'text type' as opposed to 'genre', as 'genre' can refer to distinctions more precise than is relevant for the major sectioning of the *burh* dataset: while there are meaningful differences between elegiac and epic poetry, it is first important to recognise the distinction on a larger scale between, say, poetry and administrative documents. 'Genre' is also a much-theorised term for which there is a large and complex area of scholarship.[128] Talking in terms of 'text type' allows me the adaptability necessary for my particular methodological needs.

Thus far there has been no overall generic or typological map made of written OE. Genre is often discussed in reference to individual texts or sets of texts, often focussing on rhetoric and most commonly discussing distinctions within the poetic canon.[129] The best insight into the OE written corpus as a whole is the categorisation

[128] See, for example: Anna Trosborg, ed., *Text Typology and Translation* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing, 1997); Joshua Gunn, 'Genre Theory', in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (London: SAGE Publications, 2009), https://sk-sagepub-com.libproxy.york.ac.uk/reference/communicationtheory/n164.xml; David Duff, ed., *Modern Genre Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014); John Frow, *Genre*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2015); John L. Rowlett, ed., *Genre Theory and Historical Change: Theoretical Essays of Ralph Cohen* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2017).
[129] See, for example: Herbert Pilch, 'The Elegiac Genre in Old English and Early Welsh Poetry', *Zeitschrift Für Celtische Philologie* 29, no. 1 (1964): 209–24; D. R. Howlett, 'Form and Genre in *Widsith*', *English Studies* 55, no. 6 (1974): 505–11; Mark Griffith, '*Ælfric's* Preface to Genesis: Genre, Rhetoric and the Origins of the *Ars Dictaminis*', *Anglo-Saxon England* 29 (2000): 215–34; Lori Ann Garner, 'Oral

of texts done by the *DOE*, and their sectioning has been a major influence upon my understanding of the OE corpus.[130] When considering *burh* in OE writings, it is first interesting to note in which types of text *burh* never, or only very rarely, occurs. There are no examples of *burh* in penitential texts, materials for prayer or liturgy, charms, tables of days and prognostics, proverbs and canonical texts, and very few in letters, monastic rules, runic inscriptions and medical or 'scientific' texts. This can be explained partly by subject matter: fortification and settlement are not habitual topics in texts focussing on computation, anatomy or short inscriptions. Yet, the lack of *burh* in the ecclesiastical material listed is surprising considering the high concentration of instances to be found in many other religious texts, as shall be seen.

Burh is by no means a narrowly used word, however. Those texts which do include examples of *burh* are spread widely across the written corpus, found in some of the earliest and latest examples of OE and in many different contexts. Finding meaningful divisions in the diverse *burh* corpus required both an initial quantitative exploration of the dataset and research on the texts represented. From this early analysis, the corpus was split into six major text groupings (plus a miscellaneous

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Tradition and Genre in Old and Middle English Poetry' (PhD thesis, Columbia, University of Missouri, 2001); Elaine Treharne and Greg Walker, 'Introduction', in *Writing Gender and Genre in Medieval Literature: Approaches to Old and Middle English Texts*, ed. Elaine Treharne (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2002), 1–4; Paul Cavill, 'Analogy and Genre in the Legend of St Edmund', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 47 (2003): 21–45; John Miles Foley, 'How Genres Leak in Traditional Verse', in *Unlocking the Wordhord: Anglo-Saxon Studies in Memory of Edward B. Irving, Jr*, ed. Mark C. Amodio and Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 76–108; Mary Swan, '*Men Ða Leofestan*: Genre, the Canon, and the Old English Homiletic Tradition', in *The Christian Tradition in Anglo-Saxon England: Approaches to Current Scholarship and Teaching*, ed. Paul Cavill (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2004), 185–92; László Sándor Chardonnens, *Anglo-Saxon Prognosics, 900-1100: Study and Texts*, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History 153 (Leiden: Brill, 2007); Gunn, 'Genre Theory'; Jonathan Davis-Secord, 'Scribal Interpretations of Genre in the Old English "Boethius"', *Carmina Philosophiae* 19 (2010): 1–23; Bill Friesen, 'The *Opus Geminatum* and Anglo-Saxon Literature', *Neophilologus* 95, no. 1 (2011): 123–44.

[130] Cameron and Frank, *A Plan for the* Dictionary of Old English; 'Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus'.

category), which make up the main chapters of this thesis and are summarised in Table 1:

Text Grouping	**Number of Instances**	**Appendix Report**
Glosses and Glossaries	271	Report 2
Religious and Historical Prose: The Ancient Mediterranean	1700	Report 3
Historical Prose About England	766	Report 4
Texts Concerning Social Order	52	Report 5
Administrative Documents	643	Report 6
Poetry	275	Report 7
Miscellaneous	23	Report 8

Table 1: Text groupings

The distribution of *burh* across these groupings varies considerably, as do the scholarly frameworks to which the texts belong. In response to this, the balance of qualitative and quantitative methods is different in each chapter, driven always by the data and context. The reasons for splitting the corpus this way and the broad textual composition of each grouping will be explained here, but characteristics which are relevant specifically to the analysis of *burh* within a grouping will be saved for individual chapter introductions.

Glosses and glossaries, which form Chapter 3, offer interpretations of individual Latin words, either within the framework of a text (glosses) or as compiled vocabulary lists (glossaries). While there are variations in format, density of interpretations and source material, the act of word-by-word translations visibly paralleled with the original Latin vocabulary is unique to these texts, making them a

fairly unified set. They are extremely valuable to linguistic study and will offer the opportunity to explore concepts of Latinity, translation practice and contemporary perceptions of the impact of context upon meaning.

The thesis then moves on to examples of *burh* which appear in texts traditionally considered to be prose. My groupings here are more complex, as the traditional canon of OE prose is made up of an incredibly varied range of genres and text types. I have split the prose texts in which *burh* occurs into four groups, each of which brings together texts which can be considered as quite different genres, but which for the purpose of this thesis are united by certain textual features and/or their use of *burh*. The first two groupings, found in Chapters 4 and 5, deal largely with historical writing, but are separated by locational focus. My groupings here are unconventional, but take particular inspiration from the work of Nicole Guenther Discenza on Anglo-Saxon concepts of space and place.[131] The second two prose groupings, Chapters 6 and 7, deal with administration and governance, and represent texts far more commonly grouped together in scholarship.

Chapter 4, the first of the prose groupings, looks at religious and historical texts focussed primarily on the ancient Mediterranean. This is probably the most unorthodox of all the text groupings in this thesis, as it combines Bible translations, homilies and hagiographies, as well the majority of the 'Alfredian' translations (those of Gregory the Great's *Dialogi* and *Liber regulae pastoralis*, Boethius's *Consolatio*

[131] Discenza, *Inhabited Spaces: Anglo-Saxon Constructions of Place*; see also: Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977); Yi-Fu Tuan, 'Language and the Making of Place: A Narrative-Descriptive Approach', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 81, no. 4 (1991): 684–96; Andrew Scheil, 'Space and Place', in *A Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Studies*, ed. Jacqueline Stodnick and Renée R. Trilling, Wiley Blackwell Critical Theory Handbooks 2 (Chichester: Blackwell Publishers, 2012), 197–213; Tim Cresswell, *Place: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2015).

philosophiae, Orosius's *Historiarum adversum paganos libri VII* and St Augustine's *Soliloquia*), which are generally considered to have been produced under the influence of Alfred the Great and his court. Although these texts are written with greatly differing forms and in different genres, all deal with explicitly Christian topics, many are set in the distant past, almost all are either translated or adapted from Latin sources and almost all the narratives centre on an ancient Mediterranean or Roman Imperial space. These diverse texts contain by far the most instances of *burh* in any text grouping, but are incredibly uniform in referring to ancient Mediterranean or Roman urban settlements. The distance, both in time and space, between the Anglo-Saxon audiences' lived experiences and the ancient settings of the texts will prove key to understanding the use of *burh* within this text grouping. We shall see that *burh* almost always translates examples of Latin urban terms such as *urbs* and *civitas*, and that the native-ness of *burh* plays an important role in making distant spaces into familiar places.[132] This chapter will feed into debates about Anglo-Saxon perceptions of ancient urban settlements and the strategies used by the composers of these texts to bridge that conceptual gap.[133]

Chapter 5 deals with historical texts based closer to home, considering the OE translation of Bede's *HE* and the *Chronicles*. Although not universally considered as part of the Alfredian canon, the *Old English Bede* (henceforth *OEB*) is commonly discussed in relation to those translated texts.[134] Indeed, it shares with them a focus

[132] Discenza, *Inhabited Spaces: Anglo-Saxon Constructions of Place*, 80.
[133] Discenza, 63–64.
[134] George Molyneaux, 'The *Old English Bede*: English Ideology or Christian Instruction', *English Historical Review* 124, no. 511 (2009): 1321; Andreas Lemke, *The Old English Translation of Bede's* Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum *in Its Historical and Cultural Context*, Göttinger Schriften Zur Englischen Philologie 8 (Göttingen: Universitätsverlag Göttingen, 2015), 99–100.

on religious history and Latin source material, and is probably contemporary with Alfred's literary programme, even if it was not part of it. However, this text contrasts with those in the previous group and is related to the *Chronicles* in that its focus is not on the ancient Mediterranean, but on the space which we would now call England. As has already been discussed, while the space we think of as England was not always politically unified, contemporaries did recognise a degree of linguistic unity. Thus, despite the many textual similarities between the *OEB* and the other 'Alfredian' translations, there is good reason to bring the *OEB* and the *Chronicles* together when thinking about linguistic representations of place.[135]

By contrast to the Latin-based texts in Chapter 4, both the *OEB* and the *Chronicles* focus on places known to their composers and audiences first and foremost through their native vocabulary. Bede writes a history of his own people and, though he chooses to write in Latin, he refers to places he would have known primarily by their vernacular names.[136] What is particularly fascinating is that by studying the OE translation of his work, we can at points see translation from OE into Latin, and then back into OE. It is also possible to observe the influence of pre-existing vernacular place names on choices made by the OE translators. The *Chronicles* also narrate English history, but often writing the story of relatively contemporary events and typically from a southern, West Saxon perspective. It is possible to see in the *Chronicles* the construction of historical narratives, shaping audience perceptions with the power of vernacular words and their pre-existing

[135] Discenza, *Inhabited Spaces: Anglo-Saxon Constructions of Place* separates the texts she studies according to the same principle, having the chapters 'England, the Mediterranean and Beyond' and 'Recentring: The North and England's Place'.
[136] Discenza, 105–6.

connotations. Chapter 5 will be split into two parts to treat each text separately, but in each case the analysis will examine the role of the vernacular in representing local settlements, landscape and history.

Chapter 6 looks at texts concerning social order and includes law codes as well as quasi-legal social treatises. The law codes, both royal and non-royal, show a developing written legal culture and are often explored for questions of state formation and ideology.[137] The royal codes are valuable for considering changes in concepts and language over time, as they share much in format and purpose, while also being quite precisely dateable. The social treatises appear ostensibly as unofficial materials, some of which Patrick Wormald has called "barely legal" in nature.[138] However, they have been considered as part of the Anglo-Saxon legal corpus since the twelfth century, in the compilation and Latin translation of OE laws known as *Quadripartitus*.[139] Although not laying out legislation as we might define it, these social treatises are nevertheless as much focussed on good social order and are as prescriptive in tone as the royal codes, allowing for valuable linguistic comparison. Indeed, law codes often invite close analysis of terminology as a key question in legal history surrounds the development of technical legal vocabulary.[140] Among many other terms, *burh* has been seen to evolve a specialised meaning within

[137] Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*, 1–17.
[138] Patrick Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 366, 387; S. Jay Lemanski, 'A Loose Canon: The *Quadripartitus*, *Rectitudines*, and the Creation of English Law', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 60 (2016): 61.
[139] F. Liebermann, ed., *Gesetze Der Angelsachsen*, 3 vols (Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1903); Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 236; 'Quadripartitus (Quadr)', Early English Laws, 2020, https://earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/quadr/.
[140] Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 301, 308, 310.

law codes.[141] As this text grouping has the fewest instances of *burh*, this chapter will explore these instances in-depth, questioning if we can speak of a technical use of *burh* within legal writings which is consistent or specific in meaning.

The administrative documents of Chapter 7 are often collated under the broad title of 'charters'. All of these texts are united by being, in one form or another, records of administrative deeds or governance.[142] However, it is important to bear in mind that they are not objective records, but rather preserve shaped narratives.[143] These texts were at the cutting edge of contemporary writing, and are important sources for history and archaeology, as well as the development of OE and Anglo-Latin prose.[144] The term 'charters', however, lends a sense of unity to what is realistically a greatly diverse set of texts, including diplomas, wills, records of agreements, notifications of grants, customs and dues, etc.[145] All of these texts vary in purpose and structure, with significant formal distinctions even between different parts of the same document.[146]

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[141] See, for example: Kinsey, 'Anglo-Saxon Law and Practice Relating to Mints and Moneyers, with Particular Reference to the Mints of Chichester, London, Dover and Northampton and the Moneyer(s) Cynsige or Kinsey', 14 note 1.
[142] Patrick Wormald, 'Charters, Law and the Settlement of Disputes in Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Settlement of Disputes in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. Wendy Davies and Paul Fouracre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 149–68; Richard Sharpe, 'Charters, Deeds and Diplomatics', in *Medieval Latin: An Introduction and Bibliographical Guide*, ed. Frank A. C. Mantello and Arthur G. Rigg (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 230; Ben Snook, *The Anglo-Saxon Chancery: The History, Language and Production of Anglo-Saxon Charters from Alfred to Edgar* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2015), 1–2.
[143] Sarah Foot, 'Reading Anglo-Saxon Charters: Memory, Record or Story', in *Narrative and History in the Early Medieval West*, ed. Elizabeth M. Tyler and Ross Balzaretti, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 16 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2006), 39–66.
[144] Nicholas Brooks, 'Anglo-Saxon Charters: The Work of the Last Twenty Years', *Anglo-Saxon England* 3 (1974): 226; Snook, *The Anglo-Saxon Chancery: The History, Language and Production of Anglo-Saxon Charters from Alfred to Edgar*, 7.
[145] Snook, *The Anglo-Saxon Chancery: The History, Language and Production of Anglo-Saxon Charters from Alfred to Edgar*, 1 note 3.
[146] Sharpe, 'Charters, Deeds and Diplomatics', 238; Snook, *The Anglo-Saxon Chancery: The History, Language and Production of Anglo-Saxon Charters from Alfred to Edgar*, 7.

Chapter 7 represents the most challenging array of linguistic data of all my text groupings. The complex and unorthodox first prose grouping of religious and historical texts offers 1700 very uniform uses of *burh*, the 766 examples of *burh* in historical prose about England occur in a very narrow set of texts, and the legal and quasi-legal texts only use *burh* a manageable total of 52 times. By contrast, the set of administrative documents contain 643 diverse instances of *burh* spread across hundreds of independent texts, each of which offers a unique slice of history and many of which can be compared with a range of material evidence. For this reason, neither the large-scale comparisons possible in Chapter 4 nor the detailed analysis of Chapter 6 are feasible in the study of *burh* in administrative documents. Here, instead, thematic angles shall be taken which compare the evidence of a variety of documents, showing how *burh* can represent very different sorts of landscape features throughout these texts. Ultimately, this chapter will show the value of deeply interdisciplinary research and the great broadness of *burh*'s denotation.

Finally, Chapter 8 will focus on the OE poetic canon as laid out by the *Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records Collection* series of editions.[147] Although Anglo-Saxon poetic scholarship largely follows this canon, it is nevertheless important to bear in mind that the distinction between verse and prose is not clear-cut in OE. While there is

[147] George Philip Krapp, ed., *The Junius Manuscript*, The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records: A Collective Edition 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931); George Philip Krapp, ed., *The Vercelli Book*, The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records: A Collective Edition 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932); George Philip Krapp, ed., *The Paris Psalter and the Meters of Boethius*, The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records: A Collective Edition 5 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932); George Philip Krapp and Elliott van Kirk Dobbie, eds., *The Exeter Book*, The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records: A Collective Edition 3 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936); Elliott van Kirk Dobbie, ed., *Beowulf and Judith*, The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records: A Collective Edition 4 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936); Elliott van Kirk Dobbie, *The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems*, The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records: A Collective Edition 6 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942).

evidence that contemporaries perceived a difference between writings at either end of the prose-poetry spectrum, verse-like rhetorical features can be found in some homilies and oral-formulaic language is recognisable in law-codes.[148] Indeed, the admission of some fringe poems to the canon has been questioned by certain scholars.[149] It is worth noting, however, that *burh* appears rarely outside of the core poetic texts, making the status of fringe poems less pressing in this thesis. Typically, the features by which poetic texts are set apart from prose are metre, alliteration, poetic vocabulary and a mode of language which is both conventional and formulaic, remaining relatively consistent over centuries.[150] The stability of these features can make dating the texts difficult, and this allows for analysis of poetic uses of *burh* largely divorced from politico-historical and archaeological backdrops. Instead OE poetry invites a rich linguistic, literary and thematic analysis of *burh* primarily within the texts themselves. However, the placing of this chapter at the end of the thesis will also allow me to compare to findings from previous chapters,

[148] Davis-Secord, 'Scribal Interpretations of Genre in the Old English "Boethius"', 5, 17, 19; On poetic language in traditionally prose texts, see especially: Tiffany Beechy, *The Poetics of Old English* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).
[149] Thomas A. Bredehoft, *Textual Histories: Readings in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 75.
[150] Fred C. Robinson, 'Lexicography and Literary Criticism: A Caveat', in *Philological Essays. Studies in Old and Middle English Language and Literature in Honour of Herbert Dean Merritt*, ed. J. L. Rosier, Janua Linguarum. Series Maior 37 (The Hague: The Hague Mouton, 1970), 99–110; E. G. Stanley, 'Studies in the Prosaic Vocabulary of Old English Verse', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 3 (1971): 385–418; Daniel G. Calder, 'The Study of Style in Old English Poetry: A Historical Introduction', in *Old English Poetry: Essays on Style*, ed. Daniel G. Calder (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 1; Malcolm R. Godden, 'Literary Language', in *The Cambridge History of the English Language, Volume 1: The Beginnings to 1066*, ed. R. M. Hogg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 490–535; B. R. Hutcheson, *Old English Poetic Metre* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: D. S. Brewer, 1995), 4; Elizabeth M. Tyler, *Old English Poetics: The Aesthetics of the Familiar in Anglo-Saxon England* (York: York Medieval Press, 2006), 1; Richard Dance, 'Old English Language and Alliterative Tradition', in *A Companion to Medieval Poetry*, ed. C. Saunders, Blackwell Companions to Literature and Culture 67 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 34–50.

and to relate poetic representations of *burga* with themes and connotations recognised throughout the written corpus.

The few instances in the miscellaneous grouping appear in texts which do not easily fit into any of the six major corpus sections described above: Ælfric's *Grammar*, which falls somewhere between gloss and prose text, two uses in a single medical text and three place-name inscriptions. The uses of *burh* in Ælfric's *Grammar* will be mentioned in comparison to gloss examples of *burh* in §3.4, while the two instances in *Medicina de Quadrupedibus* will be used as supporting evidence in §6.5.

These text groupings are not intended to be iron-cast and sealed off from one another. I actively recognise that the categories I have created are porous and that many other factors such as time, location or *burh*-referent span different text types and would break the corpus up into quite different configurations. I shall acknowledge, when relevant, where textual and contextual features intersect across chapters, and at all stages my analysis is mindful of the corpus as a whole. It is also not intended that the text groupings proposed for this thesis are necessarily applicable to Anglo-Saxon studies universally. Instead, they best reflect the use of *burh* in OE writings and are of most value to this particular thesis. It is hoped, however, that similarities and contrasts found between uses of *burh* in various texts may offer some new perspectives on the vernacular written corpus as well as insight into the meaning of the word itself.

Throughout this thesis, the analysis presented will derive from the rich and interdisciplinary methodology described above, but each chapter will highlight different aspects of this methodology depending on the needs of the data. In some

cases, more quantitative comparison of instances will be most valuable, with data summarised in numbers or tables; in some cases, various related examples will be compared more qualitatively; while in other cases, extreme close-reading will unpack the potential of individual instances. Likewise, some sections of the corpus will offer opportunities for engagement with more disciplines than others and the multidisciplinary methodology must be flexible to the potential of each text grouping individually. This mode of 'zooming in and zooming out' on the instances of *burh* will be a key aspect of the analytical presentation and each chapter will bring its own methodological edge to the overall holistic approach. By exploring uses of *burh* not just from different disciplinary perspectives but also from various analytical angles, this thesis aims to build up a nuanced picture of the word's meaning.

3 Glosses and Glossaries

3.1 Introduction

It seems appropriate to begin where the study of the OE language first began. When Anglo-Saxon texts were being rediscovered in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it was the Latin-OE glossaries and Latin texts with OE interlinear glosses which first allowed scholars to make sense of the medieval language which by then looked alien to them.[151] From that time onward, glosses and glossaries have been valuable sources of lexical information and are an excellent first step in this exploration of the word *burh*.

I will begin by considering the technical vocabulary used within glossographical research, and which will be used throughout this chapter. The glossographer Patrizia Lendinara gives the following basic definition of glosses: they are "explanations of words inserted between the lines of the text (interlinear glosses) or in the margins of a manuscript (marginal glosses)."[152] A glossary, by contrast, extracts individual words and their interpretations from these glossed texts and presents them in lists. A word which is glossed is known as a *lemma* (plural *lemmata*), always Latin in the texts considered in this chapter, while its explanations and translations, either in Latin or OE, are known as *interpretamenta* (singular *interpretamentum*). The value of these word-by-word translations for semantic study

[151] R. Derolez, 'Introduction', in *Anglo-Saxon Glossography: Papers Read at the International Conference Held in the Koninklijke Academie Voor Wetenschappen Letteren En Schone Kunsten van België, Brussels, 8 and 9 September 1986*, ed. R. Derolez (Brussels: Paleis der Academiën, 1992), 30.
[152] Patrizia Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, Variorum Collected Studies Series 14 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 3.

is self-evident, and historically research into glosses and glossaries was almost exclusively lexicographic in nature.[153] While the field of glossography has broadened significantly in the past few decades, these texts still feature heavily in lexical research, from studies of large linguistic trends such as loanwords,[154] to the minute exploration of individual *lemmata*,[155] as well as semantic studies of single words such as my own.[156]

The tendency of glosses and glossaries to include unusual and unique examples of words has led to their being viewed as 'exceptional' examples of language, which, much like poetry, do not represent normal usage of OE.[157] This perception has clearly lingered in lexical studies, and more recently Antonette diPaolo Healey has proposed that the exceptional status of glosses might be reduced by studying them more holistically and seeing them as "participating in the wider cultural conversation" of the time.[158] Certainly, the field of glossography has largely

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[153] Evert Wiesenekker, *Word Be Worde, Andgit of Andgite: Translation Performance in the Old English Interlinear Glosses of the* Vespasian, Regius *and* Lambeth *Psalters* (Huizen: Drukkerij J. Bout & Zn., 1991), 1.
[154] Sara Maria Pons Sanz, *Analysis of the Scandinavian Loanwords in the Aldredian Glosses to the Lindisfarne Gospels*, Studies in English Language and Linguistics Monographs 9 (Valencia: Universidad De Valencia. Servicio De Publicaciones, 2000).
[155] Scott Gwara, 'Old English *Helm, Hamel, Healm*: Three Lexical Problems in Glosses to Aldhelm's Prose *De Virginitate*', *Notes and Queries* 37, no. 2 (1990): 144–52; Roland Torkar, 'The Aldhelm Gloss *Constantina: Demera*', *Notes and Queries* 40, no. 4 (1993): 428–31; Greg Waite, 'Old English *Lybesn* and *Æ-Becn*: A Gloss in Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS 279B', *Notes and Queries* 60, no. 1 (2013): 14–19.
[156] Alaric Hall, 'The Meanings of *Elf*, and Elves, in Medieval England' (PhD thesis, Glasgow, University of Glasgow, 2005).
[157] David McDougall and Ian McDougall, 'Some Notes on Notes on Glosses in the *Dictionary of Old English*', in *Anglo-Saxon Glossography: Papers Read at the International Conference Held in the Koninklijke Academie Voor Wetenschappen Letteren En Schone Kunsten van België, Brussels, 8 and 9 September 1986*, ed. R. Derolez (Brussels: Paleis der Academiën, 1992), 117; H. D. Meritt, *Fact and Lore About Old English Words* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1954), 2; Cameron and Frank, *A Plan for the* Dictionary of Old English, 6.
[158] Antonette diPaolo Healey, 'Late Anglo-Saxon Glossography: The Lexicographic View', in *Rethinking and Recontextualizing Glosses: New Perspectives in the Study of Late Anglo-Saxon Glossography*, ed. Patrizia Lendinara, Loredana Lazzari, and Claudia Di Sciacca, Fédération Internationale Des Instituts d'Études Médiévales. Textes et Études Du Moyen Âge 54 (Porto: Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévales, 2011), 18.

developed away from pure semantic research and moved towards considering the role that glosses play in our understanding of the intellectual culture of the Anglo-Saxon period. Exploring the relationships between glosses and glossaries, tracing the transmission of *interpretamenta* across centuries and considering the impact of other text types on gloss production, such as commentaries, has opened up the world of glossography to wider literary and historical networks.[159] Yet development in this field is somewhat stunted by the lack of newer, more widely available editions of the manuscripts: Lendinara commented in 1999 on the dearth of modern, fully commented editions, a problem equally noted by diPaolo Healey in 2011 and still encountered by myself today.[160] There are various editions still in unpublished, mid-twentieth-century doctoral theses which are not accessible outside of particular university libraries, limiting the comments I can make about certain texts in this chapter, especially regarding the sources of glossary entries.

Despite these obstacles, this chapter aims to consider the relationships between different glossographical texts and the contexts within which the 271 instances of *burh* appear. In addition, by putting this chapter first I do not intend to encourage the idea of gloss exceptionalism, but rather to make clear that glosses and glossaries are not to be sidelined. Instead, they are to be seen as part of a wider organic and holistic culture of writing, a context provided by this thesis.

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[159] This new phase of glossographical study appears to have gained momentum in the nineties, particularly with publications such as: R. Derolez, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Glossography: Papers Read at the International Conference Held in the Koninklijke Academie Voor Wetenschappen Letteren En Schone Kunsten van België, Brussels, 8 and 9 September 1986* (Brussels: Paleis der Academiën, 1992); Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*.

[160] Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, 3; diPaolo Healey, 'Late Anglo-Saxon Glossography: The Lexicographic View', 7.

It is important first to consider the typologies of glosses and glossaries, and the impact that translation needs and contexts have upon how vocabulary was chosen for *interpretamenta*. Few studies have given large overviews of the field: this is noted by both René Derolez and Lendinara, and their own publications serve as the best introductions to the subject.[161] Various systems have been proposed for classifying different means of glossing, different types of text and different modes of analysis, which are relevant to the linguistic study of these texts and shall be summarised here.

The distinction between glosses and glossaries is simple to comprehend, but within these two categories there are further sub-categories. Glosses on a text can be either continuous (where every single word is given an interlinear interpretation) or scattered (where only some words receive either interlinear or marginal interpretations).[162] In the case of scattered glosses, it is often hard from a modern perspective to understand the rationale behind which *lemmata* are glossed: the difficulty of the Latin is not consistent, nor is the density of the glossing within a text.[163] Glossaries can be split into three categories.[164] *Glossae collectae* are those lists which lift *lemmata* and *interpretamenta* directly from a glossed text, preserving both the grammatical forms and the order in which they occur in the original text. This often allows scholars to identify the source material and recontextualise otherwise isolated words.[165] Class glossaries arrange their *lemmata* according to topic. These

[161] Derolez, 'Introduction', 31; Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, 1.
[162] Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, 4; Derolez, 'Introduction', 20–21.
[163] Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, 4–5.
[164] Lendinara, 9; Derolez, 'Introduction', 20–21.
[165] Derolez, 'Introduction', 13, 16.

might still be traceable to original texts, especially where grammatical forms are preserved, but they also show us connections between words as perceived by the glossary compiler. Finally, there are alphabetical glossaries, which arrange the *lemmata* according to their first letter, first two letters or in some cases their first three letters, a process which presupposes layers of compilation.[166] These categories are important frameworks to bear in mind when analysing a glossed text or glossary, but we must also be aware that such boundaries are naturally porous.[167]

We also cannot compare the output of a glossed text to a full prose translation, as glosses do not generally attempt to reproduce the syntax and flow of their source material.[168] Anglo-Saxon glosses and glossaries were produced as aids for reading Latin texts, helping both with the comprehension of individual words and with the meaning of the text as a whole.[169] Many of the source texts use complicated and arcane Latin of a hermeneutic nature, requiring a great deal of interpretation on the glossator's part; indeed, the nature of glossing can itself be seen as hermeneutic.[170] Thus, the context in which a Latin word appears can have a huge impact on its selected *interpretamenta*. The forms of *interpretamenta* were split into five categories by G. R. Wieland in 1983, which have been generally adopted in the field. These are glosses on prosody (such as accent markers), lexical glosses (word-

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[166] Antonette diPaolo Healey, 'Old English Glossaries: Creating a Vernacular', *Digital Studies/Le Champ Numérique* 4 (1997), http://doi.org/10.16995/dscn.200.
[167] Derolez, 'Introduction', 21.
[168] Wiesenekker, *Word Be Worde, Andgit of Andgite: Translation Performance in the Old English Interlinear Glosses of the* Vespasian, Regius *and* Lambeth *Psalters*, 1.
[169] Pons Sanz, *Analysis of the Scandinavian Loanwords in the Aldredian Glosses to the Lindisfarne Gospels*, 76; Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, 61; Wiesenekker, *Word Be Worde, Andgit of Andgite: Translation Performance in the Old English Interlinear Glosses of the* Vespasian, Regius *and* Lambeth *Psalters*, 2.
[170] See especially: Michael Lapidge, 'The Hermeneutic Style in Tenth-Century Anglo-Latin Literature', *Anglo-Saxon England* 4 (1975): 67–111.

for-word translations), glosses on morphology (grammatical markers), glosses on syntax (word order markers, such as the insertion of prepositions) and explanatory glosses (often longer comments on exegesis or context).[171] The category of lexical glosses, which can be as little as a representative symbol, or as much as a string of variant *interpretamenta*, is most relevant for this thesis.

Importantly, *interpretamenta* can be in either Latin or OE, or both where multiple synonyms are given. Michael Lapidge particularly has emphasised the need to take the Latin context into account and not be blinkered by a desire to consider only the vernacular.[172] Nevertheless, when dealing specifically with Latin-OE glossing, it is crucial to consider the process of translation. While it is usually clear that a Latin *interpretamentum* would not be a perfect equivalent for another Latin *lemma*, moving from one language to another creates different issues of semantic overlap. Where glossing lexically, there are various translation methods a glossator might use in order to render a Latin *lemma* into OE. Their choices largely are split into the use of native words or the creation of a loan formation.[173] Where a native OE word is used, it may be that the definition of the Latin and the OE words are so similar that they equate each other quite naturally. Otherwise, in cases where their meanings do not quite correlate, there may be a semantic loan, such as the extension of a pre-existing OE word's meaning to accommodate the range of the Latin word's

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[171] G. R. Wieland, *The Latin Glosses on Arator and Prudentius in Cambridge University Library MS Gg. 5. 35*, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies. Studies and Texts 61 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983); Derolez, 'Introduction', 35; Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, 6.
[172] Michael Lapidge, 'Old English Glossography: The Latin Context', in *Anglo-Saxon Glossography: Papers Read at the International Conference Held in the Koninklijke Academie Voor Wetenschappen Letteren En Schone Kunsten van België, Brussels, 8 and 9 September 1986*, ed. R. Derolez (Brussels: Paleis der Academiën, 1992), 43–57.
[173] Wiesenekker, *Word Be Worde, Andgit of Andgite: Translation Performance in the Old English Interlinear Glosses of the* Vespasian, Regius *and* Lambeth *Psalters*, 3.

denotation or connotations, or the use of a native word in a metaphor in which it would not otherwise naturally appear.[174]

Burh being a native and, indeed, old Germanic word, it is essential to consider whether its use as a simplex or in common compounds show signs of semantic extension. However, *burh* also appears in various compounds which are rare outside of glosses or whose origins lie clearly in a Latin model. These examples can be considered as hermeneutic OE, and this puts some uses of *burh* into the category of loan formation. This category includes calques (where the morphology of the Latin original is maintained and the individual compound elements translated directly), loan adaptations (where the Latin morphology is maintained only in part) and loan creations (where an entirely original compound is created in order to render a Latin concept).[175] Among these are nonce-compounds, words which appear to have been created with the express purpose of rendering a particular Latin *lemma*.[176]

Another key aspect to consider is the range of vocabulary used to render a Latin *lemma*. As previously mentioned, many *lemmata* are glossed by not only one but several *interpretamenta*, giving synonyms, near-synonyms or alternative interpretations of the same word. The use of these alternatives for one instance of a *lemma* is defined as 'variation' by Evert Wiesenekker.[177] By contrast, he defines 'diversity' in glosses as the range of *interpretamenta* used by a glossator for the same

[174] Wiesenekker, 62, 108–9.
[175] Wiesenekker, 3–4.
[176] Alaric Hall, 'Glosses, Gaps and Gender: The Rise of Female Elves in Anglo-Saxon Culture', in *Change in Meaning and the Meaning of Change: Studies in the Semantics and Grammar from Old to Present-Day English*, Mémoires de La Société Néophilologique de Helsinki 72 (Helsinki: Société Néophilologique, 2007), 145.
[177] Wiesenekker, *Word Be Worde, Andgit of Andgite: Translation Performance in the Old English Interlinear Glosses of the* Vespasian, Regius *and* Lambeth *Psalters*, 34–35.

Latin *lemma* across various entries, suggesting the semantic range offered by the Latin word in different contexts.[178] These will be important concepts when discussing the use of *burh* in Anglo-Saxon glosses.

Researching the textual framework of glosses and glossaries has allowed me to assemble some methodological considerations for approaching the analysis of *burh* in these texts. I have developed these from my reading at large, but especially from the work of Alaric Hall, Lendinara and Wiesenekker.[179] It is firstly important to understand that the *interpretamenta* are not simply straight equivalents of the Latin *lemmata*: I cannot consider *burh* to be an exact definition of any Latin term it glosses, nor vice versa.[180] The purpose of the gloss and the words' context must be taken into account. Indeed, context is the fundamental aspect of analysis which appears in all glossographical studies. Where the glosses are preserved with their text, this is far more straightforward, but in the case of glossaries there is a need to trace the provenance of the individual entries to determine what contextual factors might have led to the choice of vocabulary. This is not always possible as, in some cases, the origin of the glosses is undeterminable. However, the consideration of glossary provenance leads us to consider the relationships between texts. In addition to glossary sources, families of glossed texts and the influence of one glossator on another can go some way towards explaining the predominance of certain lexical choices. Within these contextual frameworks, I shall consider various linguistic

[178] Wiesenekker, 35.
[179] Hall, 'Glosses, Gaps and Gender: The Rise of Female Elves in Anglo-Saxon Culture', 144–45; Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*; Wiesenekker, *Word Be Worde, Andgit of Andgite: Translation Performance in the Old English Interlinear Glosses of the* Vespasian*,* Regius *and* Lambeth *Psalters*.
[180] Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, 1; Hall, 'Glosses, Gaps and Gender: The Rise of Female Elves in Anglo-Saxon Culture', 144.

features: which Latin *lemma* are rendered by *burh-interpretamenta*, how common or unique a *burh-interpretamentum* is within glosses, which terms appear alongside *burh* (variation) and which terms elsewhere render the same Latin *lemma* (diversity).

The analysis of *burh* in glossed texts appears in three sections. First to be considered will be continuous interlinear glosses, looking particularly at the Gospels and comparing the use of *burh* with its near-synonym *ceaster*. Next, scattered glosses will be discussed, focussing on the famously unusual vocabulary of Aldhelm's *De laude virginitatis*. Finally, the glossaries shall be explored. These texts offer a fascinating microcosm of the range and use of *burh* throughout the rest of the thesis, making this chapter an ideal introduction to the word.

3.2 Continuous Glosses

Continuous glossing of Latin texts into OE is reserved largely for biblical texts, most particularly for the Psalms.[181] The nature of a continuous gloss has a large impact on the range of vocabulary we see represented: as every Latin *lemma* must be interpreted, we see translations given for Latin words which vary from unusual terminology (likely unfamiliar to many) to the commonest vocabulary. Furthermore, all the texts considered in this section deal with the ancient Mediterranean, full of distant settlements outside the majority of Anglo-Saxon lived experience. *Burh* appears in these texts almost exclusively in reference to many of the ancient

[181] Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, 19; Derolez, 'Introduction', 27.

Mediterranean urban settlements mentioned in the Bible, either by place name or with a Latin urban term such as *civitas* or *urbs*, and in many of these cases, *burh* also appears in variation with the word *ceaster*. As we shall see, where ancient urban settlements are concerned, *ceaster* can be considered a near-synonym of *burh*; but we shall also see that *burh* can render a wider set of concepts than *ceaster*.

The most common use of *burh* in continuous biblical glosses is not in the predominant Psalms (where it actually occurs with conspicuous rarity), but in the sibling Gospel glosses of the Lindisfarne and Rushworth manuscripts, both of which date from the mid-tenth century and the time of the Benedictine Revival. The much-celebrated Lindisfarne Gospels (London, British Library, MS. Cotton Nero D. IV) have Latin text and illuminations dating from around 700, with OE interlinear glosses added by a man identified as Aldred in around 950 at Chester-le-Street.[182] The glosses represent one of the few examples of Northumbrian OE and make up the oldest extant version of the Gospels in English.[183] The Rushworth Gospels (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Auct. D. 2. 19) have Latin text from the eighth century and OE glosses dating also from the mid-tenth century, traditionally presumed to be just later than the Lindisfarne Gospels.[184] The Rushworth Gospels up

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Walter W. Skeat, ed., *The Holy Gospels in Anglo-Saxon, Northumbrian, and Old Mercian Versions, Synoptically Arranged, with Collations Exhibiting All the Readings of All the Mss.; Together with the Early Latin Version as Contained in the Lindisfarne MS., Collated with the Latin Version in the Rushworth MS.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1871), xi.[182] Walter W. Skeat, ed., *The Holy Gospels in Anglo-Saxon, Northumbrian, and Old Mercian Versions, Synoptically Arranged, with Collations Exhibiting All the Readings of All the Mss.; Together with the Early Latin Version as Contained in the Lindisfarne MS., Collated with the Latin Version in the Rushworth MS.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1871), xi; Pons Sanz, *Analysis of the Scandinavian Loanwords in the Aldredian Glosses to the Lindisfarne Gospels*, 73.

[183] Pons Sanz, *Analysis of the Scandinavian Loanwords in the Aldredian Glosses to the Lindisfarne Gospels*, 76; Sara Maria Pons Sanz, 'Aldredian Glosses to Proper Names in the Lindisfarne Gospels', *Anglia* 119, no. 2 (2001): 173.

[184] Skeat, *The Holy Gospels in Anglo-Saxon, Northumbrian, and Old Mercian Versions, Synoptically Arranged, with Collations Exhibiting All the Readings of All the Mss.; Together with the Early Latin Version as Contained in the Lindisfarne MS., Collated with the Latin Version in the Rushworth MS.*, xii.

to Mark 2:15 were written by a Mercian called Farman and the rest by a Northumbrian known as Owun, with these two sections generally known as Rushworth 1 and Rushworth 2 respectively. Exactly where the Rushworth Gospels were glossed is debated, with the primary suggestions being Harewood, West Yorkshire and Lichfield, Staffordshire.[185] Since Walter Skeat's time it has largely been believed that the Rushworth glosses were in part, if not entirely, based upon the Lindisfarne glosses.[186] More recently, that presumption has been questioned by Tadashi Kotake, who proposes instead that both might be derived from an earlier exemplar.[187] However we choose to interpret the relationship between the two manuscripts, it is clearly one of extreme closeness.

These two sets of glosses, written in similar, if not identical, dialects at almost the same time and based one way or another upon the same tradition, offer us an incredibly valuable opportunity for close comparison. This is particularly useful in terms of understanding the uses of *burh* and *ceaster*. Table 2 outlines each example of both terms book-by-book in both the Lindisfarne (R2.12–102 for *burh*) and Rushworth manuscripts (R2.106–157 for *burh*) compared with the Latin of the Vulgate as found in Skeat's edition.

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[185] Richard Coates, 'The Scriptorium of the Mercian Rushworth Gloss: A Bilingual Perspective', *Notes and Queries* 44, no. 4 (1997): 453–58.
[186] Skeat, *The Holy Gospels in Anglo-Saxon, Northumbrian, and Old Mercian Versions, Synoptically Arranged, with Collations Exhibiting All the Readings of All the Mss.; Together with the Early Latin Version as Contained in the Lindisfarne MS., Collated with the Latin Version in the Rushworth MS.*, xii–xiii; Alan S. C. Ross, 'The Use of Other Latin Manuscripts by the Glossators of the Lindisfarne and Rushworth Gospels', *Notes and Queries* 28, no. 1 (1981): 6–11.
[187] Tadashi Kotake, 'Lindisfarne and Rushworth One Reconsidered', *Notes and Queries* 59, no. 1 (2012): 14–19.

Chapter: Verse	Vulgate Latin	Lindisfarne	Rushworth
Matthew			
1:3	thamar	byrig	ðamar
2:1	bethleem	byrig	/
2:3	hierosolima	burgwæras	hierosolima
2:16	bethleem	byrig	bethleem
2:23	civitate	ceastra	cæstre
3:5	hierosolyima	burgwaras	hierosolima
4:5	civitatem	ceastra	cæstre
4:13	(capharnaum) maritinam	* sæburug	(cafarnaum) cæstæs
	civitate	ceastre	cæstæ
4:25	decapolim	byrig	decapoli
5:14	civitas	burug ł ceastra	cæstra
5:35	civitas	burug	cæstra
8:5	capharnaum	burug	cafarnaum
8:33	civitatem	byrig	cæstra
8:34	civitas	ceastra	cæstra
9:1	civitatem	byrig	cæstre
9:35	civitates	burgas ł ceastræ	burgas
	castella	werc ł cester	cæstras
10:5	civitates	burgum	cæstra
10:11	civitatem	ceastra	burh
	castellum	werc ł cester	cæstre
10:14	civitate	ceastræ	cæstre
10:15	sodomorum et gomorrhsorum	burgas ł ceastræ	sodominga … gomoringa
	civitati	ceastræ	cæstre
10:23	civitate	ceastra	cæstre
	civitates	burgas ł ceastræ	cæstre
11:1	civitatibus	burgum ł ceastrum	cæstrum
11:20	civitatibus	burgum	cæstrum

12:25	civitas	burug	cæstre
14:13	civitatibus	burgum	cæstrum
14:15	castella	ceastra	cæstre
17:24	capharnaum	byrig	capharnaum
21:10	civitas	ceaster	ceastre
	hierosolymam	burug	hierusalem
21:17	civitatem	ceastra	ceastæ
21:18	civitatem	ceastre	ceastre
22:7	civitatem	burug	burgas
23:34	civitate	burug	ceastre
	civitatem	burig	ceastre
26:18	civitatem	ceastra	cæstre
27:53	civitatem	ceastra	cæstræ
28:11	civitatem	ceastra	cæstre
Mark			
1:9	nazareth	nazareth ðær byrig	nazareð þære byrig
1:21	capharnaum	capharnaum ða burug	capharnaum þære byrg
1:33	civitas	ceastre ł burgwaras	cæstre ł burg
1:38	civitates	ceastre ł burgwaras	cæstre
1:45	civitatem	ceastra	ceastre
2:1	capharnaum	capharnaum ða burg	capharnaum þe byrig
5:14	civitatem	ceastre	cæstre
5:20	decapoli	byrig	byrig
6:33	civitatis	ceastrum	cæstrum
6:45	bethsaidam	byrig	byrig
6:56	civitates	ceastrum	cæstre
8:22	bethsaidam	bethsaiða ðær byrig	beza
8:27	castello	ceastra	cæstre
9:33	capharnaum	byrig	byrig
10:46	hiericho	burug	burug
11:2	castellum	burig	cæstre
11:19	civitate	ceastre	cæstre
14:13	civitate	ceastre	cæstre

14:16	civitate	ceastre	cæstre
Luke			
1:26	civitatem (galileae)	ceastra	cæstre
1:39	civitatem	ceastre	cæstre
2:3	civitatem	ceastra	cæstre
2:4	civitate	ceastra	cæstre
	civitate	ceastre	cæstre
2:11	civitate	ceastre	cæstre
2:39	civitatem	ceastre	cæstre
4:23	capharnaum	byrig	byrig
4:26	illarum	buriga	burga
	sarepta sidone	byrig	byrig
4:29	civitas	burg	burug
4:31	civitatem	ceastra	/
4:43	civitatibus	ceastrum	/
5:12	civitatem	ceastrana	/
5:17	castello	ceastre	/
7:1	capharnaum	burug	/
7:11	civitatem	ceastre	/
7:12	civitatis	ceastres	/
	civitatis	ceastres	/
7:37	civitate	ceastra	/
8:1	civitatem	ceastra	/
	castellum	woerc	/
8:4	civitatibus	ceastrum	/
8:34	civitatem	burug	/
8:39	civitatem	ceastra	cæstre
9:5	civitate	ceastra	cæstre
9:6	castella	ceastra	cæstre
9:10	bethsaida	burug	burug
9:12	castella	ceastra	cæstre
9:52	civitatem	ceastræ	cæstre
10:1	civitatem	ceastra	cæstre

10:8	civitate	ceastra	cæstre
10:10	civitatem	ceastra	cæstre
10:11	civitate	ceastra	/
10:12	civitati	ceastra	cæstre
10:13	corozain	burug	burug
	bethsaida	burg	burug
10:15	capharnaum	burg	capharnaum
10:30	hiericho	byrig	/
11:30	nineiutis	burge	burge
11:32	nineuitae	byrig	byrig
13:4	siloam	byrig	byrig
13:22	civitates	ceastre	cæstre
	castella	woerco	werc
14:21	civitatis	ceastre	cæstre
15:15	civium	burgawara	/
17:29	sodomis	burgum	burgum
18:2	civitatem	ceastra	cæstre
18:3	civitate	ceastra	cæstre
18:31	hierusolyma	burg	hierusalem
18:35	hiericho	byrig	byrig
19:1	hiericho	burg	burg
19:14	cives	burgwara	burugweoras
19:17	civitates	ceastrum	cæstre
19:19	civitates	burgas	cæstre
19:29	bethania	byrig	bethania
19:30	castellum	woerc	cæstel
19:41	civitatem	ceastra	cæstre
20:15	vineam	wingearde	cæstre
21:9	seditiones	ymbburgum ł ymbsetnungo	ymbsetnunge
22:10	civitatem	ceastra	cæstre
23:19	civitate	ceastra	cæstre
23:50	decurio	of ðær byrig	of ðær byrig

23:51	civitate	byrig ł ceastre	cæstre
24:49	civitate	ceastra	cæstre
24:50	bethania	byrig	byrig
John			
1:19	hierosolimis	hierusolimiscum þæm burguærum	hiersolimiscum þæm burugweorum
1:28	bethania	byrig	byrig
1:44	civitate	byrig	ceastre
	bethsaida	beðsaida byrig	byrig
1:45	nazareth	byrig	nazareð
2:1	canna	byrig	byrig
2:11	cana	byrig	byrig
2:12	capharnaum	burug	burug
2:13	hierosolyma	burug	hierusalem
4:4	samariam	samaria ða burug	burug
4:5	prædium	byrig	byrig
	civitatem	cæstre	cæstre
4:7	samaria	byrig	byrig
4:8	civitatem	ceastre	cæstre
4:28	civitatem	ceastre	cæstre
4:30	civitate	byrig	byrig
4:39	civitate	byrig	cæstre
4:46	cana	byrig	burug
	capharnaum	byrig	burug
5:2	probatica	burg	burge
	bethsaida	burug	byrig
5:4	natatoria	/	burge
6:17	capharnaum	byrig	burug
6:24	capharnaum	byrig	byrig
6:59	capharnaum	byrig	byrig
7:1	galilaea	megð	cæstre
7:25	hierosolymis	hierusalem	byrig
7:42	castelo	byrig	burug

8:20	gazafilacia	divatrium custodia	byrig
10:22	hierosolymis	byrig	byrig
11:1	bethania	beðania ðær byrig	/
	castello	ceastra	cæstre
11:18	bethania	burg	burug
11:30	castellum	ceastra	cæstra
11:54	civitatem	ceastra	cæstre
12:1	bethaniam	bethania byrig	burig
12:21	bethsaida	bethsaida galilies byrig	byrig
19:20	civitatem	ceastra	cæstre
19:38	arimathia	aramaðia byrig ł ramattha	aramathia

Table 2: *Burh* and *ceaster* in the Lindisfarne and Rushworth Gospels

A dataset like this is naturally rich in potential for analysis, and there are many aspects of interest that I do not have space to address. Instead, I shall deal with those features which are most pertinent to our understanding of *burh*, especially in comparison to *ceaster*.

The first noticeable feature is that both the Lindisfarne and Rushworth Gospels use *burh* to gloss place names. The act of rendering a proper name with a generic noun is common in OE glosses: Rohini Jayatilaka has shown that various geographical landmark names, such as for mountains and rivers, can be found glossed with their generic descriptors.[188] Specifically discussing the translation of proper names in the Lindisfarne Gospels, Sara Pons Sanz notes that around 18% of

[188] Rohini Jayatilaka, '*Descriptio Terrae*: Geographical Glosses on Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*', in *Rethinking and Recontextualizing Glosses: New Perspectives in the Study of Late Anglo-Saxon Glossography*, ed. Patrizia Lendinara, Loredana Lazzari, and Claudia Di Sciacca, Fédération Internationale Des Instituts d'Études Médiévales. Textes et Études Du Moyen Âge 54 (Porto: Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévales, 2011), 93–117.

place names are left unglossed; of those which are glossed, 70.7% are done so with either the Latin or an Anglicised version of the name, 24.7% are done with a generic noun (such as *burh*) and 4.5% use a mixture of both name and generic.[189] In a footnote, she comments also that *burh* is the most common generic noun used for city names, "even in those cases where the Latin text has stated that we are dealing with a *civitas*, which is normally glossed as *ceastre* [sic]."[190]

The use of *burh* to render a place name is commoner in the Lindisfarne Gospels than it is in Rushworth, which often simply repeats the Latin name. Indeed, only in the case of John 7:25 does Rushworth gloss a place name with *burh* where Lindisfarne maintains the place name. Where a gloss maintains a Latin place name in either manuscript, we can expect that the name was already familiar to the glossator and that he presumed it would be familiar to future readers. In Rushworth, Farman seems to trust in his audience's knowledge far more than his successor Owun: Rushworth 1 very rarely gives an explanatory, generic gloss to a place name, whereas Rushworth 2 parallels Lindisfarne's use of *burh* far more closely. Notably, only one example across the two manuscripts uses *ceaster* to render a place name. It appears, therefore, that if a place name is to be glossed with a generic noun, *burh* is the word which all three glossators would naturally choose to fill that role.

The next point of comparison between the two manuscripts is in the glossing of the common word *civitas* ('town, city'). We can see in both manuscripts that this word can be rendered by either *ceaster* or *burh*, or by both, although the rate of usage of each word is different between Lindisfarne and Rushworth:

[189] Pons Sanz, 'Aldredian Glosses to Proper Names in the Lindisfarne Gospels', 175.
[190] Pons Sanz, 175 note 8.

	Total Examples of *Civitas* Glossed	**Glossed by *Burh***	**Glossed by *Ceaster***	**Glossed by Both**
Lindisfarne	81	17 (21%)	59 (73%)	5 (6%)
Rushworth	69	4 (5.8%)	64 (92.8%)	1 (1.4%)

Table 3: Glossing of *Civitas* in the Lindisfarne and Rushworth Gospels

While it is clear that *burh* can sometimes be used to represent the concept behind *civitas*, both manuscripts show that *ceaster* is by far the preferred choice of translation. Yet, it is also clear that these two manuscripts do not accord with one another concerning the propensity to use *ceaster* for *civitas* over *burh*. The fact that three glossators working under such similar circumstances can disagree upon when *civitas* can be translated with *burh* or *ceaster* suggests that at this time these two words could, in the right situation, be near-synonyms with debatable distinctions.

However, there are clearly observable differences overall between the use of *burh* and *ceaster* for these urban settlements: only *burh* is really used to render place names and, while *civitas* is not exclusively rendered by *ceaster*, it is still far rarer for *burh* to be used. This difference in terminology cannot simply be explained as a difference in the referents: as Pons Sanz points out, many of the place names glossed with *burh* are the same places which elsewhere are referred to as *civitates* and glossed with *ceaster*. This proves that the idea of the site itself is not what drives the decision to use *burh* or *ceaster*, but instead it must be to do with the Latin vocabulary. *Civitas* is evidently not an easy word to equate with *burh*, if a Latin loanword (even one derived from a different Latin term) is preferred. This might suggest that *burh* requires some semantic extension to render *civitas* which *ceaster* does not, or that the

aspects of *ceaster*'s meaning, which it shares with *civitas*, are considered by these glossators to be more representative than those shared between *burh* and *civitas*. Furthermore, a place name glossed with a generic noun suggests a degree of unfamiliarity with the name; it may be, therefore, that a common and foundational OE word such as *burh* is preferred over a Latin loanword as an anchoring explanation.

Another word of interest is *castellum* ('fortress, stronghold'). This word appears far less commonly than *civitas*, and is also mostly rendered with *ceaster*. Nevertheless, there are also examples with *weorc* ('worked structure, building') and, in the Lindisfarne Gospels, occasionally with *burh*. However, Rushworth does not use *burh* to render *castellum* in any case, and indeed appears to make efforts specifically to use *ceaster* in contrast to *burh* at *MtGl (Ru)* 9:35 and 10:11. *Ceaster* is essentially only used to render *civitas* and *castellum*, suggesting its meaning is limited to these urban and fortification terms.

By contrast, *burh* is also used in a few cases for some quite different Latin vocabulary, evincing a greater breadth of meaning than *ceaster*. In Lk 21:9, the word *seditio* ('dissention, insurrection, violent faction') appears in the phrase "audieritis proelia et seditiones" ('you will hear of battles and insurrections'). In *LkGl (Li)* this is rendered as "gie gehereð gefehto & ymbsetnungo id est ymbburgum" ('you will hear of fights and sieges, that is *ymbbyrig* [about/around-*burga*]'). This word *ymbburh* is a *hapax legomenon* and is likely a nonce-compound created by the glossator where no pre-existing word could provide the desired meaning. According to Pons Sanz,

we should expect that the second variant is the more familiar.[191] Although this compound is unusual, it indicates the intense familiarity of its individual elements to contemporary readers, such that they can be combined to create new and comprehensible terms for an otherwise hard-to-translate concept. Here, there appears to be an emphasis on the sense of *burh* as a potential site of violence, siege and battle, suggesting that the concepts of defensibility and enclosure are key to the word. This variant on *ymbsætnung* ('siege') does not appear in Rushworth, however, suggesting either that Owun thought it unnecessary to bring across from the Lindisfarne glosses, or that Aldred added it to the Lindisfarne manuscript after Owun's glossing of Rushworth.

A few examples suggest also that *burh* could be used to refer to high-status, even royal, residences and centres of power. An interesting misinterpretation is shared by both manuscripts, where in Lk 23:50 a man named Joseph is introduced with the phrase "qui erat decurio uir bonus et iustus" ('who was a commander, a good man and righteous'). Both manuscripts render this as "seðe wæs of ł ðær byrig wer god & soðfæst" ('who was from (or) the *burh*, a good man and faithful'), evidently misreading *decurio* for *de curia*, meaning 'from the council-house, court, royal residence'. Furthermore, both manuscripts also use *burh* to translate the word *praedium* ('farm, manor, landed property'), which presumably indicates the building or buildings housing a landowner at the centre of their estate.

It appears, therefore, that *burh* can represent a wider range of settlements than simply a 'town' or 'city'. It is likely that the predominance of its usage for urban

[191] Pons Sanz, *Analysis of the Scandinavian Loanwords in the Aldredian Glosses to the Lindisfarne Gospels*, 117.

places in these texts is due to the nature of the Gospels themselves, which do not mention many manor-like settlements. Therefore, the texts determine to a large extent what connotations or even denotations of *burh* are shown most clearly. There are some places where the interdependence between the Lindisfarne and Rushworth Gospels are clear: the shared misreading of *decurio* is a representative example. But there are also many points of distinction and the copying (regardless of which manuscript was copying which) is evidently not mechanical. As the locations, dialects, periods and even traditions are so similar, the two manuscripts' differing use of *burh* can surely be put down to individual glossators' choices. Clearly, the use of the word can be debated in some places and it is not an easy equivalent for any of the Latin terms.

Before moving onto scattered glosses, it is worth discussing briefly the use of *burh* in other continuously glossed texts, and particularly considering the role of the Psalms in this narrative. As has already been mentioned, the Psalms were predominant among the continuous glosses. There are eleven Psalter manuscripts containing OE glosses, with the OE entries ranging in date from the second quarter of the ninth century to the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[192] Among these heavily glossed manuscripts, we have only three instances of *burh*: glossing the place name "babilonis" ('Babylon', R2.9) in the mid-eleventh-century Vitellius Psalter, the place name "sicimam" ('Sichem', R2.10) in the late-eleventh-century Stowe Psalter century) and *civitas munita* ('walled town', R2.11) in the early-eleventh-century

[192] 'Cotton MS Vespasian A I', British Library: Digitised Manuscripts, 2019, http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Cotton_MS_Vespasian_A_I; Wiesenekker, *Word Be Worde, Andgit of Andgite: Translation Performance in the Old English Interlinear Glosses of the* Vespasian*,* Regius *and* Lambeth *Psalters*, 15.

Lambeth Psalter. By comparison to the extensive use of *burh* in the Gospels, it is noteworthy that there are so few examples in the Psalms. Largely, this is because place names are generally untranslated, *urbs* is not used and *civitas* is otherwise rendered exclusively with *ceaster*.

It is worth questioning, therefore, why *burh* is so comprehensively rejected in the Psalm glosses, while *ceaster* is so common. We could postulate that this is to do with the age of the Psalm glosses, which in many cases are much older than those of the Gospels: *burh* possibly did not gain urban connotations until later. However, evidence presented throughout this thesis will seem to negate that argument (see especially §3.4, §4.2 and §4.6). Certainly, the Psalms had a strong tradition of OE glossing, with glossators "drawing on [this tradition] slavishly."[193] It is conceivable, therefore, that the tendency of an early glossator to choose *ceaster* over *burh* was simply maintained because it was still a functional and indeed preferred translation of *civitas*. That the Psalms are part of the Old Testament, which differs greatly in style from the Gospels of the New Testament, may also have played a role in vocabulary choice. In some other continuously glossed biblical texts, such as some of the Canticles of the Psalter (R2.159–63) and Monastic Canticles (R2.164–8), we also see *burh* glossing place names, as well as urban words such as *civitas* and *urbs*, and the Durham Ritual (R2.169–76), also glossed by Lindisfarne's Aldred, uses *burh* several times to render place names.

This study of *burh* in continuous glosses shows that the word could represent an ancient urban settlement, but also had currency as a term for defensible

[193] Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, 20.

fortifications and high-status settlements. Indeed, the fact that it could be used in loan creations such as *ymbburh* ('siege') shows that these less well-attested meanings were in fact very familiar to the glossators. The preponderance of instances where *burh* glosses *civitas* and *urbs* quite possibly has more to do with which Latin terms were used most commonly in these texts than the comparative importance of urbanity to *burh*'s meaning. The distinctions seen between the two very close Gospels manuscripts proves that the word could be used differently even under very similar circumstances. But, likewise, the comparison with the paltry evidence of *burh* in the Psalms shows that an overreliance on one text can lead to very skewed conclusions about the use and meaning of a word. Comparisons with *ceaster* have also proven to be valuable. *Burh* has been shown to have a wider breadth of referents in these texts than *ceaster*, which only renders *civitas* and *castellum*. Furthermore, *ceaster* appears rarely outside of continuous biblical glosses, only rendering *civitas* or a derivative of *civitas* where it does. By contrast, the following sections will show the varied use of *burh* in other types of glossed texts.

3.3 Scattered Glosses

The nature of scattered glosses means that only certain words are chosen for interpretation. The lack of obvious pattern in which words are selected often leaves us without much insight into the deciding factors behind the glossators' choices and this changes how we can analyse the *lemmata* and their *interpretamenta*. Among the

texts with scattered glosses, Aldhelm's *De laude virginitatis* is predominant and it is this text which will receive the lion's share of analysis in this section. Aldhelm, who died in 709, was a relative of King Ine of Kent and a student at the famous school of Canterbury under Hadrian and Theodore in the seventh century.[194] His text *De laude virginitatis*, aimed at religious women, proved incredibly popular from his lifetime until the Viking attacks of the ninth century, and then grew in popularity again from the 920s.[195] As well as having a major impact on Latin writing in England, Aldhelm is the most glossed author in OE, and *De laude virginitatis* the most glossed work, with his "unfamiliar diction" inspiring the need for exposition and innovative OE vocabulary.[196]

Many manuscript versions of *De laude virginitatis* contain OE glosses: Lendinara states that there are around 60,000 glosses to be found in fourteen manuscripts, although Arthur Napier claimed to have edited nineteen or twenty different manuscripts.[197] The Aldhelm glosses have complicated and tangled connections, which are heavily debated.[198] The manuscripts largely date from the

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[194] Derolez, 'Introduction', 29.
[195] Scott Gwara, 'The Transmission of the "Digby" Corpus of Bilingual Glosses to Aldhelm's *Prosa de Virginitate*', *Anglo-Saxon England* 27 (2008): 139.
[196] Arthur S. Napier, ed., *Old English Glosses: Chiefly Unpublished*, Anecdota Oxoniensia, IV, part XI (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900), xi; Lapidge, 'The Hermeneutic Style in Tenth-Century Anglo-Latin Literature', 73–74 esp.; Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, 21.
[197] Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, 21; Napier, *Old English Glosses: Chiefly Unpublished*, xi.
[198] Napier identified two major manuscript families for the Aldhelm glosses, the Digby and Abingdon groups. Within the Digby group he considered the Brussels 1650 manuscript (*AldV 1*) to be the forerunner for the Digby manuscript (*AldV 13.1*), the two manuscripts which contain the most uses of *burh* in Aldhelm glosses. Napier, *Old English Glosses: Chiefly Unpublished*, xi–xvii; Goossens agreed with this relationship, but it has since been complicated by Gwara's evidence which suggests at least part of Digby probably came earlier and acted as a source for part of Brussels. Louis Goossens, ed., *The Old English Glosses of MS. Brussels, Royal Library, 1650 (Aldhelm's De Laudibus Virginitatis) Edited with an Introduction, Notes and Indexes*, Klasse Der Letteren 74 (Brussel: Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van Belgie, 1974), 25; Gwara, 'The Transmission of the "Digby" Corpus of Bilingual Glosses to Aldhelm's *Prosa de Virginitate*'.

eleventh century, but many of these glosses appear in earlier glossaries: Lendinara considers the earliest Aldhelm glosses to date from around 800 and Louis Goossens claims the Corpus Glossary (*CorpGl*) from the late eighth or early ninth century to be the earliest witness to Aldhelm glosses.[199] While this chapter is unable to have the full depth and insight of a true glossographical study, the impact of these manuscript relationships was kept in mind.

The most common Latin word associated with *burh* in Aldhelm glosses, both in terms of density and in spread across manuscripts, is *municipium* ('city which enjoyed Roman privileges'): in two manuscripts the Latin simplex is rendered by *burh* (R2.198 and 214) and *municipatus* ('citizenship') with *burhscip* ('*burh*-ship', R2.197 and 213), while the compound *burhleod* ('*burh*-person') glosses *municeps* ('citizen of a *municipium*') in five of the manuscripts (R2.196, 199, 205, 207, 212 and 216). This clearly connects *burh* once again with urban connotations and this association between *burh* and *municipium*, as will be seen in the next section, is very old, suggesting that *burh* had long been able to represent ancient urban sites. The use of *burh* with *oppidanus* ('town other than Rome', R2.200) in *AldV 1* also emphasises this, likewise the glossing of *indigena* ('inhabitant') in *AldV 1* and *AldV 13.1* with "incivis, inberdlic, burhleod" (R2.194 and 210). While *indigena* does not presuppose urbanity, the Latin variant *incivis* derives from *civitas*, imparting urban connotations itself. The OE *inbyrdlic* means 'to be born into a master's house' and matches *indigena*'s broad meaning, but *burhleod* appears to translate not *indigena*, but rather *incivis*, reflecting its urban connotations.

[199] Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, 21; Goossens, *The Old English Glosses of MS. Brussels, Royal Library, 1650 (Aldhelm's De Laudibus Virginitatis) Edited with an Introduction, Notes and Indexes*, 13.

Other connotations of *burh* are also observable when considering the glosses on Latin urban *lemmata*. In both *AldV 1* and *AldV 13.1 municipium* is rendered both by *burh* and by *fæstnes* ('fastness, fortress', R2.198 and 214), emphasising also the physical and defensive aspect of *burh* seen in the Gospels. But even clearer are the associations with high-status and nobility, also seen in the Gospels. In *AldV 1* (Brussels 1650) "municipes" ('citizens') is glossed first with the Latin term "principes" ('foremost people, rulers') before "burhleodan" (R2.196), and likewise the text glosses "municipatus" ('citizenship') with "principatus" ('pre-eminance, rulership') before "burhscipe, earding" ('*burh*-ship, dwelling', R2.197). The closely related Digby manuscript (*AldV 13.1*) has the same OE glosses for these entries but lacks the Latin variants (R2.212–3).

However, the association between urbanity and nobility in *burh*'s usage is not limited to the examples in *AldV 1*. Both *AldV 1* and *AldV 8* use the compound *burhspæc* ('*burh*-speak', R2.191 and 206) among the *interpretamenta* for the word "urbanitatis" ('city life, refinement'). In *AldV 1* this appears after "eloquentiae" ('eloquence') and "loquela" ('speech, discourse') and before "gleawnysse" ('prudence, wisdom'), this latter being the usual OE translation for *eloquentia* in Aldhelm glosses. In *AldV 8*, *burhspæc* occurs only alongside *eloquentia*. Outside of these Aldhelm glosses, the word *burhspæc* never occurs, suggesting it too is a nonce-compound, created to try and render this Latin *lemma* and perhaps represents the grafting together of *burh* to represent the urban settlement aspect of *urbs* and *spæc* to represent the (eloquent) speech implied by *eloquentia*. Similarly, the word "urbana" ('urbane, refined person') is glossed by *AldV 3.2* with "burhwista" and *AldV 3.3* with

"burhwis", both variants of the word *burhwita*, meaning literally '*burh*-wise-man' but often used for a town-councillor (R2.202–3). The *DOE* considers that the use of *burhwita* to render *urbanus* might suggest a misinterpretation of the Latin as 'citizen' rather than as 'one who is urbane'.[200] However, I would argue that comparison with the use of *burhspæc* suggests that this connotation of high status and sophistication is not at all incompatible with *burh*. Indeed, we shall see throughout the corpus that *burh* is often associated with high-status sites, both secular and ecclesiastical.

There are also examples of *burh* in the Aldhelm glosses which clearly do not refer to urban settlements, but rather to much smaller sites, possibly even individual structures. While the Lindisfarne and Rushworth Gospels both glossed *praedium* simply with *burh*, both *AldV 1* and *AldV 13.1* gloss *praedium* once with the compound *foreburh* ('that which is before the *burh*', R2.192 and 208). The *burh* in question could not reasonably be interpreted as a town, as a *praedium* indicates an estate. *AldV 13.1* also appends to its gloss of *praedium* the variants "wordias" ('homesteads') and "croftas" ('small farms or holdings'), where the plural emphasises the substantial size of the land in question, and thus the high status of the estate. This use of *foreburh* to describe a landed estate indicates that *burh* could represent an estate centre, i.e. the settlement or structure before which the land lies.

In addition to this, the compound *inburh* ('within the *burh*, entrance to the *burh*', R2.193, 204 and 209) presents *burh* again as a high-status residence. In *AldV 7.1* it appears as the only *interpretamentum* for *atrium* ('atrium, entrance hall, vestibule'), while in *AldV 1* and *AldV 13.1* it glosses *uestibulum* ('entrance hall, vestibule') along

[200] Angus Cameron et al., 'Burhwita', in *Dictionary of Old English: A to I Online* (Toronto: Dictionary of Old English Project), accessed 16 November 2019, http://tapor.library.utoronto.ca/doe/.

with the variants *atrium* and *forþtig* ('forecourt, vestibule').[201] The word *inburh* only occurs a few rare times outside of these Aldhelm glosses in work by Ælfric, once translating *atrium*, and it is likely that he was drawing on either a gloss of Aldhelm or a glossary entry extracted from Aldhelm (see R2.1 and R3.1548–9). This evidence suggests that it was a loan creation on the part of an Aldhelm glossator, who understood a *burh* to be able to represent a single structure or complex of structures which could reasonably be considered to have an entrance hall or courtyard.

As I have already proposed in the case of *ymbburh*, *burh* is used in these compounds as a fundamental building block to render hard-to-translate Latin words into OE. We must, therefore, infer from the use of *burh* as an element in *inburh* and *foreburh* that the idea of *burh* as a high-status residence was as familiar and comprehensible at one time as was the idea of a *burh* as an urban settlement. The question of the dating of these glosses then becomes paramount. While some of these glosses clearly date back to the earliest periods of writing in OE, many others are not attested before eleventh-century manuscripts such as *AldV 1* and *AldV 13.1*. Were these simply early compounds not excerpted into early glossaries, or were they later additions? It is impossible to conclude when many of these glosses were first created, but there is certainly enough interaction with and variation of the glosses across the manuscripts to suggest that both the urban and non-urban connotations of *burh* were current and comprehensible in the eleventh century.

[201] The word *forþtig* appears to be an OE nonce-compound formed using a word *tig* which is not otherwise attested, leaving us little opportunity for comparison with *inburh*.

3.4 Glossaries

Glossaries make up only 1% of the total OE written corpus, but they are a valuable witness to the language itself and the Anglo-Saxon intellectual milieu.[202] In some glossaries, such as the Leiden and the Épinal Glossaries from the turn of the eighth century, we see evidence of the earliest OE writings, going back to the first Anglo-Saxon school under Hadrian and Theodore at Canterbury in the late seventh century.[203] Even parts of the Antwerp-London Glossary from the eleventh century contain material shared with these early glossaries.[204] Careful consideration of glossary evidence allows us to explore not only early OE, but also its development over the centuries.

The *lemmata* in glossaries are collected from interlinear and marginal glosses, with common sources being Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae* and Aldhelm's *De laude virginitatis*, allowing for comparison to the previous section.[205] In the case of Aldhelm, there is also evidence that he himself borrowed vocabulary from glossaries for his Latin writing, pushing the date of some of these collections of glosses even

[202] diPaolo Healey, 'Old English Glossaries: Creating a Vernacular'.
[203] J. D. Pheifer, ed., *Old English Glosses in the Épinal-Erfurt Glossary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), lxxxix; Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, 15; Lapidge, 'Old English Glossography: The Latin Context', 53; Michael Lapidge, 'The School of Theodore and Hadrian', *Anglo-Saxon England* 15 (1986): 45–72.
[204] David W. Porter, 'The Antwerp-London Glossaries and the First English School Text', in *Rethinking and Recontextualizing Glosses: New Perspectives in the Study of Late Anglo-Saxon Glossography*, ed. Patrizia Lendinara, Loredana Lazzari, and Claudia Di Sciacca, Fédération Internationale Des Instituts d'Études Médiévales. Textes et Études Du Moyen Âge 54 (Porto: Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévales, 2011), 155.
[205] Porter, 154; Pheifer, *Old English Glosses in the Épinal-Erfurt Glossary*, xli–li.

further back into the seventh century.[206] It is important, where possible, to trace the sources of glossary entries and thereby to understand the context in which they originally appeared and the factors that might have influenced the choice of *interpretamenta*. One of the major considerations in the study of glossaries is the potential age of certain glosses and what the significance is of their inclusion in later compilations. Both Lendinara and Derolez think that the uniformity of the glossaries is suggestive of a certain artificiality and mechanical copying, which would make anchoring the currency of certain glosses to a particular time quite difficult.[207] However, analysis by Hall in his doctoral thesis shows that we can indeed interpret the currency of earlier terms in later manuscripts with due caution.[208]

This section will focus mostly on the glosses found in the class glossaries of Antwerp-London, an eleventh-century glossary, which contains many early glosses, but also many which are not attested earlier and may be later in origin. The value of studying these class glossaries is that the rearrangement of the glosses by topic allows us multiple layers of semantic analysis not available in other forms of glossed text: not only can we compare the use of *burh* with the *lemmata* and other *interpretamenta*, but also with the other glosses which the glossary compiler has associated with the *burh* entries.

However, before exploring the Antwerp-London examples in detail, it is worth first starting with the earliest glossaries, which will allow us to see definitively

[206] Porter, 'The Antwerp-London Glossaries and the First English School Text', 176; Michael Lapidge, 'Aldhelm and the Epinal-Erfurt Glossary', in *Aldhelm and Sherborne: Essays to Celebrate the Foundation of the Bishopric*, ed. K. Barker and N. Brooks (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2010), 129–63.
[207] Lendinara, *Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Glossaries*, 62–63; Derolez, 'Introduction', 24.
[208] Hall, 'The Meanings of *Elf*, and Elves, in Medieval England'.

the age of some of the Aldhelm glosses in particular. *EpGl* (Épinal Glossary), from around the turn of the eighth century, and *CorpGl* (Corpus Glossary), from the early ninth century at the latest, have very few examples of *burh* by comparison to the later glossaries discussed in this section. What is especially important, however, is that both *EpGl* and *CorpGl* include the glossing of *municeps* with *burhleod* (R2.244 and 246), as we have already seen in the Aldhelm glosses, which allows us to date this semantic connection to at least the turn of the eighth century, perhaps even before. This shows that *burh* had been used to represent ancient urban settlements since the earliest period of OE writing and before the rise of urbanism in the tenth and eleventh centuries. If the word can be used to represent the sort of settlement not yet in existence in the glossators' native landscape, then we must question if this represents a semantic loan. From the glossary evidence alone, we cannot know for certain which factors directly influenced the glossators' vocabulary choice, but it is likely that the significance of *burh* to render *municipium* had changed by the time of the mid-tenth-century Cleopatra Glossaries and the eleventh-century Antwerp-London Glossaries. §4.6 in the next chapter addresses in-depth this issue of borrowed urban connotations.

Another early gloss found only in *CorpGl* is that of the Latin "cimiterium pontiani" ('cemetery of Pontianus') with "licburg a nomine p qui construxit" ('corpse-*burh* from the name of P[ontianus] who constructed it', R2.243). Here the Latin and the OE do not vary with one another, but rather together make one explanatory *interpretamentum* for the Latin *lemma*. Most commonly in OE a cemetery is referred to as a *lictun* ('a corpse-yard') or a *byrgenstow* or *legerstow* (both 'burial-

place'). *Burh* may have been used in the compound to draw on connotations of residence, defensibility and perhaps high-status, in contrast to the more common use of *tun* in *lictun*. However, as *licburg* is a *hapax legomenon* with an unknown source, we do not know the context in which it was used and thus the textual factors which might have inspired the vocabulary choice.

Although there are only a very few examples of *burh*, these early glossaries show us that the word had long been used to describe ancient urban settlements, and thus the word's ability to refer to such sites is not something which only became possible with the rise of urbanism in the tenth and eleventh centuries. We have also seen that *burh* was a productive element in loan creations from an early time, showing its long-standing value as a familiar word from which new compounds could be built.

A late-tenth-century glossary, which highlights the use of such texts for education, is Ælfric's *Glossary* (*ÆGl*), which is a part of his treatise on grammar (*ÆGram*) used to teach the Latin language to students.[209] *ÆGl* includes four instances of *burh.* Three use *burh* or a *burh* compound render *urbs* or a derivative thereof (R2.2–4): "urbanus" glossed with "burhwita", as seen in Aldhelm's glosses; "urbs" simply with "burh"; and "suburbanus" ('suburban') glossed as "se ðe sit butan ðære byrig" ('that which is outside of the *burh*'). The fourth example, mentioned briefly in the previous section, is where "atrium" is glossed both with "cafertun" ('forecourt, entrance') as well as "inburh" (R2.1). *ÆGram*, although largely prosaic grammatical explanations, also contains translated example phrases and demonstrative

[209] Fabienne Toupin, 'Exploring Continuities and Discontinuities Between Ælfric's *Grammar* and Its Antique Sources', *Neophilologus* 94 (2010): 334.

vocabulary which are much like glosses. Among these are 18 instances of *burh* (R8.1–18), mostly where *burh* translates examples of *urbs* and *municipium*, linking Ælfric's vocabulary also lists back to Aldhelm and the early glossaries. Ælfric also uses *burh* here to add epithets to ancient Mediterranean place names, a tendency to exposition which we shall see in his homiletic writings in §4.5. The glossary and gloss-style entries in *ÆGl* and *ÆGram* prove the value of such texts for teaching Latin, as well as the way in which later Anglo-Saxon scholars drew on the work of earlier glossators.

However, the two major glossaries which contain examples of *burh* are in the Cleopatra Glossaries (mid-tenth century) and the Antwerp-London Glossaries (from the eleventh century). The Cleopatra Glossaries are *glossae collectae*, which preserve the order of glosses from their source texts.[210] By contrast, the examples of *burh* in the Antwerp-London Glossaries appear in class glossaries, allowing us to see the compiler's perception of which words belong together in particular categories of meaning.

Three different glossaries are combined in the Cleopatra Glossaries, with *burh* appearing in *ClGl 1* and *ClGl 3*. It has long been understood that there was significant borrowing of sources between these two glossaries, with *ClGl 3* ironically probably coming first.[211] The influence from Aldhelm in *ClGl 3* is clear in the *interpretamenta* containing *burh*. Like *EpGl* and *CorpGl*, it contains glosses on *municipium*-words (R2.262–3). The glossing of "urbanitatis" with "burhspæce" is also preserved, but without any of the variant *interpretamenta* either in Latin or OE that

[210] Only an unpublished doctoral thesis has explored the Cleopatra Glossary sources, to which I have not had access: P. G. Rusche, 'The *Cleopatra Glossaries*: An Edition with Commentary on the Glosses and Their Sources' (New Haven, Connecticut, Yale University, 1996).
[211] Hall, 'Glosses, Gaps and Gender: The Rise of Female Elves in Anglo-Saxon Culture', 152.

we saw in the Aldhelm manuscripts (R2.260). This suggests either that between the Aldhelm manuscripts and *ClGl 3* a scribe removed the variants, believing *burhspæc* to be a sufficient gloss, or that *burhspæc* was originally the only *interpretamentum* and that other variants were added later. There are also various Mediterranean urban place names glossed with *burh* (R2.261, 264 and 266): "yppone regensi" derives clearly from Aldhelm, while "dalmatie" ('Dalmatia') and "siracusas" ('Siracusa') derive from a separate source. These examples, along with the evidence in the Gospels and other continuously glossed texts, suggests that it was fairly common practice to use *burh* to render such place names.

ClGl 1 (R2.248–59) has many of these same glosses, as well as others from Aldhelm (such as the glosses on *oppidanus*), and an example of "furiæ : burhrunan" seen similarly in *EpGl* and *CorpGl*.[212] *ClGl 1* also contains three unique examples. "Arcibus" ('strongholds, fortresses') is glossed with "hrofum oððe bigelsum, burgum" ('roofs or arched roofs, *burga*', R2.248), where the fortification and physicality of a *burh* is relevant to its use. "In tribulanam" ('in the small tribe', where *tribulana* is presumably a diminutive form of *tribus* 'tribe') is glossed with "in þa burh" (R2.252), possibly associating *burh* with tracts of land belonging to a people. However, as a definition and etymology of *tribulana* cannot be found, it is hard to pinpoint how *burh* is conceived in relation to it. Finally, "ius ciuile" ('civil law') is

[212] *Burhrunan* (lit. '*burh*-secrets/mysteries') appears glossing *parcas* ('the Fates') in *EpGl* and *CorpGl* (R2.245 and 247), and glossing *furiae* ('the Furies') in *ClGl 1* and the eleventh-century *HlGl* (R2.251 and 269). The *DOE* comments on the unusual likely etymology of the word: "The first element of the gloss was probably originally from *beorgan* (q.v., sense 2 'to spare'), but was perhaps reformed by folk-etymological association with *burh* 'enclosure' (cf. the derivation of *hægtesse* 'witch' from **hæg* 'fence, enclosure'; cf. *haga*)." Angus Cameron et al., 'Burhrune, Burhrunan', in *Dictionary of Old English: A to I Online* (Toronto: Dictionary of Old English Project), accessed 17 November 2019, http://tapor.library.utoronto.ca/doe/.

glossed with "anre burge riht" ('the law of one *burh*', R2.253). In this example *burh* is connected both with the authority and status associated with a place where legal decisions are made, and also with *civile*, derived from *civitas*.

Without being able to trace all the sources in *ClGl 1* and *ClGl 3*, as the edition is unpublished, it is difficult to do more than note the variety of connotations *burh* conveys across those glossaries. The influence from the earliest glosses and Aldhelm's work is conspicuous, but there are also glosses unique to these glossaries which show the semantic range *burh* could have. We are left always with the question of whether these meanings were all still current at the time of the manuscript's copying in the mid-tenth century, or if these were in part mechanically copied from earlier gloss collections, but this cannot be answered without further resources.

The Antwerp-London Glossaries' first part is an alphabetical glossary containing no examples of *burh*, but seventeen instances appear in the subsequent class glossaries (split by the *DOE* into three parts). The different topic sections are given Latin headings in the manuscript and smaller groups of glosses appear together, often with unifying sub-themes which are not explicitly indicated. The first examples of *burh* appear in the section entitled "nomina omnium hominum communiter" ('the names of all people generally'). Following a list of terms for lords and kings, there comes a second group listing the titles largely of local leaders, among which is "pretor" ('leader, chief') glossed with "ł prefectus ł prepositus ł questor burhgerefa" ('or prefect or chief or magistrate, *burh*-reeve', R2.226). This

suggests the importance of a *burh*-reeve's role and the idea of a *burh* as a social and possibly as an administrative centre.

In a later group containing terms for warrior troops such as *duguþ* ('troop') and *here* ('army'), three examples of *burh* appear in succession (R2.227–9). "Ciues" ('citizens') is glossed with "burhwara" ('*burh*-inhabitants'), "oppidanus" ('of a provincial town') with "burhseta" ('*burh*-resident') and "uulgus" ('mass of people') with "ł plebs, heanra burhwered" ('or the common people, poorer *burh*-inhabitants'). The uses of *burh* for *urbs* and *oppidanus* have been seen before, and the use of "heanra burhwered" to refer to the common people suggests a *burh* of a size capable of holding a mass of poorer people. *Burh* is used in each of these cases clearly to represent an urban settlement. But the inclusion of these instances, presumably by the manuscript's compiler, into a list of military terminology suggests inherent connotations of defensibility and violence understood in the word *burh*.

The following, somewhat larger, group of terms lists the various roles a man might hold in society, such as "mercedarii" ('one who pays wages') or "architectus" ('master-builder'). Early in this list, along with other high-status roles, we find "proceres" ('chiefs, nobles') glossed with "ł primores ł primarii, yldest burhwara" ('or principals or those of the first rank, the most senior *burh*-inhabitants', R2.230), "municeps" ('citizen of a town') glossed with "portgerefa ł burhwita" ('port-reeve or *burh*-councillor', R2.231) and "curiales" ('ones belonging to a court') with "ł decuriales, burhgerefa" ('or belonging to a division [of ten], a *burh*-reeve', R2.232). Each of these examples associates high-ranking roles or positive descriptors, such as *wita* ('wise man') and *gerefa* ('reeve'), with *burh* when translating these terms for

important social roles, although it is worth noting that the superlative adjective "yldest" is required to describe "burhwara" when translating "proceres". It appears clear that *burh* can represent a centre of power, which is used to qualify these otherwise vaguer role titles. However, later in the list, among terms for less illustrious roles, the term "aedilis" ('magistrate in charge of public buildings') is glossed with "hofweard ł byriweard ł botl[weard]" ('farm-ward or *burh*-ward or building-ward', R2.233). This example does not appear to use *burh* as a way of emphasising the nobility of the role. Rather, we can see that *burh* can be associated with lower-status roles, and it is noteworthy that the *burh*-word comes between two other OE structure words, suggesting that it is the physicality of the *burh* as a building or complex of buildings which is of importance.[213] These examples, where *burh* can be used as a qualifier to indicate high status, more neutral status (for example, where it needs to be qualified by "yldest") or even low status, shows the range of social ranks which can be conceived of living within a *burh*.

The following examples appear under unexpected section titles, often in small pockets of separate or tangential topics within the larger class. Under the section entitled "nomina arborum" ('the names of trees') we find a very short group of urban and defensive settlement terms. It begins with "urbanus" glossed with "burhwita ł burhman" (R2.234–5), similar to examples we have seen in Aldhelm's glosses. This is followed by "oppidum" glossed with "fæsten", "ciuis" with "ceasterware" and "castellum" with "wic ł lytel port" ('settlement or little port'). There is little reason that can be seen for this insertion, but here *burh* is evidently

[213] The importance of physicality to *burh* is evident throughout the thesis, but discussed particularly in §8.3.

among other defensible or urban settlements. In another section entitled "nomina armorum" ('the names of weapons'), we also see the *lemma* "ciuile bellum" ('civil war') glossed with "burhware gefeoht" ('fight of *burh*-inhabitants', R2.236), where *burh* is again associated with the concept of the *civitas* and inhabitants, as well as violence. Civil war as an abstract concept is somewhat out of place among a list of words for weaponry. However, it is thematically congruous and its insertion emphasises the martial aspects of *burh*.

The final examples of *burh* in the Antwerp-London Glossaries appear under the equally unrelated title of "nomina xii ventorum" ('the names of the twelve winds'). This section lists the twelve winds and then moves onto more geographical vocabulary, beginning with the spiritual and then moving into the worldly with "municipium" glossed with "burhscipe" ('*burh*-ship', R2.237). A few settlement terms are listed, but afterwards the glossary moves onto terms related more to the infrastructure of settlements. "Menia" ('defensive walls, city walls') is glossed with "burhweal" (*burh*-wall', R2.238) and a few entries later "promurale" ('defensive outerwork') is glossed with "foreburh" ('before the *burh*', R2.239), which we have seen used previously with *praedia* ('landed estate'). This compound appears to be acting as a loan-formation based upon the morphology of *promurale* (lit. 'before the wall'), where *burh* represents the walls. Both these examples evince the pre-eminence of physical defensibility in the concept of a *burh*. A further example of *burh* in this section is among terms for important structures within a settlement, with "forus" ('forum') being glossed with "ł prorostra, motstow on burge" ('or speakers' platforms, meeting-place in a *burh*', R2.240). Here the *burh* is clearly an important

social space, where a meeting or gathering, such as might be conceived of taking place in a forum, could occur. This also presupposes, to some extent, features of the *burh* as being both large enough and accessible enough for the public to gather there.

Two particularly interesting examples of *burh* appear as this section moves from settlement terms to landscape terms. The *lemma* "uallum" ('earthen wall or rampart with palisades') is glossed with "scidwealles eorðbyri" ('the wooden fence of an earth-*burh*', R2.241) and ends a group of infrastructure terms on folio L10v. On the next folio, L11r, "agger" ('earthwork embankment') is glossed with "eorðbyre ł geworht stræt" ('earth-*burh* or worked street', R2.242), beginning a new group of terminology to do with geography and partitions of land. The use of these glosses to progress the topic from man-made settlements to natural features suggest a concerted choice on the part of the compiler. Both the Latin *lemmata* are indicative of structures created by man but using earth, which likely looked more like landscape features than a town wall would. That the compound *eorðburh* is representative in both cases of this half-house between natural earth and construction is also significant: the use of *eorð* as the first element shows that *burh* alone cannot represent this concept. Rather, *burh* likely indicates the concept of man-made construction in this compound. However, these examples also make clear that a *burh* can be something more a part of the landscape than a Roman, urban site. As shall be seen in §7.2, *eorðburh* can be associated reliably with Iron Age hillforts, which were recognisable by their great earthworks and, like Roman ruins, were formidable and ancient monuments on the Anglo-Saxon landscape.

Once again, the Antwerp-London Glossaries show the range of connotations *burh* can have: the urban, the noble, the physical, the defensible, the manmade on the landscape. Unlike in manuscripts where the groups of *glossae collectae* were imported to a later manuscript *en masse*, the rearrangement of these glosses by category shows an interaction on the part of the Antwerp-London compiler with the denotations and connotations of individual entries. This suggests to me that the vocabulary was still relevant to the compiler in the eleventh century and that this range of meanings could co-exist. Indeed, it was perhaps this flexibility and breadth of denotation was the very essence of *burh*.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has opened up various questions which characterise the study of *burh* across the entire corpus of OE writings. Overwhelmingly, *burh* appears in glosses and glossaries representing ancient Mediterranean urban settlements and as a near-synonym of the loanword *ceaster*. However, deeper exploration has shown that unlike *ceaster*, *burh* is capable of referring to a wider range of referents and evoking a wider range of connotations than just the urban. *Burh* can clearly represent fortified sites of defensive and military significance, as it co-occurs with references to walls and warfare, though such connotations are not at odds with some of its urban uses, as *urbs* can be defined as a 'walled city'. In addition to this, *burh* is also associated with high status, sometimes in conjunction with connotations of urbanity,

such as in the case of eloquent *burhspæc*, but sometimes in reference to presumably private elite estates and even individual structures.

The examples of non-urban uses of *burh* appear relatively rarely in the glossographical corpus, but we should not interpret this as necessarily meaning that *burh* primarily meant 'town' in the language as a whole. This chapter has shown that the nature and topic of these texts has greatly influenced the vocabulary used: ancient Mediterranean urban settlements dominate these texts, impacting the proportion of urban uses of *burh*. Furthermore, the uses of *burh* to represent defensive and high-status sites appear often in loan formations, which presuppose the familiarity of these connotations to the glossators. The need to recognise the importance of connotations half-hidden in the texts which survive to us is a challenge threaded throughout this thesis. However, the prevalence of *burh* representing ancient urban sites in glossed texts which appear to predate the rise of urbanism in England raises another question, which shall be addressed by the next chapter: in what way was such urbanity conceived and can we consider *burh* to have been semantically extended?

4 Religious and Historical Prose: The Ancient Mediterranean

4.1 Introduction

This text grouping contains 1700 examples of *burh*, the highest by far of any corpus section discussed in this thesis. In many ways this is proportional to the amount of Latin-based religious and historical prose writing in the surviving OE corpus in general, but it is also indicative of the employment of *burh* in these texts. The following analysis will show the impact of these texts and their content upon our overall impression of the word *burh*. While this text grouping raises complicated thematic issues and taps into substantial areas of scholarship, my questions regarding the use of *burh* are very specific: where is *burh* being used, what places does it refer to and, where available, what Latin does it translate? The answers returned by these questions are largely uniform, and we shall see that the analysis in this chapter builds on themes and texts already explored in the glosses and glossaries. This chapter will focus particularly on imagined as opposed to experienced spaces, Anglo-Saxon perceptions of the ancient past and how we can interpret the urban connotations which may have been borrowed from Latin into OE in these examples.

Alfredian translations, Bible translations, homiletic and hagiographic writings are all widely studied and it would be both unreasonable and unhelpful to attempt historiographies for each of them here. However, it is worth rehearsing those aspects

of the texts which are most pertinent to the following analysis of uses of *burh*. All of these texts are concerned with theology or Christian history, and almost all are framed within the imagined space of the ancient Mediterranean. This chapter does not ignore those religious texts, particularly saints' lives, which were set in the space we would now consider to be England. However, as shall be seen, their relative absence in the analysis of this thesis is due to their limited use of the word *burh*. The evidence of this chapter will show that, as we have already seen in the glosses and glossaries, the typical subject matter and ancient Mediterranean setting of these texts encourage a predominant use of *burh* to represent urban settlements. Indeed, comparison between those stories set in the ancient Mediterranean and the few hagiographical stories set within England will further show the impact of thematic factors upon the use of language.

Another important uniting factor is the Latin origin of most of these texts, be they outright translations of Latin source material or retellings of biblical and Late Antique hagiographic stories. However, it is important to note that the binary of translation and composition dissolves under closer analysis. A translation can vary from literal to free, with the translator taking more or less liberty with the original text. Likewise, those homilies and hagiographies we often consider as compositions can range from entirely original works to composites of earlier texts in either Latin or OE. Therefore, this collection of texts is not made of opposing categories of translation and composition, but rather exists on a spectrum, with all its texts reliant to some degree on early Christian Latin models. Even in those cases where the OE seems entirely original, there are many Latin texts which describe the settlements

dubbed *burga* in the OE and to which we can trace a tradition of translation and linguistic interpretation to explain the vocabulary choice.

In addition to shared subject matter, setting and linguistic origins, we can also see some similarities in composition context. Many of these texts were written under circumstances of intellectual reform, be it the Alfredian programme or the Benedictine Revival. Indeed, these texts can be seen as forming a vernacular prose tradition, with the achievements of later writers such as Ælfric building on the advances of the late-ninth- and early-tenth-century texts.[214] The use of the OE language as part of these reforms is an important topic and one which ties back into questions of audience and purpose. All of these texts have traditionally been viewed as catering to those with little or no Latin, with OE as a second-class language used only out of necessity. More recently, this view has been challenged, suggesting a contemporary confidence in the vernacular that had hitherto been overlooked.[215] While always hard to specify, these new perspectives on the use of OE have made the purposes and audiences of these texts even more elusive and we need to be flexible in how we interpret the language under these circumstances.[216]

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[214] See Malcolm R. Godden, 'Aelfric & the Vernacular Prose Tradition', in *The Old English Homily and Its Backgrounds*, ed. Bernard F. Huppé and Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1978), 99–117; Malcolm R. Godden, 'Ælfric and the Alfredian Precedents', in *A Companion to Ælfric*, ed. Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 139–63.

[215] Robert Stanton, *The Culture of Translation in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2002), 2; Mechthild Gretsch, 'Ælfric, Language and Winchester', in *A Companion to Ælfric*, ed. Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 118; Helen Gittos, 'The Audience for Old English Texts: Ælfric, Rhetoric and "the Edification of the Simple"', *Anglo-Saxon England* 43 (2014): 232, 265–66; Rebecca Stephenson, *The Politics of Language: Byrhtferth, Ælfric, and the Multilingual Identity of the Benedictine Reform* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), esp. 'Introduction'.

[216] Charles D. Wright, 'The Old English Homilies and Latin Sources', in *The Old English Homily: Precedent, Practice, and Appropriation*, ed. Aaron J. Kleist, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 17 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2007), 39–41; Clare Lees, *Tradition and Belief: Religious Writing in Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 6.

The uncertainty around the production purposes of these texts is important to bear in mind throughout this chapter. However, the unifying factors of theme, setting, sources, language choice, reform framework and, potentially, tradition allow us to make meaningful comparisons across the uses of *burh* in this set of texts. Due to the composite nature of this text grouping, the chapter will be divided into sections. The first four sections will consider where *burh* occurs in the texts discussed, especially by comparison to *ceaster* and in relation to Latin terminology: firstly, the Alfredian translations of theological and philosophical works from the late ninth century, thinking about the similarities and distinctions between this relatively heterogenous group; next to be considered are Bible translations, exploring the different translators' choices and comparing the West Saxon Gospels with the glossed Gospels discussed in the previous chapter; next are the anonymous homilies and hagiographies, often placed in the mid-tenth century during the early years of the Benedictine Revival, which show a uniformity in the use of *burh* for ancient Mediterranean sites, but highlight how the word is used differently for local settings; following this survey of *burh* in homiletic and hagiographic texts by varied and unknown writers, the chapter will move on to think about individuals, particularly looking at the prolific religious writings of Ælfric of Eynsham from the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, whose use of *burh* and personal style shall be compared to his contemporary Wulfstan of York. The chapter will conclude with a section which questions more directly the relationship between the use of *burh* in these texts, contemporary perceptions of the past and urbanism, drawing together the linguistic evidence with modern theories of urbanism and the concept of *Romanitas*.

4.2 Alfredian Translations

The texts discussed in this section are OE translations of key Late Antique Latin Christian texts, predominantly set in the ancient Mediterranean: Gregory the Great's *Liber regulae pastoralis*, a treatise on the responsibilities of churchmen (*OE Pastoral Care*); Gregory the Great's *Dialogi*, a collection of stories of (mostly monastic) saints and miracles *(OE Dialogues*); Orosius' *Historiarum adversum paganos libri VII*, a universal history of Christianity (*OE Orosius*); Boethius' *Consolatio philosophiae*, a philosophical dialogue on virtue (*OE Boethius*); and Augustine's *Soliloquia*, a dialogue seeking self-knowledge (*OE Soliloquies*).

These texts are traditionally associated with the educational reform of King Alfred in the 890s, one of the major periods of "artistic resurgence" in Anglo-Saxon England.[217] The initiative produced an innovative body of works hitherto unknown in OE, and created a model for later works, both for those writers of the Benedictine Revival and also for modern scholars attempting to define the early West Saxon language.[218] The impact of these texts upon the history of OE prose writing and the lasting effects of the Alfredian programme more generally make these valuable texts to study at this stage of the thesis.[219]

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[217] D. R. Letson, 'The Poetic Content of the Revival Homily', in *The Old English Homily and Its Backgrounds*, ed. Bernard F. Huppé and Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1978), 139.
[218] Godden, 'Ælfric and the Alfredian Precedents', 163; Janet Bately, ed., *The Old English Orosius*, Early English Text Society, S.S. 6 (London: Oxford University Press, 1980), xxxix.
[219] Nicole Guenther Discenza, *The King's English: Strategies of Translation in the Old English* Boethius (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), 127–28.

However, the unifying bracket of 'Alfredian' is somewhat misleading as the influence of Alfred himself over these translations is increasingly questioned. Some of these texts have prefaces which declare the king to be the translator, for example the *OE Boethius*, while some are connected to him by later writers, such as William of Malmesbury's attribution of the *OE Orosius* to Alfred. For many years Alfred's authorship was accepted, but modern scholarship questions whether Alfred himself was a sole translator, even for those texts whose prefaces claim to be his work, and his involvement in other texts attributed to him has been called entirely into doubt.[220] It is difficult to find any consensus on the subject, with contradictions even within a single scholar's work: Malcolm Godden called into question Alfred's authorship of any of the canonical texts in 2007; he then stated in 2009 that the *OE Pastoral Care*, *OE Boethius* and *OE Soliloquies* were generally accepted to be the work of the king, while he had the *OE Dialogues*, *OE Orosius* and *OEB* translated for him; however, in the same year, Godden's edition of the *OE Boethius* with Susan Irvine profoundly questioned Alfred's authorship of that text.[221] Nevertheless, these texts are generally seen as belonging to this early period and scholars more often than not consider each to have been influenced by the Alfredian initiative.

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[220] Carolin Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation of Pope Gregory the Great's* Regula Pastoralis *and Its Cultural Context: A Study and Partial Edition According to All Surviving Manuscripts, Based on Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 12*, Münchner Universitäts-Schriften Texte Und Untersuchungen Zur Englischen Philologie 25 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003), 47 Schreiber queries if the aides acknowledged in the preface of the *OE Pastoral Care* were more directly involved in doing the translation work, or if it was indeed the work of the king; Bately, *The Old English Orosius*, lxxiii Bately notes the contrast between the *OE Orosius* and the *OE Boethius*, noting differences in style which would suggest different translators, while still seeing similarities between the *OE Orosius* and other texts contemporary with Alfred's programme.

[221] Malcolm R. Godden, 'Did King Alfred Write Anything?', *Medium Ævum* 76, no. 1 (2007): 18; Godden, 'Ælfric and the Alfredian Precedents', 140; Malcolm R. Godden and Susan Irvine, eds., *The Old English Boethius: An Edition of the Old English Versions of Boethius's* De Consolatione Philosophiae (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 140–46.

As they are all early prose translations (relative to other OE writings) set in the ancient Mediterranean, the *OE Pastoral Care*, *OE Dialogues*, *OE Orosius*, *OE Boethius* and *OE Soliloquies* make a usefully comparable set. Unlike glosses, a translation aims to displace the original and tends to represent a more native and natural flow in the target language.[222] In the late ninth century, however, there was no pre-existing model of translation from Latin into OE.[223] Indeed, these five texts show a variety of translation methods, some of which border on adaptation and expansion, while others are relatively literal and precise. Comparison of *burh* across these texts allows us also to consider the mode of translation employed in each.

In all of these texts, *burh* is used to refer to ancient Mediterranean urban sites, translating either Latin *urbs* or *civitas*, or expanding upon a place name, much as we have already seen in the Lindisfarne and Rushworth Gospels. Furthermore, as with the Gospel glosses, the amount of data is too great to be analysed instance-by-instance: the 'Alfredian' theological translations together contain over 500 examples of *burh*, with 31 in the two versions of the *OE Pastoral Care*, 400 in the *OE Orosius*, 13 in the *OE Boethius*, 2 in the *OE Soliloquies* and 127 across two versions of the *OE Dialogues*. Therefore, it is instructive instead to ask certain key questions and analyse the trends they produce: which Latin terms does *burh* render; is *burh* being used as an explanatory epithet to place names where in the Latin only the place name occurs; and to what extent do near-synonyms of *burh*, such as *ceaster*, appear in these texts?

[222] Jacob Hobson, 'Translation as Gloss in the Old English *Boethius*', *Medium Ævum* 86, no. 2 (2017): 207.
[223] Gretsch, 'Ælfric, Language and Winchester', 118.

In the *OE Pastoral Care* (R3.1–31), considered the most faithful of these translations, we can see *burh* being used to translate both *urbs* and *civitas*, as well as being used to refer back to previously mentioned sites where the Latin does not feel the need to repeat nouns. It is used in apposition to place names, but mostly where those place names occur with *urbs* or *civitas* in the Latin original. The word *ceaster* also appears in the *OE Pastoral Care*, translating *civitas* and *castrum*, as we have already seen in the Gospel glosses. However, unlike the Gospel glosses, the *OE Pastoral Care* does not appear to prefer *ceaster* as a translation of *civitas*, and, overall, there are around twice as many examples of *burh* as there are of *ceaster* in this text.

Like the *OE Pastoral Care*, the *OE Boethius* (R3.432–444) appears happy to translate both *urbs* and *civitas*, or terms derived from these, with *burh*. The Latin Boethian text actually contains comparably few examples of either *urbs* or *civitas*, but the translator brought in material from Latin glosses and commentaries, and it is mostly in these sections that we find *burh* being used.[224] Largely where *burh* is used to translate parts of the original text, it is to add explanatory epithets to place names such as "Romebyrig" ('Rome-*burh*', R3.437 and 439) and "Trogiaburg" ('Troy-*burh*', R3.438). What is also noticeable is that there are very few examples of *ceaster* in this text, only 3 by comparison to the 13 examples of *burh*, suggesting that *burh* was the preferred choice when translating Latin urban terms.

The *OE Soliloquies* (R3.445–6) stands out among the five texts as there are no examples of *ceaster* and only two examples of *burh*, both part of the place name

[224] Godden and Irvine, *The Old English Boethius: An Edition of the Old English Versions of Boethius's* De Consolatione Philosophiae vol. 2 notes the sources, where they can be found, and this has been invaluable in finding the Latin terms *burh* was likely translating.

Romeburh. In both cases, *Romeburh* is used when discussing the construction of Rome. The original Latin text, however, contains no examples of *civitas*, *urbs* or *Roma*, meaning that this is likely an insertion on the part of the translator using a common OE version of the place name.

Rome also features heavily among the examples of *burh* in the *OE Orosius* (R3.32–431), either as the place name *Romeburh* or in general reference to the city, which is overwhelmingly described in the Latin original as an *urbs*. In the early books Rome often appears as part of the narratives, but in the later books the place name is predominantly used as part of a formula for marking the progress of time: "æfter þam Romeburh getimbred wæs" ('after Rome had been built'), translating the Latin "ab Urbe condita" ('since the city's founding'). Other ancient cities are also referred to using *burh*, either where *urbs* or *civitas* is used in the Latin to describe the place or where an unfamiliar place name has been given an explanatory epithet. What stands out particularly when looking at the *OE Orosius* is the incredibly few examples of *ceaster* by comparison to the hundreds of examples of *burh*. *Ceaster* appears twice in book 1 (*Or 1*), of which one instance is a contrastive near-synonym with *burh*: "þa hie forneah mid ealle aweston, & ealda ceastra & ealde byrig towearpon" ('they very nearly laid [Asia and Europe] entirely to waste and destroyed the old *ceastra* and the old *burga*', R3.81). Two more examples of *ceaster* appear in books 5 and 6 (*Or 5* and *Or 6*) in the English place names *Cirenceastre* (Cirencester) and *Eforwicceastre* (York). No English place names are given the explanatory *burh* epithets and these two *ceaster* place names are presented as standard forms. This suggests that, for the *OE Orosius* translator, the overwhelming

vocabulary preference for these ancient, mostly Mediterranean, urban settlements is *burh*, and moreover that there is a difference in how local place names are treated by comparison to those of distant settlements.

Finally, the *OE Dialogues* (R3.447–573) present a far more clear-cut split between the uses of *ceaster* and *burh* in translating Latin terms. The examples of *burh* can be seen to translate either *urbs* or to expand upon a Latin place name, but the word is not generally used to render *civitas*, which is instead translated regularly by *ceaster*. *Ceaster*, too, is used in this text to give explanatory epithets to place names, mostly for those places which have elsewhere been called a *civitas*. Although there are far fewer examples of *ceaster* than *burh*, this is largely proportional to the ratio of examples of *civitas* to *urbs*. This text therefore stands out among those discussed as making a relatively clear distinction between a *burh* and a *ceaster* based upon the Latin terminology used.

Across all of these texts we can see *burh* translating Latin urban terms and referring to distant urban settlements. Yet the slight distinctions in how each of the 'Alfredian' texts uses *burh* highlight the different translators' approaches to their texts and offer insights into the translation potential of *burh* and *ceaster*. *Ceaster* is associated almost uniquely with *civitas*, while *burh* is able to translate both *urbs* and *civitas* depending on the translator's choice. Indeed, as with the Gospel glosses, the fact that *burh* can be used mutably in these texts, some of which were probably composed in the same intellectual milieu, shows that the word's relationship to Latin urban vocabulary was not set in stone and that, even when referring to urban settlements, *burh* is a more flexible term than *ceaster*.

4.3 Bible Translations

Within Latin Europe, England, most particularly Wessex, stands out in the early Middle Ages for having translations, not just glosses, of various parts of the Bible, including the Psalms and the Gospels, as well as the Heptateuch (a modern term used to describe the Pentateuch plus the books of Joshua and Judges).[225] Indeed, there was a particularly strong Anglo-Saxon tradition for translating and commenting upon the Old Testament, with whose figures the Anglo-Saxons felt an affinity, especially in the tenth century under the rising threat of Viking attacks.[226] The dating of these texts is often uncertain. The Psalms are often held to have been translated by Alfred, though, as with the texts discussed previously, his authorship is in some doubt. The West Saxon Gospels are dated convincingly by Roy Michael Liuzza to the tenth or eleventh centuries, but he comments also that they are anonymous with no clear composition context.[227] The Heptateuch is a composite of various Old Testament translations, part of which was completed by Ælfric in the

[225] S. J. Crawford, ed., *The Old English Version of the Heptateuch: Ælfric's Treatise on the Old and New Testament and His Preface to Genesis*, Early English Text Society, O.S. 160 (London: Oxford University Press, 1921), 1.
[226] Rachel Anderson, 'The Old Testament Homily: Ælfric as Biblical Translator', in *The Old English Homily: Precedent, Practice, and Appropriation*, ed. Aaron J. Kleist, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 17 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2007), 121–22; see also: Malcolm R. Godden, 'Biblical Literature: Old Testament', in *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, ed. Malcolm R. Godden and Michael Lapidge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 225.
[227] Roy Michael Liuzza, 'Who Read the Gospels in Old English?', in *Words and Works: Studies in Medieval English Language and Literature in Honour of Fred C. Robinson*, ed. Peter S. Baker and Nicholas Howe (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 100; by contrast, Esteban-Segura posits a date no later than the ninth century, although she does so citing only Skeat's nineteenth-century edition: Laura Esteban-Segura, 'Translating and Glossing Nouns in the Old English Gospels: A Constrastive Study', *Nordic Journal of English Studies* 13, no. 1 (2014): 34.

late tenth or early eleventh century; the origins of the other translations are unknown.[228]

Unlike the freedom with which some of the Alfredian translations were undertaken, the biblical translations tend to accord far more closely with their Latin originals. This is in many ways not surprising, as these translators are rendering into the vernacular not just prestige texts, but texts deemed to be sacred. For example, Ælfric, in the preface to his translation of the Book of Genesis, rehearses his anxieties at having to do just that.[229] We have no commentaries for the other anonymous translations, but the fear of misinterpreting and misrepresenting Scripture is reasonable in the light of the translators' faith. Yet, there is evidence of some authority of biblical writings in the vernacular. Firstly, it is clear that OE Bible translation was not as uncommon as we might think. These sources originate from different translators, times and initiatives, with the suggestion of multiple versions of some parts: Ælfric claims his patron Æthelweard already had some of the Old Testament translated into OE, but Marsden considers it unlikely that this is the version we now have preserved in the Heptateuch.[230] Furthermore, despite his ostensible anxieties, Ælfric's biblical translation work is not word-for-word and becomes less so as he progresses.[231] In addition to this, there is even some codicological evidence that, as well as being read alongside the Latin Gospels, the

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[228] Anderson, 'The Old Testament Homily: Ælfric as Biblical Translator', 123; Richard Marsden, ed., *The* Old English Heptateuch *and Ælfric's* Libellus de Veteri Testamento et Novo*, Vol. 1*, Early English Text Society O.S. 330 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), xxxiii.
[229] For more on Anglo-Saxon anxieties surrounding Bible translation, see Stanton, *The Culture of Translation in Anglo-Saxon England*, 101–43.
[230] Marsden, *The* Old English Heptateuch *and Ælfric's* Libellus de Veteri Testamento et Novo*, Vol. 1*, xxxiii.
[231] Anderson, 'The Old Testament Homily: Ælfric as Biblical Translator', 125–26.

West Saxon Gospels were treated as Gospel books in their own right.[232] This is suggestive of contemporary confidence in OE and the potential for the translations to displace their originals, an important concept where semantic loans from Latin to OE are concerned.

It is worth first exploring the West Saxon Gospels, as these bear comparison not only with the Latin Vulgate, but also with the Lindisfarne and Rushworth Gospel glosses discussed in the previous chapter. It would be incredibly difficult to reconstruct the exact version of the Vulgate that Anglo-Saxon translators might have used.[233] However, the critical edition of the Vulgate by Weber and Gryson offers the best resource, and it is this version used in the present analysis.[234] There are 14 instances of *burh* in Matthew (R3.712–25), 2 in Mark (R3.726–7), 4 in Luke (R3.728–31) and 3 in John (R3.732–4). The table below summarises the Latin translated by *burh* in the West Saxon Gospels by comparison to *ceaster*, and it is worth noting in advance that *urbs* is not a term used in the Latin Gospels:

	Total Uses	***Civitas/Cives***	***Castellum***	**No Term in Original**
Burh	23	19	2	2
Ceaster	66	61	5	0

Table 4: *Burh* and *ceaster* in the West Saxon Gospels

Here we can see that the West Saxon Gospels share the Gospel glosses' tendency to favour *ceaster* as a translation of *civitas* over *burh*. Indeed, these numbers match

[232] Liuzza, 'Who Read the Gospels in Old English?', 11–13.
[233] Marsden, *The* Old English Heptateuch *and Ælfric's* Libellus de Veteri Testamento et Novo, *Vol. 1*, xxxiii.
[234] Robert Weber and Roger Gryson, eds., *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, 5th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007).

almost exactly with the translations of *civitas* in the Lindisfarne Gospels, in which *burh* is used 17 times and *ceaster* 59 times. However, it is still noticeable that the overall number of examples of *burh* in the Gospel glosses far exceeds that of the West Saxon Gospels: *burh* appears a total of 90 times in Lindisfarne and 51 times in Rushworth. The reason for this difference in numbers is due almost entirely to the propensity of each text to use *burh* as a translation of, or explanatory epithet to, a Latin place name. We have already seen that Lindisfarne very commonly glosses Latin place names with *burh*, while Rushworth did so less frequently; the West Saxon Gospels, by comparison, never use *burh* to translate or explain a Latin place name. Indeed, the West Saxon Gospels employ *burh* more narrowly than the glosses, only using it to translate *civitas* and occasionally *castellum*.

In the Anglo-Saxon Old Testament translations *burh* appears 135 times: 31 in Genesis (R3.576–606), 4 in Exodus (R3.607–10), 3 in Leviticus (R3.611–3), 5 in Numbers (R3.614–8), 14 in Deuteronomy (R3.619–32), 57 in Joshua (R3.633–89), 5 in Judges (R3.690–4), which make up the Heptateuch, and a further 16 in the Psalms (R3.696–711). The OE Heptateuch and prose Psalms do not translate all the verses of these biblical books and, as we have seen, they do not have a unified textual history. However, there are some clear trends shared by these texts which differ noticeably from the West Saxon Gospels, even while both the New and Old Testament translations predominantly use *burh* to refer to ancient urban settlements. Unlike the West Saxon Gospels, the Old Testament translations often render Latin place names into OE with *burh* as an explanatory epithet, such as "Gabaon ða burh" for Latin "Gabaon" in *Josh* 10:41 (R3.679). Furthermore, while the New Testament and Psalms

contain no examples of *urbs*, the Heptateuch books use both *urbs* and *civitas* to describe settlements, and *burh* is used to render both. All examples of *urbs* translated into the OE are rendered with *burh*, except for one use of *fæsten* at *Josh* 11:11. Furthermore, almost all examples of *civitas* translated into the OE version are also rendered with *burh*, except for three examples of *ceaster* in *Gen* and one example of *port* in *Deut*. Indeed, these are the only three examples of *ceaster* in the Heptateuch and only one occurs in *PPs (prose)/PsHead*, which suggests a decisive choice on the part of these translators to use just *burh* to represent the ancient urban settlements discussed in the texts.

While the Old Testament translations most commonly use *burh* to render *urbs*, *civitas* and Latin place names, these texts, like the glosses, also offer us some variation in which Latin terms *burh* can translate. Another term denoting both the urban and the fortified, *oppidum*, is rendered with *burh* in *Gen* 44:13 and the variant *Gen (Ker)* (R3.575 and 606). There is also an example in *Exod* 29:32 of *uestibulum* ('vestibule') rendered with *foreburh* ('fore-*burh*', R3.610), as seen in some Aldhelmian glosses (see S3.3). This example reminds us of the potential for *burh* to refer to more than simply urban settlements.

Physical features of a *burh* are emphasised in some cases through the collocation of *burh* with gates, which are indicative both of a wall or enclosure and also the controlled entry through such a barrier. The compound *burhgatu* ('*burh*-gates') is used to translate the Latin *portae* ('gates'), in reference to the gates of *urbes* or *civitates* in *Josh* 2:4 and *Judg* 16:3 (R3.636 and 693). At *Deut* 14:27 and 15:1 "binnan þinre byrig" ('within your *burh*', R3.623–4) translates "intra portas tuas" ('within

your gates') and "intra portas civitatis tuae" ('within the gates of your city'). That *burh* alone can be used to represent the boundary suggested by the reference to gates in the Latin indicates that walls or enclosure are an inherent concept to a *burh*.

Land is also connected to the term *burh* in the Old Testament translations. In *Josh* 2:2 and 7:2 (R3.634 and 648) *burh* translates *terra* ('land'), where spies are sent to scope out the lands and cities of Jericho and Hai, themselves called *urbs* and *civitas* respectively. *Terra* is used to distinguish the hinterlands from the cities in the Latin, but the fact that both are rendered by *burh* suggests its capacity to represent both the centre of a landed area, and by extension the landed area itself. But we can also see a contrast between *burh* and the agricultural landscape in *Deut* 28:16 where the Latin "maledictus eris in civitate, maledictus in agro" ('you shall be cursed in the city, you shall be cursed in the field') is rendered as "beo ðu awyriged binnan byrig & butan" ('you shall be cursed within the *burh* and without', R3.269). This formula "binnan byrig & butan" is fairly common, especially in late Anglo-Saxon writ-charters (see §7.6). That 'without the *burh*' can here stand for 'in the field' suggests the potential binary between land and *burh*. This possibly highlights urban connotations of *burh* by contrast to the more agricultural *ager*, while the conflation between *burh* and land in *Josh* might suggest more territorial rather than rural connotations for *terra*. However, this may also be due to difference in translators' vocabulary preferences or the flexibility of the meaning of *burh* and its role within the wider landscape.

In addition to these connotations, *burh* can in some circumstances represent something more social and abstract. In *PPs (prose)* 47:3 (R3.705), *burh* is used to render "domibus" ('houses'), in the context of God being known in all the houses of

the Earth, and it is meaningful that the usual translation of *domus*, *hus* ('house'), is not used in this situation. As we shall see in §8.6, *burh* has the capacity to represent 'everywhere' and by extension 'everyone', and this use of *burh* here might also represent this sense of totality.

So far in this thesis, we have considered OE works where the Latin sources are relatively clear. Comparing the evidence of the Bible glosses, Alfredian translations and Bible translations, we can see that the use of *burh* to describe ancient Mediterranean urban settlements, particularly in translating *urbs* and *civitas*, is fairly standard, even across several centuries and from one end of England to the other. Indeed, similar uses of *burh* can be observed in other translations set in the ancient Mediterranean (R3.1664–72, 1680–91), such as the anonymous mid-tenth-century *Alexander's Letter to Aristotle* (*Alex*) and *Marvels of the East* (*Marv*), where *burh* translates *civitas*, *urbs*, *oppidum* and expands on Latin place names.[235] Although important texts in their own right, their use of *burh* to translate Latin terms is so similar to the texts discussed thus far that, with the limited space of this thesis, they do not warrant individual focus. The next two sections will consider what can be observed in the use of *burh* in OE religious writings that do not necessarily directly translate Latin urban terms, but adapt a variety of sources.

[235] Andy Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the* Beowulf-*Manuscript*, 2nd edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 116, 132, 175–76, 184–88, 206–9, 228–33; Andy Orchard, *A Critical Companion to* Beowulf (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2003), 25–39; Richard North, Joe Allard, and Patricia Gillies, eds., *The Longman Anthology of Old English, Old Icelandic and Anglo-Norman Literatures* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2011), 719.

4.4 Anonymous Homilies, Sermons and Hagiographies

The mid-tenth century saw the rise of the Benedictine Revival, a monastic movement that changed the way the Church in England was organised, but also created another artistic resurgence, particularly where vernacular writings were concerned.[236] Other than the historical and administrative documents, most of the writing produced in OE in the tenth century was homilies, sermons, and some of the earliest vernacular hagiographies.[237] Indeed, OE enjoys the largest and earliest corpus of homilies, sermons and hagiographies in early medieval Europe and around 50 manuscripts contain copies of Anglo-Saxon vernacular homilies.[238] Broadly, homilies (specifically based on Scripture) and sermons are preaching texts, while hagiographies are the narrative lives of saints.[239] There are significant differences between these genres, and more subtle differences within them, but they often blur into one another and in terms of the use of *burh* they can be treated together.

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[236] Letson, 'The Poetic Content of the Revival Homily', 139; Pauline Stafford, 'Church & Society in the Age of Aelfric', in *The Old English Homily and Its Backgrounds*, ed. Bernard F. Huppé and Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1978), 22; for an overall background to the movement, see Mechthild Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations of the English Benedictine Reform*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 25 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
[237] J. Elizabeth Jeffrey, *Blickling Spirituality and the Old English Vernacular Homily*, Studies in Mediaeval Literature 1 (Lewiston/Lampeter/Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1989), 1.
[238] Lees, *Tradition and Belief: Religious Writing in Late Anglo-Saxon England*, 4; M. J. Toswell, 'The Codicology of Anglo-Saxon Homiletic Manuscripts, Especially the Blickling Homilies', in *The Old English Homily: Precedent, Practice, and Appropriation*, ed. Aaron J. Kleist, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 17 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2007), 209.
[239] Milton McC. Gatch, 'The Achievement of Aelfric & His Colleagues in Perspective', in *The Old English Homily and Its Backgrounds*, ed. Bernard F. Huppé and Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1978), 45; D. R. Letson, 'The Form of the Old English Homily', *The American Benedictine Review* 30, no. 4 (1979): 412–19.

Many of the OE saints' lives originate from Late Antique narratives of common saints of the Latin Church, and many are likely translations or adaptations from Latin texts, even if the Latin is no longer extant.[240] The homilies and sermons, by contrast, are more commonly composed with the help of many Latin sources, be they biblical or patristic, and some later homilies also take influence from earlier OE texts.[241] Much of Anglo-Saxon homiletic research has focussed on identifying the sources used by the composers and trying to recreate their intellectual surroundings.[242] In many cases the sources have been identified, but some motifs are so commonplace that they likely emerge from a larger tradition.[243] This possibility is particularly valuable when considering the use of *burh*, which, as we have seen, appears to be used fairly typically to represent ancient urban settlements across a variety of texts.

The vast majority of homilies and hagiographies produced in the tenth and eleventh centuries are the products of Ælfric of Eynsham, who will be considered in isolation in the next section.[244] Most of the non-Ælfrician homilies and all of the non-Ælfrician hagiographies are anonymous, and it is these which shall be treated in this

[240] E. Gordon Whatley, 'Introduction', in *Holy Men and Holy Women: Old English Prose Saints' Lives and Their Contexts*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach, SUNY Series in Medieval Studies 1 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 15.
[241] Jeffrey, *Blickling Spirituality and the Old English Vernacular Homily*, 179; Wright, 'The Old English Homilies and Latin Sources', 15; Letson, 'The Form of the Old English Homily', 399–400.
[242] Aaron J. Kleist, 'Introduction', in *The Old English Homily: Precedent, Practice, and Appropriation*, ed. Aaron J. Kleist, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 17 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2007), 1–2; Lees, *Tradition and Belief: Religious Writing in Late Anglo-Saxon England*, 4.
[243] As in the case of the *ubi sunt* motif: Wright, 'The Old English Homilies and Latin Sources', 23.
[244] Indeed, Ælfric produced two-thirds of all OE hagiographies: Joyce Hill, 'The Context of Ælfric's Saints' Lives', in *Hagiography in Anglo-Saxon England: Adopting and Adapting Saints' Lives into Old English Prose (c. 950-1150)*, ed. Loredana Lazzari, Patrizia Lendinara, and Claudia Di Sciacca, Fédération Internationale Des Instituts d'Études Médiévales Textes et Études Du Moyen Age 73 (Madrid: Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévales, 2014), 1.

section.[245] The anonymous homilies mostly appear in single manuscript collections, such as the Vercelli manuscript and the Blickling homiliary. These collections are generally dated to the mid-tenth century, in the early years of the Benedictine Revival, although Charles Wright believes the anonymous homilies could represent a pre-Revival tradition.[246] Certainly, they were composed one or more generations before Ælfric and his contemporary Wulfstan were writing their religious prose. These texts, furthermore, appear to be have been composed by various authors and then later compiled into composite homiliaries, and, as they lack opening addresses, we know relatively little about their audiences and purposes.[247] Although there is a significant corpus of pre-Ælfrician homilies and sermons, there are few pre-Ælfrician saints' lives, and almost all of those appear in the tenth century.[248]

Generally, these earlier texts are overlooked by scholars by comparison to the works of Ælfric and Wulfstan, with their style being viewed as less sophisticated.[249] Indeed, Ælfric studies have dominated religious prose scholarship and his distinctive, personal style is often taken as 'classical' OE prose.[250] Yet, some scholars have seen the anonymous composers' use of language as skilful, and it is worth

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[245] Whatley, 'Introduction', 4.
[246] Jeffrey, *Blickling Spirituality and the Old English Vernacular Homily*, 2; Wright, 'The Old English Homilies and Latin Sources', 45.
[247] Toswell, 'The Codicology of Anglo-Saxon Homiletic Manuscripts, Especially the Blickling Homilies', 225–26; Wright, 'The Old English Homilies and Latin Sources', 39; Marcia A. Dalbey, 'Themes & Techniques in the Blickling Homilies', in *The Old English Homily and Its Backgrounds*, ed. Bernard F. Huppé and Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1978), 221.
[248] D. G. Scragg, 'The Corpus of Anonymous Lives and Their Manuscript Context', in *Holy Men and Holy Women: Old English Prose Saints' Lives and Their Contexts*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach, SUNY Series in Medieval Studies 1 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 209, 224–25.
[249] Wright, 'The Old English Homilies and Latin Sources', 55.
[250] Even in praising the style of the Vercelli homilies, Szarmach calls them 'pre-Classical Old English prose': Paul E. Szarmach, 'The Vercelli Homilies: Style & Structure', in *The Old English Homily and Its Backgrounds*, ed. Bernard F. Huppé and Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1978), 262.

questioning whether Ælfric should be seen as a standard against which to judge other OE prose.[251] These extant anonymous texts appear to represent the shadow of a relatively diffuse practice of vernacular religious writing centred around the mid-tenth century and the start of the Benedictine Revival. It is worth, therefore, shining a spotlight on these often-overlooked vernacular texts, which still form a significant part in the history of OE writing, and it is interesting to see the similarity in use of *burh* even across what might be a fairly diverse set of writers.

Relatively few anonymous homilies contain examples of *burh*, and their spread and density depend very much on the type of discourse being expounded (R3.750–77, 939–61). Often there are only one or two examples of *burh* in a single homily, generally being used in apposition to a place name as an explanatory epithet, such as: "Aremaððia þære byrig" ('Arimathea the *burh*', R3.765) in *HomS 24 (Verc 1)*. A few homilies, such as *HomS 21* (R3.753–63) contain a series of examples of *burh*, often in reference back to the same location in which the narrative of the homily is set. Where and how often *burh* appears in the anonymous homilies appears to be inconsistent and this evidence accords with the idea of various different authors. However, what is consistent is that *burh* is used to refer to ancient urban settlements.

Examples of *burh* appear far more commonly in the hagiographies than the homilies, as geographical setting plays a more consistent role, possibly due to hagiographic texts adopting a more narrative style (R3.778–938, 962–1098). For those stories set in the ancient Mediterranean, there are copious examples of *burh*, many of

[251] Szarmach, 262.

which explain a place name, either in apposition with the name or in a construction along the lines of 'in the *burh* which was called X'. Even outside of the ancient Mediterranean, those places which come under the sphere of influence of the old Roman Empire are equally given explanatory *burh* epithets. For example, in St Martin of Tours' *vita* (R3.814–8), Tours is called a *burh*: although not in the Mediterranean and the world of the Gospels, Tours at the time of St Martin's martyrdom was part of Late Antique Gaul and the Roman Empire, and the story likely came to England via Latin descriptions of the city.

By contrast to this abundance of common examples of *burh* when describing ancient Mediterranean and continental Roman cities, the local saints' lives (esp. R3.791–2, 805–9, 842–59, 962–1036) contain examples of *burh* only in standard OE place names (such as *Cantwarabyrig* for Canterbury, R3.843), in Anglo-Saxon personal names, or in reference to ancient Mediterranean sites such as Rome. The consistent distinction is quite striking and, coupled with the evidence from the *OE Orosius*, suggests a tendency to give anchoring and explanatory generic nouns to unfamiliar places, while the more local and familiar are represented only by their names. This desire for didacticism and clarity has been evident in various uses of *burh* in Latin-based works, and we see it all the more clearly in the works of Ælfric.

4.5 Ælfric and Wulfstan

Both Ælfric of Eynsham (d. c.1010) and Wulfstan of York (d. 1023) have come to dominate our discussions of the late Anglo-Saxon Church and religious prose. As part of the second generation of the Benedictine Revival, they were educated within a Church whose structure had already been shaken up and where vernacular writings were relatively common. They both became prolific writers who straddled genres and left an indelible mark upon the history of Anglo-Latin and, especially, OE prose. Ælfric studies have exploded in recent years – an entire book-length bibliography is dedicated just to his work – and, while Wulfstan has tended to be neglected by comparison, scholarship concerned with his work is still extensive.[252] To attempt a thorough historiography of the two would be unreasonable, but I will briefly outline the important factors of their careers relevant to my analysis of the language they used.[253]

Ælfric is the most prolific of any identifiable OE writer and the most important writer of OE religious prose.[254] He wrote various different types of text, producing many homilies and saints' lives, but, as we have already seen, also

[252] Luke M. Reinsma, *Ælfric: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987); Kleist, 'Introduction', 1; Joyce Tally Lionarons, *The Homiletic Writings of Archbishop Wulfstan: A Critical Study*, Anglo-Saxon Studies 14 (Woodbridge, Suffolk: D. S. Brewer, 2010), 1.
[253] For biographies of both, see: Reinsma, *Ælfric: An Annotated Bibliography*, vii ff; Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan, 'Introduction', in *A Companion to Ælfric*, ed. Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 1; Joyce Hill, 'Ælfric: His Life and Works', in *A Companion to Ælfric*, ed. Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 35–65; Andy Orchard, 'Wulfstan as Reader, Writer, and Rewriter', in *The Old English Homily: Precedent, Practice, and Appropriation*, ed. Aaron J. Kleist, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 17 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2007), 311.
[254] Hugh Magennis, 'Ælfric Scholarship', in *A Companion to Ælfric*, ed. Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 5.

translating Bible passages, creating a vernacular Latin grammar, and we also have copies of letters by him. Genres can also blur in his works, particularly where saints' lives form the basis of his homilies.[255] His series of *Catholic Homilies* was likely his first major body of work, which he intended to be a textual corpus for priests to use for preaching throughout the year and which he claimed to have written for the "ungelæredum" ('unlearned').[256] It is much debated what exactly he might mean by 'unlearned', what the differences were at the time between the reformed and the unreformed, and what the realistic distinctions were between the lay and the clerical, which the Benedictine Revival had so sought to keep separate.[257] Yet didacticism was clearly part of his writing, and his famous desire to control the circulation and emendations of his texts suggest the importance he placed upon the language and reception of his works. His career was also strongly impacted by his lay supporters and patrons, the greatest of whom, Æthelweard, commissioned Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* collection.[258] Æthelweard's own Latin was demonstrably very good, so his request for OE versions of these texts further complicates our already complex

[255] Robert K. Upchurch, 'Homiletic Contexts for Ælfric's Hagiography: The Legend of Saints Cecilia and Valerian', in *The Old English Homily: Precedent, Practice, and Appropriation*, ed. Aaron J. Kleist, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 17 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2007), 265; Malcolm R. Godden, 'Experiments in Genre: The Saints' Lives in Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*', in *Holy Men and Holy Women: Old English Prose Saints' Lives and Their Contexts*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach, SUNY Series in Medieval Studies 1 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 261–66.
[256] Helmut Gneuss, *Ælfric of Eynsham: His Life, Times and Writings*, Old English Newsletter Subsidia 34 (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2009), 13; Kathleen Davis, 'Boredom, Brevity and Last Things: Ælfric's Style and the Politics of Time', in *A Companion to Ælfric*, ed. Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 322.
[257] Christopher A. Jones, 'Ælfric and The Limits of "Benedictine Reform"', in *A Companion to Ælfric*, ed. Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 67–108.
[258] Catherine Cubitt, 'Ælfric's Lay Patrons', in *A Companion to Ælfric*, ed. Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 165–92.

understanding of the purposes of Ælfric's writing and indeed all vernacular religious prose.[259]

Ælfric was influenced heavily by his time at the school of Winchester under the great reformer Æthelwold, with his religious terminology representing the Winchester vocabulary developed there.[260] Ælfric also built upon the tradition of the earlier vernacular texts discussed in this chapter, although he considered some of the more worthy models than others: he saw Alfred's translations in hugely positive light, while he scorned earlier homiletic writings, some of which were presumably the anonymous texts discussed above.[261] But despite forming part of what is often deemed the 'Standard OE' of late West Saxon, Ælfric's style is quite his own and is often used to identify his work.[262] This he developed from various models and created a mode of writing which was succinct, efficient, plain and avoided unnecessary synonyms.[263]

Wulfstan also stands out among Anglo-Saxon religious writers. He was similarly didactic and concerned with language in his writing, but his style is far more exhortatory and eschatological than narrative, and is often more interested in

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[259] Gretsch, 'Ælfric, Language and Winchester', 131.
[260] Gretsch, 109.
[261] Godden, 'Aelfric & the Vernacular Prose Tradition', 99–106; Godden, 'Ælfric and the Alfredian Precedents', 139; Gretsch, 'Ælfric, Language and Winchester', 118; Kiriko Sato, 'Ælfric's Lexical Alterations in His Adaptations from the Old English *Boethius*', *Neophilologus* 95 (2011): 305; Joyce Hill, 'Translating the Tradition: Manuscripts, Models & Methodologies in the Composition of Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 79, no. 1 (1997): 62–63.
[262] John C. Pope, ed., *Homilies of Ælfric: A Supplementary Collection, Being Twenty-One Full Homilies of His Middle and Later Career for the Most Part Not Previously Edited with Some Shorter Pieces Mainly Pasages Added to the Second and Third Series*, Early English Text Society, O.S. 259 (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 94.
[263] Gretsch, 'Ælfric, Language and Winchester', 122; Godden, 'Aelfric & the Vernacular Prose Tradition', 110; Davis, 'Boredom, Brevity and Last Things: Ælfric's Style and the Politics of Time', 321; Gneuss, *Ælfric of Eynsham: His Life, Times and Writings*, 17–18; Sato, 'Ælfric's Lexical Alterations in His Adaptations from the Old English *Boethius*', 309, citing: ; Malcolm R. Godden, 'Ælfric's Changing Vocabulary', *English Studies* 61 (1980): 219.

the 'here and now' of his audience than the 'there and then' of the ancient Mediterranean.[264] He was heavily involved in lay politics and engaged with preaching as a form of Christian practice and a vehicle of social change.[265] He, too, wrote texts which spread across various modern genres, though staking claim to a largely different textual territory than Ælfric: alongside his homilies he also wrote law codes and social treatises, with all of his genres bleeding into each other in a way that makes us question to what extent he saw a difference between them.[266] Wulfstan's writing style is also quite different to that of Ælfric's, employing, for example, alliteration, synonym-pairing, unusual compounds and lists.[267] But one cannot quite call his style inimitable. Indeed, like Ælfric, Wulfstan's work has largely been identified on stylistic grounds, but the many who later imitated him have made it hard to define a clear corpus of his work.[268] I follow the corpus as laid out by Joyce Tally Lionarons, who combines the work of Jonathan Wilcox and Thomas Hall to create a (for now) exhaustive list of his works.[269]

Both Ælfric and Wulfstan were prolific vernacular writers, appreciated by modern scholars, contemporaries and each other – they were correspondents and seem to share their reform outlook.[270] But their differences can be summed up as

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[264] Jonathan Davis-Secord, 'Rhetoric and Politics in Archbishop Wulfstan's Old English Homilies', *Anglia* 126, no. 1 (2008): 67; Milton McC. Gatch, *Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England: Ælfric and Wulfstan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 165.
[265] Lees, *Tradition and Belief: Religious Writing in Late Anglo-Saxon England*, 7–8.
[266] Orchard, 'Wulfstan as Reader, Writer, and Rewriter', 318–19.
[267] Davis-Secord, 'Rhetoric and Politics in Archbishop Wulfstan's Old English Homilies'.
[268] Orchard, 'Wulfstan as Reader, Writer, and Rewriter', 320.
[269] Lionarons, *The Homiletic Writings of Archbishop Wulfstan: A Critical Study*, 23–42; Jonathan Wilcox, 'The Dissemination of Wulfstan's Homilies: The Wulfstan Tradition in Eleventh-Century Vernacular Preaching', in *England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Carola Hicks (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1992), 200–201; Thomas N. Hall, 'Wulfstan's Latin Sermons', in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York: The Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference*, ed. Matthew Townend, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 10 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2004), 93–139.
[270] Jones, 'Ælfric and The Limits of "Benedictine Reform"', 108.

"Ælfric teaches and explains, Wulfstan preaches and proclaims," and indeed this archetypal dichotomy of their writing styles reflects the differing uses of *burh* that we see in their texts.[271]

As we have come to expect in religious prose, Ælfric's uses of *burh* are all in reference to ancient Mediterranean urban settlements, but what is distinctive about his use of *burh* is its abundance. Even though Robert DiNapoli does not list cities, fortifications or settlements among the many themes apparent in Ælfric's work, around one third of all the examples of *burh* in the data set for this chapter are attributable to Ælfric (R3.1099–1657).[272] To some extent this high proportion of examples is relative to the amount of religious prose he wrote, but this does not explain it entirely. Particularly in his homilies and sermons, he uses far more examples per text than the anonymous homilies did. Part of the reason for this is that he very often uses *burh* as an explanatory epithet for urban place names, far more commonly than his anonymous antecedents. He then typically repeats the word *burh* as he refers back to these cities, re-anchoring his audience in the locational setting. Ælfric was also a proponent of line-by-line exegesis, giving translations of Gospel passages (though not the same translations as found in the West Saxon Gospels) and often rendering biblical verses which use *civitas*.

There is also a marked lack of *ceaster* in his writings, with Ælfric clearly opting for the native word *burh* rather than the Latin loanword. His emphasis on explaining Latin place names, on repeating setting descriptions for his audience and on

[271] Orchard, 'Wulfstan as Reader, Writer, and Rewriter', 341.
[272] Robert DiNapoli, *An Index of Theme and Image to the Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church* (Hockwold cum Wilton, Norfolk: Anglo-Saxon Books, 1995).

choosing native vocabulary accord well with the image of him as a consummate teacher with a love of plain, comprehensible language. His hagiographies likewise make great use of the word *burh* in apposition to place names and to refer back to these urban sites. But, as with the anonymous hagiographies, his use of *burh* falls off sharply when dealing with an Anglo-Saxon saint, such as Saint Æthelthryth (R3.1399–403), in whose stories *burh* only appears in onomastic forms.

As well as contrasting against the anonymous homilies and hagiographies, Ælfric's abundant use of *burh* is incredibly different to that of Wulfstan's, whose homilies rarely make use of the word (R3.1658–63). He himself seems far less concerned with anchoring the audience in the geographical setting of his homilies, which are, in any case, far more thematic and exhortatory than exegetical. Several of the uses of *burh* in his canonical homilies occur not in reference to specific ancient cities, but rather in eschatological imagery. Wulfstan seeks to alarm his audience with violent symbolism, using phrases such as "land hy awestað & burga forbærnað & æhta forspillað, & eard hy amyrrað" ('they will lay waste to the land and burn down the *burga* and destroy property and spoil the homeland', R3.1662). Inspired most likely by similar descriptions of the destructions of *civitates* in biblical apocalypse scenes, *burh* may well represent a translation of *civitas* in these instances. However, for a man whose writings were there to exhort and enact social change, the functionality of using a native word like *burh* becomes layered.

While Ælfric's use of *burh* may be to make local a distant and ancient geography, Wulfstan's use makes present an otherwise distant future. The audience need not comprehend the urban origin to the references; indeed, the value of using a

common and native word brings the threat of the end times to their own backyard. It is perhaps unsurprising, therefore, to find such references in Wulfstan and not in Ælfric, and likewise didactic expansions in descriptions of settings in Ælfric and not Wulfstan.

The analysis of this chapter so far has shown that, while the use of *burh* to refer to ancient urban settlements is fairly uniform among religious prose texts, the way in which the words are used and what they represent connotationally can vary between different writers and purposes. The overwhelmingly urban use of *burh* is also largely driven by the subject matter of the texts: few settlements are ever discussed which are not ancient urban sites. What remains, then, is a certain cognitive dissonance between the OE word and the concepts it is used to represent in these texts, and this centres around two issues, to which I now turn: imagination and urbanism.

4.6 The Imagined Urban Space

The evidence of this thesis so far has raised some significant questions. To what extent did Anglo-Saxon audiences recognise the difference between their own *burga* and the settlements of their biblical and Late Antique antecedents? Did they comprehend urbanism, either as a concept of these ancient sites or as a burgeoning framework for their own settlements? Or were there different factors by which they defined these settlements? Therefore, to what extent are connotations, or even

denotations, being borrowed from the Latin into the OE where *urbs* or *civitas* are translated with *burh*, and what connotations of *burh* were in return transposed onto readers' or listeners' comprehension of these ancient narratives? Finally, how did such perceptions change over the period studied? All of these questions are complex, but also important to consider, and this final section will bring together the evidence discussed throughout this chapter in order to examine the power of imagination and concepts of urbanism, before coming to some conclusions about the use of *burh* in OE religious and historical prose set in the ancient Mediterranean.

It is valuable here to outline briefly the current thinking on the development of urbanism in England, and how this aligns with the composition of texts discussed in this chapter. Following Roman occupation of Britain, Late Antique British society shifted away from being city-based.[273] Although Roman town ruins stood on the landscape, such as at Canterbury where Hadrian and Theodore set up their school in the seventh century, Britain was generally un-urban during the early Anglo-Saxon centuries.[274] Any developments by the eighth century of permanent trade, craft and occupation observable at select sites such as London were brought to a sudden end by the Viking incursions of the ninth century, and any progress was reversed.[275] Yet, the previous chapter has shown that, even during this very un-urban early period, *burh* was used to render Latin urban terms. Indeed, even though the seeds for

[273] John Moreland, 'An Introduction', in *Debating Urbanism Within and Beyond the Walls A.D. 300-700: Proceedings of a Conference Held at the University of Leicester, 15th November 2008*, ed. Denis Sami and Speed, Leicester Archaeology Monograph 17 (Leicester: School of Archaeology and Ancient History, University of Leicester, 2010), 142.
[274] Carver, *Formative Britain: An Archaeology of Britain, Fifth to Eleventh Century AD*, 263–75.
[275] Fleming, *Britain after Rome: The Fall and Rise, 400–1070*, 189–99, 241.

English urbanism were sown in the time of Alfred and his children, Alfred's translation programme still belongs to this pre-urban period.

During the tenth and eleventh centuries, various sites across a newly unified England developed commerce, specialised craft and distinct identities from the countryside. 'Urban' reforms have been identified in the tenth century, likely concurrent with the anonymous homilies and hagiographies.[276] By the time of Ælfric and Wulfstan's writings, and certainly by the mid-eleventh century, there existed in England numerous settlements which we might be able to describe as 'towns', often called *burga* in contemporary texts.[277] Perceptions of ancient urbanism would thus have likely progressed along with Anglo-Saxon urbanism.

However, it is evident that there was a strong and orthodox tradition of using *burh* to translate Latin urban terms stretching back long before English towns existed. We might, therefore, ask ourselves if *burh* in these earlier Latin-based prose texts and glosses was semantically extended to include urban connotations from the Latin terms, and if this connotational borrowing changed over time? Yet, even asking these questions presupposes that contemporaries would have understood 'urbanism' in a way which is comparable to modern definitions. Even modern scholars disagree on the extent of urbanism in very late Anglo-Saxon England: Carver sees the first towns as only appearing on the eve of the Norman Conquest,

[276] Hill, 'Athelstan's Urban Reforms'.
[277] Carver, *Formative Britain: An Archaeology of Britain, Fifth to Eleventh Century AD*, 275; Fleming, *Britain after Rome: The Fall and Rise, 400–1070*, 241.

while Fleming considers mid-eleventh-century England to be awash with hundreds of towns.[278]

In fact, the whole modern concept of 'urbanism' is vague and "often undertheorized."[279] Where scholars even try to define what they mean by 'urban', 'urbanism' or 'cities', they often find themselves resorting to amorphous descriptions such as "people practising in place," "an extreme form of nucleated settlement that carries with it certain well-established models of social and ideological control and economic function," or the distinction between urban and non-urban being "above all, one of identities."[280] There are calls for thinking of 'urbanism' in new ways.[281] But what remains clear for the current discussion is that not only is 'urbanism' hard to define, it is also part of a modern theoretical framework which requires comparative methods, sociological models and hindsight, which were largely unavailable to the Anglo-Saxon scholar. It is worth, therefore, thinking in a more *a priori* fashion about the experience contemporary writers might have had with ancient, Mediterranean and (by our standards) urban settlements. From this

[278] Carver, *Formative Britain: An Archaeology of Britain, Fifth to Eleventh Century AD*, 275; Fleming, *Britain after Rome: The Fall and Rise, 400–1070*, 241.
[279] George L. Cowgill, 'Origins and Development of Urbanism: Archaeological Perspectives', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33 (2004): 526.
[280] Adam Rogers, 'Late Roman Town as Meaningful Places: Re-Conceptualising Decline in the Towns of Late Roman Britain', in *Debating Urbanism Within and Beyond the Walls A.D. 300-700: Proceedings of a Conference Held at the University of Leicester, 15th November 2008*, ed. Denis Sami and Speed, Leicester Archaeology Monograph 17 (Leicester: School of Archaeology and Ancient History, University of Leicester, 2010), 61; Martin Carver, 'Debating Urbanism in Post-Roman Europe: Some Thoughts About Objectives', in *Debating Urbanism Within and Beyond the Walls A.D. 300-700: Proceedings of a Conference Held at the University of Leicester, 15th November 2008*, ed. Denis Sami and Speed, Leicester Archaeology Monograph 17 (Leicester: School of Archaeology and Ancient History, University of Leicester, 2010), 291; Cowgill, 'Origins and Development of Urbanism: Archaeological Perspectives', 527.
[281] Cowgill, 'Origins and Development of Urbanism: Archaeological Perspectives', 542–43; Carver, 'Debating Urbanism in Post-Roman Europe: Some Thoughts About Objectives', 291.

approach, we can explore which features Anglo-Saxons might have considered to be shared between their own settlements and those described in the Latin texts.

Direct interaction with places such as Jerusalem and Constantinople would have been incredibly limited and, of course, contact with lost, even mythological, sites like Babel would have been impossible. Instead, the point of contact between Anglo-Saxons and the ancient world was Rome. The contemporary impact of the idea of Rome as an imperial antecedent and as the heart of Christendom cannot be overestimated.[282] On the English landscape, significant ruins of Roman towns survived, which were venerated, re-appropriated and re-inhabited variously throughout the Anglo-Saxon period.[283] These sites played a role both in Anglo-Saxon architecture and Anglo-Saxon imagination. Important churches were sometimes built within Roman ruins and many of the later Alfredian fortifications restored and re-used old Roman town sites. In addition to this, descriptions of the magnificent imagined hall of Heorot in *Beowulf* are quite probably based upon Roman ruins and textual descriptions of Roman sites.[284] At the very least, the intellectual elite of Anglo-Saxon society understood their culture and its structural manifestations to have been built upon what the Romans left behind.[285] But Rome also represented the centre and source of Anglo-Saxon Christianity, important both in its influence over

[282] The pre-eminence of Rome in Anglo-Saxon culture and the reading of these texts is discussed by Discenza, *Inhabited Spaces: Anglo-Saxon Constructions of Place*, 57, 77, 84.
[283] Rogers, 'Late Roman Town as Meaningful Places: Re-Conceptualising Decline in the Towns of Late Roman Britain', 67–73.
[284] Heide Estes, *Anglo-Saxon Literary Landscapes: Ecotheory and the Environmental Imagination*, Environmental Humanities in Pre-Modern Cultures 1 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017), 77.
[285] Estes, 61.

their culture and in the fact that the texts discussed in this chapter are predominantly religious in nature.[286]

Anglo-Saxon imagination and comprehension of the ancient Mediterranean world were, therefore, always filtered through a Roman lens, be that through the concept of the classical Empire or via the Latin writings known to have originated in that city. However, it was not simply a place reconstructed in the mind from Romano-British ruins or textual descriptions. Rome itself was visited fairly regularly by English churchmen, royals such as Alfred himself and other pilgrims throughout the Anglo-Saxon period, its own ancient city-infrastructure still clearly visible.[287] Visitors brought back artistic influence and, presumably, descriptions of the settlement from these visits.[288] Rome, thus, was the eternal concept in which both the ancient Empire and the contemporary Church were combined, acutely real and mythically distant all at once. The writings behind OE religious prose were funnelled through Rome's image and Rome's language. Latin texts call Rome itself and its subordinate cities *urbes* and *civitates*, and the latter were central to Roman identity and the concept of *Romanitas*.[289] It can be most logically argued, therefore, that these Roman models are the ones upon which Anglo-Saxon translators and

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[286] Francesca Tinti, 'Introduction', in *England and Rome in the Early Middle Ages: Pilgrimage, Art and Politics*, ed. Francesca Tinti, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 40 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2014), 1.
[287] David E. E. Pelteret, 'Not All Roads Lead To Rome', in *England and Rome in the Early Middle Ages: Pilgrimage, Art and Politics*, ed. Francesca Tinti, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 40 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2014), 17–41; Alan Thacker, 'Rome: The Pilgrim's City in the Seventh Century', in *England and Rome in the Early Middle Ages: Pilgrimage, Art and Politics*, ed. Francesca Tinti, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 40 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2014), 89–139; Discenza, *Inhabited Spaces: Anglo-Saxon Constructions of Place*, 57.
[288] Luisa Izzi, 'Anglo-Saxons Underground: Early Medieval *Graffiti* in the Catacombs of Rome', in *England and Rome in the Early Middle Ages: Pilgrimage, Art and Politics*, ed. Francesca Tinti, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 40 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2014), 141–77.
[289] Moreland, 'An Introduction', 141.

writers would have based their image of the ancient Mediterranean *urbes* and *civitates* referenced in their Latin religious texts.

We can now ask both what might have been the features they saw as shared between their own *burga* and these Roman *civitates* and *urbes*, which advocated *burh* as a good translation for these Latin terms, but also which differences they might have perceived, which required semantic extension of *burh* in order to be accommodated. A key shared element is likely the inherent existence of a fortified boundary. Already we have seen the collocation between walls and *burga* and the way in which they are presented as an inherent feature of a *burh*. Likewise, the etymology of *burh* associates the word with protection and defence. Walls were also a key aspect of Roman cities. Stone walls are often a significant part of the fabric of ruins surviving from a Roman city and city walls were important in both the Classical and medieval eras in Italy.[290] Furthermore, the Latin term *murus* ('wall') often appears in collocation with *civitas* and *urbs* in these texts. Even though the great stone walls of Roman towns were leagues apart from the hedges, fences and palisades that surrounded most Anglo-Saxon defended sites, the recognition of the fortified boundary of a *civitas* or *urbes* was likely a key factor in choosing *burh* to translate these terms.

But *civitates* and *urbes* are not simply fortifications, they are also populated sites, as are *burga*. The most common compounds containing *burh* across the whole

[290] Simona Latimer, ''*Hoc Est Civitatis Vel Potius Castri*': City-Walls and Urban Status in Northern Italy (circa A.D. 493-774)', in *Debating Urbanism Within and Beyond the Walls A.D. 300-700: Proceedings of a Conference Held at the University of Leicester, 15th November 2008*, ed. Denis Sami and Speed, Leicester Archaeology Monograph 17 (Leicester: School of Archaeology and Ancient History, University of Leicester, 2010), 10.

OE corpus are those describing the inhabitants of *burga*, such as *burhware* or *burhsittende* (see particularly §7.6). Latin typically uses the word *civis*, derived from *civitas* and often translated with a *burh*-resident term, to describe a citizen, and the descriptions of the *civitates* and *urbs* in the source texts make it clear that these places were heavily populated. Another potential overlapping feature is that of high status. As we have seen in the glosses and shall see throughout this thesis, *burga* are places of importance, either as estate centres, ecclesiastical centres, royal centres or, later, urban centres. Connotations of power and social prestige are commonly attached to uses of *burh* in OE. Likewise, the *urbes* and *civitates* of the Latin texts are great centres of imperial or ecclesiastical power, with emperors, kings, lords, apostles, popes and bishops as the major players in those settings within the frames of these narratives.

These features (defensive boundary, population and high status), and likely others we cannot now detect, would have played a significant role in endorsing the use of *burh* as a translation of *urbs* and *civitas*. But what differences would have been perceived between the *urbes* and *civitates* of Latin description and the Anglo-Saxons' own *burga*? Quite possibly the scale and engineering capacity of their Roman forebears by comparison to themselves would have been noticeable. The phrase *enta geweorc* ('the work of giants') is often associated with ancient Roman ruins on the English landscape, emphasising the impact of the size of the remains and the by-then lost skills of their creators on Anglo-Saxon imagination (see also §8.3). Likewise, certain aspects of infrastructure, such as baths, were still visible in some British Roman ruins and might have been recognised as superior engineering by some at

the time.[291] Would distinguishing features such as specialised trade or large-scale commercial networks have been noted or considered relevant to Anglo-Saxons? It is impossible to say. But what we can propose is that they would have recognised the ruins on their landscape and the *urbes* and *civitates* of the Latin source texts as being 'Roman'.

We can perhaps consider, therefore, that concepts of 'urbanism' as understood by Anglo-Saxons were inextricably and inescapably tied up with concepts of *Romanitas*, and that *burh* therefore borrowed connotations of Roman urbanism where it is used in such contexts. It would be by no means the only way in which the concept of *Romanitas* was borrowed and utilised in Anglo-Saxon society. The image of Rome, the capital of the ancient Empire and the centre of contemporary Christianity, was exploited by kings, builders, the Church and those writers imitating patristic models. The West Saxon fortified settlements of Alfred re-used, in many places, Roman ruins and borrowed Roman models in organising the space within.[292] Anglo-Latin texts refer to the great settlements of England as *civitates* and *urbes*, and it is noteworthy that these sites, many of which later became urban centres, are described in OE as *burga*.

We might ask, however, why *burh* is the predominant term used to describe these sites in OE religious prose, when the loanword *ceaster* also existed and was also regularly used. Certainly, we have seen that, in many texts, *burh* and *ceaster* act almost as near-synonyms when describing ancient Mediterranean urban sites. Yet,

[291] Rogers, 'Late Roman Town as Meaningful Places: Re-Conceptualising Decline in the Towns of Late Roman Britain', 68–69.
[292] Carver, *Formative Britain: An Archaeology of Britain, Fifth to Eleventh Century AD*, 275.

context is key here. The texts which make the most use of *ceaster* are generally those which would have been used within the Latin-educated world: the glosses are there as aids to Latin reading, the Bible translations appear to have been used within the Church environment and certainly some of the Alfredian translations, although presented as texts necessary for all men, were circulated guardedly and meant more for his bishops than the population at large.[293] It is particularly in the preaching texts, and most especially in Ælfric's writing, presumably meant at least in part for lay audiences with no Latin, that we see the overwhelming presence of *burh* and conspicuous absence of *ceaster*. The use of *burh* to explain unfamiliar place names and to describe distant settlements, even in texts aimed at the Latin-educated, shows the need to use a native word to anchor the reader or listener with a familiar concept.[294] Furthermore, the borrowing of concepts of *Romanitas* from Latin texts into OE by translating *urbs* and *civitas* as *burh* accords with the contemporary desire to imitate *Romanitas* and helped bring the distant Roman into the local and familiar.

Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that, while an educated and clerical translator or author might have interpreted the use of *burh* to translate *urbs* or *civitas* in this way, there is no need to assume that all possible audiences for these texts would have comprehended these examples of *burh* in the same way. Liuzza reminds us to think of the heterogeneity of audiences for religious texts, and it is also valuable to consider the heterogeneity of perceptions of a single word.[295] It is

[293] Liuzza, 'Who Read the Gospels in Old English?', 15; Gittos, 'The Audience for Old English Texts: Ælfric, Rhetoric and "the Edification of the Simple"', 239.
[294] Similar but more generic familiarising techniques are noted by Discenza, *Inhabited Spaces: Anglo-Saxon Constructions of Place*, 71.
[295] Liuzza, 'Who Read the Gospels in Old English?', 3.

possible to reconstruct this layered and Romanising interpretation of *burh* on the part of translators, composers, scribes and readers of the same background. But would such connotations have been carried across for someone who had never seen the Latin originals, had never read other descriptions of such sites and who perhaps only experienced narratives and descriptions of these ancient Mediterranean settlements through these vernacular texts? Such listeners (as they would not likely have been readers) did not necessarily borrow much of *Romanitas* into their concept of *burh*, but rather brought their pre-existing conceptions of *burh* to the scenery of biblical and religious stories. Indeed, the use of *burh* for these ancient sites would have encouraged all who interacted with these texts, no matter their understanding of *Romanitas*, to bring contemporary connotations of *burh* with them on their journey into the distant past. To understand more what these connotations are, we need to turn to those texts which use *burh* to describe the world the Anglo-Saxons themselves inhabited.

5 Historical Prose About England

5.1 Introduction

This chapter thinks about how *burh* is used in the OE translation of Bede's *HE* and the *Chronicles*, where the writers used their own language to describe places within their own lived experience, and, indeed, places they experienced primarily through their own language. This differs greatly from the analysis of the previous two chapters, in which the OE adapts Latin descriptions of places generally only imagined by most people. Even though united by setting and vernacular usage, the questions pertinent to the *OEB* and the *Chronicles* are quite different, and this chapter will be split into two parts accordingly.

The analysis of the *OEB* will consider the impact of multiple layers of translation on place names and place perception, while the section on the *Chronicles* will argue for a more political reading of *burh*, showing how pre-existing connotations help vernacular chroniclers shape their historical narratives.

5.2 The *OEB*

5.2.1 Introduction to the *OEB*

The Venerable Bede was a Northumbrian monk who lived and worked at the dual monastery of Wearmouth-Jarrow in the late seventh and early eighth centuries.

His *magnum opus*, the *HE*, was finished in 731 and contains five books of the history of Britain from Roman occupation to his own day.[296] It proved to be one of the most popular texts in medieval Europe, being widely disseminated and studied.[297] Although a Latin text, Bede occasionally employed vernacular place names, and four of these contain *burh* as an element. By the early tenth century, a translation of the *HE* had been made into OE, which contains 73 examples of the word *burh* (R4.1–57, 62–93), with four additional examples occurring in an alternative translation of part of Book III (R4.58–61).[298]

Manuscript evidence suggests that the *OEB* was produced between 890 and 930, translated from (and heavily editing) the C-recension of the *HE*.[299] While the date is generally accepted, the question of authorship and geographical origin has never been satisfactorily settled. The text itself gives no clear indication of its authorship, but around a century after its composition Ælfric attributed it to King Alfred.[300] For a long time Alfred was accepted as the translator, but the attribution was called into question in the late nineteenth century, especially when Thomas

[296] Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, eds., *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), xvii.
[297] Colgrave and Mynors, xvii; Lemke, *The Old English Translation of Bede's* Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum *in Its Historical and Cultural Context*, 42.
[298] Generally, the translation is known as the *Old English Bede* or *OEB*. The *DOE* lists each book of the translation and its headings as separate items (*BedePref*, *BedeHead*, *Bede 1*, *Bede 2*, *Bede 3*, *Bede 3 (O)*, *Bede 4* and *Bede 5*). When referring to the text as a whole, I shall refer to it as *OEB*, but for quotations I shall use the individual book codes.
[299] Sharon M. Rowley, *The Old English Version of Bede's* Historia Ecclesiastica, Anglo-Saxon Studies 16 (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2011), 16–24; Lemke, *The Old English Translation of Bede's* Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum *in Its Historical and Cultural Context*, 40–43, 89.
[300] Homily IX, Malcolm R. Godden, ed., *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series*, Early English Text Society, S.S. 17 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 72–80; Rowley, *The Old English Version of Bede's* Historia Ecclesiastica, 37.

Miller noted the presence of Anglian dialect in the text.[301] Miller's observation revolutionised research about the *OEB*, and since then issues of style and dialectology have become enmeshed in the authorship debate.[302] Ultimately, we cannot prove one way or another whether the *OEB* was part of the Alfredian translation programme or not.[303] While most of the analysis of the use of *burh* in this section will not speak directly to the authorship debate, the scholarly debates around the text's production must be borne in mind. This section will work with the general consensus that it was made in the late ninth or early tenth century and is not purely West Saxon.

Burh and Bede have been discussed together before, tending to deal with two interwoven concerns: place names and the common translation pairs of *urbs*/*burh* and *civitas*/*ceaster*. Blair, in discussing early minsters, comments that of the 10 *burh* place names known from pre-750, seven of these are minsters.[304] Four of these names

[301] Henry Sweet, ed., *An Anglo-Saxon Reader in Prose and Verse* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1876), 195; Thomas Miller, ed., *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People: Edited with a Translation and Introduction*, vol. 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1890), xxvi–lvii.
[302] See especially: J. M. Hart, 'Rhetoric in the Translation of Bede', in *An English Miscellany, Presented to Dr. Furnivall in Honour of His Seventh-Fifth Birthday*, by Frederick James Furnivall, ed. W. P. Ker, Arthur S. Napier, and Walter W. Skeat (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901); Sherman M. Kuhn, 'Synonyms in the Old English Bede', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 46, no. 2 (1947): 168–76; Rudolf Vleeskruyer, ed., *The Life of St Chad: An Old English Homily* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1953), 53; Dorothy Whitelock, 'The *Old English Bede*: Sir Israel Gollancz Memorial Lecture, British Academy', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 48 (1962): 57, 77; Dorothy Whitelock, 'The List of Chapter-Headings in the Old English Bede', in *Old English Studies in Honour of John C. Pope*, ed. Robert B. Burlin and Edward B. Irving, Jr. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 263–84; Stanton, *The Culture of Translation in Anglo-Saxon England*, 58; Molyneaux, 'The *Old English Bede*: English Ideology or Christian Instruction'; Christine Wallis, 'The Old English Bede: Transmission and Textual History in Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts' (Sheffield, University of Sheffield, 2013); Greg Waite, 'The *Old English Bede* and the Glosses in the *Tiberius Bede*', *Parergon* 30, no. 1 (2013): 1–49; Greg Waite, 'Translation Style, Lexical Systems, Dialect Vocabulary, and the Manuscript Transmission of the Old English Bede'', *Medium Ævum* 83, no. 1 (2014): 1–48; Lemke, *The Old English Translation of Bede's* Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum *in Its Historical and Cultural Context*, 99–100.
[303] Molyneaux, 'The *Old English Bede*: English Ideology or Christian Instruction', 1322.
[304] Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 250.

are those found in the *HE* and a further example, *Coludesburg*, although not in the *HE*, appears in other early Latin texts and also in the *OEB*. James Campbell also observed that generally the *OEB* used *burh* where the *HE* used *urbs*, "for an important settlement with no notable Roman heritage," and *ceaster* where the *HE* used *civitas*, for places "known to have had a significant Roman past;" however, he also noted that Canterbury and London "represented something of an exception" to this rule.[305]

This section intends to build upon the observations of these scholars within the framework of a complete study of the word *burh*. Firstly, the four examples of *burh* place names in the *HE* will be examined. This evidence will be used to question what we can know about Bede's understanding of *burh*, but also to think about the nature of his taking OE place names and rendering them into Latin. Following this, I shall consider the *burh*/*urbs* and *ceaster*/*civitas* pairings and their exceptions, demonstrating the impact of pre-existing OE place names on the vocabulary choices of the translator(s). This section will conclude with an interdisciplinary case study on *Coludesburg*, arguing against its traditional association with Coldingham and showing how detailed investigation into a single *burh* place name can shed light on sites of archaeological interest.

[305] James Campbell, 'Bede's Words for Place', in *Names, Words, and Graves: Early Medieval Settlement: Lectures Delivered in the University of Leeds, May 1978*, ed. P. H. Sawyer (Leeds: School of History, University of Leeds, 1979), 34–43; quotations from Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 248.

5.2.2 *Burh* in the *HE*

Each of the four examples of *burh* in the *HE* occurs along with at least one Latin settlement term describing the site, allowing us insight into Bede's concept of *burh*:[306]

> de nobillissimo … **monasterio** … quod vocatur lingua Anglorum **Bancornaburg**
>
> from the most noble **monastery/minster** …. which is called ***Bancornaburg*** in the language of the Angles
> *HE* II, chapter 2

> in **castro** … quod lingua Anglorum **Cnobheresburg**, id est **urbs** Cnobheri, vocatur
>
> in the **stronghold/fortification** … which is called **Cnobheresburg** in the language of the Angles, that is 'the **town** of Cnobhere'
> *HE* III, chapter 19

> in illa [**civitate**] quae **Tilaburg** cognominatur
>
> in that [**city/town**] which is named ***Tilaburg***
> *HE* III, chapter 22

> in **castello** sui illustri … **Viltaburg**, id est **Oppidum** Viltorum
>
> in his famous walled **town** … **Viltaburg**, that is the **fortress/fortified town** of the Vilts
> *HE* V, chapter 11

[306] Latin edition used is: Colgrave and Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*.

We can see that the four *burh* place names interact with six different Latin terms, all of which have specific connotations which characterise the sites slightly differently. Four of these (*monasterium*, *castra*, *civitas* and *castellum*) are used by Bede to define the sites themselves. *Bancornaburg* (identified as Bangor or Bangor Iscoed in Wales) is shown to be a monastery or minster.[307] *Cnobheresburg* (generally associated with Burgh Castle) is described as a *castrum* or fortress, within which a monastery was built.[308] This also connects a *burh* place name with a monastic site, but unlike *Bancornaburg*, *Cnobheresburg* is not the monastery itself but rather the site around it. *Tilaburg*, identified with Tilbury, is mentioned along with *Ythancaestir*, both called *civitates*, in the context of episcopal activity, linking *burh* sites once again to the Church.[309] Finally, *Viltaburg*, associated with Utrecht in the modern-day Netherlands, which was then part of the Frankish kingdom, is defined as a *castellum*, which, much like *castrum*, can refer to a fortress, but also to smaller settlements without urban connotations.[310] The Frankish king Pippin is said to have endowed a Church and bishopric here. The repeated connection between *burh* place names and Church concerns is to be expected in a text dubbed an 'ecclesiastical history', but these four Latin terms also show a variety of settlement connotations which Bede

[307] Colgrave and Mynors, 138, note 1 identifies it as Bangor Iscoed; while Thomas Miller, *Place Names in the English Bede and the Localisation of the Mss.*, Quellen Und Forschungen Zur Sprach- Und Culturgeschichte Der Germanischen Völker 78 (Strasbourg: Karl J. Trübner, 1896), 47 thought that it was Bangor itself.
[308] Colgrave and Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, 271; Miller, *Place Names in the English Bede and the Localisation of the Mss.*, 56.
[309] Colgrave and Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, 283 and 285; they also think that Ythancaestir is an Anglicised form of Othona, a Roman fort, situated in modern-day Bradwell-on-Sea.
[310] See 'Castellum', in *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2015), http://clt.brepolis.net.libproxy.york.ac.uk/dmlbs/Default.aspx.

associates with these *burh* sites. Yet the words refer to the sites themselves and do not necessarily directly reflect on his perception of the word *burh* itself.

However, two of the terms (*urbs* and *oppidum*) are used actively by Bede to translate *burh* into Latin. On the one hand, this does lend credence to the *burh*/*urbs* dichotomy noted by Campbell. However, Bede is evidently equally at ease with translating *burh* as *oppidum*, a term used for fortified towns and fortresses.[311] This translation from OE into Latin by Bede suggests that he associates *burh* with fortified settlements, evidently of some importance or size. We are left, then, with the question of why Bede felt the need to translate the names *Cnobheresburg* and *Viltaburg*, but not *Bancornaburg* or *Tilaburg*. A lack of familiarity of the sites due to their distance from Bede's Northumbrian monastery does not distinguish these sites consistently: *Viltaburg* is on the continent and *Cnobheresburg* was part of the East Anglian kingdom far to the south, but *Tilaburg* was also in Essex and *Bancornaburg* in north-west Wales. We could instead theorise that the use of *castrum* and *castellum* are causative, perhaps requiring further explanation as to the use of a *burh* place name with these Latin terms. However, the connotations of fortification which are key to both *castrum* and *castellum* are similar to those for *urbs* and *oppidum* and do not seem to be at all contradictory to Bede's own definition of *burh*. Furthermore, the evidence forms such a small sample that it is difficult to draw any conclusions. It remains, therefore, unclear why Bede translated only two of the *burh* place names.

While some primacy is afforded to *urbs* and *oppidum* as the direct translations of *burh*, the *burh*/*urbs* connection is not overwhelmingly apparent in Bede's own

[311] See 'Oppidum', in *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2015), http://clt.brepolis.net.libproxy.york.ac.uk/dmlbs/Default.aspx.

writing. What is important in the analysis of these four examples is that there appears to be no cognitive dissonance for Bede in his use of any of these six Latin terms to describe a *burh* site. Fortification and importance of the sites appear to be key factors in the Latin terms chosen, but equally we can see that *burh* can be associated with a variety of connotations in Latin.

5.2.3 *Burh/Urbs* Pairing and the Impact of Place Names

Place names are also of central importance to understanding the use of *burh* in the *OEB*. This section will show that, while the *burh/urbs* and *ceaster/civitas* dichotomies observed by Campbell largely hold true, there is a more subtly complicated relationship between the Latin and OE terms. We shall see that both OE terms are used for a wider range of Latin vocabulary than the pairings suggest, but also that the pre-existence of either *burh* or *ceaster* in a standard OE place name could influence the translation choices made.

Excluding the alternative passage from Book III, there are 89 examples of *burh* in the *OEB*. Sixteen of these are found in personal names, and shall not be discussed. The remaining 73 examples and what they translate are summarised in Table 5, with examples split according to whether *burh* appears in the OE as part of a place name:

Latin Term	Not in Place Name	Place Name	Total
Urbs	15	7	22
Civitas	2	2	4
Oppidum	3	0	3
Castellum	1	0	1
Civis (trans. with *burhwara*)	2	0	2
Metropolis (trans. with *ealdorburh*)	3	0	3
Latin place name	0	19	19
OE *Burh* place name	0	3	3
No Latin term	11	5	16

Table 5: *Burh* in the *OEB*

It is immediately clear that the connection between *burh* and *urbs* is strong, but also that it is not exclusive. Certainly, *urbs* itself is rarely translated in the *OEB* by anything other than *burh*: beyond these 22 examples, *urbs* is otherwise only rendered once by *fæsten* and three times by *ceaster*. However, this appears to be representative more of the range of ways in which the translator(s) felt *urbs* could be rendered in OE, rather than the limitations of *burh* as a semantic agent.

The translator(s) clearly considered that *burh* was capable of rendering other fortification and urban terms, including *civitas*. A particularly interesting use of *burh* is where the Latin term *metropolis* ('mother city, capital city'), used to describe Constantinople, London and Canterbury, is translated with *ealdorburh* ('chief/superior *burh*', R4.12, 14, 16 and 21). This compound only appears in OE a few times outside of the *OEB*, twice in glossaries, again translating *metropolis*, and once in a riddle poem (R2.258, 271, R7.188). This would suggest that the term

ealdorburh was an invention in order to render *metropolis*, giving yet another example of *burh* as a productive building-block word for translators. *Burh* and *burh* place names in the *OEB* are also often inserted into passages where the Latin had no equivalent term, either to add an explanatory epithet to a Latin place name, or to refer back to a previously mentioned site. This desire to add in explanation where the Latin was felt to be too laconic is something we have already seen in the previous chapters, and is a phenomenon not isolated to the use of *burh*.

However, what this table also shows us is the central role place names play in the use of *burh* in the *OEB*. Thirty-six of the 73 examples of *burh* appear as the second element of compound place names, such as *Bebbanburg* (Bamburgh), *Romeburh* (Rome) and *Cantwarabyrig* (Canterbury). Three of these examples occur where Bede himself used the OE place names in the *HE* (R4.52, 56 and 86). *Burh* also appears in place names where the Latin has used a settlement term such as *urbs*, e.g. the translation of "in urbe Roma" ('in the city of Rome', *HE* Book IV, chapter 17) as "in Rome byrig" ('in Rome-*burh*', R4.74). Far more commonly, though, *burh* appears in a place name where the Latin has no settlement term, such as the regular translation of *Dorovernis* as *Cantwarabyrig* for Canterbury, or *Roma* as *Romaburh* for Rome. Largely, these OE place names can be found attested in many other texts across the whole language, which, as Whitelock notes, suggests that they were fairly standard forms.[312] These names were thus used by the translator(s) not necessarily because *burh* translated a particular Latin term, but simply because they were the settlements' pre-existing vernacular names.

[312] Whitelock, 'The *Old English Bede*: Sir Israel Gollancz Memorial Lecture, British Academy', 64–65.

Recognising this is key, as what we are really dealing with here is not merely the question of how certain Latin terms are translated into OE, but we are instead working with several layers of translation. The *HE* was a Latin text written by a native OE speaker, who refers to many places within Britain and sometimes inserts vernacular place names into his Latin. This means that the later OE-speaking translators would be influenced in how they read the Latin not only by their own knowledge of pre-existing vernacular place names, but also by how Bede himself interacted with such onomastic forms. All of these factors would then impact how the Latin was rendered into OE.

The consequences of this complex translation framework upon our understanding of the use of *burh* in the *OEB*, and especially the dichotomy proposed by Campbell, can be best seen through comparison with the 166 examples of *ceaster*:

Latin Term	**Not in Place Name**	**Place Name**	**Total**
Civitas	33	23	56
Urbs	1	2	3
Oppidum	0	1	1
Castellum	3	0	3
Castrum	1	0	1
Civis (trans. with *ceasterwara*)	5	0	5
Latin place name	0	29	29
OE *ceaster* place name	0	1	1
No Latin Term	6	4	10

Table 6: *Ceaster* in the *OEB*

Many of the patterns are familiar. Like *burh* with *urbs*, *ceaster* shows a strong but not exclusive relationship with *civitas*, and is also used for other fortification and urban Latin terms. Likewise, *ceaster* place names often translate Latin place names which used no settlement term: most commonly this occurs with Latin *Hrofi* translated as *Hrofesceaster* (Rochester). Furthermore, like *urbs* and *burh*, *civitas* is rendered almost exclusively by *ceaster*, with the only exceptions being those four examples noted in Table 5 where it is translated with *burh*.

Largely, therefore, we can see that Campbell's pairings ring true when we look from the Latin to the OE. Indeed, looking in detail at the exceptions actually goes some way to support Campbell's findings, but to evolve them within the complex translation framework set out above. Where *burh* translates *civitas* and *ceaster* translates *urbs*, we can find evidence that the pre-existence of *burh* or *ceaster* in a standard OE place name prompted the translator(s) to use that term, even in defiance of normal semantic correlations. Three of the four examples where *burh* translates *civitas* are in reference to Canterbury. Twice, the Latin name *Dorovernis* is paired with *civitas* in the *HE*, but is rendered in the *OEB* as *Cantwarabyrig* (R4.13 and 89), and the phrase "in regia civitate" ('in the royal city') is translated as "in þære cynelican byrg" ('in the royal *burh*', R4.18). That Bede would refer to Canterbury as a *civitas* is not unexpected, as it has a strong Roman heritage, and usually where he does, it is translated as *ceaster*. However, the place name *Cantwaraburh* shows that in OE Canterbury was also conceived of and labelled as a *burh*, specifically the *burh* of the Kentish people. It is likely, therefore, that the preconception of Canterbury as a *burh* encouraged the translator(s) to flout their usual terminological pairings on

occasion. The influence of place names can similarly be seen in two of the three examples where *ceaster* translates *urbs*: in *Bede1*, chapter 7, "Legionum Urbis" is translated as "Ligeceastre" (Leicester) and in *Bede4*, chapter 14, "Urbis Lundoniæ" is rendered as "Lundenceastre" (London), both of which are standard names throughout OE writings.

Place-name influence is also visible in two examples of *burh* and *ceaster* translating other Latin terms. The only example of *burh* translating *castellum* is R4.85, where the term describes *Wiltaburg*, one of the *burh* place names used in the *HE* by Bede himself (as *Viltaburg*). *Ceaster* translates *oppidum* in *Bede1*, chapter 5, when "Eboracum oppidum" is rendered as "Eoforwicceastre," the name always used in the *OEB* for York. However, other than this one example, *oppidum* in the *HE* is rendered in the *OEB* only with *burh*. We have also seen *burh* translate *oppidum* in other texts, particularly the glosses and glossaries, and it is also noteworthy that it is the one word other than *urbs* which Bede himself uses to translate *burh* in the name *Viltaburg*.

A final example of interest is R4.11, where "civitatibus" is translated as "burh" in reference to the fortifications from which the fifth-century Britons fled when under Pictish attack. This passage highlights the Britons' helplessness following the abandonment of Britain by the Romans, and the fortifications are clearly represented as British, not Roman, in origin. Although not under the influence of a place name, this example suggests an active choice on the part of the translator(s) to avoid using *ceaster* in this distinctly non-Roman context, preferring the perhaps more flexible and denotationally broad *burh*.

The evidence of this section has shown a subtle and complex multi-layered translation process, with Bede's own use and translation of vernacular place names as well as knowledge of pre-existing OE place names impacting later readers' interpretation of the Latin and its subsequent translation into OE. It is now possible to use this deeper understanding of the translation process and the use of *burh* in the *OEB* to shed light on an individual site of onomastic and archaeological interest: *Coludesburg*.

5.2.4 *Urbs Coludi*, *Coludesburg* and Coldingham

In book IV, chapter 25 of the *HE*, Bede tells of a double monastery in a place called *Coludi urbs* ('the fortified town of *Colud*'), which in the seventh century was presided over by an abbess named Æbbe. A hermit from Ireland predicts the monastery will burn down after Æbbe's time due to the sins of its inhabitants, an event which has taken place by the time of Bede's writing. The *OEB* translates *Coludi urbs* with the place name *Coludesburg*, and the site is most commonly associated with modern-day Coldingham, Berwickshire in southern Scotland.

The first point of interest is in the name *Coludesburg* itself. On the surface, it appears to be a direct translation of the Latin name: *Coludes* for *Coludi* (both genitive forms of the putative name *Colud*) and *burh* for *urbs*. However, as we have seen throughout this section, the translation process is not so simple. It is likely that Bede himself is translating the vernacular name he knows for the site into Latin, and that

the *OEB* translator is rendering it back into OE, and indeed it seems likely that Bede would also have known the site as *Coludesburg*. The most compelling evidence for this comes from the use of the vernacular name in two Latin hagiographies contemporary with Bede's writing. The late-seventh-/early-eighth-century anonymous *Life of St Cuthbert* tells the story of Cuthbert's invitation from Æbbe to come to her monastery, which is called *Colodesbyrig*; Bede's *Life of St Cuthbert* refers to the site at the same part of the story as *urbs Coludi*.[313] Likewise, the early-eighth-century Latin *Life of Bishop Wilfrid* also refers to Æbbe's monastery with the vernacular name *Colodæsburg*.[314] As these texts were all written in Northumbrian monasteries, it seems certain that *Coludesburg* was the contemporary vernacular name, and that *urbs Coludi* is its translated form. This gives us another example, in addition to that of *Cnobheresburg*, where Bede translates *burh* as *urbs*.

While we can be certain that an *urbs Coludi* existed in Bede's time under the name of *Coludesburg*, a question mark hangs over the modern associated location. It was Miller who first identified *urbs Coludi*/*Coludesburg* with Coldingham in his translated edition and later in his publication concerning place names in the *OEB*.[315] He gives no reasoning for his choice (though he was probably encouraged by the fact that Coldingham had a documented later medieval priory), but since then Coldingham has been the standard interpretation.[316] However, this case study will

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[313] Bertram Colgrave, ed., *Two* Lives *of Saint Cuthbert: A* Life *by an Anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life: Texts, Translation and Notes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), 80–81, 188–89.
[314] Bertram Colgrave, ed., *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus: Text, Translation and Notes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927), 78–79.
[315] Miller, *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People: Edited with a Translation and Introduction*; Miller, *Place Names in the English Bede and the Localisation of the Mss.*, 29.
[316] See, for example: Alan O. Anderson, *Scottish Annals from English Chroniclers A.D. 500 to 1286* (London: David Nutt, 1908), 61; Colgrave, *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus: Text,*

use linguistic, textual and archaeological evidence to argue that Coldingham and *urbs Coludi*/*Coludesburg* were in fact different sites, possibly co-existing.

The onomastic evidence may indicate a separate history for these two sites, though it is far from conclusive. W. F. H. Nicolaisen, in his study of Scottish place names, considers Coldingham to derive from the form *Coldingaham* and to have a parallel tradition with *Coludesburg* and Bede's *urbs Coludi*.[317] He recognises that the first element of both names is likely *Colud*, which he thinks might be a Brittonic place name. He thus posits the translation of *Coldingaham* as either "the village of the people at *Colud*" or even "the village of the people near *Coludesburg*" and thinks that *Coldingaham* probably originated in the seventh century.[318] He also considers that *Coludesburg* might derive from a theoretical Britonnic name such as *Gaer Colud*.[319] His conclusions regarding the relationship between *Coldingaham* and *Coludesburg* are therefore somewhat unclear: he lists the history of *Coludesburg* as parallel to that of *Coldingaham*, but also indicates that *Coldingaham* could derive from *Coludesburg*, which he suggests may be a separate fort on St Abb's Head, a nearby headland named after Æbbe.[320]

Texts from the twelfth century regarding the history of Coldingham seem to confirm that it and *Coludesburg* were separate sites. At the turn of the twelfth century, King Edgar of Scotland grants Coldingham to the monks of St Cuthbert: in

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Translation and Notes; Colgrave, *Two* Lives *of Saint Cuthbert: A* Life *by an Anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life: Texts, Translation and Notes*; Whitelock, 'The *Old English Bede*: Sir Israel Gollancz Memorial Lecture, British Academy', 65.

[317] W. F. H. Nicolaisen, *Scottish Place-Names: Their Study and Significance* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1976), 21.

[318] Nicolaisen, 20–21, 72–73.

[319] Nicolaisen, 20–21.

[320] Nicolaisen, 72–73.

Lawrie XVIII, a charter dating to 1098, Edgar grants Coldingham "cum omnibus consuetudinibus sicut eas ego ipse habui in mea propria manu" ('with all the customs such as I have had them in my own hands'), suggesting that Coldingham was previously a Scottish royal estate.[321] Furthermore, in Lawrie XIX, dated to 1100, King Edgar confirms his gift of Coldingham including other lands, calling Coldingham a *mansio* ('manor').[322] While the later medieval priory may have been an influencing factor in Miller's choice of Coldingham as a translation of *Coludesburg*, these charters appear to document the foundation of the medieval priory at the turn of the twelfth century. The textual evidence thus suggests to me that *Coldingaham* was a Scottish royal estate in the eleventh century, and could reasonably have been in Anglian royal possession in the eighth century.[323]

In addition to this, the *Miracles of St Æbbe*, a Latin text written in the late twelfth century, possibly by a monk of Coldingham who originated in Durham, tells the story of Æbbe and of 'Simple' Henry who supposedly built the church at Coldingham.[324] This text refers independently to *Coldingham*, which is classed at one point as a *villa*, and Æbbe's *urbs Coludi*, presenting them clearly as separate sites. In this text, *urbs Coludi* appears to be used near-synonymously with the phrase *mons Coludi* ('the mountain/hill of *Colud*'), and both of these are translated by the editors as being St Abb's Head.[325]

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[321] Archibald C. Lawrie, ed., *Early Scottish Charters* (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1905), 16.
[322] Lawrie, 16.
[323] Ian B. Cowan and David E. Easson, *Medieval Religious Houses: Scotland, with an Appendix on the Houses of the Isle of Man*, 2nd ed. (London; New York: Longman, 1976), 55 discuss the fact that Coldingham probably began its life with a monk taking charge of a Scottish estate, as these documents suggest.
[324] Robert Bartlett, ed., *The Miracles of Saint Æbbe of Coldingham and Saint Margaret of Scotland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), xviii.
[325] Bartlett, 6–7, 22–23, 26–27, 28–29, 34–35.

The only text which adds any confusion to this point is that of Symeon of Durham, a monk writing in the twelfth century, who describes Æbbe's monastery as the "monasterium in Coldingham."[326] This might suggest evidence in favour of Coldingham being at least part of her double monastery. However, it is possible also that Symeon of Durham has confused Coldingham and *urbs Coludi*, as by his time the priory of Coldingham was in existence. Nevertheless, the texts discussed here generally make it clear that Coldingham and *urbs Coludi* were distinct sites nearby to one another.

Two archaeological investigations have attempted to locate remains of *urbs Coludi*: Alcock, Alcock and Foster in 1986 and Stronach in 2005.[327] Due to the descriptions in the saints' lives of *urbs Coludi* being above the sea, Alcock, Alcock and Foster rejected inland Coldingham as the site of the monastery, but also ruled that the medieval remains of Rampart Hall on St Abb's Head were of a later medieval secular hall.[328] Instead, they turned their attentions to nearby Kirk Hill, another headland in the vicinity of Coldingham.

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[326] Thomas Arnold, ed., *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia: Historia Ecclesiæ Dunhelmensis*, vol. 1 (Wiesbaden: Lessing-Druckerei, 1882), 59.
[327] Leslie Alcock, Elizabeth A. Alcock, and Sally M. Foster, 'Reconnaissance Excavations on Early Historic Fortifications and Other Royal Sites in Scotland, 1974–1984: 1, Excavations near St Abb's Head, Berwickshire', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 116 (1986): 255–79; Simon Stronach, 'The Anglian Monastery and Medieval Priory of Coldingham: *Urbs Coludi* Revisited', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 135 (2005): 395–422.
[328] Alcock, Alcock, and Foster, 'Reconnaissance Excavations on Early Historic Fortifications and Other Royal Sites in Scotland, 1974–1984: 1, Excavations near St Abb's Head, Berwickshire', 264–65, 268, 274–76.

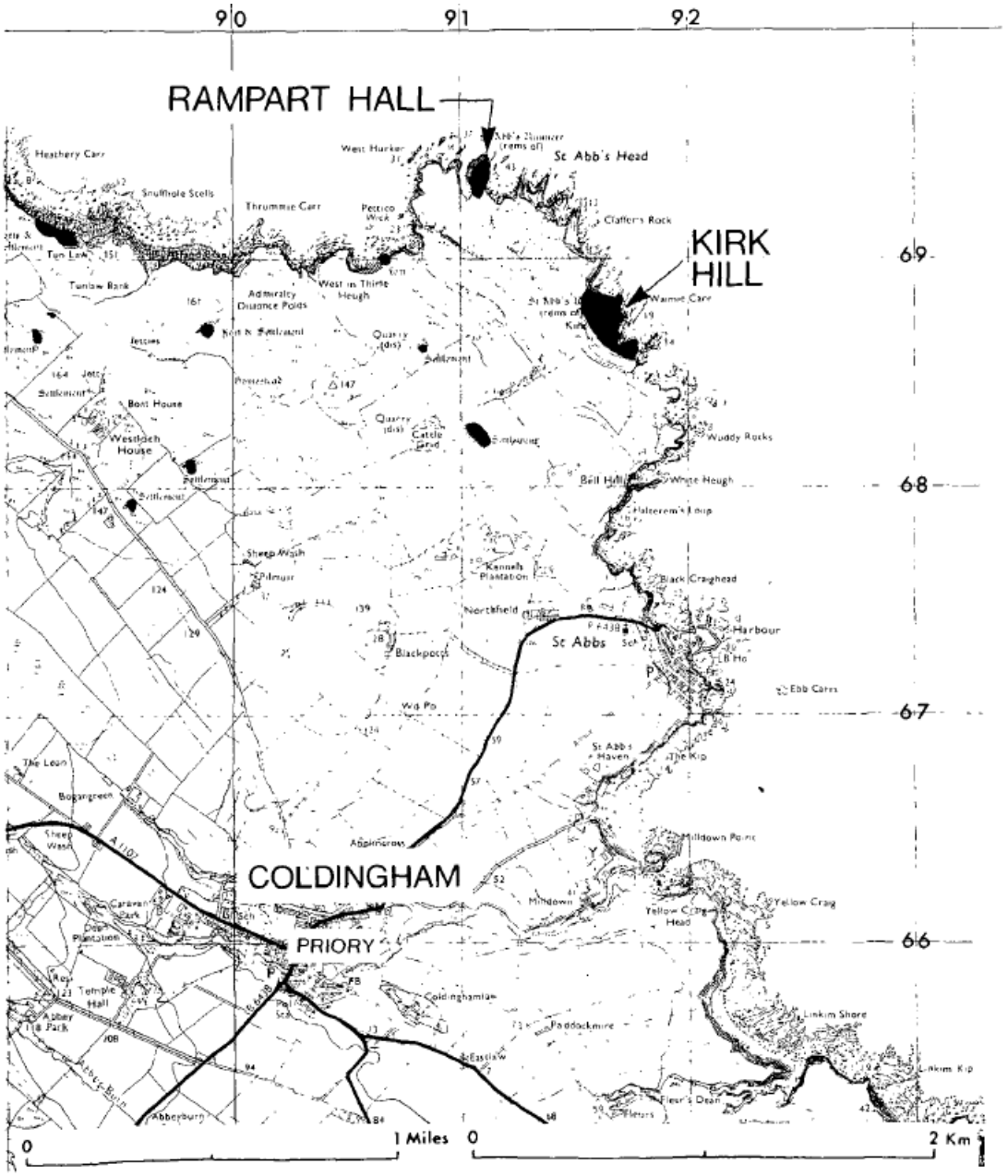

Fig. 4: Map by Alcock, Alcock and Foster showing Coldingham, Kirk Hill and Rampart Hall at St Abb's Head[329]

Several features favoured the choice of Kirk Hill as the site for *Coludesburg*. The *kirk* element in the name is suggestive of a church, and Alcock, Alcock and Foster found remains of a two-phase early medieval rampart up on the headland

[329] Image reproduced from Alcock, Alcock, and Foster, 263, Illus. 2.

(see Fig. 5 below). The wooden palisade of the earlier phase of the rampart appeared to have been burned, as the remains were charcoaled, which aligned with the story of *urbs Coludi* burning.[330] They also concluded that the rampart and its palisade had been constructed sometime in the last quarter of the first millennium AD, meaning the site could not be ruled out as contemporary with Bede's *urbs Coludi*.[331] They further noted that the style of rampart-fortification on the headland "conform[s] to a well-established pattern of relationships between Angles and Britons in the establishment of fortified centres of power."[332]

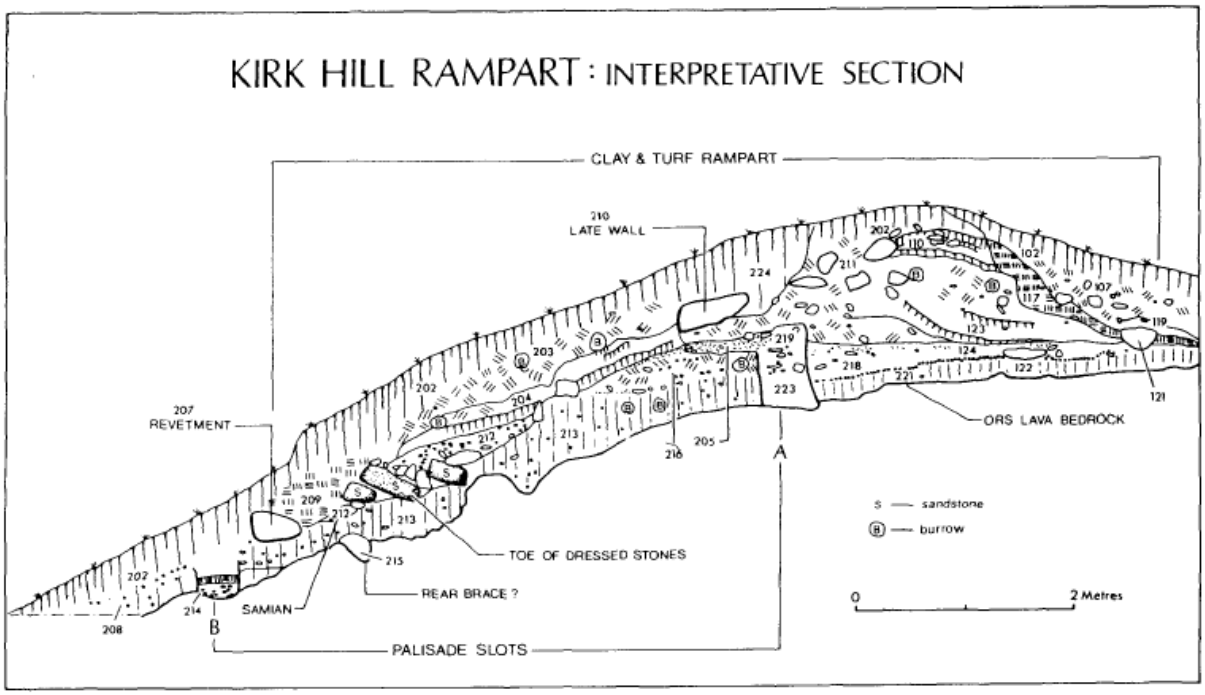

Fig. 5: Cross-section of the rampart excavated by Alcock, Alcock and Foster at Kirk Hill[333]

In many ways the evidence appears satisfying: the dates, although broad, do not contradict the timings given in the texts and the evidence of burning fits with the

[330] Alcock, Alcock, and Foster, 272.
[331] Alcock, Alcock, and Foster, 273.
[332] Alcock, Alcock, and Foster, 275–76.
[333] Image reproduced from Alcock, Alcock, and Foster, 270, Illus. 7.

story in the *HE*. Yet, there are no artefact finds which positively suggest that Kirk Hill is ecclesiastical rather than secular, and conversely no evidence was given for why the remains at St Abb's Head were definitively secular rather than ecclesiastical themselves.[334]

The question of *urbs Coludi* was not examined again archaeologically for almost twenty years, until Stronach decided to re-evaluate the evidence at Coldingham itself. While he acknowledged the discoveries made by Alcock, Alcock and Foster, he thought there was untapped potential under the later medieval priory in the village.[335] He notes chance finds from the nineteenth century which were considered to be Anglian and adds to these finds from his own dig of a ditch and an antler comb from the Anglian period.[336] Stronach also examined the layout of the village, noting that on old maps the roads around the medieval priory are on a different axis from the priory itself, suggesting that an earlier site underlies the later medieval structures.[337]

Stronach considers the combination of evidence sufficient to suggest that there was an Anglian site beneath the medieval one, and thinks it probable that the monastery of *urbs Coludi* was at least partly at Coldingham. He proposes that the double monastery, as described in the contemporary texts, had one site at Coldingham and another at Kirk Hill, which he does admit is likely to date from the same period.[338] Although Alcock, Alcock and Foster found no clear signs that the site

[334] Alcock, Alcock, and Foster, 264–65.
[335] Stronach, 'The Anglian Monastery and Medieval Priory of Coldingham: *Urbs Coludi* Revisited', 398.
[336] Stronach, 398, 412, 415.
[337] Stronach, 418–19.
[338] Stronach, 416–17.

at Kirk Hill was ecclesiastical, Stronach discusses finds from Coldingham, which he considers to be suggestive of ecclesiastical use: indirect evidence of an early Christian graveyard, the chance find of a fragment of a possibly Anglian stone sculpture and indication of ironworking in the area.[339] However, this evidence is far from categorical. Furthermore, Stronach's analysis of the textual and linguistic evidence is often contradictory: for example, he interprets Nicolaisen's confused parallel tradition for Coldingham's place name as evidence that Coldingham originated from the *urbs Coludi* name.[340]

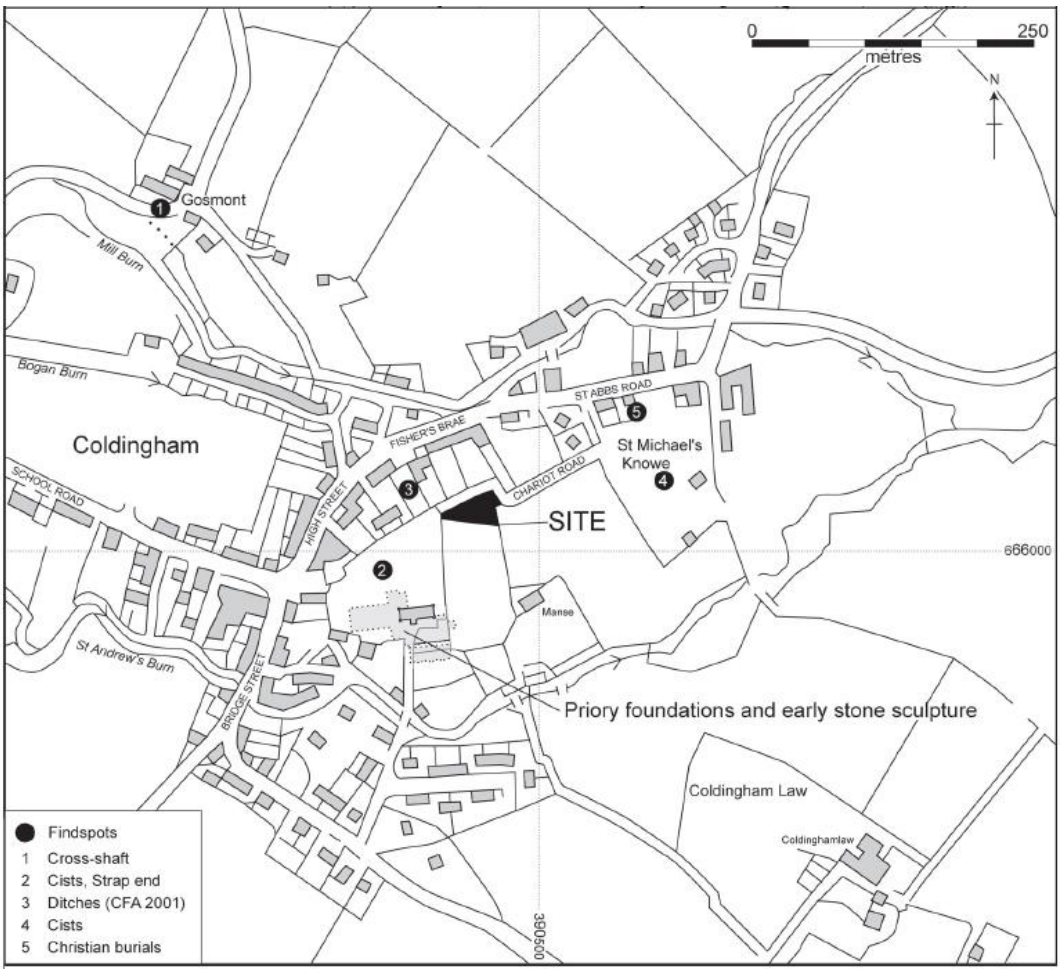

Fig. 6: Map of Coldingham showing Stronach's excavation site and finds[341]

[339] Stronach, 417.
[340] Stronach, 416.
[341] Image reproduced from Stronach, 396, Illus 1.

I would like to re-evaluate the findings of both Alcock, Alcock and Foster and Stronach in light of the discussions regarding *urbs Coludi* in this chapter. The textual and linguistic evidence seem clearly to suggest that Coldingham and *urbs Coludi*/*Coludesburg* were two separate sites, and that Coldingham had been a royal estate, at least in the eleventh century. The evidence of a burnt palisade at Kirk Hill, the presence of fortification, the location on a headland and the dating of the rampart certainly seem to conform with what we would expect of *urbs Coludi*/*Coludesburg* from the linguistic and textual evidence. While Stronach's argument that Coldingham was the site of an Anglian settlement is convincing, I propose an alternative interpretation of the site to his theory of its being part of a double monastery. Combining the place-name and documentary evidence with Stronach's finds, I would consider this to be suggestive of a royal estate of Anglian origin, which was later given by king Edgar of Scotland for the formation of Coldingham priory. I also think it likely that the finds at Kirk Hill correspond as much as possible with *urbs Coludi*/*Coludesburg*.

The interdisciplinary evidence indicates, therefore, the existence of a headland monastery with a connected royal estate, originating in the Anglian period, with the monastery being abandoned after burning down and the estate later becoming a priory. This particular conclusion could only be reached by combining comparative linguistic and textual analysis with archaeological investigation, showing the value of such interdisciplinary research.

5.2.5 Conclusion to the *OEB*

This analysis of *burh* in the *OEB* has not simply explored ways in which we might interpret *burh* in the translation of Bede's Latin into OE. It has also considered Bede's own use of the vernacular, and thus how he understood his world, examining how he then rendered vernacular ideas into Latin. In writing about his land, both historical and near-contemporary, he largely writes of settlements which are not urban, even if they have Roman origins. His use of words such as *urbs* and *civitas* says much for the impression of 'England' he wishes to paint, but also perhaps of how he might have viewed such Latin vocabulary as a means of representing settlements for which he already had native vocabulary such as *burh*. This phenomenon can be seen clearly in examples such as *urbs Coludi*, but must have been endemic throughout his writing.

Thus, we can see Bede's own understanding and production of Latin filtered through his native OE, to be followed by his later translator(s), whose own OE impacted how they read his Latin and in turn how they translated it back into OE. We can recognise, therefore, that *burh*, presumably along with other OE words, was not being used to render distant Latin into domestic writing, as in the two previous chapters. Rather, the fact that the referents were predominantly within the writers' own worlds meant that the OE vocabulary functioned both as source and target language in a complex translation process. This section has also shown the value of interdisciplinary linguistic research for other disciplines, offering new ways of reading archaeological evidence. A better understanding of the word *burh* itself, but

also the way in which the word is used in the *OEB* and *HE*, allows us to come at an old problem from a different angle and propose a different solution.

5.3 The *Chronicles*

5.3.1 Introduction to the *Chronicles*

It is difficult to express the value of the *Chronicles* for early medieval English scholarship, or to encapsulate briefly in this introduction the wide variety of debates surrounding their productions, contents and historiography. They are for Anglo-Saxon historians possibly the "most important source," often inciting questions on national identity and kingship.[342] Literary scholars drill into the rhetoric of certain famous sections, such as the quasi-heroic account of Cynewulf's murder in 755.[343] Archaeologists also often rely on the evidence of the *Chronicles* to provide historical context to their material findings, and this is especially the case for those looking at

[342] Quotation from Simon Keynes, 'Manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*', in *The Cambridge History of the Book*, ed. Richard Gameson, vol. Vol 1: c. 400-1100 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 551; see also especially: Jacqueline Stodnick, 'What (and Where) Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* About?', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 86, no. 2 (2004): 87–104; Nicholas Brooks, 'Why Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* about Kings?', *Anglo-Saxon England* 39 (2010): 43–70; Alice Sheppard, *Families of the King: Writing Identity in the* Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004); Barbara Yorke, 'The Representation of Early West Saxon History in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History*, ed. Alice Jorgensen, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 23 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010), 141–59.
[343] See, for example: Jacqueline Stodnick, 'Sentence to Story: Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as Formulary', in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History*, ed. Alice Jorgensen, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 23 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010), 93; Nina Rulon-Miller, '"Cynewulf and Cyneheard": A Woman Screams', *Philological Quarterly* 76, no. 2 (1997): 113–32; Francis Leneghan, 'Royal Wisdom and the Alfredian Context of *Cynewulf and Cyneheard*', *Anglo-Saxon England* 39 (2010): 71–104.

the 'burghal' defences of Alfred, Edward and Æthelflæd.[344] Furthermore, the *Chronicles* are attractive to historical linguists, as the manuscripts contain some of the earliest and latest prose written in OE, giving evidence for both diachronic and synchronic language change.[345] For the semantic study of *burh*, the *Chronicles* are an invaluable resource, offering more than 650 instances (R4.94–766). Many of these examples are duplicated across manuscripts and many more are found in standard place names such as *Cantwaraburh*, reducing the number of instances which call for individual analysis. Nevertheless, it is still not possible to examine meaningfully every example of *burh* worthy of attention in the *Chronicles*, and this section will therefore concentrate primarily on the uses of *burh* which are of most value to current archaeological and historical 'burghal' research.

The key word when dealing with the *Chronicles* is multiplicity. All too often it is presumed that the *Chronicles* "constitute a single continuous narrative: official in status, consistent in nature and uniform in authority."[346] The reality is far more pluralistic. The *Chronicles* represent a collection of seven manuscripts and one fragment, known by the letters A–H, which preserve variant narratives, written at different times and places and from different perspectives, although predominantly

[344] See, for example: Haslam, 'The Anglo-Saxon Burh at *Wigingamere*'; Griffiths, 'The North-West Frontier'; Blake and Sargent, '"For the Protection of All the People": Æthelflæd and Her Burhs in Northwest Mercia'.
[345] Alice Jorgensen, 'Introduction', in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History*, ed. Alice Jorgensen, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 23 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010), 1–2.
[346] Keynes, 'Manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*', 537; See also the collated versions: Charles Plummer, ed., *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel with Supplementary Extracts from Others*, 2 vols (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1892); Dorothy Whitelock, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1961).

West Saxon perspectives.[347] More recently, scholars have come to recognise this plurality and to question its impact upon how we read these texts.[348] The eight *Chronicles* manuscripts have a labyrinthine history, and their relationships are still much debated today. It is not feasible in this short introduction to rehearse fully the codicological details of each manuscript and the various proposed stemmas between them.[349] Instead, I shall briefly introduce the manuscripts via an overview of the *Chronicles*' entries in terms of key events and narrative blocks mostly identified by Cecily Clark.[350] Many of the non-onomastic examples of *burh* appear throughout the *Chronicles* in clusters which accord with sections of the *Chronicles* established by Clark, and therefore this is a valuable framework within which approach my data.

It is valuable first to think about the origins of the *Chronicles*. For the annals from 60BC to 892AD, all the *Chronicles* manuscripts (excluding the fragment H,

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[347] The *DOE Web Corpus*, from which my data is gathered, does not catalogue the B manuscript. Where relevant, the evidence of this manuscript will still be considered, but its instances of *burh* are not counted among the quoted numbers due to its absence from the *DOE*.

[348] Sheppard, *Families of the King: Writing Identity in the* Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 3; Jorgensen, 'Introduction', 8; Keynes, 'Manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*', 537.

[349] For more thorough information on the manuscripts and their relationships, see: Janet Bately, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, vol. 3: MS A (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1986), xiii ff; Simon Taylor, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, vol. 4: MS. B (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1983), xi ff; Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, vol. 5: MS C (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2001), xiii ff; G. P Cubbin, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, vol. 6: MS. D (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1996), ix ff; Susan Irvine, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, vol. 7: MS. E (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2002), xi ff; Peter S. Baker, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, vol. 8: MS F (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2000), ix ff; Bredehoft, *Textual Histories: Readings in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 4–6; Susan Irvine, 'The Production of the Peterborough Chronicle', in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History*, ed. Alice Jorgensen, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 23 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010), 49–51; Jorgensen, 'Introduction', 4–5; Malasree Home, 'Double-Edged Déjà Vu: The Complexity of the Peterborough Chronicle', in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History*, ed. Alice Jorgensen, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 23 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010), 68; Janet Bately, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Texts and Textual Relationships*, Reading Medieval Studies 3 (Reading: Graduate Centre for Medieval Studies, 1991).

[350] Cecily Clark, 'The Narrative Mode of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* before the Conquest', in *England Before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. Peter Clemoes and Kathleen Hughes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 215–35.

henceforth *ChronH*) are based upon shared material known as the 'Common Stock'. This earliest section of the *Chronicles* is written, with only a few notable exceptions, in terse and simple prose, and makes use of material from various sources, including Late Antique Latin texts, Bede, the Bible, putative pre-existing Latin and even vernacular annals, as well as probable oral narratives.[351] The 'Common Stock' is believed to have been originally compiled at Alfred's court as another output of his intellectual programme.[352] Parallels can be seen between the format established in the 'Common Stock' and that seen in the Latin *Royal Frankish Annals* started under Charlemagne, suggesting a desire to emulate this great ruler.[353] Manuscript A (*ChronA*) is the closest witness to this initial compilation period as its first scribal hands can be dated to the late ninth or early tenth centuries.[354] The 'Common Stock' represents the only section which is consistent and shared across all the manuscripts, although the late-eleventh- and twelfth-century manuscripts D, E and F (*ChronD, ChronE* and *ChronF*) preserve a variant version known as the 'Northern Recension', which adds in, from a southern perspective, Mercian and Anglian details to the otherwise relatively Wessex-centric annals.[355] Following the 'Common Stock', the various manuscripts deviate from one another in terms of which narratives they tell and how long they continue for. The exception to this is manuscript G (*ChronG*),

[351] Clark, 215–17, 220; Jorgensen, 'Introduction', 12.
[352] Bately, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, 3: MS A:xviii; Bredehoft, *Textual Histories: Readings in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 6; Jorgensen, 'Introduction', 11–12; Yorke, 'The Representation of Early West Saxon History in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', 141; Brooks, 'Why Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* about Kings?', 48; Stodnick, 'Sentence to Story: Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as Formulary', 89; Keynes, 'Manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*', 539.
[353] Anton Scharer, 'The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and Continental Annal-Writing', in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History*, ed. Alice Jorgensen, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 23 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010), 161–62.
[354] Bately, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, 3: MS A:xxi–xxiv.
[355] Bredehoft, *Textual Histories: Readings in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 68.

which is a straight copy of *ChronA*, and will not be individually discussed in this chapter section.[356]

The most significant examples of *burh* in the *Chronicles* for archaeological and historical discussions are those found in the section known commonly as the 'Wars of Alfred' (found in *ChronA*, *ChronB*, *ChronC* and *ChronD*) from the last decade of the ninth century, and its twin continuations in the annals of Edward (*ChronA*) and Æthelflæd (*ChronB*, *ChronC* and *ChronD*) in the first quarter of the tenth century. These sections are often used in conjunction with the *BH* for evidence of the 'burh' system, and it is likely, although nowhere stated, that it is from these annals that historians were first inspired to use the word 'burh' to describe these fortifications. The prevailing narrative in the study of Alfredian/Edwardian 'burhs' is that the annals of Alfred record his creation of the *burh* as a military innovation and that the annals of Edward and Æthelflæd track their movements and *burh*-building across Wessex and Mercia.[357]

The 'Wars of Alfred' annals recount Alfred's military efforts against the Vikings.[358] These annals show a syntactic change of gear from the sparse entries of the 'Common Stock', giving more detail and interpretation of the events, and indeed the stylistic unity of the 'Wars of Alfred' annals suggests that they were composed as

[356] Bredehoft, 6.
[357] Brooks, 'The Unidentified Forts of the Burghal Hidage', 87; Haslam, 'Parishes, Churches, Wards and Gates in Eastern London', 38; Blake and Sargent, '"For the Protection of All the People": Æthelflæd and Her Burhs in Northwest Mercia', 121; Pelteret, 'An Anonymous Historian of Edward the Elder's Reign', 321–22; Thompson Smith, 'Marking the Boundaries: Charters and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', 173.
[358] Clark, 'The Narrative Mode of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* before the Conquest', 221–23; Brooks, 'Why Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* about Kings?', 49; Keynes, 'Manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*', 541.

a single block narrative.[359] There is some disagreement about which exact years this section covers, but I will follow Clark's suggestion of 892–6 for *ChronA*, with *ChronB*, *ChronC* and *ChronD* placing the annals a year later in 893–7.[360] The 'Wars of Alfred' annals were probably an official continuation of the 'Common Stock', but it is noticeable that this section does not appear universally across the manuscripts, being absent in *ChronE* and *ChronF*.[361]

From the tenth-century annals onwards we see even more divergence between the manuscripts.[362] *ChronA* continues in the first quarter of the tenth century with its West Saxon dynastic focus, relating the activities of Alfred's son Edward during his own wars for and conquest of much Viking-held territory.[363] In counterpoint to *ChronA*, the early-tenth-century annals of *ChronB* and *ChronC* contain what is known as the 'Mercian Register', concentrating on the role of Æthelflæd, Edward's sister, during this period of warfare to the exclusion of Edward himself.[364] This emphasis on the actions of a female figure is remarkable, as is the distinctly Mercian slant, and it is likely that these annals were produced as a continuation to the Alfredian section in or around the Mercian court in the tenth century.[365] *ChronD* creates a mixture of the Edwardian and Æthelflædian narratives,

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[359] Clark, 'The Narrative Mode of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* before the Conquest', 221–23.
[360] Clark, 221; Brooks and Keynes propose the years 893–6: Brooks, 'Why Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* about Kings?', 49; Keynes, 'Manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*', 541.
[361] Janet Bately, 'The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle 60BC to AD 890: Vocabulary as Evidence: Sir Israel Gollancz Memorial Lecture', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 64 (1978): 115–16; Bredehoft, *Textual Histories: Readings in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 62; Jorgensen, 'Introduction', 14; Brooks, 'Why Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* about Kings?', 49.
[362] Clark, 'The Narrative Mode of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* before the Conquest', 224.
[363] Jorgensen, 'Introduction', 14.
[364] Stafford, '"The Annals of Æthelflæd": Annals, History and Politics in Tenth-Century England', 103; Jorgensen, 'Introduction', 14; Stone, 'Mutually Assured Construction: Æthelflæd's Burhs, Landscapes of Defence and the Physical Legacy of the Unification of England, 899-1016', 13–14.
[365] Stafford, '"The Annals of Æthelflæd": Annals, History and Politics in Tenth-Century England', 97.

but these annals are missing from *ChronE* and *ChronF*, along with the 'Wars of Alfred'.

Although the later annals of the *Chronicles* will not be the primary focus of this chapter section, they will provide a valuable point of comparison to the main analysis. Following the relatively intense narration of the late ninth and early tenth centuries, the mid-tenth century annals return to the laconic terseness of the 'Common Stock', even appearing "somewhat disappointing."[366] It is worth noting, however, that it is here that poetry first appears in the *Chronicles*, although these verse texts will be discussed in §8.3. In the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, *ChronC*, *ChronD*, *ChronE* and *ChronF* narrate the reign of Æthelred the Unready in critical and moralising tones, showing a change of style in the history-writing once again.[367] These annals were likely written in hindsight during the reign of Æthelred's successor Cnut, encouraging the vilifying bias.[368]

Two of the manuscripts, *ChronB* and *ChronF*, cease their entries before the Norman Conquest: *ChronB* was copied in its entirety in the last quarter of the tenth century, with its entries ending at 977, while *ChronF*, although penned in the twelfth century, ends its entries at 1058.[369] *ChronF* nevertheless stands out among the *Chronicles* manuscripts as it is an entirely bilingual OE-Latin version and provides a fascinating insight into twelfth-century understanding of earlier OE writings. *ChronC*

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[366] Keynes, 'Manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*', 543.
[367] Clark, 'The Narrative Mode of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* before the Conquest', 225–26.
[368] Alice Jorgensen, 'Rewriting the Æthelredian Chronicle: Narrative Style and Identity in Anglo-Saxon Chronicle MS F', in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History*, ed. Alice Jorgensen, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 23 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010), 115; Brooks, 'Why Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* about Kings?', 52.
[369] Baker, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, 8: MS F:xvii, lxvii; Bredehoft, *Textual Histories: Readings in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 4.

continues up to 1066, while *ChronA*, *ChronD* and *ChronE* continue past 1066, with notably competing perspectives on the Norman Conquest in *ChronD* and *ChronE*.[370] *ChronE* even continues into the mid-twelfth century, having been copied at Peterborough and showing how local events can be woven into a larger historical narrative.[371]

As can be seen from this very short introduction, the history of the *Chronicles*' composition, and the histories they themselves preserve, are complex and contextually driven. Whether it is the image of Æthelred written in the light of Cnut's reign or the contradictory narratives of the Norman Conquest, we can see that the perspectives in the *Chronicles* are political and image-building, rather than transparently factual. Yet the textual evidence used in archaeo-historical 'burghal' research often does not give enough credence to the different manuscript, composition or linguistic contexts within which examples of *burh* appear. It is, therefore, the aim of this section to re-analyse the passages relevant to 'burghal' studies within a more nuanced understanding of the texts themselves. The analysis will show that, rather than representing an innovative concept, the *Chronicles*' composers drew on existing connotations of *burh* and other vocabulary to shape perceptions of the narratives they wrote. Although the focus will be primarily on the Alfredian, Edwardian and Æthelflædian annals, the trends recognised in the main analysis will also be shown to be reflected throughout the *Chronicles*' chronology.

[370] Clark, 'The Narrative Mode of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* before the Conquest', 234; Keynes, 'Manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*', 547.
[371] Irvine, 'The Production of the Peterborough Chronicle', 49–54; Home, 'Double-Edged Déjà Vu: The Complexity of the Peterborough Chronicle', 68.

5.3.2 The 'Wars of Alfred'

The 'Wars of Alfred' annals have a significantly different style to the preceding 'Common Stock', and indeed to many later annals. These five years of entries document Alfred's later wars against the Vikings, essentially cataloguing the Viking activities and the West Saxon efforts against them.[372] Here, we see a new layout of the manuscripts, longer entries with more complex syntax and a greater tendency to interpret the events described. Furthermore, these annals, unlike the 'Common Stock', are also formally linked through their content and themes. Indeed, the campaign of 892–6 (or 893–7) "is recorded as a single whole."[373]

Alice Sheppard comments that little attention has generally been paid to these annals except by military historians tracking Alfred's tactics.[374] It is in these annals that we see a development in the mobility of the Alfredian troops and various military innovations, such as the construction of a fleet.[375] Yet, for Sheppard, the emphasis is not on Alfred as a military king, but rather on his lordship ethos, which is used to mask any West Saxon vulnerabilities.[376] For others, such as Jacqueline Stodnick, Ryan Lavelle and Scott Thompson Smith, these annals represent a form of mapping the kingdom; the lists of place names give spatial information in a

[372] Ryan Lavelle, 'Geographies of Power in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: The Royal Estates of Anglo-Saxon Wessex', in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History*, ed. Alice Jorgensen, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 23 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010), 188.
[373] Clark, 'The Narrative Mode of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* before the Conquest', 221–23.
[374] Sheppard, *Families of the King: Writing Identity in the* Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 26.
[375] Stodnick, 'What (and Where) Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* About?', 94.
[376] Sheppard, *Families of the King: Writing Identity in the* Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 38.

traditional form and make the kingdom into a landscape.[377] Issues of military tactics and landscape creation are inherently important to discussions of the use of *burh*. The *burga* which appear in these annals are often seen as one of Alfred's military innovations.[378] The analysis of this chapter sub-section will show that the use of *burh* in the 'Wars of Alfred' presents the *burga* as neither innovations, nor new constructions, but rather as well-established and well-known sites, and that the focus of construction and military activity centres instead on *geweorc* ('fortifications, constructions').

In the 'Wars of Alfred' there are 15 examples of *burh* in *ChronA* (R4.128–42), *ChronB* and *ChronC* (R4.298–312), and 13 in *ChronD* (R4109–421). Seven of the *burh* examples appear in place names, with six examples of *Lundenbyrig* ('London') and one of *Sceobyrig* ('Shoebury'); however, *ChronD* only has five examples of *Lundenbyrig*. Among the eight non-onomastic examples of *burh*, a further three describe London: twice the *burhware* ('*burh*-residents/guardians', R4.131, 139, 301, 309 and 418) leave London to aid Alfred's war (in *ChronD* only once), and we are also told in 895/896 that the king is "on neaweste þære byrig" ('in the vicinity of the *burh*', R4.140, 310 and 419) during raids on Viking property. Only two more identifiable places are associated with *burh* during these years. In 893/894 the *burh* of Exeter is "beseten" ('besieged', R5.134, 304 and 413) by the Vikings, and in 894/5 the *burhware* of Chichester are put to flight by the Vikings (R4.137, 307 and 416).

[377] Stodnick, 'What (and Where) Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* About?', 104; Lavelle, 'Geographies of Power in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: The Royal Estates of Anglo-Saxon Wessex'; Thompson Smith, 'Marking the Boundaries: Charters and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', 167–85.
[378] See, for example: Brooks, 'The Unidentified Forts of the Burghal Hidage', 87; Abels, *Lordship and Military Obligation in Anglo-Saxon England*, 71; Stodnick, 'What (and Where) Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* About?', 94; Blake and Sargent, '"For the Protection of All the People": Æthelflæd and Her Burhs in Northwest Mercia', 121.

Importantly, none of the identifiable *burh* sites of the 'Wars of Alfred' annals are presented as a site which is newly founded or in any way out of the ordinary. Although Exeter and Chichester do appear in the *BH*, they both also have Roman heritages represented by the *ceaster* in their place names, often associated with *burh* as we have seen. London, too, has a strong Roman heritage and is often associated with the term *burh* in later Anglo-Saxon writings (see §7.5). Certainly, the fact that these three sites are called *burga* in these annals does not necessarily suggest that the features which earned them that description were innovated by Alfred, nor that they conformed to a tactical or technical definition. Indeed, they appear to be pre-existing *burh* sites.

The three remaining instances of *burh* in the 'Wars of Alfred' sections are those most commonly cited from these annals where Alfred's 'burghal' innovations are discussed. In 893/894 we are told:

> <hi> mon eac mid oþrum floccum sohte mæstra daga ælce, oþþe on niht, ge of þære fierde ge eac of þæm **burgum**; hæfde se cyning his fierd on tu tonumen, swa þæt hie wæron simle healfe æt ham, healfe ute, butan þæm monnum þe þa **burga** healdan scolden
>
> They [the Vikings] were also sought by other troops most days, either by night or by day, whether from the [English] army or also from the ***burga***; the king [Alfred] had split his army in two, so that there were always half at home, half out, except for those men who were to hold the ***burga***
> *ChronA*, 893 (R4.128–9, 298–9 and 409–10)

This quotation describes Alfred's tactic of splitting his army into rotations, with a permanent group of men to guard the *burga*. Here, the use of *burh* seems to be

imbued with connotations of permanence as well as defence. However, it is important to note that the *burga* themselves are not identified. Later in the same annal, we are told of senior noblemen of the king gathering from a group of *burga*. These *burga* are still unnamed individually, but are given some geographical markers:

> Þa gegaderode Æþered ealdormon & Æþelm ealdorman & Æþelnoþ ealdorman & þa cinges þegnas þe þa æt ham æt þæm geweorcum wæron, of ælcre **byrig** be eastan Pedredan, ge be westan Sealwuda ge be eastan, ge eac be norþan Temese & be westan Sæfern, ge eac sum dæl þæs Norðwealcynnes
>
> Then ealdorman Æthered and ealdorman Æthelm and ealdorman Æthelnoth gathered and the king's thegns who were at home at the fortifications, from each ***burh*** to the east of the Parret, and both to the west of Selwood and the east, and also to the north of the Thames and the west of the Severn and also some part of the Welsh people
> *ChronA*, 893 (R4.136, 306 and 415)

There are several points of interest in this quotation. Firstly, it is clear that the *geweorc* ('fortifications') and the *burga* are closely related, and the relevance of this will become clearer later. Once again, we are given no real indication of which places are referred to: the geographical markers offer little help as they describe large and vaguely defined areas, and may in fact be used to show how widely Alfred's army was spread. It is also noteworthy that it is ealdormen and thegns of the king who are "æt ham" ('at home') in the *burga*. As we shall see in the following chapter, Alfred legislates against the breaking and entering of what are evidently the private *burga*

of various high-status social ranks, including ealdormen and thegns (see §6.2). This evidence may place reasonable doubt in our minds that the *burga* intended in this quotation are solely *BH* sites. The reality is that we cannot know which sites *burh* refers to here.

However, the very fact that the references to the *burga* are so laconic and so abstruse to modern readers indicates strongly that they were not seen at the time as special innovations of the king, but as established and standard sites on the landscape. Evidently, the contemporary audience of these annals was expected to be aware of which places were implied, or of what sort of places were implied, even if the individual sites were irrelevant. Lavelle points out a similar phenomenon for sites referred to as *villae regiae* ('royal vills') in contemporary Latin texts, which are presented as undescribed place names in the *Chronicles* because, he argues, the expected audience of the vernacular annals would already know the nature of these sites.[379] Thus, we can infer that the chronicler likewise expects the nature of the *burga* to be common knowledge.

It is also worth highlighting that other military innovations made by Alfred are described in great detail in the 'Wars of Alfred' annals. For example, the construction of the fleet is described in 896/897 with information on the exact specifications of the ships; likewise, the ways in which Alfred besieged or starved the Vikings within their own fortifications are also expounded in detail, such as at the end of annal 893/894. Indeed, the very tactic of splitting the army between home, troops and the *burga* is itself explained. We might, therefore, expect that if the *burga*

[379] Lavelle, 'Geographies of Power in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: The Royal Estates of Anglo-Saxon Wessex', 199–200.

were considered to be an innovation at the time, a commentary would likewise be provided on how Alfred had designed them to protect his people. Yet the *burga* themselves are never described in this way, but rather are represented as matter-of-fact, already established and well enough known, either as individual sites or as a concept, not to require further explanation.

This linguistic evidence certainly runs contrary to the idea that Alfred created the idea of *burga* as part of his defensive scheme. However, these annals do, in fact, mention fortifications being built, both by Alfred and his enemy, although these fortifications are not called *burga*, but *geweorc*. The word *geweorc* (whose plural is also *geweorc*) can be interpreted as a 'work, construction' or 'fortification' and derives from the verb *(ge)weorcan* ('to work, make, construct'). By contrast to the eight non-onomastic examples of *burh*, *geweorc* appears twenty times in the Wars of Alfred in each manuscript, referring to various named or vaguely located sites.[380] Twelve of these examples describe *geweorc* constructed by the invading Viking forces in 892/893, 893/894 and 895/896. Among the various sites implied, six are identified by location: Middleton, Appledore, Benfleet, Shoebury, Bridgnorth and somewhere near Lea. A further eight examples of *geweorc* describe sites either already in existence before the Viking attacks or built by the West Saxon forces during the campaign. The Vikings attack an unnamed Kentish *geweorc* in the process of being built in 892/893 and an unnamed Devon *geweorc* in 893/894. The abandoned Roman city of Chester is also described as a *geweorc* in 893/894 when the Vikings are holed up and besieged inside by Alfred's forces. As we have already seen in the second

[380] In *ChronA*, two examples of *geweorc* can be found in 892, twelve in 893 and six in 895; the parallel instances can be found in annals 893, 894 and 896 of *ChronB*, *ChronC* and *ChronD*.

quotation above, a further example relates West Saxon *geweorc* with the *burga* of thegns and ealdormen who gather for Alfred's army in 893/894. The final two examples appear in 895/896, when Alfred builds two *geweorc* either side of the Thames to trap Viking ships. It is these two *geweorc* that Haslam considers to be a potential "double-burh" built by Alfred, showing the vocabulary contradictions which occur in the archaeological use of 'burh'.[381]

There are various factors regarding the use of *geweorc* in this section of the *Chronicles* which are of key value when compared with *burh*. In order to understand the significance of the use of these two words, it is necessary to think about some of the trends recognised by historians and literary scholars in the construction of the 'Wars of Alfred' section more generally. Both Stodnick and Lavelle think of the 'Wars of Alfred' in terms of the geographical narratives the annals weave. Lavelle studies the movement of Alfred and his troops around named, but undescribed, places which he thinks are likely royal estates, and his work highlights the importance of the "control of nodal points."[382] Stodnick considers the annals to tell a "kind of spatial story" as the English troops and their Viking counterparts are tracked around the country.[383] However, Sheppard also points out that the use of place names with no description allows the chronicler to avoid drawing "the kind of verbal map that would point out Alfred's vulnerabilities."[384] Nevertheless, this story is about the protection of a "kingdom already won," where the Vikings are

[381] Haslam, 'Parishes, Churches, Wards and Gates in Eastern London', 38.
[382] Lavelle, 'Geographies of Power in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: The Royal Estates of Anglo-Saxon Wessex', 200.
[383] Stodnick, 'What (and Where) Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* About?', 94.
[384] Sheppard, *Families of the King: Writing Identity in the* Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 38–39.

constantly harried out of their newly constructed fortifications by Alfred's ever-moving army.[385] Indeed, the "preoccupation with movement" is noted by both Stodnick and Lavelle in the repeated use of verbs for travel, such as *geridan* ('ride'), which Lavelle thinks was possibly used to mirror the actions of the Vikings, undoing their claim over the land.[386]

When considering the use of *geweorc* in this context, it is important to begin with its etymology, which lends the word denotations and connotations of productivity and construction. With the word's repeated use in the 'Wars of Alfred', the image of constant industry on the part of the Vikings and Alfred is painted in our minds, giving us the impression of activity that is somewhat feverish with progress. This stands in contrast to the uses of *burh*, which appear always to be already-established places of refuge and stability from which the Alfredian army surges. In the example, then, of Alfred's men who were "æt ham æt þæm geweorcum… of ælcre byrig" ('at home at the *geweorc* … from each *burh*'), the *geweorc* and the *burga* appear to occupy the same space, even if they do not refer to the same concept. *Geweorc* perhaps refers to the physicality of the defences, while *burh* may indicate the permanent settlement as a whole.

Another factor of interest, however, is that *geweorc* is used to refer to the constructions both of Anglo-Saxons and Vikings. Stodnick points out the way in which difference in vocabulary is often used to distinguish one side from the other: the classic example of this is the repeated use of *here* for the Viking forces and *fyrd*

[385] Sheppard, 27; Stodnick, 'What (and Where) Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* About?', 95.
[386] Stodnick, 'What (and Where) Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* About?', 95; Lavelle, 'Geographies of Power in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: The Royal Estates of Anglo-Saxon Wessex', 207.

for the Anglo-Saxon army.[387] Instead, *geweorc* is used to represent the efforts of both sides. Indeed, I would return here to the point made by Lavelle about the use of *geridan* to mirror the actions of the West Saxons with those of the Vikings. In the case of *geweorc*, too, I think we see an active choice to show matched strength: a sort of glorified version of 'anything you can do, I can do better'. While Vikings may break into Anglo-Saxon *geweorc* and then build their own, they are always ousted by the Anglo-Saxon army, and, in the end, it is Alfred's two riverside *geweorc* which are proven to be the most effective.

It is also instructive to consider the verbs used with *geweorc* and *burh* and the syntactical constructions in which the words appear. *Burh* in this section is mostly represented as a site of permanence and security, for leaving and returning to, occurring twice with the preposition *of* ('from, out of') and once with *on neaweste* ('in the vicinity of'). In terms of verbs, there is one example of the *burh* at Exeter being *beseten* ('besieged') and we are also told that Alfred's garrisons *heoldan scolden* ('should hold', R4.129, 299 and 410) the *burga.* But little action happens at these sites. On the other hand, the *geweorc* are regularly associated with the verbs *weorcan* ('to make, construct'), *abrecan* ('to break into') and *ymbsittan* or *besittan* ('to besiege'), showing industrial and martial activity.

The final interesting point about the use of *geweorc* in the *Chronicles* is that it is limited in use almost exclusively to the 'Wars of Alfred'. Five examples can be found in the late-ninth-century annals of the 'Common Stock': one for an earlier Anglo-Saxon *geweorc* at Nottingham besieged by the Vikings in 868/869, two for the fort

[387] Stodnick, 'Sentence to Story: Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as Formulary', 99–105.

built at Althelney by Alfred in 878/879, one for a Viking fortress built near Eddington also in 878/879 and one for a Viking fortress near Rochester in 885/886. Noticeably, these uses all still appear within the framework of the Viking invasions, and most occur in earlier annals of Alfred's reign. After the 'Wars of Alfred', we find two examples in *ChronA* 917, also in relation to Viking attacks and which shall be address in more detail in the next section. The word does not reappear again until the late eleventh century in *ChronC* and *ChronD* as part of the place name Southwark, and in *ChronE* as a verbal noun meaning 'constructing'. This shows that its use in the *Chronicles* is anchored firmly in the narratives of Anglo-Scandinavian warfare in the late ninth century.

While *geweorc* is predominant in the Alfredian annals, *burh* is the primary fortification term used in the Edwardian and Æthelflædian annals. The next section will compare the evidence of Alfred's annals to those of Edward and Æthelflæd, proposing that the change in vocabulary had more to do with representation and connotation than morphological changes in the settlements themselves.

5.3.3 The Annals of Edward and Æthelflæd

In her divisions of the *Chronicles*, Clark says nothing much about the years of Edward the Elder's reign (899–924), except to comment that in the tenth century "greater divergences appear between the surviving versions of the *Chronicles*."[388] Yet

[388] Clark, 'The Narrative Mode of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* before the Conquest', 224.

for 'burghal' scholars, the annals of *ChronA*, *ChronB*, *ChronC* and *ChronD* from the middle of Edward's reign are of utmost importance. The prevailing narrative is that these annals track Edward's and his sister Æthelflæd's movements and *burh*-building across Edward's expanding kingdom. *ChronA* from 901–20 (R4.144–80) is a dense section of annals united by style and theme, which present Edward as a "triumphant conqueror."[389] At this period, *ChronA* gives a thoroughly West Saxon perspective on recent events, with the manuscript having been copied at this time and the Edwardian annals likely emanating directly from Edward's court.[390] We can see in these annals how Edward is represented as the true heir to his father's legacy, and that of the Cerdicing line in general.[391] The 'Mercian Register', otherwise known as the 'Annals of Æthelflæd', is a unique witness to events of the same time from a Mercian perspective, particularly focussing on the military, political and spiritual achievements of Edward's sister, Æthelflæd, lady of the Mercians. These annals probably originated from a Mercian centre and act like a separate continuation of the *Chronicles* after the 'Wars of Alfred', but highlighting Æthelflæd to the exclusion of Edward.[392] The 'Mercian Register' appears alone in *ChronB* and *ChronC* (R4.314–29), and is combined with the Edwardian annals in *ChronD* (R4.423–34).

The Edwardian and Æthelflædian annals contain the highest concentration of the word *burh* in the *Chronicles*. In contrast to the 'Wars of Alfred', these *burga* are usually specifically located, with descriptions of the leader's movement to a new

[389] Jorgensen, 'Introduction', 14.
[390] Keynes, 'Manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*', 543.
[391] Sheppard, *Families of the King: Writing Identity in the* Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 101; Jorgensen, 'Introduction', 14.
[392] Stafford, '"The Annals of Æthelflæd": Annals, History and Politics in Tenth-Century England', 103; Jorgensen, 'Introduction', 14; Stone, 'Mutually Assured Construction: Æthelflæd's Burhs, Landscapes of Defence and the Physical Legacy of the Unification of England, 899-1016', 13–14.

named site, at which a *burh* is fortified or occupied. Much archaeological 'burghal' work has been based on these annals, with scholars looking for unity between the *burh* sites to uncover what a 'burh' really was.[393] There appears to be no doubt in the mind of most archaeologists and historians that the decision of a chronicler to call a site a *burh* was one of technical distinction that we can now try to reconstruct. However, this section will offer an alternative reading of *burh* in the annals of Edward and Æthelflæd, especially in comparison to the 'Wars of Alfred'. It will be argued that the use of *burh* is governed more by the political force of the word than any technical considerations, with the chroniclers drawing on *burh*'s connotations rather than its morphological denotations.

The first line of argument questions the generally accepted idea that the annals of Edward and Æthelflæd chronicle their foundation of *burga* across the landscape. Looking more closely at the textual evidence shows that the annals of Edward in particular present a narrative which is far more complicated than simply a sequence of *burh*-building. It is just as much a narrative of *burh*-improvement, *burh*-capture and *burh*-settlement. This will be shown by looking at how the verbs of construction used with many of the *burh* instances can potentially be interpreted at times as verbs of refortification, suggesting that some *burga* were improved rather than founded. Then shall be considered the uses of *burh* which refer quite clearly to *burga* not founded by Edward, but which were pre-existing sites and even recaptured enemy settlements.

[393] See, for example: Haslam, 'The Second Burh of Nottingham'; Haslam, 'The Anglo-Saxon Burh at *Wigingamere*'; Blake and Sargent, '"For the Protection of All the People": Æthelflæd and Her Burhs in Northwest Mercia'.

There are two main verbs used which are generally considered to represent Edward's construction and foundation of a *burh* in *ChronA*: *gewyrcan* and *getimbran/atimbran*. These verbs appear in Edward's annals with the two *burga* at Hertford and the *burh* at Witham in 912 (R4.145–7), the *burga* at Buckingham in 914 (R4.149), the southern *burh* at Bedford in 915 (R4.152), the *burh* at Maldon in 916 (R4.153), the *burh* at *Wigingamere* and the burh at Towcester in 917 (R4.154–5), the southern *burh* at Stamford in 918 (R4.173), the *burh* at Thelwall in 919 (R4.177), and the southern *burh* at Nottingham as well as the *burh* at Bakewell in 920 (R4.178 and 180).[394] These verbs can appear independently or in pairs when describing the work done on a particular *burh*. Looking more closely at the meanings of these verbs and how they are used in these annals can raise some interesting questions about how we interpret Edward's interaction with these sites. *Gewyrcan*, which we have already encountered as the source of the noun *geweorc*, is defined as meaning 'to work, make, build'.[395] In those cases where *burh* is governed by *gewyrcan*, it seems fairly certain that the *burh* has been constructed under Edward's orders, and the verb is used for the southern *burh* at Hertford, the *burh* at Witham, the two *burga* at Buckingham, the southern *burh* at Stamford, the *burh* at Thelwall, the southern *burh* at Nottingham and the *burh* at Bakewell. In the case of Thelwall and Bakewell, we are also told that the *burga* are manned (*gemannian*), suggesting that there was not much of a military presence at this site before its construction. *Gewyrcan* also appears with *getimbran* in

[394] Hertford, Witham and Buckingham are similarly described in *ChronD* in the subsequent years (R4.427, 429 and 431).
[395] Joseph Bosworth, 'Gewyrcan', in *Bosworth Toller's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*, ed. Thomas Northcote Toller and et al. (Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, 2019), https://bosworthtoller.com/16939.

the description of the work on Witham: "man þa burg worhte & getimbrede æt Witham" ('the *burh* was worked and timbered at Witham').

Getimbran, like its cognate *atimbran*, is defined typically as 'to make of wood, to build (up), to construct'.[396] The verbs appears with Witham, as we have seen, as well as the southern *burh* at Bedford, Maldon, *Wigingamere* and Towcester. Although the verbs clearly also describe construction, they appear to be more specific in construction material than *gewyrcan*, and David Pelteret even suggests that in this part of *ChronA*, *getimbran* might be used particularly with the meaning 'to provide a *burh* with a wooden palisade'.[397] The fact that the two near-synonymous verbs have been used together in this way could be purely rhetorical, but it might also indicate that different aspects or types of construction work are being emphasised. Pelteret's reading of the verb in these annals may be a stretch, but it is certainly interesting to consider that *getimbran* might not necessarily indicate an entirely new foundation, but a new level of fortification.

Thinking more flexibly about the use of *getimbran* allows us to re-evaluate the descriptions of the *burga* at Maldon and Towcester, which also use *getimbran* in conjunction with another verb. Here, a close-reading of the relevant quotations shall be compared to Whitelock's translation, which is the most authoritative interpretation of the *Chronicles* and is often cited by scholars not working from the original OE. In *ChronA* 916 we are told "for Eadweard cyning to Mældune &

[396] Joseph Bosworth, 'Getimbran', in *Bosworth Toller's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*, ed. Thomas Northcote Toller and et al. (Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, 2019), https://bosworthtoller.com/16579; Joseph Bosworth, 'Atimbran', in *Bosworth Toller's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*, ed. Thomas Northcote Toller and et al. (Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, 2019), https://bosworthtoller.com/2562.
[397] Pelteret, 'An Anonymous Historian of Edward the Elder's Reign', 321.

getimbrede þa burg & gestaðolode ær he þonon fore" (R4.153). Whitelock translates this as: "King Edward went to Maldon and built and established the borough there before he went away."[398] Here *getimbran* appears with the verb *gestaðelian*, which Whitelock interprets as 'to establish', and this reading of the passage certainly indicates Edward's foundation of the site. However, *gestaðelian* has multiple possible interpretations, some of which relate to foundation, i.e. 'to found, establish, erect', while others relate to restoration, i.e. 'to strengthen, confirm, repair, fortify'.[399] Combining this range of meanings with the more complex view of *getimbran* offers two different directions in which we could interpret the construction at Maldon: either as an entirely new foundation, or as the fortification of a *burh* site which may have already existed. We know, for example, that it is at Maldon where Edward camps with his army when constructing the *burh* at Witham in 912, possibly indicating the significance of the site prior to 916.

Towcester offers another interesting example. In 917 we are told "Eadweard cyning het gefaran þa burg æt Tofeceaster & hie getimbran" (R4.154), which Whitelock renders as "King Edward ordered the borough at Towcester to be occupied and built."[400] This passage could equally be translated as 'King Edward ordered [his men] to occupy the *burh* at Towcester and to *getimbran* it'. My own translation more closely follows the OE syntax, which separates the verbs *gefaran* ('to occupy') and *getimbran*, and even emphasises the distinction between the two verbs

[398] Whitelock, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, 64.
[399] Joseph Bosworth, 'Gestaðelian', in *Bosworth Toller's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*, ed. Thomas Northcote Toller and et al. (Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, 2019), https://bosworthtoller.com/16147.
[400] Whitelock, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, 64.

as *getimbran* does not govern the noun *burh* along with *gefaran*, but instead refers back to it with the pronoun "hie" ('it'). Again, it is important to question whether *getimbran* means construction from scratch or the adding of timber to previous defences. The fact that the concept of occupying the *burh* appears as an independent syntactic statement might suggest that there was already a *burh* at Towcester when Edward arrived. As has been suggested before, the fact that the place name Towcester contains *ceaster* shows that it was already conceived of as a site of some Roman and defensive significance. The 'timbering' of the *burh* might imply a progression of defences, rather than their initial foundation. It is also worth noting that we are told later in the same year that Towcester was attacked by Vikings and that following this "man worhte þa burg æt Tofeceastre mid stanwealle" ('the *burh* at Towcester was worked/constructed with stone walls'), showing a further progression of the defences and perhaps encouraging the interpretation of *getimbran* as 'to fortify with wood' by comparison.

These close-readings of the Maldon and Towcester passages only hint at the possible pre-existence of those *burga*. However, there are various other sites in the Edwardian annals whose descriptions suggest far more clearly that they already existed as *burga* before Edward's intervention. Twice in 917 we are told that men assembled "of þam niehstum burgum" ('from the nearest *burga*', R4.162 and 164) when Edward attacked Tempsford and Colchester. The *burga* are clearly proximal to the sites being attacked, but in both cases, they are an unnamed mass. This reflects the use of *burh* already seen in the Wars of Alfred, either where the chronicler expected the audience to know where is implied or where the concept of *burga*

mattered more than the locations. Indeed, even the formula "of þam niehstum" is repeated from the Alfredian annals. This usage stands in contrast to the otherwise pinpointed *burga* of the Edwardian annals, but it is also important to recognise that these *burga* evidently already exist and are not being represented as Edwardian foundations. Another example of a pre-existing *burh* in Edward's kingdom is Tamworth, shown in the Mercian Register to have been built by Æthelflæd and occupied by Edward after her death in 918 (R4.175), when he took sole control over Mercia.

Furthermore, the *burga* of the Edwardian annals are not only Anglo-Saxon sites. We also see Viking *burga* being captured. The northern *burh* at Bedford is "beget" ('obtained') from the Vikings by Edward in 915 (R4.150). When the Anglo-Saxon men "of þam niehstum burgum" ('from the nearest *burga*') ride to attack the Viking strongholds at Tempsford and Colchester in 917, both are referred to as *burga* (R4.163 and 165), which the Anglo-Saxons "besæton" or "ymbsæton" ('besieged'). In both cases, explicit details are given about the fighting around and destructive entry into the Viking *burga*, as well as the slaughter and submission of their Viking-led inhabitants. Later in the annal we are told that Edward "gebette" ('repaired') the *burh* at Colchester (R4.172). 917 also sees the taking of Huntingdon from the Vikings, when the Anglo-Saxon *fyrd* "gefor þa burg æt Huntandune & hie gebette & geedneowade þær heo ær tobrocen wæs be Eadweardes cyninges hæse" ('attacked the *burh* at Huntingdon and repaired and restored it where it had been broken into on King Edward's order', R4.171). Evidently these *burga* were not founded by Edward, but they are shown to have been well and truly dominated by him.

Thus, we see in can see in the Edwardian annals that, alongside those sites evidently presented as constructs of Edward, there are various *burga* already in existence, with which Edward interacts and over which he claims power without being their founder. What these examples show is that our interpretation of these annals as being united thematically by Edward's *burh*-building is an oversimplification of what actually appears to be a much more complex picture of a landscape of *burga*, some being built, some being restored and some being taken. The *burga* might, therefore, not represent a series of foundations, but a backdrop against which the war is painted.

It is important now to turn briefly to the thus-far neglected 'Mercian Register', discussed here in reference primarily to *ChronC*. Like the Edwardian annals, the 'Mercian Register' follows the creation or capture of *burga* and the subsequent submission of the people in the region.[401] These entries are far more laconic and formulaic than the Edwardian annals. For the *burga* Æthelflæd has created, *getimbran* is the only verb used and only perfunctory information is given about the sites she has constructed. For example, in 912 the entry reads: "Her com Æþelflæd Myrcna hlæfdige on þone halgan æfen Inuentione Sancte Crucis to Scergeate & þær ða burh getimbrede, & þæs ilcan geares þa æt Bricge" ('In this year Æthelflæd, lady of the Mercians, came on the holy eve of the Invention of the Cross to *Scergeat* and built the *burh* there, and in the same year the one at *Bricge*', R4.317). The 'Mercian Register' sets Æthelflæd up as a successor to her father's vision, much as *ChronA* does for Edward, and acts like a continuation of the 'Wars of Alfred' from a Mercian

[401] Stafford, '"The Annals of Æthelflæd": Annals, History and Politics in Tenth-Century England', 103.

perspective.[402] The 'Mercian Register' ends with the election of Athelstan, Edward's son, as king by the Mercians, and it has been argued that the annals might be a commission of Athelstan's to commemorate his aunt, but also to legitimise the rulership of his line in Mercia.[403] Pauline Stafford points out how closely the 'Mercian Register' parallels the Edwardian annals in style and in content, suggesting the two are almost in dialogue with one another.[404] This may also explain, therefore, the shared terminology between the two sets of annals; the chronicler of Æthelflæd wants to reflect the successes of Edward's campaign in Æthelflæd's own endeavours.

This narrative of construction, fighting and capturing mirrors the 'Wars of Alfred', but what we see is a change in vocabulary focus from *geweorc* to *burh*. The first question we might ask is whether this change of vocabulary represents a change in the nature of the sites, and thus indicates a technical distinction between the two words. However, this proves to be a very difficult question to answer. There is no real overlap between sites called *geweorc* in the 'Wars of Alfred' and those called *burh* in the Edwardian annals, and many of the *geweorc* in Alfred's annals are either unidentifiable or un-excavated. The most likely example for comparison is that of the northern fortress of Nottingham, described in the 'Common Stock' annal for 868/869 as a *geweorc* held by the Vikings and besieged by the West Saxon forces, which later reappears in 918 as a Viking *burh*. However, while the fifty intervening years would have been sufficient time for significant morphological changes, there is no material

[402] Stafford, 97; Bredehoft, *Textual Histories: Readings in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 65.
[403] Stafford, '"The Annals of Æthelflæd": Annals, History and Politics in Tenth-Century England', 104; Brooks, 'Why Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* about Kings?', 50.
[404] Stafford, '"The Annals of Æthelflæd": Annals, History and Politics in Tenth-Century England', 103.

evidence to date, with the excavation at Nottingham by Haslam focussing on the Edwardian southern *burh*.[405] Furthermore, it is rare for morphological changes recognised in the archaeological record to be dated more accurately than late-ninth/early-tenth century, and often it is the textual evidence which is used for more precise dating in such cases. After the Alfredian annals, there are only two occurrences of *geweorc* with the meaning 'fortification', both of which appear in *ChronA* 917. Interestingly, these two instances refer to Viking Tempsford and Huntingdon before they are broken and taken by Edward's forces later in the same annal, at which point they are described as *burga*. However, there is no indication given that any morphological changes happened at these sites in that year between their labelling as *geweorc* and *burga*.

A quite specific parallel between the uses of *geweorc* and *burh* is in the construction of double-fortifications either side of a river. The use of such a set-up is seen as an important part of Alfred's defences against the Vikings and appears to be similar to Frankish bridge-forts found on the continent at the same time.[406] We have already seen the one description of this in the 'Wars of Alfred' in 895 where we are given a detailed description of the construction of two *geweorc* joined by a bridge to confound the Vikings. We also have in the annals of Edward four examples of *burga* built as a pair either side of a river, sometimes explicitly joined by a bridge: the two *burga* at Hertford are built on either side of the river Lea in 912 (R4.145 and 147); after the submission of the northern *burh* at Bedford in 915, Edward builds a second

[405] Haslam, 'The Second Burh of Nottingham'.
[406] J. M. Hassall and David Hill, 'Pont de L'Arche: Frankish Influence on the West Saxon Burh?', *Archaeological Journal* 127, no. 1 (1970): 191, https://doi.org/10.1080/00665983.1970.11078395.

burh to the south of the river (R4.150 and 152); in 918 he builds the southern *burh* at Stamford before taking the northern *burh* on the other side of the river (R4.173–4); and, likewise, after taking the northern *burh* at Nottingham in 918, he builds a southern *burh* on the other side of the river in 920, which is joined by a bridge in the same year (R4.176, 178–9). That such a specific fortification set up would differ so much in technicality from Alfred to Edward is unlikely, especially in light of the latter's imitation of the former, suggesting that the change in terminology represents something else.

Certainly, the above discussion shows that there is no positive evidence that the lexical choices made by the chroniclers reflect any morphological or technical distinctions between the two words. Indeed, comparisons between the linguistic and historical contexts of the 'Wars of Alfred' and the Edwardian annals suggest that *geweorc* and *burh* actually perform similar functions in the two eras. The two words share semi-formulaic language structures. Both Alfredian *geweorc* and Edwardian *burga* are places travelled to and then fortified, in Alfred's years always using the verb *gewyrcan*, but in Edward's years the verbs *getimbran* and *atimbran* are also used, as has been seen. Another important point of similarity is that, just as the Vikings have *geweorc* as much as the Anglo-Saxons, so too do the Vikings have *burga*. Not only does this show further mirroring between the Alfredian use of *geweorc* and the Edwardian use of *burh*, it also indicates something valuable about the 'burghal' interpretation of these annals: if we are to believe that a specific technical definition existed for the Anglo-Saxon 'burh', then we must admit that identical procedures were being carried out at exactly the same time by their enemy. Furthermore, both

Alfredian *geweorc* and Edwardian *burga* are also characterised by verbs which indicate military action: both are governed by *abrecan* ('to break in') and *ymbsittan/besittan* ('to besiege'), but *burh* also collocates with *feohtan on* ('to fight at/in'), *begeotan* ('to obtain') and *gefaran/geridan* (both of which generally mean 'to travel to' but are here used with the sense 'to occupy'). The greater breadth of verbs used with the Edwardian *burga* mirrors the increase in description and detail we see generally in his annals. However, the constructions and types of verbs used make it evident that *geweorc* and *burh* fill almost identical conceptual roles in the years of Alfred and Edward.

Lexical variation such as we see with *geweorc* and *burh* can be explained by changes in authorship: Janet Bately points out that switches in vocabulary and syntax can suggest different chroniclers, such as almost complete change from *gefaran* in the 870s to *forþferan* in the 880s, both used to mean 'to die', and Stodnick emphasises that changes in vocabulary can be used to recognise different sections of the *Chronicles*.[407] However, the linguistic evidence suggests that the change from *geweorc* to *burh* was not simply a case of authorial preference, but was a choice based upon the connotations of the two words and the political force of the different *Chronicles* sections. It has been argued that the 'Wars of Alfred' annals try to downplay the vulnerability of a kingdom permanently fighting off incoming attack. Alfred does not conquer or expand, but repels at a border always at risk of shrinking.[408] On the other hand, Edward's war campaign is presented in light of its

[407] Bately, 'The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle 60BC to AD 890: Vocabulary as Evidence: Sir Israel Gollancz Memorial Lecture', 109; Stodnick, 'Sentence to Story: Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as Formulary', 99–105.
[408] Sheppard, *Families of the King: Writing Identity in the* Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 38–39.

victories. Thompson Smith, in particular, has developed the idea that the annals of Edward read like charter boundaries clauses on a national scale.[409] The annals move from site to site with connectors such as *þonan* ('thence'), similarly used in the boundary clauses of royal diplomas, and mark out the landscape with references to *burga*, at which Edward submits the people of the region to his rule.[410] With the progression of such boundary markers in a chronological text such as the *ChronA*, Thompson Smith argues that we are presented with a moving border as Edward's territory expands.[411] Edward is shown to be triumphant, a conqueror. Indeed, Alice Jorgensen states that "much more than the Common Stock they [the Edwardian annals] invite the controversial label 'propaganda'."[412] The annals seek to prove Edward as Alfred's true heir and the story shows how he follows his father as a military leader.[413]

It is under these auspices that we must read the use of the term *burh* and come back to the issue of connotations. I argue that *burh* is used to the exclusion of *geweorc* in the Edwardian annals not due to any distinguishing technical features, but rather because of the political weight of the word. A *burh*, as we see in other texts, carries the significance of a centre of power and administration as well as being a defensible site. The use of the word here may draw explicitly or implicitly on the understanding of its use in other texts to refer to estate centres, ecclesiastical centres

[409] Scott Thompson Smith, *Land and Book: Literature and Land Tenure in Anglo-Saxon England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 153; Thompson Smith, 'Marking the Boundaries: Charters and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', 169.
[410] Thompson Smith, *Land and Book: Literature and Land Tenure in Anglo-Saxon England*, 161; Thompson Smith, 'Marking the Boundaries: Charters and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', 173.
[411] Thompson Smith, *Land and Book: Literature and Land Tenure in Anglo-Saxon England*, 166.
[412] Jorgensen, 'Introduction', 14.
[413] Stafford, '"The Annals of Æthelflæd": Annals, History and Politics in Tenth-Century England', 101.

and even Rome. While *geweorc* might represent the physicality of the defences, *burh* suggests permanence and power. This is reflected in the repeated trope of the peoples' submission to Edward where he holds a *burh*. In a narrative which seeks to sell Edward as a conqueror with an expanding territory, it is more impressive to present Edward as making and taking *burga* in the landscape than *geweorc*. By contrast, Alfred's own *burga* from which his men surge, although not explicitly located, are presumably well within his own borders. His own centres of power are not pressing outwards, but are presenting a stable interior. Most of the action of construction and capture at fortifications in his years is that of the Vikings: they commonly take West Saxon forts and settlements and build their own new ones. It would sound far more threatening if the sites they control are power centres (*burga*), rather than simply physical fortifications (*geweorc*). Likewise, Alfred cannot oversell his position, which is shaky. Instead, he matches the Viking activity, beating them at their own game but never over-emphasising a power he does not have over disputed territory. In summary, Alfred worked to protect a kingdom he already had, but it was up to Edward to expand it.[414]

Be it conscious or subconscious, the use of *burh* instead of *geweorc* lends the movement of Edward's borders more weight. It is a proclamation of territorial power. A *geweorc* placed on a fringe or in enemy territory might suggest a space of industry and action, but to place a *burh* onto disputed land makes a statement not just of defence, but of power implanted into the landscape. This analysis may also go some way to explain the shift in descriptions of Tempsford and Huntingdon from

[414] Thompson Smith, 'Marking the Boundaries: Charters and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', 168.

being *geweorc* to *burga* in *ChronA* 917. While still under Viking control, they are presented as nothing more than physical defences, but when the English army come to take the Viking fortifications, they have been upgraded to *burga* which are thoroughly routed and conquered. Against the Anglo-Saxons the Vikings hold only *geweorc*, but what Edward takes from them is a socially meaningful *burh*, a sign that he now has dominion in the region.

Further excavations may yet prove morphological distinctions between *geweorc* and *burh* sites, but the argument presented above offers an alternative reading of the use of *burh* in the *Chronicles*, which responds to the sensitive political nature of a text which has at times been called propaganda.[415] Expecting a technical and archaeologically demonstrable explanation for a choice of terminology under such circumstances may be both too optimistic and too simple. Language, especially in a relatively contemporary historical text, is never static and never transparent: active or subconscious manipulation of the narrative will always occur.

5.3.4 Patterns of *Burh* Throughout the *Chronicles*

Throughout the *Chronicles*, non-onomastic uses of *burh* follow certain connotational patterns, which highlight the preoccupation of these texts with warfare and also show how structures established in earlier annals tended to be

[415] Sheppard, *Families of the King: Writing Identity in the* Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 26; Jorgensen, 'Introduction', 11–14; Thompson Smith, 'Marking the Boundaries: Charters and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', 168.

repeated in later annals. Although *burh* can clearly be identified with connotations of defence and power from the earliest entries, it was really in the late-ninth- and early-tenth-century annals analysed above that semi-formulaic structures were established within which *geweorc* and *burh* could represent the tide of war. These structures reappear throughout the later annals of the *Chronicles* in times of conflict and invasion, firstly using *burh* and later using the new loanword *castel* (cognate with modern *castle*).

The 'Common Stock' is relatively laconic and disparate in its non-onomastic uses of *burh*, but each is used in a situation which relates to martial action and struggles for landscape control. In 60B.C. of *ChronD* and *ChronE*, the Roman emperor takes the *heahburga* ('high-*burga*', R4.388 and 515) of the Britons, representing Roman dominion over the landscape. A quite different example appears in the story of the murder of King Cynewulf by his enemy Cyneheard in 755 of *ChronA*, *ChronB*, *ChronC*, *ChronD* and *ChronE*. The annal is an island of narrative expansion in a sea of brief entries, and is one of the most studied, indeed possibly over-studied, parts of the *Chronicles*.[416] We are told that the king had gone quite undefended to a place called *Merantune*, where he is later found slain in the *burh* there, a site clearly described as gated (R4.114, 283–4, 394 and 554). Following the murder, a skirmish takes place around the *burh*-gates and Cyneheard is killed in revenge, and the *burh*

[416] Stodnick, 'Sentence to Story: Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as Formulary', 93; the varied work on this annal include: Rulon-Miller, '"Cynewulf and Cyneheard": A Woman Screams'; Bredehoft, *Textual Histories: Readings in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 39; Sheppard, *Families of the King: Writing Identity in the* Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 32–36; Yorke, 'The Representation of Early West Saxon History in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', 142; Leneghan, 'Royal Wisdom and the Alfredian Context of *Cynewulf and Cyneheard*', 103; Yorke, 'West Saxon Fortifications in the Ninth Century', 94.

site is generally interpreted as a lordly residence of the king.[417] Although this is one of only two manorial *burga* in the *Chronicles* the *burh* at *Merantune* still acts as a site of military action and events which determine the rulership of a people. The other manorial site is represented by the place name *Wihtgarasbyrig* (R4.99–100, 193, 270–1, 518–9), also the site of an important early battle.

Following the Alfredian, Edwardian and Æthelflædian annals, however, we can observe trends in the use of *burh* and similar defensive vocabulary to represent the progress of war, and especially invasions. The later reign of Æthelred in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, and especially his fated war against the invading Dane Cnut, is portrayed scathingly, probably from the biased hindsight of a chronicler during Cnut's reign in the early eleventh century.[418] These annals of *ChronC*, *ChronD* and *ChronE* represent a decaying English identity, but also look forward to a kingdom 'yet to come' in Cnut's reign.[419] While the use of *burh* observed in Edward's annals presents expanding borders, in the annals of Æthelred *burh* is used to represent a kingdom being eroded.

The *burga* noted in the years 994–1016 are established sites: centres of power already in the landscape of a by-then united England (R4.229–57, 336–75, 443–84, 582–624). However, it is around such sites that we see fighting and destruction at the hands first of Sweyn Forkbeard before his brief conquest in 1014 and then of Cnut in 1016. The most common verbs which occur with *burh* in these annals are *feohtan (on)*

[417] Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', 224; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 248; Hall, '*Burhs* and Boroughs: Defended Places, Trade, and Towns. Plans, Defences, and Civic Features', 3; Williams, 'Military and Non-Military Functions of the Anglo-Saxon Burh, c.878–978', 130.
[418] Jorgensen, 'Rewriting the Æthelredian Chronicle: Narrative Style and Identity in Anglo-Saxon Chronicle MS F', 115; Brooks, 'Why Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* about Kings?', 52.
[419] Sheppard, *Families of the King: Writing Identity in the* Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 72, 93.

('to fight (in/about)'), *forbærnan* ('to burn down') and *(for/ge)heregian* ('to lay waste to, ravage'). The progression of the destruction and submission of *burga* to the Danes is visible throughout the years. The 990s and turn of the millennium see heavy warfare around important *burga* including the capital London. Yet, at this stage the *burga* remain in Anglo-Saxon hands. Then, in 1001 the *burh* at Exmouth is attacked (R4.236, 340, 447 and 586). Here, we see the English forces, while capable of defending the *burh*, are defeated soundly in the field. From this point onwards, even the *burga* fall before the Viking attacks. The next ten years see a constant harrying and burning of *burga* by the Danes. However, in the 1010s there is a change from the Danes simply ravaging the *burga* to clearly besieging and submitting them, in language reminiscent of Edward's earlier territorial expansion. Both at the short-lived triumph of Sweyn in 1013 and the more permanent conquest of Cnut in 1016, it is the fall of the *burh* of London after all other *burga* which represents the fall of England itself.

Between the conquest of Cnut in 1016 and the conquest of the Normans in 1066 we do not see many uses of *burh* outside of place names. During Edward the Confessor's reign, *ChronE* 1048 tells the story of the revenge of Edward the Confessor's Norman brother-in-law, Eustace, upon Dover, which is called both a *burh* and a *port* (R4.633–6), variation which is suggestive of urban economic features, as we shall see in §6.3.[420] In the same manuscript in 1055, the attack of Ælfgar and Griffin on Hereford is described in more familiar terms: they "forbærndon" ('burned down') the minster and the whole *burh* (R4.641).

[420] Whitelock, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, 117, note 1 explains Eustace's identity.

However, this general lack of focus on fortified sites changes at 1066. In the diverse annals which relate the progressive and definitive conquest of the English landscape by William of Normandy, we see once again the language of destruction and submission used with *burh* in earlier annals. *ChronC* has little to say about 1066, and the only example of *burh* in this annal is where Harald Hardrada, the later defeated Norwegian contender, came to York and "hi mon gislade of þære burh" ('the people of the *burh* submitted to them', R4.387). Here, we see a repeat of the structure of the Æthelredian years, where a *burh* submission represents the power of the invading force, albeit short-lived in Harald's case. However, it is *ChronD* which gives us the fullest account of the Norman Conquest and its aftermath years.[421] Although there is almost no use of *burh* in *ChronD* 1066, the years of rebellion in 1067 and 1068, which were violently quashed by William, are partly recounted through the movement of the Norman forces from place to place, besieging (*besittan*), harrying (*forheregian*), breaking into (*abrecan*) and burning (*forbærnan*) the *burga* at Exeter, Bristol, Durham and York (R4.501–9). A single, but similar, description of the harrying of the *burh* of York appears in *ChronE* 1068 (R4.649). The defeat of the English is shown, again, through the submission and destruction of their centres of power by the invading army.

However, at this time we also see a new word fill the role of the triumphant power centre: the loanword *castel*. The word is loaned from the Old French term *castel* for 'fortress' and is often rendered into modern English as 'castle', although

[421] Keynes, 'Manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*', 547.

this translation is perhaps as problematic as the modern use of 'burh'.[422] While it is evident in the uses of *castel* that it refers to a fortified site, seeking morphological distinctions between *castelas* and *burga* is beyond the scope of this thesis, both because of the breadth of castle studies and because of the difficulty already seen in pinning down morphological details to such early sites.[423] Instead, this analysis will show how *castel* takes on the linguistic role filled in earlier annals by *geweorc* and *burh*, bringing with it new and negative connotations of foreignness.[424]

The very earliest uses of *castel* appear in the reign of Edward the Confessor. In *ChronE* 1048 we are told that the Welshmen fighting against the king had "gewroht ænne castel" ('made a *castel*') and from there had done "ælc þæra harme & bismere" ('as much harm and disgrace') upon the king's men as they could. Although the political heart of this was an Anglo-Scandinavian dissenter, Earl Sweyn, the *castel* is clearly represented as a construction of the non-English Welshmen and is collocated conceptually with the harm and disgrace done by its inhabitants. What is also interesting is that there is no further description given for the site, suggesting that the word was already familiar to at least the writer. In the story of Godwine's campaign against the Norman Eustace in 1052, there is a *castel* at Leominster in *ChronD* and one at Langtree, Gloucestershire in *ChronE*. Both of these sites are clearly

[422] Philip Durkin, *Borrowed Words: A History of Loanwords in English* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 282.
[423] Comparisons between *burga* and *castelas* have been made since Armitage's work. Recent research has considered the role of these sites in the landscape and questioned if there was much morphological difference between a *burh* and an early 'castle'. See especially: Armitage, 'Anglo-Saxon Burhs and Early Norman Castles'; Coulson, 'Cultural Realities and Reappraisals in English Castle-Study''; Creighton, *Castles and Landscapes*.
[424] *ChronD* contains 12 instances of *castel* and *castel*-compounds (in annals 1052, 1066, 1067, 1068, 1075, 1076 and 1077); *ChronE* contains 86 instances (in annals 1048, 1052, 1069, 1075, 1076, 1079, 1086, 1087, 1090, 1091, 1092, 1094, 1095, 1097, 1100, 1102, 1104, 1105, 1106, 1113, 1114, 1116, 1118, 1119, 1120, 1123, 1124, 1126, 1129, 1135, 1137 and 1140).

fortified and are explicitly manned by "þa Frencyscan" ('the French'). Likewise, later in *ChronE* 1052, archbishop Robert, a Norman, and his Frenchmen avoid being taken as hostages by escaping to "Pentecostes castele" (the *castel* of Sir Osbern Pentecost) and "Rodbertes castele" (Robert's *castel*). These *castelas* are clearly privately owned and, again, of foreign origin, especially belonging to Frenchmen of apparently dubious morals. We can immediately see in all of these examples that *castel* has strong connotations of 'foreignness', and that a clear separation is made between the English countrymen and the non-English who stand against them.

At the point of the Norman Conquest, *castel* is used to represent the progression of William's dominion over the English landscape, much as *burh* had been in Edward's annals. In *ChronD* 1066 we are told that William's first act on English soil was when his men "worhton castel æt Hæstingaport" ('made a *castel* at Hastings'), and it is immediately following this statement that we are told Harold returned south to fight the Normans. The *castel* is representative of the threat to Harold and England and, as William is to prevail, it is a promise of his coming power over the land. After William's coronation at the end of the annal we are told that his men "worhton castelas wide geond þas þeode, & earm folc swencte, & a syððan hit yflade swiðe" ('built *castelas* widely over this nation and the poor people were afflicted and ever since it has got much worse'). During the rebellion years of 1067 and 1068, we can also see that, while William is crushing the resistant *burga* of the English, he is busy building *castelas* at strategic points in a manner which is incredibly reminiscent of the late-ninth- and early-tenth-century annals: "He for þa to Snotingaham, & worhte þær castel, & for swa to Eoferwic, & þær worhte twegen

castelas, & on Lincolna & gehwar on þan ende" ('He went then to Nottingham and built a *castel* there, and so went to York and there made two *castelas* and in Lincoln and everywhere in that area'). The English attempt to fight back unsuccessfully by attacking Norman *castelas* in exchange. As with the movement and placing of *burga* on the landscape in the Edwardian annals, the image of William's *castel*-construction signals his dominion over the land.

The semi-formulaic language of landscape control which we have observed used in Alfred's years with *geweorc* and Edward's years with *burh* is now strikingly visible with *castel*. Indeed, Clark comments on how these Conquest years return to ninth-century formulae for battles, such as "ahton wælstowe geweald" ('they had control of the battlefield').[425] However, while we saw *geweorc* and *burh* used for the sites of both the Anglo-Saxons and their enemies, there exists a dichotomy in these mid-eleventh-century annals between the Norman *castelas* and the Anglo-Saxon *burga*. Both *castelas* and *burga* represented defensible and symbolic sites of power and military activity, but the clear connotations of 'foreignness' in *castel* make the word necessarily applicable only to the fortresses of the Norman invaders, and lend connotations of 'nativeness' to *burh*. As in earlier annals, the story of these fortifications narrates the progress of the war: the *castelas* are represented as an oppressive and progressive blanket over the whole land, while the *burga* are static, on the back foot, and losing control over the land.

ChronD finishes its annals before the end of William's reign, and the only real witness after this point is *ChronE* which was copied in around 1122 at Peterborough

[425] Clark, 'The Narrative Mode of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* before the Conquest', 234.

and extended in various stints to include annals up to 1154.[426] *Castelas* appear many times in the annals of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, being built, besieged and fought over. Comparatively, there are very few non-onomastic instances of *burh* in these later years. Most of those examples deal with the burning of *burga*, either by attack or natural disaster, such as Gloucester in 1122 (R4.704). What is important in our understanding of *burh* here is that the word evidently still has a physical referent which can be affected by fire, and the sense of 'borough' as an administrative region has clearly not overtaken the meaning of *burh* as a physical settlement. The final non-onomastic use of *burh* in *ChronE* appears in 1140 and, again, recalls earlier martial uses of *burh*. This appears during the annals relating the war between the Empress Matilda and the eventually triumphant King Stephen, which were written as a block after Stephen's death in 1154. We are told in 1140 that Matilda came to Oxford and that the powerful men and earls "iauen hire þe burch" ('gave her the *burh*', R4.753). This symbol of submission to a woman who is doomed to fail is difficult to interpret, but it is perhaps meaningful that it is a *burh* which is said to submit to her, a site which has not represented a node of victory in the *Chronicles* for over two hundred years.

[426] Irvine, 'The Production of the Peterborough Chronicle', 49–54; Home, 'Double-Edged Déjà Vu: The Complexity of the Peterborough Chronicle', 68.

5.3.5 Conclusion to the *Chronicles*

The *Chronicles* form interrelating, competing and political narratives of Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman history. The perspectives of the annals change depending on the centre from which they emanate and we can see the power of language in shaping the stories the chroniclers tell. The use of *burh* in the *Chronicles* largely recounts a history of conflict and particularly of invasion. From the Roman taking of British *burga* in 60B.C. all the way to Matilda's claim on Oxford in 1140, we can see that *burga* played a role in making statements of power and control over the land.

The most interesting trends are visible when we compare the use of *burh* to that of *geweorc* and *castel*. The trope of moving through the land, building a fortification and, whether implicitly or overtly, thereby gaining the submission of the people can be observed with each of these words at different times and for different purposes. Both the lack of comparative archaeological data and the diversity of the sites which have been excavated means that it is difficult to suggest any morphological or functional features which may have distinguished *geweorc*, *burga* and *castelas* from one another. However, it is clear from the present study that political concerns were certainly part of the drive behind vocabulary choices as compilers and scribes aimed to shape the narratives of their own histories. *Geweorc*, *burh* and *castel* are all capable of referring to quite possibly similar fortified sites, but it is the connotations attached to these words which prove so valuable. *Geweorc* brings concepts of construction and industry, *castel* ideas of foreignness and

negativity, while *burh* represents a stable centre of power and, in later annals, native English strongholds.

These findings are significant in their own right, but are particularly impactful when we consider the interpretation of the late-ninth- and early-tenth-century annals within 'burghal' studies. This analysis suggests that *burh* was not used to represent a specific and innovative technical definition, but because of the connotations of permanence and power already inherent to the word. By reading the *Chronicles* with an awareness of its role as a piece of literature as much as a piece of history, we can learn more about how the *burga* of Alfred, Edward and Æthelflæd were perceived at the time, but also how chroniclers could use vernacular terms to shape the image of their own past and their own space.

5.4 Conclusion to Historical Prose About England

It is clear by comparing the findings of this chapter with the previous chapter that writers creating narratives about their own linguistic space use *burh* significantly differently from those who make distant histories familiar to vernacular readers. Although several of the texts discussed thus far in the thesis can be connected in some way to the court of Alfred, the significance, connotations and even denotations of *burh* vary depending on the purpose and setting of the text in question. Looking at the *HE* and the *OEB* has shown the impact of multi-layered translation, where Bede's own vernacular experience of place impacts his Latin

vocabulary choices, and the later translators' knowledge of standard vernacular place names likewise plays a role in their own translation decisions. Indeed, paying close attention to these lexical layers has also proven valuable for detailed archaeological case studies, revealing a potential connection between an early Anglian royal estate and a monastic *burh*.

The study of the *Chronicles*, on the other hand, showed how the power of *burh* in the annals of Edward and Æthelflæd was due to the pre-existing connotations of power and stability inherent to the word. The semi-formulaic use of *burh*, *geweorc* and *castel* showed that rhetorical structures were established and used to shape the presentation of the past, and the vocabulary choices changed according to the political needs of the time. Nevertheless, *burh* was used at all times throughout the *Chronicles* to represent nodes of power. In the 'Wars of Alfred', the *burga* were the centres of stability within Alfred's threatened kingdom, while in the Edwardian and Æthelflædian annals *burh* was used as a rhetorical tool to symbolise the ever-expanding kingdom of the triumphant West Saxons. Later, the taking and breaking of *burga* by external forces showed the decay of Anglo-Saxon power in the face of invasion, to be replaced eventually by *castelas* as weapons of domination. Yet, *burga* were never stripped of their power and appear even in the latest annals as sites worthy of mention and symbolic of control.

6 Texts Concerning Social Order

6.1 Introduction

OE legal writings have an important place in historical, literary and linguistic study.[427] Indeed, semantic investigation of the law codes, although infrequent, has proven to be a fruitful exercise.[428] The Anglo-Saxon laws, along with the Irish Brehon laws, are rare among early Western medieval legal texts for having been written in the vernacular, and the first law code, that of Æthelberht of Kent (r. 590–616), is the earliest extant OE text.[429] But while Anglo-Saxon legal writing finds its origins in seventh-century Kent, the majority of our material comes from the West Saxon dynasty kings, starting with the seventh-century king Ine but taking off from Alfred onwards. From the tenth century, almost every Anglo-Saxon king promulgated written laws (except, notably, Edward the Confessor), and the impact of these texts extended beyond their own reigns: much Anglo-Norman governance and legal writing drew upon Anglo-Saxon precedents to establish their Englishness.[430]

These texts exist within the realm of administration and governance, and, be they kings' codes or quasi-legal treatises, they engage with issues of social order.

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[427] For a historiography of twentieth-century research, see: Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 3–28; for the significant impact of Felix Liebermann's work, see: Andrew Rabin, 'Felix Liebermann and *Die Gesetze Der Angelsachsen*', in *English Law Before Magna Carta: Felix Liebermann and* Die Gesetze Der Angelsachsen, ed. Stefan Jurasinski, Lisi Oliver, and Andrew Rabin, Medieval Law and Its Practice 8 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 1–8.
[428] J. R. Schwyter, *Old English Legal Language: The Lexical Field of Theft* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1996), 15.
[429] Carole Hough, 'Legal and Documentary Writings', in *A Companion to Anglo-Saxon Literature*, ed. Phillip Pulsiano and Elaine Treharne, Blackwell Companions to Literature and Culture 11 (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 174.
[430] Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*, 169.

However, the nature and function of Anglo-Saxon laws is much debated. There is doubt as to how much the policies prescribed were ever carried out in practice, and Wormald especially argues for reading law codes in the light of royal image-building.[431] Yet, although it is important to bear in mind this potential disjunction between text and reality, it does not mean that we should dismiss these texts as historical sources. Tom Lambert points out that, even if we do not read Anglo-Saxon laws to understand how society behaved, they certainly give us insight into how the elite thought and intended society to function.[432]

The laws developed in tandem with great social changes, such as the unification of England, urbanisation and the emergence of a market society.[433] Consequently, the content and form of the law codes are integral to questions of state formation, trade, personal status and, of course, the impact of using the vernacular. Kings' codes are also among the most used texts for archaeologists and historians studying the development of the Alfredian 'burghal' sites into urban centres throughout the tenth century. Commonly, *burh* in the kings' codes is interpreted as 'town' and is often read exclusively in the light of the Alfredian achievement, with this evidence feeding back into a narrow definition of the modern word 'burh'.[434] By contrast, exploration into *burh* in the non-royal social treatises

[431] Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 264; Hough, 'Legal and Documentary Writings', 176.
[432] Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*, 15.
[433] Lambert, 163; S. R. H. Jones, 'Transaction Costs, Institutional Change, and the Emergence of a Market Economy in Later Anglo-Saxon England', *Economic History Review* 46, no. 4 (1993): 658–78.
[434] Such scholarship will be discussed in more detail later, but some key examples are: Kinsey, 'Anglo-Saxon Law and Practice Relating to Mints and Moneyers, with Particular Reference to the Mints of Chichester, London, Dover and Northampton and the Moneyer(s) Cynsige or Kinsey'; Jones, 'Transaction Costs, Institutional Change, and the Emergence of a Market Economy in Later Anglo-Saxon England'; Hill, 'Athelstan's Urban Reforms'; Williams, 'Military and Non-Military Functions of the Anglo-Saxon Burh, c.878–978'; Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*.

often occurs in studies of social status and manorialisation, where *burh* occurs in a few iconic passages and is generally interpreted as a high-status private settlement.[435] It is clear, therefore, that re-evaluating *burh* semantically in these legal texts will be valuable for several areas of scholarship.

In total, the social order texts contain 52 instances of *burh* and, for this reason, it is possible to engage with each instance individually and answer some specific linguistic questions. Many of the texts can be dated with accuracy to a king's reign or even to a particular year, allowing us to explore diachronic changes in the use of *burh* in legal texts. However, there are also various synchronic factors which can be seen to affect the language used in the texts, such as topic, location, audience and purpose, and important aspects of *burh* become apparent when taking these features into account.

One of the key lexical issues which this chapter shall address is that of technical vocabulary. Wormald considered that OE law codes showed signs of developing technical terminology in the tenth century.[436] As has already been stated, *burh* in law codes is often read through the specific filter of the Alfredian system, and R. S. Kinsey states that, by the early tenth century, *burh* had attained a technical meaning as "a specially authorized and protected fortress, permanently maintained by the inhabitants of the surrounding district, and included an official market and an

[435] Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest'; Gardiner, 'Implements and Utensils in Gerefa and the Organization of Seigneurial Farmsteads in the High Middle Ages'; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England'; Chelsea Shields-Más, 'The Reeve in Late Anglo-Saxon England' (PhD thesis, York, University of York, 2013), http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/5534/.
[436] Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 301–10.

official mint."[437] However, technicality of language is an understudied area of medieval texts, and scholars often "take for granted that there are known criteria for the determination of what constitutes technical vocabulary" in historical writing.[438] Louise Sylvester uses factors of distribution and hyponymy to establish technicality in medieval texts, arguing that a term may be technical if it appears only in limited circumstances or with a specific meaning within a lexical hierarchy.[439] While *burh* has already been shown to appear with very broad meanings throughout OE texts, this chapter will explore if semantic evidence suggests that *burh* did indeed develop a specific, and thus perhaps technical, meaning in Anglo-Saxon law codes.

6.2 The Earliest Codes

The earliest examples of *burh* in legal texts are found in law codes of the West Saxon kings Ine (r. 688–726, *LawIne* and its headings *LawIneRb*, R5.1, 4–5) and Alfred (r. 871–99, *LawAf 1*, R5.2–3). *LawIne* focuses on compensation and is thought to have come from fairly early in Ine's reign, although it is only preserved as an appendix to *LawAf 1*, Alfred's *domboc*.[440] Although *LawIne* is clearly an Alfredian compilation of various law codes promulgated by Ine, the textual evidence suggests that the content

[437] Kinsey, 'Anglo-Saxon Law and Practice Relating to Mints and Moneyers, with Particular Reference to the Mints of Chichester, London, Dover and Northampton and the Moneyer(s) Cynsige or Kinsey', 14 note 1.
[438] Louise Sylvester, 'Technical Vocabulary and Medieval Text Types', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 117, no. 1 (2016): 170.
[439] Sylvester, 'Technical Vocabulary and Medieval Text Types'.
[440] 'Ine's Code (Ine)', Early English Laws, 2020, https://earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/ine/.

of *LawIne* was left untampered by Alfred and that what we have are therefore the original seventh-century laws.[441] *LawAf 1*, by far the longest legal text in OE and unparalleled in its content, was probably written after 893 and promulgated laws explicitly based upon those of Æthelberht of Kent, Ine and Offa of Mercia (the latter no longer extant).[442] *Burh* does not appear in any of the early Kentish law codes, but evidence particularly from the laws of Æthelberht (r. 590–616, *LawAbt*) bears comparison.[443]

In both *LawIne* and *LawAf 1*, *burh* appears primarily in clauses which legislate the compensation due to individuals where their private property is broken into, with the compensation stratified according to the victim's social rank.[444] *LawIne* 45 states:

> **Burgbryce** mon sceal betan CXX scillinga kyninges & biscepes, þær his rice bið; ealdormonnes LXXX scillinga; cyninges ðegnes LX scillinga; gesiðcundes monnes landhæbbendes XXXV
>
> [In the case of] **breaking into a *burh*** one must compensate 120 shillings [if the *burh* belongs to] the king or a bishop, where his authority is; 80 shillings [if the *burh* belongs to] an

[441] Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 103; Hough, 'Legal and Documentary Writings', 175; Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*, 68.
[442] 'Alfred's Domboc (Af)', Early English Laws, 2020, https://earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/af/; Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 285; Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*, 164–65.
[443] All texts cited in this chapter can be found in: Liebermann, *Gesetze Der Angelsachsen*; for information on the history of the seventh-century codes, see: Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 93–108; Oliver, *The Beginnings of English Law*, 8ff; Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*, 63–110.
[444] Not considered in this chapter is the use of *mægburh* ('lineage') in *LawIne*, R5.5, and *LawAf 1*, R5.3, as this poetic compound is discussed in §8.6. In these legal instances we learn little about the meaning of *burh*, and it instead feeds into discussions about the use of poetic language in law codes, which is outside the remit of this thesis; for more information see chapter 3 of Beechy, *The Poetics of Old English*.

> ealdorman; a king's thegn 60 shillings; a noble man who holds land 35
> R5.4

This law certainly uses *burh* to indicate an enclosed, privately-held and high-status property: the use of *bryce* ('breaking into') indicates the physical boundary of the site, and the fact that the compensation is due to individuals suggests their proprietorship of the property. It is also noteworthy that all the ranks listed are noble. The idea of *burh* as high-status is emphasised in *LawAf 1* 40, which is among the laws Alfred adapted from *LawIne*:[445]

> Cyninges **burgbryce** bið CXX scillinga ærcebiscepes hundnigontig scillinga, oðres biscepes & ealdormonnes LX scillinga, twelfhyndes monnes XXX scillinga syxhyndes monnes XV scillinga; ceorles edorbryce V scillinga.
>
> For **breaking into the *burh*** of the king is 120 shillings, of an archbishop 90 shillings, of another bishop and an ealdorman 60 shillings, a man with twelve hides 30 shillings, a man with six hides 15 shillings; for breaking into a *ceorl*'s *eodor* 5 shillings
> R5.2

Alfred maintains the structure of Ine's law, but stratifies the ranks further: archbishops and bishops are now compensated differently, the thegn has disappeared, and the "gesiðcundes monnes landhæbbendes" ('noble, land-holding man') of *LawIne* has been split into men with twelve or six hides, presumably still noble as they hold significant lands. In addition to these noble ranks is the insertion

[445] Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 280.

of the *ceorl*, a freeman, but not a nobleman.[446] What is key is that the *ceorl* does not have a *burh* but an *eodor*, commonly defined as 'enclosure, fence, hedge, wall'.[447] Like *burh*, this word here appears to represent a settlement enclosed by a physical boundary and which is privately held. Considering the sparse information given, the only clear distinction given between the *burh* and the *eodor* is one of rank: *burh* for noble dwellings, *eodor* for lower-class dwellings.

Here it is useful to make a comparison with *LawAbt*, the early seventh-century code of the Kentish king Æthelberht. In clause 27, Æthelberht also legislates compensation for breaking into enclosed property:

> Gif friman **edorbrecþe** gedeþ, VI scillingum gebete
>
> If a freeman commits an **enclosure-breaking**, he shall compensate with 6 shillings

This law gives no rank stratification and uses only *eodor* to refer to the property. We can see, therefore, that *LawAbt*, *LawIne* and *LawAf 1* all legislate on a similar issue but with different social distinctions and using different enclosure vocabulary. As *LawAbt* dates to the early seventh century, *LawIne* to the early eighth and *LawAf 1* to the late ninth, it is plausible that these laws represent semantic change over time. However, there appears little difference between the use of *burh* in *LawIne* and in *LawAf 1* nearly 200 years later. It is possible to suggest that the distinction is between

[446] Hines, 'Social Structures and Social Change in Seventh-Century England: The Law Codes and Complementary Sources', 397.
[447] Hines interprets this specifically as a 'house', but this seems to me unfitting: Hines, 406; see also Angus Cameron et al., 'Eodor', in *Dictionary of Old English: A to I Online* (Toronto: Dictionary of Old English Project), accessed 1 October 2020, http://tapor.library.utoronto.ca/doe/.

the use of *eodor* in the Kentish code and *burh* in the West Saxon codes. However, it is hard to argue that this difference is dialectal with such a small amount of data, and, furthermore, *burh* evidently existed in the Kentish dialect: it is a core term across Germanic languages, evidence from the eighth-century glossaries discussed in §3.4 show that it was a term used in early Kentish writings, and indeed the capital of Kent was named *Cantwarabyrig*.

Rather, I would argue that the distinction in the use of *eodor* and *burh* is one of status. From the sixth century onwards, enclosure begins to be a feature of rural settlements and over time the settlements show more stratification of status, and presumably by association social ranks also stratified more.[448] Certainly, by Alfred's time there is significant distinction to be seen between lower- and higher-status settlements and there is, in fact, a general trend in *LawIne* to distinguish social ranks more than its contemporary Kentish codes do.[449] It is noticeable that *burh* only appears in the context of laws dealing with noble ranks. Indeed, in *LawAf 1*, *burh* is shown to be applicable only to noble sites, where *burh* is contrasted with the *ceorl*'s *eodor*. I would suggest, therefore, that *eodor* could represent any enclosure, while *burh* was specifically used for high-status enclosures. Thus, as Æthelberht's law makes no rank distinction, it uses only *eodor* as a term which could represent enclosed settlements of any social magnitude.

[448] Andrew Reynolds, 'Boundaries and Settlements in Later Sixth- to Eleventh-Century England', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 12 (2003): 102, 130; Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society in Anglo-Saxon England*, 75; Hines, 'Social Structures and Social Change in Seventh-Century England: The Law Codes and Complementary Sources', 399.
[449] Hines, 'Social Structures and Social Change in Seventh-Century England: The Law Codes and Complementary Sources', 398.

The social difference between *eodor* and *burh* may be apparent linguistically, but what is not evident is how this would have played out in practice. Can we imagine a visible and physically measurable distinction between a *burh* and an *eodor* in Alfred's reign? Some architectural differences are to be expected between settlements of higher and lower status, but, in reality, judging the social status of a site is far from easy and boundaries tend to blur.[450] It seems unlikely that a hard and precise distinction would have been recognisable between the enclosed dwelling of a man with six hides and one with five, nor would a site's morphology necessarily change with the possibly fluctuating rank of its proprietor. I would suggest rather that *burh* is meaningfully distinguished from *eodor* in these texts only by social perception, emphasising the importance of high-status connotations in the concept of *burh*.

6.3 Forming and Reforming England

This section shall consider royal laws from the tenth century before the reign of Æthelred the Unready. This period saw the fitful formation of England as a whole kingdom and also various impactful reforms, for example coinage under Athelstan and the Benedictine Revival under Edgar. It is also when we see an explosion in legal writing, with kings often turning out multiple law codes.[451] *Burh* appears in

[450] Hines, 407.
[451] Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*, 165, 199.

laws of Edward (r. 899–924, R5.6), Athelstan (r. 924–39, R5.7–16), Edmund (r. 939–46, R5.17–8) and Edgar (r. 959–75, R5.19–27), often in circumstances related to urban and commercial growth. Indeed, it is in these examples that scholars most commonly interpret *burh* as a technical term for a town which evolved from the Alfredian 'burghal' system.[452] Lambert also sees this tenth-century period as one defined by a short experiment of national governance through these 'burhs'.[453] One of the key factors driving the very urban and commercial reading of *burh* in this period is its perceived near-synonymity with the word *port* ('port, haven, town, esp. a market town', from the Lat. *portus* meaning 'harbour, haven, port').[454] Quotations containing *port* or *burh* are often conflated in discussions about the development of the urban 'burh'.[455] It will therefore be constructive to compare uses of *port* in the tenth-century law codes with those of *burh* to ascertain whether claims of near-synonymity are founded, as well as to consider if a technical reading of *burh* is supported by the semantic evidence.

It is worth first briefly introducing the word *port*, which has c. 185 examples across the entire corpus of OE. Although Durkin considers it to be a loanword from before 650, it appears overwhelmingly in tenth- and eleventh-century texts,

[452] Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 246.
[453] Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*, 245–47.
[454] Joseph Bosworth, 'Port', in *Bosworth Toller's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*, ed. Thomas Northcote Toller and et al. (Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, 2019), https://bosworthtoller.com/25311; 'Portus', in *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2015), http://clt.brepolis.net.libproxy.york.ac.uk/dmlbs/Default.aspx.
[455] Kinsey, 'Anglo-Saxon Law and Practice Relating to Mints and Moneyers, with Particular Reference to the Mints of Chichester, London, Dover and Northampton and the Moneyer(s) Cynsige or Kinsey', 15; Hill, 'Athelstan's Urban Reforms', 174; Molyneaux, *The Formation of the English Kingdom in the Tenth Century*, 106–7; Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*, 245 note 19, 271–72.

suggesting increasing relevance over time.[456] The majority of the examples appear in charters, either in witness lists as the compound *portgerefa* ('*port*-reeve') or in the writ-charter formula *binnan porte ond butan* (within the *port* and without'), likely modelled on the more common formula *binnan byrig ond butan* (see §7.6). It appears fairly frequently in later *Chronicles* entries mostly as part of place names, and there is also a marked abundance of uses of *port* in the anonymous hagiography *LS 34 (SevenSleepers)*, suggesting the vocabulary choice of an individual writer. The word appears nine times in the OE law codes, all bar one appearing in codes for Edward the Elder and Athelstan, always relating to trade and minting.

One of the key changes apparent in tenth-century England, and one which was instrumental in the urban development of the kingdom, was the emergence of a market economy, generally precipitated at fortified centres under royal or ecclesiastical control, which typically developed out of the Alfredian defence system.[457] Part of the impetus for encouraging market trade was in the control of transactional locations, which appears first in *LawIEw*. Law 1 states that "nan man ne ceapige butan porte" ('no man should purchase outside of a *port*'), instead needing the *port*-reeve and other good witnesses to confirm the purchase. Law 1.1 confirms that if anyone were to buy "butan porte" ('outside the *port*') then they would be in contempt of the king. The use of *port* in this instance makes it clear that the word has strong commercial connotations.

[456] Durkin, *Borrowed Words: A History of Loanwords in English*, 111.
[457] Jones, 'Transaction Costs, Institutional Change, and the Emergence of a Market Economy in Later Anglo-Saxon England'.

Law 1.4 then states that if a man cannot produce suitable witnesses for a purchase, he will be assigned six men "on ðam ylcan geburhscipe, þe he hamfæst wære" (in the same *geburhscip*, in which he is resident', R5.6). The word *geburhscip* is a *hapax legomenon* meaning something like '*burh*-ship', often translated as 'township'. However, what exactly it signifies is uncertain. Clearly, the concept of a district is associated with *burh*, but what the *burh* itself constitutes or how it interacts with the district is impossible to reconstruct. However, we can see that the *burh* and the *port* are not the same place, as the text makes quite clear that the *geburhscip* is that in which the man himself lives, not a district attendant upon the *port* in which the trade happens. While these uses of *port* emphasise commercial factors, the word *geburhscip* has instead connotations of residence, administrative centrality and community. Indeed, *LawIAs* also uses *burh* with similar connotations, as the code is addressed to "ðam gerefan to hwilcere birig" ('the reeves in each *burh*', R5.7). Although *burh* here is often translated as 'borough', it is unclear what *burga* are intended.[458] What is relevant is that the *burga* and their attendant reeves are used as the system of administration.

LawIIAs, the longest code of Athelstan (r. 924–39), plays a central role in discussions about urban development in England.[459] David Hill considers that "Athelstan saw the Anglo-Saxon town as burh, mint and port," although he does not clearly define what each of these terms individually represents.[460] It is certainly in

[458] 'Æthelstan's Tithe Edict (I As)', Early English Laws, 2020, https://earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/i-as/.
[459] 'Æthelstan's Grately Code (II As)', Early English Laws, 2020, https://earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/ii-as/.
[460] Hill, 'Athelstan's Urban Reforms', 175.

this law code that we see the greatest interaction between *burh* and *port*. Edward's rules regarding trade within a *port* are upheld in law 12 of *LawIIAs*, which is followed by law 13, stating that "ælc burh" ('each *burh*', R5.8) should be repaired fourteen nights after Rogationtide.[461] It appears likely that the *burga* in question are not private residences, as after *LawAf 1* private estates are not discussed in the royal codes.[462] This *burh*-statement is followed by law 13.1, stating again that all purchases should happen within a *port*.

When discussing this section, scholars often conflate the two terms, stating that trade was only permitted within a 'burh', despite the fact that laws 12 and 13.1 actually use *port*.[463] Certainly, the positioning of these statements in such close conjunction with one another does suggest a perceived connection between what they are legislating. However, it is noticeable that, while the two words appear associated and could arguably be referring to the same physical spaces, they are by no means being used synonymously. *Port* is once again used only in collocation with highly commercial issues, while *burh* is here used in relation to physical construction and defence.[464] The connotational meanings evoked by these two words are clearly very different. Indeed, in the later code *LawVIAs*, Athelstan revokes the requirement to purchase within a *port* in law 10, probably as it was too impractical to enforce

[461] One variant manuscript entitles this law "be burga gebettunge" ('on the repair of *burga*') and another "be burhbot" ('on *burh*-service'). However, these titles are not included in the *DOE* corpus. For the manuscript variations, see: Liebermann, *Gesetze Der Angelsachsen*, 156.
[462] Jay Lemanski, 'A Loose Canon: The *Quadripartitus*, *Rectitudines*, and the Creation of English Law', 59–60.
[463] Williams, 'Military and Non-Military Functions of the Anglo-Saxon Burh, c.878–978', 138–41; Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*, 245.
[464] A similar argument is made by Harmer when considering the use of *port* in writ-charters: Harmer, *Anglo-Saxon Writs*, 460–61.

across the kingdom.[465] *Burh* is not used anywhere nearby and in fact only appears in this code in the place names *Lundenbyrig* and *Witlanbyrig* (R5.15–16). While the association between the two words is apparent, they are not in these instances referring to the same concept.

The other situation in *LawIIAs* in which *burh* and *port* interact is in reference to coinage reform. Numismatically, Athelstan's reign was important as place names first appeared regularly on coins and a section of *LawIIAs*, which is possibly an interpolation of a contemporary text, first legislates on minting.[466] Following laws regarding trade regulation, law 14 states that no one may mint coins "buton on port" ('except in a *port*'). Clause 14.2 then assigns the number of moneyers permitted in various places:

> On **Cantwarabyrig** VII myneteras: IIII ðæs cynges & II þæs biscopes, I ðæs abbodes; to Hrofeceastre: II cynges & I þæs biscopes; to **Lundenbyrig** VIII; to Wintaceastre VI; to Læwe II; to Hæstingaceastre I; oþer to Cisseceastre; to Hamtune II; to Wærham II; to Execeastre II; to **Sceaftesbyrig** II; elles to þam oþrum **burgum** I.
>
> In **Canterbury** 7 moneyers: 4 of the king and 2 of the bishop and 1 of the abbot; to Rochester: 2 of the king and 1 of the bishop; to **London** 8; to Winchester 6; to Lewes 2; to Hastings 1; another to Chichester; to Southampton 2; to Wareham 2; to Exeter 2; to **Shaftesbury** 2; else to the other ***burga*** 1.
> R5.9–12

[465] Jones, 'Transaction Costs, Institutional Change, and the Emergence of a Market Economy in Later Anglo-Saxon England', 673; Williams, 'Military and Non-Military Functions of the Anglo-Saxon Burh, c.878–978', 141.
[466] Kinsey, 'Anglo-Saxon Law and Practice Relating to Mints and Moneyers, with Particular Reference to the Mints of Chichester, London, Dover and Northampton and the Moneyer(s) Cynsige or Kinsey', 13; C. E. Blunt, 'The Coinage of Athelstan, 924–939: A Survey', *British Numismatic Journal* 42 (1974): 40–41.

By placing the mints within *burga* and also stating that minting must be done within a *port*, this law implies that the *burh* and *port* inhabit overlapping physical spaces. Scholars looking at Athelstan's coinage often end up treating *burh* and *port* as one.[467] However, it is not clear if the two words refer to the same concept: the *port* may represent an area within a *burh*, or they may refer to the same physical referent with different connotations.

Certainly, a particularly interesting element of this law is that the referents of *burh* appear to be limited to those sites at which a mint can be found, and at least some of these can be identified by considering mint signatures. Overall, we have evidence of 35 mints active in Athelstan's reign, which can be found across England, if not in equal density everywhere.[468] Indeed, there is evidence that identified mints not named in the law did tend to have only one moneyer each, showing that this law reflects the reality to some extent.[469] Even allowing for lost mints, this makes a relatively limited set of sites which this law considers to be *burga*, and many are indeed *BH* sites, although Athelstan appears to have abandoned some of the more purely defensive sites in favour of his own foundations with more compact and commercially-minded layouts, suggesting a change in priorities.[470] This law, at least,

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[467] Kinsey, 'Anglo-Saxon Law and Practice Relating to Mints and Moneyers, with Particular Reference to the Mints of Chichester, London, Dover and Northampton and the Moneyer(s) Cynsige or Kinsey', 15; Fleming, *Britain after Rome: The Fall and Rise, 400–1070*, 274; Allen, *Mints and Money in Medieval England*, 1; Williams, 'Military and Non-Military Functions of the Anglo-Saxon Burh, c.878–978', 138; Blake and Sargent, '"For the Protection of All the People": Æthelflæd and Her Burhs in Northwest Mercia', 122.

[468] Carroll and Parsons, *Anglo-Saxon Mint Names: I. Axbridge-Hythe*, xvi; Blunt, 'The Coinage of Athelstan, 924–939: A Survey', 44–45.

[469] Blunt, 'The Coinage of Athelstan, 924–939: A Survey', 41; Allen, *Mints and Money in Medieval England*, 1–3.

[470] Carroll and Parsons lay out detailed information about each Anglo-Saxon mint with names beginning A-H. Unfortunately, the second volume of this study is yet to be published: Carroll and Parsons, *Anglo-Saxon Mint Names: I. Axbridge-Hythe*; Hall, '*Burhs* and Boroughs: Defended Places, Trade, and Towns. Plans, Defences, and Civic Features', 10–11.

seems to use *burh* in an almost technical way to refer to a very specific type of settlement with limited representatives.

On the other hand, *LawIIAs* 20.1 and 20.4 (R5.13–14) emphasise the role of the *burh* as the centre of judicial procedures and legal assemblies. These two laws stipulate the punishment for the failure of duty on the part of a member of the *gemot* ('assembly'), whereby "þa yldestan men … ealle þe to þære byrig hyron" ('the most senior men … all who belong to the *burh*') must ride to the offender and take his possessions. Here, the *burh* represents the centre of a legal catchment area, where men gather for local assemblies, and presents *burh* with connotations of administration and district centrality.[471]

LawIIAs could be seen to present a relatively specific denotation of *burh*, especially if we interpret all uses of *burh* in the code as referring to the limited set of sites implied in the coinage law, as scholars like Kinsey appear to. However, it is important to bear in mind that the coinage law is perhaps an interpolation from another text with a different writer, and we can see that the various uses of *burh* throughout *LawIIAs* occur with quite different connotations. Indeed, it is possible that the interpretation of *burh* was shaped by context, with the specific urban referents of *burh* in this coinage law being apparent to contemporaries from the highly commercial subject matter. This would suggest that the narrow meaning of *burh* in law 14.2 arises not from the word developing a technical definition, but rather from its context-driven flexibility.

[471] Hill, 'Athelstan's Urban Reforms', 175.

Furthermore, the examples of *LawIIAs* lead us to a more subtle understanding of the relationship between *burh* and *port*. This code certainly closely associates the two words more than once, but it is hard to argue that they are truly interchangeable. While they overlap significantly in the legislation on mints, *burh* is not used to define the limits of trade, nor is *port* used when covering issues of judicial administration. There are clear distinctions between the use and connotations of these two words: even if they do at times refer to the same physical site, the perceptions they lend the settlement are quite different. *Port* in *LawIIAs* clearly emphasises trade and commerce, whereas *burh* emphasises defence and authority. Indeed, it is pertinent that the most economic interpretations of *burh* occur where these two words interact. It is also important to note that *burh* is an incredibly common and flexible word in OE generally, while *port* has a very limited use and definition. I would argue, therefore, that across the language as a whole these words are not near-synonyms, and that, even in those contexts where they do overlap, the extent of their interchangeability is far less than has previously been suggested.

Not all examples of *burh* within tenth-century law codes fit squarely into an urban narrative. *LawIIEm*, the second code of Athelstan's son Edmund (r. 939–46), focuses not on financial matters, but on peace and controlling bloodfeuds.[472] *Burh* appears in law 2, which gives terms of sanctuary for "hwa cyrican gesece oððe mine burh" ('anyone who seeks a church or my *burh*', R5.18). The use of the adjective "mine" ('my') is striking and emphasises the king's proprietorship of the site in a

[472] 'Edmund's Bloodfeud Laws (II Em)', Early English Laws, 2020, https://earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/ii-em/; Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 310–11.

way which is more reminiscent of the private *burga* in the laws of Ine and Alfred than the more explicitly urban sites of Athelstan's laws. Thus, while it is conceivable that *burh* here might refer to a town, the emphasis on the king's possession of the site makes it is far more likely that it refers to the king's own residence, an idea supported by Ann Williams.[473] The parallel between churches with the king's *burh* also emphasises this, as it is easier to imagine a parallel being made between sanctuary in the presence of God and sanctuary in the presence of the king than in a larger, more public, urban settlement. This example is incredibly important as it indicates that in mid-tenth-century law codes, *burh* could be used to refer not just to commercial urban centres, but also to private royal residences, depending on the topic at hand.

Lambert believes that the 'burghal' experiment of Edward and Athelstan's reigns failed and that the kings' reliance on 'burhs' to govern the kingdom was passed over in favour of hundreds and shires, perhaps due to the inability of the rural hinterland to interact regularly with the urban centres.[474] However, uses of *burh* in the law codes of Edgar the Peaceful (r. 959–75) show that *burga* were, in fact, presented as an integral part of the kingdom's management alongside hundreds and shires. *LawIIIEg*, the secular part of Edgar's Andover code, is underpinned by issues of judicial organisation and theft, and law 5.1 stipulates: "habbe man þriwa on geara burhgemot & tuwa scirgemot" ('there shall be three *burh*-assemblies in a year and

[473] Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', 227.
[474] Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*, 245–47.

two shire-assemblies', R5.19).[475] Far from disappearing from governmental laws, the *burh*-meetings are listed first and are to be held more often than those of the shire. Although there is no mention here of hundreds, Levi Roach comments that the shire and hundred courts were not well distinguished, and that the ruling probably did not match reality.[476] What the law presents, therefore, is a conceptual binary of meeting types. This paralleled use of *burh* and *scir* can also be seen in *LawIVEg* 2a: "to ælcere byrig & on ælcere scire hæbbe ic mines cynescipes gerihta" (in every *burh* and in every shire, I have the rights of my kingship', R5.20). The terms *burh* and *scir* work metonymically together to create the sense of 'everywhere', suggesting that they represent opposing but complementary concepts. It seems most logical to interpret this binary, therefore, as representing either the urban and the rural, or the enclosed and the open, or a natural combination of the two.

A further contrast of *burga* with hundreds/shires appears in legislation on purchase witnesses in *LawIVEg*, which ramifies laws on trade and courts for a Danelaw audience.[477] It is in this code that witnesses for the hundred or the wapentake (the Danelaw equivalent) are first appointed, and Lambert sees this as further evidence for *burga* taking a back seat to hundreds in terms of governance.[478] However, the four references to hundred/wapentake witnesses always appear in this code in parallel to *burh* witnesses (R5.23–7): "gewitnes sy geset to ælcere byrig &

[475] 'Edgar's Andover Code (II-III Eg)', Early English Laws, 2020, https://earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/iiiii-eg/; Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 316.
[476] Levi Roach, *Kingship and Consent in Anglo-Saxon England, 871–978* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 119.
[477] Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 319.
[478] Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*, 245.

to ælcum hundrode" ('let witnesses be appointed to each *burh* and each hundred', R5.23). Indeed, as in the case of the meetings in *LawIIIEg*, the *burh* witnesses are always mentioned before the hundred witnesses, and law 4 lays special emphasis on the *burga*:

> To ælcere **byrig** XXXVI syn gecorone to gewitnesse; to smalum **burgum** & to ælcum hundrode XII, buton ge ma willan.
>
> In each ***burh*** 36 are [to be] chosen as witnesses; in small ***burga*** and in each hundred 12, except if more are wanted.
> R5.24–5

This statement is important to our understanding of governance through *burga* in several respects. Firstly, there was clearly a growing need to define a gradation of *burga*, although how to judge the size of a *burh* is in no way made apparent. What is striking about the language used is that the 36-witness *burga* are not deemed to be large, but rather they are presented as standard *burga*. It is the 12-witness *burga* which require qualification, and it is telling that they are equated with the hundreds, suggesting that perhaps the inclusion of this new category of *burh* is in response to the governmental issues Lambert discusses. That this law deals with commercial issues, as well as the paralleling of entire districts with small *burga*, suggests that all the *burga* in question are important and possibly urban sites. Yet, *burga* could be much more than large, urban centres, and it is possible that smaller sites were developing regional importance. The need, when discussing commercial concerns, to qualify *burga* which did not fit the standard 'economic' type also shows

that language was adapting to reflect changing administrative and settlement patterns. Furthermore, this evidence shows that *burga* had by no means fallen out of use, but instead laws were adapting linguistically to accommodate *burh* development.

Uses of *burh* within these tenth-century law codes certainly appear in many cases with clear urban connotations and interacting with key urban characteristics, such as market trading and identity distinction between the 'town' and the 'country'. Yet, it is also clear from these examples that a simplistic translation of *burh* as 'town' in laws from this period is reductive. The examples of the king's *burh* in *LawIIEm* and the small *burga* of *LawIVEg* show that *burh* was a more flexible term than a technical reading of it might allow. Even within laws which refer clearly to large urban centres, valuable connotations can be discerned, especially in contrast to the word *port*, with which *burh* is all too commonly elided. The fact that *burh*, especially in the coinage legislation of *LawIIAs*, can be shown to have a very distinctive and restrictive set of referents is all the more interesting in the face of the wider evidence. Clearly, *burh* was a word whose meaning and interpretation relied greatly on context and the reader's knowledge.

6.4 War and Wulfstan

After a stretch of peace over many years in the mid-tenth century, the reign of Æthelred (r. 978–1016) saw unrest, war and invasion. It is perhaps not surprising,

therefore, that peace is an overwhelming theme among his law codes.[479] In his laws we see *burh* used to represent what appear to be urban or at least well-populated sites, but also as foci of peace. *LawIIAtr* is a treaty from 994 defining Anglo-Scandinavian peace terms.[480] It is here that we encounter the *hapax legomenon friðburh* ('peace-*burh*'):

> 2: & ælc ceapscip frið hæbbe, ðe binnan muðan cuman, ðeh hit unfriðscyp sy, gyf hit undrifen bið.
> 2.1: & ðeh hit gedriuen beo & hit ætfleo to hwilcre **friðbyrig**, & ða menn up ætberstan into ðære **byrig**, ðonne habban ða men frið & þæt hy him mid bringað.
>
> 2: and each trade-ship shall have peace, which comes within a [river] mouth, even if it is an enemy ship [un-peace-ship], if it is undriven.
> 2.1: and even if it is driven and it escapes to any **peace-*burh*** and the men break away up into the ***burh***, then the men and everything they have brought with them shall have peace.
> R5.28

The interpretation of the *burh*-words in 2.1 is dependent upon understanding law 2, which is a very confusing statement, particularly in terms of understanding "undrifen" (and consequently "gedriuen" in 2.1). Taken alone, "undrifen" can simply be translated as 'undriven', but both the twelfth-century Latin translation *Quadripartitus* and Felix Liebermann interpret the word in this context as 'not driven by storms or shipwrecked'.[481] Even so, this clause is abstruse. Indeed, it is a law

[479] Lambert, 207.
[480] 'Æthelred's Treaty with Olaf (II Atr)', Early English Laws, 2020, https://earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/ii-atr/.
[481] Liebermann, *Gesetze Der Angelsachsen*, 222–23.

which Liebermann himself had trouble translating into German. I interpret it in the following way: if a trade ship is not wrecked, then it presumably intends to trade and is on a peaceful mission; on the other hand, a wrecked ship may not have been bound on a peaceful mission and is not automatically granted peace on English soil.

For such shipwrecked men, the option remains in clause 2.1 to flee to a peace-*burh*, about which a close analysis of the passage can reveal important information. As no individual to whom the fleers should apply nor the ownership of the *burh* is mentioned, it seems unlikely to be a privately controlled site, and the association with trade would imply that the *burh* is urban. Furthermore, as the ship may flee to any *friðburh*, we may presume that some, if not all, *friðburga* could be found along rivers. The need for the men to get "into" the *burh* suggests it had a clear, physical boundary. Yet, the fact that the men must escape "up" to the *burh* indicates that this boundary was not at a jetty or landing dock, but rather slightly upland of the river itself. The use of the compound *friðburh* also implies that there were certain *burh* sites with a special *frið* status conferred upon them, but nowhere are we ever given an indication of how to identify such places. Once again, knowledge is presumed on the part of the reader to make any practical sense of this statement.

Burh also appears in clauses of the same code regarding breach of peace. Laws 5–5.2 concern the consequences of Anglo-Scandinavian killings. Clauses 5 and 5.1 state the compensation due for individual deaths, but 5.2 states that if eight men are killed, then this constitutes a breach of the peace, be it "binnan byrig oððon buton" ('within the *burh* or without', R5.30). This formula, which first appears in law codes in *LawIVEg* 3 (R5.21–2), will be discussed in detail in §7.6. Typically, the construction

is used to represent 'everywhere', and it does not always appear in situations with clear *burh* referents. However, in this case the choice of *burh* is relevant considering the following clause, 6:

> Gyf hit binnan **byrig** gedon bið, seo friðbræc, fare seo **buruhwaru** sylf to & begyte ða banan, cuce oðde deade, heora <nyhstan> magas, heafod wið heafde.
>
> If it happens within a ***burh***, the breach of peace, let the ***burh-inhabitants*** themselves intervene and seize the killers, alive or dead, their [the victims'] nearest relatives, head for head. R5.31–2

These uses of *burh* indicate a degree of mass habitation of the *burh* in question and a sense of group-identity for the "buruhwaru." Furthermore, it suggests a sense of public duty and community, as well as a degree of autonomy. From this we may infer that the *burga* in question are to be interpreted as urban, with a larger population and self-defining identity.

Just a few years later in 997 Æthelred produced the Wantage code (*LawIIIAtr*), which is directed at the 'Five Boroughs' of the Danelaw (Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, Nottingham and Stratford) and uses Scandinavian-inspired language indicative of local usage.[482] Clauses 1–1.2 establish the importance of *grið* ('peace', a Danish loanword used instead of *frið*) and define the compensation due when a peace-oath

[482] 'Æthelred's Wantage Code (III Atr)', Early English Laws, 2020, https://earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/iii-atr/; Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 327; E. G. Stanley, *Imagining the Anglo-Saxon Past: The Search for Anglo-Saxon Paganism and Anglo-Saxon Trial by Jury* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2000), 144.

is broken, with gradation according to the circumstances of the oath. Here we see a marriage between concepts of peace and *burh* assemblies:

> 1.1: & þæt grið, þæt se ealdormann & kinges gerefa on **Fifburga** geþincða sylle, bete man þæt mid XII hund'.
> 1.2: And þæt grið, þæt man sylleð on I **burhgaþinðe**, bete man þæt mid VI hundrum; and þær man sylle on wæpentake, bete man þæt mid hundrum, gif hit man brecð; and þæt man sylle on ealahuse, bete man þæt æt deadum menn mid VI healfmarce & æt cwicon mid XII oran.
>
> 1.1: and that peace, which the ealdorman and king's reeve promise in the assembly of the **five *burga*** [the Five Boroughs], must be compensated with 12 hundreds [unit of money]
> 1.2: and that peace, that is promised in one ***burh*'s assembly** must be compensated with 6 hundreds, and where it is promised in the wapentake must be compensated with hundreds [read: one hundred], if it is broken; and that which is promised in the ale-house, must be compensated when men are dead with six half-marks and where the men are alive with twelve *oran* [Danish measure of money]
> R5.33–4

The 'Five Boroughs' clearly constitute a specific category of their own, with a shared "Fifburga geþincða" ('assembly of the five *burga*). It is meaningful that, while other documents make clear which these five *burga* are, the codes here do not, thus presuming that the sites are already known to the reader. Oaths given at this combined court are seen as most valuable, and it is made clear from the following gradation that the oath of the single *burh* assemblies are valued at six times those of the wapentake/hundred assemblies. This could be to do with the risk of breach of

peace within a confined, presumably urban, space, but may also represent the importance of *burh* sites.

Thus far, the *burga* of Æthelred's codes have appeared overwhelmingly urban in connotation. However, the final use of *burh* in his tenth-century codes indicates not an urban space, but either the king's personal residence or a court invested with the king's authority. Following several clauses outlining the judicial process against those who break the peace, moving from a fine to ordeals by water or iron, clause 6.1 states that "ælc team & ælc ordal beo on þæs kyninges byrig" ('each oath of warranty and each ordeal shall be in the king's *burh*', R5.35). As we have seen before, the description of the *burh* as specifically belonging to the king is significant and recollects the private properties of *LawIne* and *LawAf 1*, as well as the king's residence in *LawIIEm*. It is not inconceivable that such ordeals would need to take place in the presence of the king, as these breaches of peace in a time of war would have been of political significance. Thus, it is likely that the connotations of *burh* here are not urban, but represent the king's residence and seat of power.

These early codes of Æthelred differ in character from his later codes.[483] The early years of the eleventh century saw Wulfstan, Archbishop of York, enter politics and produce law codes both for Æthelred and his Danish successor Cnut.[484] All of Wulfstan's writings – his sermons, law codes and social treatises (which shall be discussed in the next section) – are characterised by his pursuit of a perfectly organised, holy society. His law codes are famously homiletic and exhortatory in

[483] Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 320.
[484] Wormald, 330.

tone, possibly because they derived from his and other bishops' preaching at the *witan* ('king's council'); by contrast, his later homilies are often quite judicial in style.[485] Another feature of Wulfstan's legislation is that he "grounds his social vision in an idealised account of England's legal past."[486] Often this is dismissed as nostalgia. However, it is more productive to view his retrospection not as misty-eyed reminiscing, but rather as his seeking a precedent for his contemporary moralising.[487]

His law codes for Æthelred are overwhelmingly ecclesiastical in nature, with only a few secular issues raised.[488] The secular social concerns he has centre on the idea of a society in which men uphold their rights and duties. Considering this focus on responsibilities, rather than economy, coupled with his tendency to revive past legislation and customs, it is fitting that the only uses of *burh* in his two major codes for Æthelred appear in clauses which bring the three common burdens of landholders across from charters for the first time.[489] The three common burdens, or the *trimoda necessitas*, traditionally consist of the building and maintenance of fortresses and bridges, as well as army service, and were levied upon bookland even where the landholding lord was granted every other freedom. In OE texts these burdens are known as *fyrdung* ('military service'), *bricbot* ('bridge-service') and *burhbot* ('*burh*-service').

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[485] M. K. Lawson, 'Archbishop Wulfstan and the Homiletic Element in the Laws of Æthelred II and Cnut', *The English Historical Review* 107, no. 424 (1992): 573–74; Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 131, 365; Rabin, *The Political Writings of Archbishop Wulfstan of York*, 2, 31, 43.
[486] Rabin, *The Political Writings of Archbishop Wulfstan of York*, 38.
[487] Rabin, 38–39.
[488] Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 328.
[489] Wormald, 344.

It is this term *burhbot* which appears in *LawVAtr* 26.1 (R5.36) from 1008 and its amendment *LawVIAtr* 32.3 (R5.37) as one of the duties men should be "georne" ('eager') to perform. The exact meaning of *burhbot* is much discussed, often in connection with the concept of public 'burghal' defences. The fact that these duties are expected even on bookland suggests that they were seen as important to the kingdom's safety, and Richard Abels notes that the first examples of these burdens appear in Mercian texts in conjunction with the emergence of the first 'public' fortifications in eighth-century Mercia, such as Offa's Dyke.[490] The burdens rise in use after the eighth century, however, and often *burhbot* is associated with the Alfredian 'burghal' system and its subsequent towns, with the connection between *burhbot* and *bricbot* leading scholars to presume the great importance laid upon bridges as part of the national defence system.[491]

Comparison with Latin vocabulary allows us insight into how contemporaries conceived of the *burh* in *burhbot*, whether it be purely defensive or urban. Originally these services were laid out in the Latin parts of diplomas, with fortress-service first appearing in the Mercian charter *Ch 92* from 749 in the reign of Æthelbald.[492] From this diploma all the way through to eleventh-century land grants, fortress-service is signified in the Latin with the phrase *arcis restauratio* ('repair of the fortress'). The word *arx* denotes an explicitly defensive site, a 'stronghold' or 'fortress', and suggests that *burhbot* was originally chosen to translate *arcis restauratio* due to the

[490] Nicholas Brooks, 'The Development of Military Obligations in Eighth- and Ninth-Century England', in *England Before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. Peter Clemoes and Kathleen Hughes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 71; Abels, *Lordship and Military Obligation in Anglo-Saxon England*, 53.
[491] See especially: Brooks, 'The Development of Military Obligations in Eighth- and Ninth-Century England'; Abels, *Lordship and Military Obligation in Anglo-Saxon England*.
[492] Abels, *Lordship and Military Obligation in Anglo-Saxon England*, 52.

defensive denotation of *burh*.[493] However, the consistency in Latin diplomas' use of the full phrase "exceptis tribus, expeditione, pontis arcisue restauratione" ('except these three things, military service, bridge and fortress restoration') and in vernacular texts' use of the three OE terms *fyrdung*, *bricbot* and *burhbot* implies that these had over time become fixed formulas. Thus, the equation between *burh* and *arx* may no longer be one of active choice by the time of Wulfstan's writing.

Indeed, the difficulty in defining the *burh* of *burhbot* is perhaps demonstrated in the contemporary Latin paraphrase of *LawVIAtr* made by Wulfstan.[494] Clause 32.3 of both the OE and the Latin are as follows:

> & **burhbota** & bricbota aginne man georne on æghwilcon ende, & fyrdunga eac & scipfyrdunga ealswa, a þonne neod sy, swa swa man geræde for gemænelicre neode.
>
> And one should begin ***burh*-service** and bridge-service eagerly in every part and also army-service and naval service also, always when it is necessary just as is directed for common need.
> R5.37

> Arcium muri, urbes, oppida, castella, ciuitates, pontes reparentur, restaurentur, renouentur, uallis et fossis muniantur et circumuallentur.
>
> The fortresses' walls, towns, strongholds, forts, towns, bridges are [to be] repaired, restored, renovated, the earthen walls/palisades and ditches are [to be] fortified and surrounded with a wall.

[493] See 'Arx', in *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2015), http://clt.brepolis.net.libproxy.york.ac.uk/dmlbs/Default.aspx.
[494] Wulfstan's Latin paraphrase is presented in parallel with the OE text in Liebermann, *Gesetze Der Angelsachsen*, 247–59.

While is it a tendency of the Latin paraphrase of *LawVIAtr* to use multiple Latin synonyms for single OE terms, the proportion of the Latin paraphrase dedicated to rendering *burh* by comparison to the other OE terms in this passage is remarkable. Other than the one use of *pons* ('bridge'), every other noun in the Latin is used to translate *burh*, and even the final two verbs for 'repair' and 'restore' use language applicable only to a ringed defence. The Latin vocabulary expounds upon the defensive nature of the *burh*, even going so far as to add in fortification details not mentioned in the OE. Yet it is notable also that two urban words, *urbs* and *civitas*, have been well-integrated into the list of possible synonyms. The profusion of terminology Wulfstan uses to render *burh* speaks to his attempts to overcome the *burh*'s flexibility, using many terms to express the vagueness of meaning *burh* clearly had in this and other circumstances.

The last royal code to be written in OE is *LawICn* and *LawIICnut*, edited separately by Liebermann, but actually forming the ecclesiastical and secular parts of a single code.[495] This code is the pinnacle of Wulfstan's political career, being promulgated in 1020/1 just a few years before his death, and is the fullest single code of Anglo-Saxon law extant.[496] It is an unusual piece of work, largely recapitulating earlier legislation and presenting its laws in a fairly imprecise and highly exhortatory manner.[497] While the ecclesiastical part of the code, *LawICn*,

[495] Liebermann, 278–371; 'Cnut's Winchester Code (I-II Cn)', Early English Laws, 2020, https://earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/iii-cn/.
[496] Mary P. Richards, 'I-II Cnut: Wulfstan's *Summa*?', in *English Law Before Magna Carta: Felix Liebermann and* Die Gesetze Der Angelsachsen, ed. Stefan Jurasinski, Lisi Oliver, and Andrew Rabin, Medieval Law and Its Practice 8 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 137; Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 345.
[497] Lawson, 'Archbishop Wulfstan and the Homiletic Element in the Laws of Æthelred II and Cnut', 581; Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and*

contains no examples of *burh*, six examples appear in *LawIICn*, the secular part of the code, which is nevertheless very moralising in tone.[498]

Among the laws taken from earlier legislation are two instances encouraging *burhbot* (R5.38, R5.43), taken from Wulfstan's own laws for Æthelred, as well as repeating the stipulation of *LawIIIEg* for three *burh*-assemblies and two shire-assemblies per year (R5.39). We also see a clause relating to the need for witnesses at a purchase, which must happen "seo hit binnan byrig, sy hit upp on lande" ('be it within a *burh*, be it up in the country') in 24 (R5.41). This clause is similar to earlier legislation regarding the need for witnesses in *burga* and in the hundreds, but in this case the contrast between *burh* and *land* emphasises the non-rural, and thus urban, connotations *burh* could evoke in the early eleventh century.

The final two uses of *burh* in *LawIICn* to be discussed both emphasise its role as a centre of judicial process. As part of a series of clauses discussing the oaths and ordeals of accused men, 22.1 gives the following confounding statement:

> And ungetrywan men ceose man anfealdne að on þrim hundredum, & þryfealdne að, swa wide swa hit to ðære **byrig** hyre.
>
> And for an untrustworthy [accused] man, let a single oath be chosen in three hundreds, and a three-fold oath, as widely as it belongs to the ***burh***.
> R5.40

Its Limits, 131, 355; Lambert, *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*, 165; 'Cnut's Winchester Code (I-II Cn)'.

[498] Lawson, 'Archbishop Wulfstan and the Homiletic Element in the Laws of Æthelred II and Cnut', 580.

What exactly is meant by "swa wide swa hit to ðære byrig hyre" is unclear and Liebermann also struggles to make sense of the phrase.[499] While the syntax may be hard to fathom, the *burh* nevertheless appears to represent the centre of the judicial process. The twelfth-century Latin translations *Quadripartitus* and *Instituti Cnuti* translate *burh* as *curia* ('court, legal or royal') and their contemporary *Consilatio Cnuti* renders *burh* as *urbs*.[500] While evidence from around a century later should be taken with a pinch of salt, it is interesting that two of the three choose to consider the *burh* here to represent a court rather than a town. It certainly seems plausible to interpret *burh* here as a court, while the hundreds appear to be districts beholden in some manner to the breadth of the *burh*'s power. While the evidence is abstruse and hard to interpret, it implies a relationship between *burga* and hundreds which may be more complex than often thought.

Finally, law 34 states: "stande betux burgum an lagu æt ladunge" ('let one law stand between the *burga* at a purgation', R5.42). *Quadripartitus*, *Instituti Cnuti* and *Consilatio Cnuti* render *burh* here as *burgus* (a Latin loanword of *burh*), *civitas* and *urbs* respectively. While we must again be careful not to rely too much on this twelfth-century evidence, it opens up the possibility that the *burga* in question are towns, but the use of the loanword *burgus* in *Quadripartitus* emphasises the difficulty in finding suitable Latin terminology to render *burh*, as we have already seen in Wulfstan's paraphrase. At the very least *burh* here seems to represent nodes of administration, which can be used metonymically to refer to the whole kingdom's governance.

[499] Liebermann, *Gesetze Der Angelsachsen*, 324.
[500] Liebermann, 325.

The uses of *burh* in the laws of Æthelred and Cnut show once again the word's contextually mutable denotations and connotations, and the comparison with Latin translations of OE help us further understand contemporary and later perceptions of the word. While many of the referents of *burh* in these texts are urban, we also see references to the king's private residence and court, where judicial matters of national importance occur. Furthermore, *burh* is associated with a variety of concepts such as defence, peace-keeping, trade and judicial authority. Throughout the kings' codes, *burh* has proven to be more subtle and more wide-ranging in meaning than scholarship often recognises, and it is hard to identify a technical meaning which develops and is used consistently in the tenth century or later.

6.5 Non-Royal Codes and Social Treatises

Alongside the officially promulgated royal law codes discussed above, the OE legal canon also includes various unofficial codes and social treatises. Some of these texts deal with topics which parallel the kings' codes, while others treat themes untouched by royal legislation. Yet, these are all texts concerned with social order and are a valuable point of comparison with the kings' laws. As shall be seen, the evidence of these texts supports some readings in the kings' codes and also shows how the social topic at hand can impact the meaning of *burh*.

LawBlas is considered the earliest of these non-royal texts: due to its similarity with statements in *LawIIAs*, it is tentatively dated to Athelstan's reign.[501] Indeed, the single example of *burh* within *LawBlas* is directly comparable to evidence from *LawIIAs* 20.1 and 20.4. Like those clauses, *LawBlas* 3 rules that if a man cannot bring forth an acceptable oath, then he "stande on þæra yldesta manna dome … þe to ðære byrig hyran" ('stands in the judgement of the most senior men … who belong to the *burh*', R5.44). This representation of the *burh* as the centre of jurisdiction is almost identical to that of *LawIIAs*, but *LawBlas* generally affords these men far more power than the king's law code does, leading Wormald to suggest that this was an amendment on local initiative.[502] What is particularly interesting here is that this suggests the *burh* to be a regional centre of power not necessarily under the king's authority, and hints at a range of non-royal jurisdictional *burga* not present in the royal codes.

LawPax likewise fits into the context of a particular king's code, in this instance *LawIIIAtr*, which was likely intended to set peace terms in the Danelaw.[503] Its opening line states:

> Ðus feor sceal beon þæs cinges grið fram his **burhgeate**, þær he is sittende, on feower healfe his, ðæt is III mila & III furlang & III æcera bræde & IX fota & IX scæftamunda & IX berecorna.

[501] 'Be Blaserum 7 Be Morðslihtum (Blas)', Early English Laws, 2020, https://earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/blas/; Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 367.
[502] Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 367–68.
[503] 'Peace (Pax)', Early English Laws, 2020, https://earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/pax/; Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 371–72.

> Thus far shall the king's peace be from his ***burh*-gate**, where he is resident, on all four sides, that is three miles and three furlongs and three acres' breadth and nine feet and nine shaft-hands[504] and nine barley-corns.
> R5.45

The use of the possessive "his" defines the *burh*-gate (and thus presumably the *burh* itself) as belonging to the king, which we have seen in comparable laws in *LawIIEm* and *LawIIIAtr*. The fact that *LawIIEm* 2, *LawIIIAtr* 6.1 and *LawPax* 1 share the topic of peace and all describe *burh* as belonging to the king, either with a possessive or the genitive "þæs kyninges" ('the king's'), suggests that they share a referent for *burh*. I have previously postulated that the king's *burh* in these laws represents his private residence, and the phrase "þær he is sittende" ('where he is resident') in *LawPax* 1 makes this clear beyond doubt.[505]

The use of *burhgeat* ('*burh*-gate') in this quotation is much debated. Some scholars have shown archaeological evidence of gates or gate-towers in Anglo-Saxon high-status settlements, suggesting that the *burhgeat* was a significant feature in its own right;[506] others have interpreted it as a metonymic representation of the entire *burh* complex.[507] The impractically precise measurements given suggest the symbolism of the passage, and it seems perfectly fitting, therefore, for the *burhgeat* also to be symbolic of a larger concept. The *burhgeat*, whether literal or rhetorical, can

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[504] This word is not found in dictionaries, but I have re-etymologised it based upon Liebermann's German translation: Liebermann, *Gesetze Der Angelsachsen*, 391.
[505] This is also the conclusion of Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', 227.
[506] Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society in Anglo-Saxon England*, 111; Renn, 'Burhgeat and Gonfanon: Two Sidelights from the Bayeux Tapestry', 177–85.
[507] Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', 226; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 248.

certainly be seen to conjure up important connotations, which highlight features of the *burh*. The existence of a gate presupposes a possibly defensible enclosure, but a gate also implies control of access and propriety. The *burhgeat* thus embodies not just defensibility and high-status, but also control, and this is potent where the passage extends the king's power out into the open countryside, imbuing the king's peace with the image of the king's centre of authority.

The connection between a *burhgeat* and privately-held, high-status estates can also be seen in the evidence of *Med 1.1*, which is an OE translation of the Late Antique Latin medical text *Medicina de Quadrupedibus*, and is attested in eleventh- and twelfth-century manuscripts.[508] One remedy suggests burying parts of the liver of a badger at the "ymbhwyrftum þinra landgemæra & þinra burhstaðola" ('edges of your land-boundaries and of your *burh*-places', R8.19), and hiding its heart "at þinum burhgeatum" ('at your *burh*-gates', R8.20). These two quotations translate the Latin phrases "circa fines orbis tuae aut circa fundus" ('around the boundaries of your land or around your estate') and "ad portam" ('at the gate').[509] The estate in question is presented as belonging to the addressee, and, as the text alleges to be addressed to the Roman Emperor Augustus, this property can be interpreted as high-status. The use of *burhstaðolas* ('*burh*-places') to translate the estate-word *fundus* shows the close connection perceived between land-ownership and *burh*-residence. Likewise, the addition of *burh* into the compound *burhgeat* to translate Latin *porta* shows the importance of the *burh*-gate as a symbol of the lordly residence, which, as

[508] Hubert Jan de Vriend, ed., *The Old English Herbarium and Medicina de Quadrupedibus*, Early English Text Society O.S. 286 (London: Oxford University Press, 1984), xi–xliv, lxiii.
[509] For the Latin text, see de Vriend, 237.

the repository for the badger's heart, can perhaps be seen as representing the heart of the settlement.

A number of the unofficial law codes and social treatises have been attributed with more or less certainty to Wulfstan, and this offers us a valuable opportunity to compare his uses of *burh* across social order texts of different themes and functions. Like *LawPax*, *LawGrið* deals with peace, and was written by Wulfstan sometime before 1014. Clause 15 warns of the consequences if one fights or steals "in cynges byrig oððon on his neaweste" ('in the king's *burh* or in his vicinity', R5.50). Once again, the *burh* is qualified by the king's possession, and we are told further in clause 15 that the culprit's life is forfeit, "nimþe se cyng alyfan wille, þæt man <wergylde> alysan mote" ('unless the king wishes to allow that a wergild may be paid'). This option for the king's personal judgement would imply his presence, supporting the idea that the *burh* is his residence. As with *LawIIEm*, *LawIIIAtr* and *LawPax*, this clause suggests a deep connection between royal residences and the idea of maintaining order and harmony. Furthermore, the more explicit evidence of *LawPax* and *LawGrið* help to prove the interpretation of the king's *burh* in the royal codes, showing how comparison between these texts can be illuminating.

Another Wulfstanian text is *LawEpis.* It is from fairly early in Wulfstan's political career, dating to around 1002–8, but it engages with various themes which were to define his later writings.[510] The text focuses on the duties of a bishop and its two uses of *burh* align with the commercial-centric kings' codes of the early tenth century. Commerce is not a topic with which Wulfstan typically deals in the laws of

[510] Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 392; Rabin, *The Political Writings of Archbishop Wulfstan of York*, 61.

Æthelred and Cnut, but it is also noteworthy that *LawEpis* shows that urbanism and economics intersected with the Church's social role in the early eleventh century. Clause 6 suggests the close interaction between a bishop's authority and market proceedings:

> Ne sceall he geþafian ænig unriht ne woh gemet ne fals gewihte; ac hit gebyreð, þæt <be> his ræde fare & be his gewitnesse æghwylc lahriht, ge **burhriht** ge landriht; & ælc **burhgemet** & ælc wægpundern beo be his dihte gescift swiðe rihte…
>
> He shall not permit any wrongdoing, nor wrong measurement, nor false weight; but it is proper that each legal right goes according to his advice and his witness, be it ***burh*-right** or land-right; and each ***burh*-measure** and each steel-yard should be ordained very correctly according to his direction…
> R5.51–2

The *burh* in this passage is without a doubt a commercial and urban centre. The word *burhgemet* ('*burh*-measure') indicates an integral relationship between commercial regulation and the *burh* itself, while the distinction between *burh*-rights and land-rights emphasises the urban nature of the *burh* in question. It also suggests that the bishop would be based in a *burh*, highlighting the role of important ecclesiastical centres in the urban development of England.

The final three texts to be discussed in this chapter are all well-studied in discussions on private lordly estates. Management of private property is a topic almost entirely ignored by the kings' codes, and it is noticeable that, other than royal residences, private *burga* do not appear in the official law codes after Alfred's

compensation for *burgbryce* in *LawAf 1*.[511] This shift from the private *burga* of Alfred to the more governmental *burga* of Athelstan onwards has encouraged the idea of *burh* undergoing a fundamental semantic change as the 'burghal' system developed. However, the evidence of these three social treatises suggests that the interpretation of *burh* in the kings' codes derives more from a change in subject matter than in the meaning of the word.

LawGeþyncðo forms part of a group of texts likely composed around 1006–8 by Wulfstan, which also includes *LawNorðleod*, *LawMirce*, *LawAð* and *LawHad*. Their focus is social status and societal order, and they are probably forerunners to Wulfstan's famous *Institutes of Polity* on the same topic.[512] *LawGeþyncðo* lays out customs of social mobility. As it is written almost entirely in the past tense and does not match with any previous legislation, *LawGeþyncðo* is often interpreted as image-creation of an idealised past society.[513] Clause 2 constitutes one of the most famous quotations in studies of late Anglo-Saxon society, regarding how a *ceorl* ('non-noble freeman') could attain the rank of *þegn* ('thegn, king's retainer'):

> And gif ceorl geþeah, þæt he hæfde V hida fullice agenes landes, bellan [variant version: bellhus] & **burhgeat**, setl & sundornote on cynges healle, þonne wæs he þanon forð þegenrihtes wyrðe.

[511] Alban Gautier, 'Le Régisseur Intelligent : Les Fonctions Du Gerefa Dans La Législation Anglo-Saxonne', in *Échanges, Communications et Réseaux Dans Le Haut Moyen Âge: Études et Textes Offerts à Stéphane Lebecq*, ed. A. Gautier and C. Martin, Haut Moyen Âge 14 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2011), 217; Hines, 'Social Structures and Social Change in Seventh-Century England: The Law Codes and Complementary Sources', 405; Shields-Más, 'The Reeve in Late Anglo-Saxon England', 159.
[512] Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 391; Rabin, *The Political Writings of Archbishop Wulfstan of York*, 65.
[513] Rabin, *The Political Writings of Archbishop Wulfstan of York*, 67.

> And if a *ceorl* thrived, such that he had five hides fully of his own land, a bell [variant version: bell-house] and ***burh*-gate**, seat and special duty in the king's hall, then he was thenceforth worthy of a thegn's right
> R5.49

It is difficult to say how much we can rely on this passage to represent actual social practice of any period. The past tense and alliteration lead us to see this passage as nostalgic and rhetorical, and cast doubt on how much we may read into the implicit connection between a *burh*-gate and thegn-status. However, various elements of the physical descriptions in this passage do ring true for archaeological observations in high-status settlements of the tenth and eleventh centuries. As we have already discussed, the *burhgeat* can be a powerful symbol of authority, and we also have evidence of gates or towers in high-status settlements of the later Anglo-Saxon period, as well as a rise in the number of defensible 'manors' in the tenth century.[514] Williams also interprets the "bellan" or "bellhus" as representing a church, pointing out the rise in estate churches during the tenth and eleventh centuries.[515]

Whether we want to see the *burhgeat* in *LawGeþyncðo* as representative of the settlement as a whole, and whether we interpret the possession of such a residence as having ever been a legally necessary component of a man's social mobility, is in some ways irrelevant to our analysis of *burh* as a meaningful word to Wulfstan. We can certainly interpret *burh* in this passage as representing a lord's private residence,

[514] Reynolds, 'Boundaries and Settlements in Later Sixth- to Eleventh-Century England', 111; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 245; Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society in Anglo-Saxon England*, 111–17; Thomas, *The Later Anglo-Saxon Settlement at Bishopstone: A Downland Manor in the Making*, 196; Hines, 'Social Structures and Social Change in Seventh-Century England: The Law Codes and Complementary Sources', 407.
[515] Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', 226, 233–35.

probably an enclosed complex with a gate and attendant church. The social value of such a settlement is key in the text as, although he is describing a past custom, Wulfstan shows a tendency for what could be deemed optimistic nostalgia: he looks to an idealised past for precedents for his vision of a well-ordered society. The social structures he seeks in the past are ones he longs for in the present, and for such a statement about social mobility to be relevant and moralising in his own time, the meaning of *burh* as a private residence cannot have been defunct. Such a use of *burh* highlights its connotations of high status and social significance, as opposed to concepts of the military or the commercial.

The final texts to be discussed in this chapter are *Rectitudines singularum personum* (*LawRect*) and *Gerefa* (*LawGer*), a pair with a complicated history and unusual form. *LawRect* is a practical estate manual for a reeve, possibly originally created for the estates of St Peter's, Bath. *LawGer*, on the other hand, is a literary text with Classical inspiration which discusses the duties of the reeve himself. Although these two texts are very different in style and have quite separate origins, possibly in the tenth century, they were amended and re-edited together in the early eleventh century, perhaps by a colleague of Wulfstan or someone who shared Wulfstan's interest in social order.[516]

LawRect lays out the duties and rights of all the social ranks found on a lord's estate from thegn down to the lowest order, with the notable exception of the reeve.

[516] P. D. A. Harvey, 'Rectitudines Singular Personarum and Gerefa', *The English Historical Review* 108, no. 426 (1993): 1–22; Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century. Volume 1: Legislation and Its Limits*, 387–89; also Gobbitt's online edition found at Early English Laws Project, 'Gerefa (RSP+Ger)', *Early English Laws* (blog), 2017, http://www.earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/rspger/.

The thegn's duties contain the three common burdens including *burhbot* (R5.46). As has been previously explored, the use of *burh* here refers to fortifications, but are quite probably intended for public defence, and it is unlikely that this *burh* is supposed to refer to his own property. One of the duties of the *geneat* ('tenant'), however, is the need to "burh hegegian" ('hedge the *burh*', R5.47), which stands among various other tasks of estate maintenance and duty to his lord such as mowing, repairing buildings and guarding his lord's life. Similar duties can be found in *Ch 1555*, the custumal for the estate at Tidenham, often recognised as a parallel to *LawRect*, which includes the *gebur*'s ('peasant-farmer's') need to ditch one length of the *burh* (see R6.513).[517] Both *LawRect* and *Ch 1555* lay out the duties of the tenants to their lords, rather than to the kingdom as a whole, and there is little doubt that the hedging is owed to the lord's own defensible residence.

We might question, therefore, how it is that within a few lines of the same text, *burh* appears to refer to two different categories of settlement. Certainly, in both cases the repair of the defensible enclosure is paramount and we can understand that the foundational force of both instances of *burh*, regardless of their status, is that they are defended. In addition to this, there is a strong possibility that the thegn's rights and duties were not part of the original text, and might have been an interpolation as part of the text's re-editing in the eleventh century to fill the gap in the ranks.[518] The influence of Wulfstan or a colleague of his at this stage of the text's

[517] Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', 227; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 248; Shields-Más, 'The Reeve in Late Anglo-Saxon England', 174.
[518] Harvey, 'Rectitudines Singular Personarum and Gerefa', 13, 18.

history seems fitting considering Wulfstan's transfer of the common burdens from charters into Æthelred's laws at around the same time.

LawGer is often seen as having been compiled together with *LawRect* to fill the reeve's absence in *LawRect*, and the context of *LawGer* likewise centres on duties owed to the lord on his estate. At all points when analysing extracts from *LawGer*, it is essential to bear in mind its literary status. The text is by no means a practical guide as *LawRect* is: certain key agricultural elements are missing and its rhetorical features, such as alliteration, indicate its origins as a literary exercise rather than an accurate catalogue.[519] However, it is equally important not to see the text as entirely divorced from reality, as there is significant evidence within *LawGer* that aligns with archaeological or textual evidence of estate management in the Middle Ages.[520] The text is split into three sections, with the second section containing the reeve's duties throughout the year. While the season-by-season duties are largely agricultural, we are told in clause 13:

> A he mæig findan, hwæt he mæig on **byrig** betan ne ðearf he na unnyt beon, ðonne he ðær binnan bið: oððe hus godian, rihtan & weoxian & grep hegian, dicsceard betan, hegas godian, weod wyrtwalian, betweox husan bricgian, beoddian, bencian, horsan styllan, flor feormian oððe synnes sum ðing ðe to nyte mæge.
>
> Always may he [the reeve] find something which he can fix in the ***burh***, nor need he be of no use when he is within there:

[519] Harvey, 8; Gardiner, 'Implements and Utensils in Gerefa and the Organization of Seigneurial Farmsteads in the High Middle Ages', 260.
[520] Christine E. Fell, 'Some Domestic Problems', *Leeds Studies in English* 16 (1985): 26; Gardiner, 'Implements and Utensils in Gerefa and the Organization of Seigneurial Farmsteads in the High Middle Ages', 260, 267; Gautier, 'Le Régisseur Intelligent : Les Fonctions Du Gerefa Dans La Législation Anglo-Saxonne', 218–19; Shields-Más, 'The Reeve in Late Anglo-Saxon England', 160–61.

> either [he could] make good the houses, repair and make clean and hedge the furrow, repair a ditch-gap, make good the hedges, eradicate weeds, bridge between the houses, make tables and benches, stable the horses, maintain the floor or some such thing which may be of use.
> R5.48

As in the case of *LawGeþyncðo*, the highly literary status of *LawGer* does not impact negatively on our ability to judge contemporary perceptions of the word *burh*. The image painted of the *burh* in this text is very much one of a residential complex on an agricultural estate, which one man could manage and which has defences made from hedges and ditches. However we interpret the detailed recommendations of the text, the fact remains that a contemporary must have interpreted *burh* as able to represent a lord's estate centre. Furthermore, it is possible that some of the activities described in *LawGer* were based in actual late Anglo-Saxon practice.[521] Thus, even if a lord's residence would never have included all such elements at once, the above passage still gives us insight into the features a contemporary would associate conceptually with the term *burh* in a high-status residential context. Once again, the topic at hand can be seen to shape the interpretation and expectations attached to *burh* in OE texts.

[521] Shields-Más, 'The Reeve in Late Anglo-Saxon England', 174–75, 181–82.

6.6 Conclusion

OE legal writings have proven to be a rich linguistic source, offering opportunities for diachronic, synchronic and interdisciplinary analysis. One of the central aims of this chapter was to question whether *burh* developed a technical definition as a post-Alfredian urban settlement in tenth-century law codes, as is interpreted by various scholars, and the evidence suggests that it did not. The meaning of *burh* does not become more limited and specific in law codes; instead, it maintained and even broadened a wide range of meanings throughout the centuries.

From a diachronic perspective, it is certainly observable that, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, *burh* gained urban associations such as market-trading, mass population and an identity in contrast to the countryside. However, the meaning of the word can be seen to broaden to accommodate these new connotations, rather than to narrow. Synchronically, we can see that the referents and rich connotations of *burh* changed according to context and theme. Where commercial concerns such as markets and mints were relevant, *burh* appeared with urban connotations, sometimes even referring to a very limited set of locations. Yet, where peace and sanctuary were key topics, the *burh* in question was often the king's private residence or court, representing royal power and presence. The limited evidence of early texts shows *burh* as a noble private residence and, although after Alfred's laws the kings' codes took little interest in the affairs of lordly estate centres, eleventh-century social treatises focussing on social rank or personal duties use *burh* to refer to lordly complexes. *Burga* could also connote defensibility or centres of governance.

Its semantic potential proves to be layered and mutable. Indeed, looking at eleventh- and twelfth-century Latin translations of OE legal texts shows that *burh* had become a word difficult to define.

Understanding *burh* in the law codes necessitates close-reading and interdisciplinary analysis. The variations in the meaning of *burh* are subtle and contextually driven, often presuming knowledge on the part of the reader. This shows us not only the complex meaning of *burh*, but also reveals valuable patterns in the language use and content of OE social order texts in general. Certain topics, such as economics and peace, are prioritised by the kings' codes, while others, such as social advance or estate duties, are avoided, impacting the aspects of *burh* which are apparent when looking only at the official royal codes. However, looking at shared topics in the non-official social order texts, such as peace at the king's *burh* in *LawPax* and market regulations in *LawEpisc*, show that these texts, although non-royal, are not non-standard in their language. The comparative study of *burh* across the whole corpus of Anglo-Saxon legal writings shows the way in which our interpretation of the OE language as a whole can be impacted by the thematic choices of those who wrote influential texts.

7 Administrative Documents

7.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on those texts commonly referred to as 'charters', although this term gives a deceptive impression of the uniformity of these documents.[522] All of these texts are records of some form and are administrative in nature. However, it is important to bear in mind that they are not straightforwardly descriptive, but rather preserve a shaped narrative of events.[523] Variety is undoubtedly the essence of this chapter. Anglo-Saxon administrative documents are extant from across England from the seventh century onwards and continued to have influence on and even be produced under Norman governance of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[524] The topics and purposes of charters are also wide-ranging, recording, among other things, grants of land, reports of lawsuits, agreements and instructions from assemblies. It is also significant that, while the majority of administrative documents do emanate from royal authority, many are produced at the behest of churchmen and nobles. Thus, the compositional contexts of these documents vary considerably by time, place, topic, purpose, authority and even the

[522] Texts referred to as *Ch X* or *Rec X* in this chapter can be found in the Appendix Reports 1 and 6. Texts referred to as *Sawyer X* are not part of my dataset and can instead be found in the Abbreviations on pp. 13–9 of this thesis.
[523] Sharpe, 'Charters, Deeds and Diplomatics', 230; Hough, 'Legal and Documentary Writings', 120; Foot, 'Reading Anglo-Saxon Charters: Memory, Record or Story'; Sarah Foot, 'Internal and External Audiences: Reflections on the Anglo-Saxon Archive of Bury St Edmunds Abbey in Suffolk', *The Haskins Society Journal* 24 (2012): 168.
[524] Simon Keynes, 'Church Councils, Royal Assemblies and Anglo-Saxon Royal Diplomas', in *Kingship, Legislation and Power in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Gale R. Owen-Crocker and Brian W. Schneider (Woodridge: The Boydell Press, 2013), 134; Richard Sharpe, 'The Use of Writs in the Eleventh Century', *Anglo-Saxon England* 32 (2003): 247–91.

skill of the clerks involved, all of which impact on the style and form in each individual text.[525] Indeed, use of language can differ even between the sections of an individual text, making this the most multifaceted text grouping studied in this thesis.

Overall, there are 643 instances of *burh* in administrative documents, and each offers a rich linguistic context and a unique slice of history. Even taking standard place names out of the equation, we are left with hundreds of instances of *burh* which deserve individual attention. This level of detail is not feasible for such a large amount of data, and instead this chapter will aim to offer windows into *burh*'s multifarious use and meanings within administrative documents. The resources now available for the study of charters have been invaluable, and alongside the many excellent editions of these texts, I am particularly indebted to the *Electronic Sawyer* and the *DOE Corpus*.[526] Dates and comments on authenticity throughout have largely been taken from the *Electronic Sawyer*'s synthesised diplomatic information.

This chapter will look separately at different types of settlement and discourse associated with *burh*, demonstrating the subtleties and complexities in *burh*'s relationship to different referents and connotations. In response to the multiplicity of the sources, the methodology of this section will be equally varied. Some individual instances will be closely read, while some sets of data will be compared.

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[525] Sharpe, 'Charters, Deeds and Diplomatics', 238.

[526] The most valuable editions and resources have been: Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London: Whiting & Company, 1885); Dorothy Whitelock, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Wills*, Cambridge Studies in English Legal History 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930); A. J. Robertson, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939); P. H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography*, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks 8 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1968); 'The Electronic Sawyer', The Electronic Sawyer: Online catalogue of Anglo-Saxon charters, 2020, http://www.esawyer.org.uk/about/index.html.

Throughout, however, interdisciplinarity will be central to the analysis, taking advantage of the opportunities to align linguistic data with physical evidence and acknowledging the limitations where this is not possible. The findings will show the wide range of meanings observable in uses of *burh* throughout the corpus of OE administrative documents, and will demonstrate once again the impact of context and topic upon our understanding of the word.

7.2 Boundary Clauses, *Burga* in the Landscape and Iron Age Hillforts

Boundary clauses give verbal perambulations of the perimeters of estates granted in charters. The majority appear in royal diplomas, which record land grants made by the king and were likely quite performative texts presented ceremoniously at royal assemblies.[527] These documents are largely formulaic, containing a superscription (naming the king), the grant itself, a boundary clause, a dating clause and a witness list.[528] The majority of a diploma is in Latin, but from the early eighth century onwards we find boundary clauses in the vernacular.[529] Similar charter structures can also be found in the land grants made by noblemen and important

[527] Wiles, 'The Treatment of Charter Bounds by the Worcester Cartulary Scribes', 114; Simon Keynes, 'The Henry Loyn Memorial Lecture for 2008: Welsh Kings at Anglo-Saxon Royal Assemblies (928-55)', *The Haskins Society Journal* 26 (2015): 80–81.
[528] Keynes, 'The Henry Loyn Memorial Lecture for 2008: Welsh Kings at Anglo-Saxon Royal Assemblies (928-55)', 80–81.
[529] F. M. Stenton, *The Latin Charters of the Anglo-Saxon Period* (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1955), 56.

churchmen, and in addition to these there are a few entirely vernacular documents which list the bounds and customs of certain places. Overall, boundary clauses contain 277 examples of *burh*. The laconic but consistent syntactical structures of boundary clauses make them ideal candidates for linguistic comparison and this section will demonstrate how such a methodology can give us insight into *burga* as landscape features.

The form of a boundary clause is distinctive and almost abstrusely concise, as can be seen in the following typical example:

> Ðis synd ða land ge mæra to Worðige ðæt is of icenan and lang ðæra dic . up to ðære hylle . of ðære hylle . and lang ðære dic . eft sona up to heafod stoccan . of heafod stocca . and lang stræt to lusan ðorne…
>
> These are the land-bounds for Worthy: that is from *icenan* along the ditch up to the hill, from the hill along the ditch, afterwards immediately up to the head-post, from the head-post along the street to Lusa's thornbush…
> *Ch 309* (854)

Boundary clauses do not use full sentences, but rather draw the bounds of the land by moving from landscape feature to landscape feature.[530] We can broadly describe the structure as "NP [noun phrase] + preposition + NP + preposition…," with the prepositions connecting the landscape features both linguistically and physically, and with some later Worcestershire clauses also adding in details such as cardinal

[530] 'Anglo-Saxon Boundary Clauses', Langscape: The Language of Landscape: Reading the Anglo-Saxon Countryside, 2008, http://www.langscape.org.uk/about/boundaries.html.

directions.[531] Another common feature is that nouns are often used twice in quick succession when moving to and then from a single location, as in the case of the hill and head-post in the example above, likely used to aid memory and comprehension.[532] Overall, the 277 examples of *burh* refer to around 180 locations, and simplex or repeated examples of *burh* which refer back to already described locations will not be given individual attention. Some locations are referred to in more than one charter, but each of these references will be considered separately as they occur in different linguistic contexts.

As can be seen in the example above, the landscape features are given little description and the references clearly rely on both physically and temporally local knowledge.[533] Because of this, many of the *burh* sites referenced in boundary clauses are unidentified and none have been excavated archaeologically, limiting our contextual understanding. Individually, therefore, these *burh* instances can appear uninformative, but this section will show how comparative analysis can draw out suggestive patterns which are invisible in isolated examples.

Before approaching the data, it is important to lay out some factors which can impact our analysis. The first of these is onomastics. It is not always clear if a *burh*-compound should be considered as an active description of a site, or if it was a proper name by the time of the charter's composition. In the cases where simplex

[531] Wiles, 'The Treatment of Charter Bounds by the Worcester Cartulary Scribes', 120; Hooke, *The Anglo-Saxon Landscape: The Kingdom of the Hwicce*, 52.
[532] Wiles, 'The Treatment of Charter Bounds by the Worcester Cartulary Scribes', 127.
[533] Della Hooke comments on the need for boundary clauses to be considered from a geographical as well as historical perspective and combines her research with cartographic evidence and simply walking the bounds herself. She further comments that it is impossible for us to fully solve boundary clauses due to missing evidence: Hooke, *Worcestershire Anglo-Saxon Charter Bounds*, 1–2; Brooks, 'Anglo-Saxon Charters: The Work of the Last Twenty Years', 222–23.

burh refers back to a previously named site, it is evident that the site is still actively considered a *burh*.[534] However, there are many more examples where it is almost impossible to tell if a *burh*-compound is a proper name, and thus if the appellation of *burh* was still relevant to the site. Indeed, as the 'properhood' of a place name is often contextually defined, the semantic status of a *burh*-compound may not even have always been transparent to non-local contemporary readers.[535] This can influence how we interpret the connection between *burh* as a term and any features assigned to the site. However, as much of the following analysis deals with large-scale landscape elements such as hills and rivers, which are unlikely to have much changed since a site's naming, semantic/onomastic distinction is not always crucial. For this reason, all of the *burh* examples shall be considered together, as any attempt to separate which examples are semantic or onymic would be both arbitrary and misleading.

Another key aspect of these data is chronology. These examples appear in genuine charters from the early eighth century to the later eleventh century, as well as in documents forged throughout this period and later. These three and a half centuries witnessed vast societal and settlement changes in England, which we might expect to see reflected in the boundary clauses. Yet, the evidence is largely stable over the entire period: it is rare to find a feature or description associated with *burga* in late boundary clauses that cannot also be found in early ones. While the

[534] Wiles, 'The Treatment of Charter Bounds by the Worcester Cartulary Scribes', 135 considers that the use of a simplex to refer back to a place name is evidence that the name was still semantic rather than onymic.
[535] Coates, 'Singular Definite Expressions with a Unique Denotatum and the Limits of Properhood'; Coates, 'Properhood'.

impact of diachronic change will by no means be ignored by this section, the consistency of the evidence allows us to meaningfully compare examples across the period. Three categories of linguistic evidence will be considered in this section: the boundary clause elements which appear either side of *burh* locations, features described by *burh* and descriptions applied to *burga*. Each type of linguistic evidence highlights a different facet of *burh*'s meaning, and by comparing the examples within the formally consistent boundary clauses, we can gain insight into the word's meaning and the place of *burga* on the landscape.

The table below summarises the landscape features found in the immediate vicinity of *burga* in boundary clauses:[536]

Category	**Feature**	**Number of Examples**
Water	*broc* ('brook')	9
	ea ('river')	1
	flode ('water channel')	1
	ford ('ford')	8
	lacu ('lake')	2
	mere ('lake')	9
	mylengear ('mill yair')	1
	pol ('pool')	2
	river name	6
	riþ ('stream')	1
	stream ('stream, river')	5
	were ('weir')	1
	wyll ('spring, well')	7

[536] The *burh* examples considered in this table exclude compounds such as '*burh*-street' and '*burh*-hill', which may not represent landscape features which were in the same immediate area as the *burh* itself. It is also important to bear in mind that not all boundary clause elements will have preceding and following elements, impacting the total numbers presented.

Slopes	*clif* ('cliff')	2
	cnol ('summit')	1
	cumb ('hollow, valley')	2
	denu ('valley')	4
	dun ('hill, down')	6
	heafod ('headland')	5
	hlinc ('bank, slope')	3
	hoh ('hoo, spur of land')	1
	hrycg ('ridge')	4
	hyll ('hill')	1
	slæd ('slade, small valley')	2
	trog ('trough, basin')	1
Burial Sites	*beorg* ('barrow, hill')	9
	byrgels/byrgen ('burial place')	4
	crundel ('barrow, burial mound')	5
	hlæw ('barrow, burial mound')	4
	pytt ('pit, grave')	2
Trees/Plants	*graf* ('grove')	1
	hyrst ('upland wood, copse')	1
	reow ('row [of trees]')	2
	sceaga ('shaw, thicket')	1
	stocc ('trunk')	2
	stybb ('stump')	3
	tree name (various species)	8
	þorn ('thornbush')	2
	wyrttruma ('plant roots')	2
Land	*æcer* ('acre')	2
	gar ('gore, strip of land')	3
	hangra ('grassplot')	1
	hlyp ('leap')	1
	læs ('pasture')	1
	leah ('lea, meadow')	7

	mor ('moor')	2
	**rodu* ('ride, linear clearing')	1
	sloh ('slough, marshland')	1
Manmade Constructions	*bricg* ('bridge')	1
	dic ('ditch')	26
	foss ('ditch')	1
	geat ('gate')	4
	hæcce ('fence')	1
Other Settlements	*burh* settlement	13
	gemære ('boundary')	6
	haga ('enclosed area')	3
	ham settlement	3
	mearc ('boundary')	3
	tun settlement	4
Roadways	*herepæð* ('army road')	7
	lane ('lane')	1
	pæð ('path')	1
	stig ('path, footpath')	1
	stræt ('street')	9
	weg ('road')	20
Miscellaneous	animal lair	3
	furlanges end ('furlong's end')	1
	hloþgewirpe ('treasure mound')	1
	spelstow ('speaking place')	1
	stan ('stone')	6
	uncertain meaning	6

Table 7: Nearby landscape features

Nearby natural landscape features indicate the sorts of environments *burga* tended to be built in. Many *burga* appear in proximity to waterways and bodies of water: although rivers are a common feature of boundary clauses generally, access to

a water source for drinking, cooking, cleaning and fishing was a key factor in the choice of site for a settlement, and some waterways would have offered transport and network opportunities much like roads.[537] *Burga* are also often shown to be in the vicinity of various types of hills and slopes, indicating that the *burga* were built on or near raised ground, which might have provided defensive opportunities. In addition to this, there are a surprising number of burial mounds and tumuli to be found near *burga*, supporting Crewe's theory that Anglo-Saxons often chose to live in close proximity to ancient barrows, rather than avoiding them as is typically believed.[538] Likewise, trees and woodland appear to be fairly common nearby features, perhaps valuable for shelter and material. *Burga* also appear near stretches of open land, and, while terms such as *mor* ('moor') and *sloh* ('slough') suggest an untamed landscape, other terms such as *leah* ('lea, meadow') and *æcer* ('acre') are suggestive of land use, aligning the *burga* with land proprietorship and agricultural activities.

Various other features represent more obvious human impact on the landscape. Ditches are common, and are not presented as part of the *burh*'s defences, but instead appear as immediately close and independent constructions. It is possible that some of these represent large-scale ditch-defences like Offa's Dyke, but

[537] Hooke, *The Anglo-Saxon Landscape: The Kingdom of the Hwicce*, 58; Della Hooke and Maren Clegg Hyer, 'Introduction', in *Water and the Environment in the Anglo-Saxon World: Volume III of The Material Culture of Daily Living in the Anglo-Saxon World*, ed. Maren Clegg Hyer and Della Hooke, Exeter Studies in Medieval Europe (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2017), 1, 3, 9; Hooke, 'Water in the Landscape: Charters, Laws and Place Names', 34–36, 38–39; Dalwood, 'Water, *Wics* and *Burhs*', 187–201.

[538] Vicky A. Crewe, 'Barrows and Buildings, Ditches and Dwellings: The Appropriation of Prehistoric Monuments in Early to Middle Anglo-Saxon Settlements' (Sheffield, University of Sheffield, 2010).

smaller ditches were also used regularly as estate boundaries and field markers.[539] Like the nearby fields, these ditches might represent the position of *burga* as estate centres within an agricultural setting. Boundary clauses also contain descriptions of other settlements in close proximity with *burga*, including other *burh* sites: while certain boundary clauses favour listing habitative place names more than others, these examples nevertheless suggest the number of small settlements on the Anglo-Saxon landscape, which are often forgotten in the face of famous sites.

The integration of *burga* within an infrastructural network is also emphasised by the number of nearby roadways, and these suggest the importance of accessibility in how *burga* functioned. It is worth discussing particularly the word *herepæð* ('army road'), a fairly specialised term which appears to refer to the movement of troops.[540] It does not appear in genuine charters before the late ninth century, when Alfred was reinventing the army system including the mustering of troops from *burga*. As shown in §5.3.2, we do not know what *burga* these military forces surged from, despite the typical association with the *BH*. The evidence of the boundary clauses shows that these smaller, now mostly lost and forgotten, *burga* were closely linked with army roads, and allows us to question whether private *burga* could have been part of the call to arms.

Looking at the landmarks which appear near examples of *burh* in the boundary clauses gives us an impression of the position of *burga* on the landscape. The evidence shows that they were built in advantageous locations and played roles

[539] Hooke, *The Anglo-Saxon Landscape: The Kingdom of the Hwicce*, 62; Worthington Hill and Grigg, 'Boundaries and Walls', 165–67, 169.
[540] Hindle, 'Roads and Tracks in Anglo-Saxon England', 46.

in larger settlement networks. Examination of the examples of *burh* themselves gives us insight into how the *burga* acted as landmarks. It is clear that the word *burh* alone was quite capable of referring to a recognisable landscape feature: nine sites appear in boundary clauses from the ninth and tenth centuries with no description or specification of any sort.[541] Even if the word *burh* did not conjure up a single, unified image in a contemporary's mind, it could evidently be used as a simplex to identify a structure *in situ* when walking an estate's bounds.

There are examples of *burh* such as "rammesburi yate" ('ram's-*burh* gate', *Ch 524*, R6.121) or "seo burhstræt" ('the *burh* street', *Ch 535*, R6.130), where a landscape feature is identified by its relationship to a *burh*. It is important to note that where a *burh*-compound is the descriptor, this may represent an onomastic form; however, the types of features described by simplex *burh* and *burh*-compounds do not differ enough to warrant separation in this comparative analysis:

Category	**Feature**	**Number of Examples**
Land	*hryding* ('clearing, patch of cleared land')	1
	leah ('lea, meadow')	1
	worðig ('yard, farm')	1
Woodland	*hyrst* ('upland wood, copse')	1
	wudu ('woods')	1
Natural Slopes	*denu* ('valley')	2
	hlinc ('slope, bank')	4
	hyll ('hill')	3
	slæd ('slade')	1

[541] These examples are found at R6.34, 37, 42, 72, 82, 98, 109–10, 117 and 375 (probably in reference to Worcester).

Burial Place	*hlæw* ('barrow, burial mound')	2
Water	*broc* ('brook')	1
	will ('well')	3
Roadway	*stræt* ('street')	3
	weg ('road, way')	5
Enclosure Features	*dic* ('ditch')	4
	gemære ('boundary')	3
	hecg ('hedge')	3
	hyrne ('corner')	1
	weall ('wall')	3
Gate	*geat* ('gate')	13
Miscellaneous	*bæc* ('back, ridge' or 'stream')	2
	ham ('home')	2
	**rodu* ('ride, linear clearing')/*rod* ('cross')	2
	stoc ('place')	2

Table 8: Features described by *burh*

Some of the examples in Table 8 represent features which were physically separate from the *burh* itself, but were defined by their notable proximity to or possession by the *burh*, while others represent constituent parts of the *burh* itself. It is also worth noting that many features overlap between Tables 7 and 8, suggesting either that a distinction was recognised between dependent and independent features, or that the boundary between the two was blurry. Regardless, the features in Table 8 underscore concepts associated closely with *burh*. Plots of land and woodland may have been part of the *burh*'s estate, indicating the inherent connection between *burga* and land ownership. *Burh*-slopes may again suggest that these *burga* were to be found atop raised ground, providing a defensive advantage, while brooks

and wells described as belonging to *burga* emphasise the importance of access to water. *Burh*-roads also stand out: formed analogously to *portweg*, which Paul Hindle considers to mean 'road to the market', it is credible that *burhstræt* or *burhweg* represented roadways leading to a *burh*.[542] This would suggest that roads could be built with *burga* as destinations in mind, acting as nodes in the road network of the region.

Elements which indicate the constituent parts of *burga* emphasise the aspects of a *burh* which were most apparent visually, and thus could be used as landscape markers. Descriptions of hedges, walls and ditches suggest the type of enclosures one might expect to find around a *burh*, and, although *burh*-corners do not indicate the material of the *burh*'s construction, they are suggestive of the shape and angles possible in a *burh*'s structure. However, the most common feature belonging to a *burh* in the boundary clauses is a gate. We have already seen the common collocation between *burh* and gates, especially in §6.5, and they can be important features in their own right. From the perspective of boundary clauses, the common reference to *burh*-gates is noteworthy as they would not only provide a landmark in the estate's boundary, but also orientation along the *burh*'s defensive circuit. Indeed, in *Ch 519* (R6.119), *cheoles burh* was to be entered by its east-gate and then to be left by its west-gate, suggesting that the site was large enough for two gates and that shared access could be expected as an estate boundary passed through it. Overall, the features of Table 8 emphasise the role *burh* can play as a descriptor in a landmark context.

[542] Hindle, 'Roads and Tracks in Anglo-Saxon England', 46; Gelling, *Signposts to the Past: Place-Names and the History of England*, 153.

Finally, this section considers descriptions applied to *burga* in boundary clauses, either where *burh* occurs as the second part of a compound or where it is qualified by an adjective or a noun in the genitive. Patterns in the descriptions illustrate the sorts of features used to individualise *burga* as landscape features, which in turn gives us a deeper understanding of what the word *burh* denoted on its own. It is also through this analysis that we can most clearly find examples of *burh* referring to Iron Age hillforts in OE texts, and the rest of this section will focus particularly on connecting such sites with individual examples. Table 9 below summarises the descriptions of *burga* found in boundary clauses:

Category of Description	**Description**	**Number of Instances**
Material/Setting[543]	*æsc* ('ash')	2
	clif ('cliff')	1
	denu ('valley, dale')	1
	eorð ('earth')	15
	fearn ('fern')	1
	hæsl ('hazel')	3
	hæð ('heath')	4
	mearc ('district boundary')	3
	mere ('sea, lake')	2
	slæd ('slade')	1
	stan ('stone')	2
	wilig ('willow')	1
	wudu ('wood')	2
Size	*brad* ('broad')	1
	heah ('high')	1

[543] The difference between construction material and landscape setting can be hard to distinguish. For example, a wood-*burh* may be one made from wood or one found near woodland. For this reason, the two categories have been combined in this table.

	lytel ('little')	2
	micel ('large')	1
	ordinal number	3
Age	*eald* ('old')	13
Combined	*eald* + *eorð* ('old' and 'earth')	1
	lytel + *eorð* ('little' and 'earth')	1
Ownership	*abbodes* ('abbot's')	1
	biscopes ('bishop's')	1
	cyne- ('royal')	5
	likely personal name	25
Other	*bleo* ('variegated')	1
	cocc ('cockerel')	1
	hord ('hoard')	1
	hræfn ('raven')	2
	ram ('ram')	1
	sætere ('robber')	1
	winter ('winter')	1
	uncertain meaning	40

Table 9: *Burh* descriptions

As we have seen from simplex uses of *burh*, the word did not require qualification to represent a distinctive landscape feature. However, 141 of the c. 180 *burh* locations in boundary clauses are qualified, and there are clear patterns in the types of descriptions applied.

Physical features such as size, landscape setting or construction material have the widest range of examples, and it is significant in the case of boundary clauses that these are features which would have been visually apparent. It is quite likely that at least some of the examples above were onomastic forms by the time they

appeared in a boundary clause; yet, even when onomastic, some of the descriptions would likely still have been relevant and visually obvious. In other cases, local knowledge of the area would have been required.

The other major type of description is proprietorship, where a (perhaps erstwhile) owner or notable occupant defined their *burh*. The proprietor could be the king or the Church, but overwhelmingly it is the names of individuals which appear, suggesting the commonality of privately occupied *burh* sites.[544] Regardless, it is important to bear in mind that the description of a *burh* site with a proprietor's name does not necessarily indicate the sort of occupant found throughout the site's history. Whether the proprietor was still in residence at the point of the boundary clause's composition, or whether we are dealing with a purely onomastic form, these descriptions would nevertheless have required local knowledge. Certainly, this evidence suggests that at one time or another, there were a profusion of privately owned *burga* on the landscape.

When considering the describing words individually, two stand out particularly: the noun *eorð* ('earth') in *burh*-compounds and the adjective *eald* ('old'). While the other individual descriptions have no more than five occurrences each, most appearing only once or twice, *eorð* appears 16 times, *eald* appears 13 times and they appear together in one further instance. Such disproportionately high rates of occurrence warrant deeper investigation, and it is here we find connections to Iron Age hillforts.

[544] Personal names were identified by the use of the following resources: 'Langscape: The Language of Landscape: Reading the Anglo-Saxon Countryside', 2008, http://langscape.org.uk; 'PASE Database', The Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England, 2010, http://pase.ac.uk/jsp/index.jsp.

Place-name evidence has previously led scholars to associate *eorðburh* with Iron Age hillforts, and the boundary-clause evidence generally accords with this interpretation.[545] In order to explore the association, I examined areas around the postulated modern sites of Anglo-Saxon estates with *eorðburga* in their boundaries for nearby Iron Age hillforts, using maps, hillfort research and heritage databases; where identified, the hillfort locations were then compared with modern parish boundaries.[546] As modern parishes are often derived from medieval estate patterns, the position of a hillfort on a parish boundary increases the likelihood that this could have been on the boundary of the Anglo-Saxon estate.[547] Table 10 below summarises the findings, and Figs. 7–9 illustrate my mapping analysis with the example of *Ch 366*, Chisledon, Wilts.

Estate Centre	**Charter**	**Date**	**Report Reference**	**Postulated Hillfort Site**	**On Parish Boundary?**
Dinton, Wilts	*Ch 329*	860	R6.45	Wick Ball Camp	Yes
Chisledon, Wilts (2 *eorðburga*)	*Ch 366*	901	R6.63, 66	Liddington Castle	Yes
			R6.64–5	Barbury Castle	Yes

[545] Cameron, *English Place-Names*, 115; Cox, 'The Pattern of Old English Burh in Early Lindsey', 35 and 47; Gelling, *Signposts to the Past: Place-Names and the History of England*, 143–47; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 241.

[546] The resources used for this investigation were: J. Forde-Johnston, *Hillforts of the Iron Age in England and Wales: A Survey of the Surface Evidence* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1976), 26, 33, 36; Henry Rothwell, 'The Hillfort Map Project', Digital Digging, 2018, http://www.digitaldigging.net/the-digital-hillfort-map-project/; G. Lock and I. Ralston, Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and Ireland, 2017, https://hillforts.arch.ox.ac.uk/; 'Search the List', Historic England, 2020, https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/; 'Church of England Parish Map', ArcGIS, accessed 3 August 2018, https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?useExisting=1.

[547] S. E. Rigold, 'The Distribution of Early Romanesque Towers to Minor Churches', *Archaeological Journal* 136 (1980): 201; Blair, 'Introduction: From Minster to Parish Church'; modern parishes are similarly used to explore Anglo-Saxon sites by Aliki Pantos, '"On the Edge of Things": The Boundary Location of Anglo-Saxon Assembly Sites', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 12 (2003): 38–49.

Stanton St Bernard, Wilts	*Ch 368*	903	R6.67	Milk Hill	Yes
Stoke Canon, Devon	*Ch 389*	924x939	R6.75	Stoke Hill Camp	Yes
	Ch 971	1031	R6.273		
Exton, Hants	*Ch 463*	940	R6.92	Old Winchester Hill	Yes
Wylye, Wilts	*Ch 469*	940	R6.94–5	Possible: Yarnbury Castle	Yes, but parish much bigger than estate
				or	
				Bilbury Rings	No, in middle of parish
Ashdown Park, Ashbury, Berks	*Ch 524*	947	R6.120	Alfred's Castle	Near
Burbage, Wilts	*Ch 688*	961	R6.173	N/A	No
Churchstow, Devon	*Ch 704*	962	R6.186	N/A	No
Bedwyn, Wilts	*Ch 756*	958x968	R6.201	Chisbury Camp	No
Witney, Oxon	*Ch 771*	969	R6.205–6	N/A	No
Longstock, Hants	*Ch 840*	982	R6.226	Danebury Hill Camp	Just outside
Ardley, Oxon	*Ch 883*	995	R6.237	Possible: Banjo Enclosure at Fewcott	No
Sevington, Leigh Delamere, Wilts	*Ch 999*	1043	R6.279–80	N/A	No
Dawlish, Devon	*Ch 1003*	1044	R6.281	Castle Dyke	Yes

Table 10: *Eorðburh* in boundary clauses

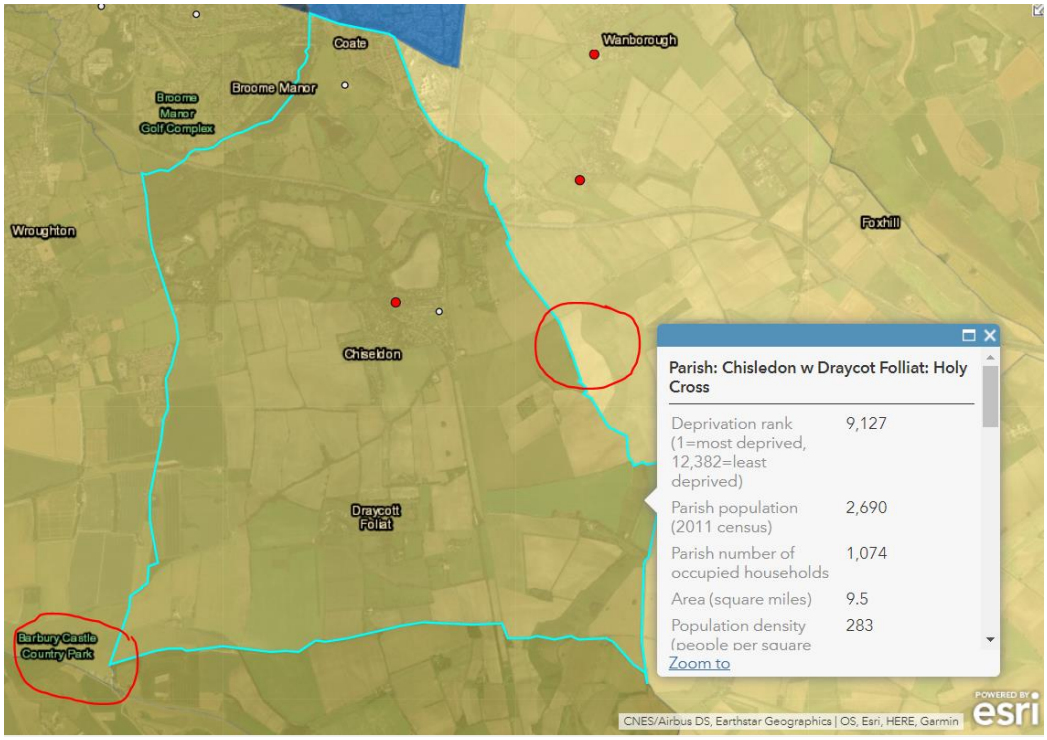

Fig. 7: Chisledon parish boundary map showing locations of Iron Age hillforts Liddington Castle and Barbury Castle[548]

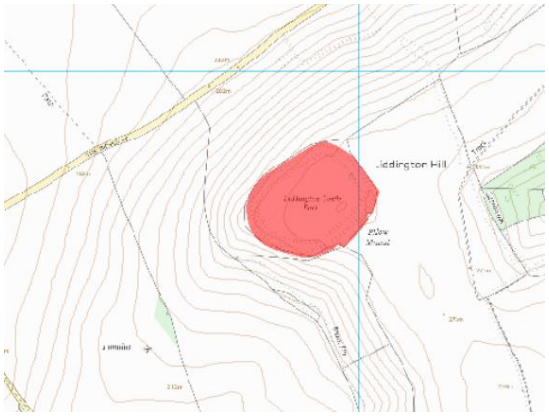

Fig. 8: Historic England map showing Liddington Castle[549]

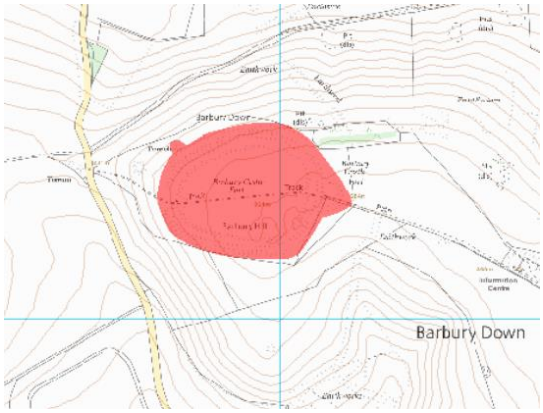

Fig. 9: Historic England map showing Barbury Castle[550]

Of the 16 independent *eorðburh* sites listed in Table 10, 10 can be reasonably associated with Iron Age hillforts, of which seven stand on, and two are very close

[548] 'Church of England Parish Map'; annotations showing the locations of the hillforts are my own.
[549] 'Liddington Castle', Historic England, 2020, https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1016312.
[550] 'Barbury Castle: A Hillfort and Bowl Barrow', Historic England, 2020, https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1014557.

to, modern parish boundaries. There are also two further possible hillfort locations. The three remaining *eorðburh* examples, including the "lythlan" ('little') *eorðburh* of *Ch 771*, cannot now be identified with prehistoric sites. Hooke considers the *eorðburh* on Churchstow's bounds to represent a tenth-century promontory fort, although this is in response to Haslam's postulated Anglo-Saxon fort at the site, for which there is no archaeological confirmation.[551] It is not impossible that these unidentified uses of *eorðburh* still did refer to prehistoric forts, as there may be many lost sites.[552] Certainly, the weight of the evidence presented in Table 10 shows that *eorðburh* did commonly, if not exclusively, refer to Iron Age hillforts in boundary clauses.

It is also valuable at this point to consider the use of *eorðburh* across the whole extant OE written corpus. The compound appears only four times outside of boundary clauses. Two of these examples have been discussed in §3.4 in the glossary *AntGl 4* (R2.241–2) translating Latin terms for earthworks, which appear between geographical and settlement glossary-classes. Another example appears in the main body of a land grant in *Ch 1310* (R6.377), where it is used as an identifying landmark for a small woodland. The final example appears in *ChristA,B,C* 7 (R7.131), likely meaning 'city of the earth/world'. It is evident, therefore, that *eorðburh* occurs almost exclusively in contexts where it refers to a landscape feature, often earthworks or hillforts.

Iron Age hillforts would have been ancient monuments even in the earlier Anglo-Saxon period. Thus, it is striking that the adjective *eald* ('old') is the other

[551] Della Hooke, *Pre-Conquest Charter-Bounds of Devon and Cornwall* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1994), 168; Jeremy Haslam, 'The Towns of Devon', in *Anglo-Saxon Towns in Southern England*, ed. Jeremy Haslam (Chichester: Phillimore, 1984), 271–75.
[552] Forde-Johnston, *Hillforts of the Iron Age in England and Wales: A Survey of the Surface Evidence*, 280.

common descriptor of *burga* in boundary clauses. Noticeably, we see no descriptions of 'new' *burga* in boundary clauses, despite place-name evidence showing that this was not an uncommon descriptor for sites. This suggests, perhaps, that 'old' was a more useful attribute for *burga* when referring to longstanding landmarks, and leads us to question whether *eald burh* was also a typical way of describing Iron Age hillforts. The same hillfort and parish boundary mapping analysis was applied to examples of *eald burh*, the findings of which are summarised in Table 11:

Estate Centre	**Charter**	**Date**	**Report Reference**	**Postulated Hillfort Site**	**On Parish Boundary?**
Cyricestun, Smt (unknown site)	*Ch 345*	882	R6.53	N/A	No
Grittleton, Wilts	*Ch 472*	940	R6.97	N/A	No
Badby, Northants	*Ch 495*	944	R6.107	Arbury Hill	Yes
Chieveley, Berks	*Ch 558*	951	R6.142	Bussock Camp	No
Stanton St Bernard, Wilts	*Ch 647*	957	R6.167	Milk Hill	Yes
	Ch 685	960	R6.172		
Easton, Hants	*Ch 695*	961	R6.177–8	N/A	No
Avington, Hants	*Ch 699*	961	R6.179–81	N/A	No
Newnham Murren, Oxon	*Ch 738*	966	R6.199	N/A	No
Treable, Cheriton, Devon	*Ch 830*	976	R6.225	N/A	No
Smite, Hindlip, Worcs	*Ch 1339*	978	R6.378–9	N/A	No

Hilton & Featherstone, Staffs	*Ch 1380*	996	R6.384	N/A	No
Cheselbourne, Dorset	*Ch 955*	1019	R6.265–6	Lyscombe Hill	Yes

Table 11: *Eald burh* in boundary clauses

Table 11 shows that *eald burh* cannot be associated consistently with Iron Age hillforts. Three of the 12 independent *ealda burga* can be linked with Iron Age hillforts on current parish bounds, and, in addition to this, the hillfort at Bussock Camp, although not on a modern boundary, aligns enough with other landscape markers in the boundary clause to confirm the identification. Furthermore, these uses of *eald burh* overlap in several significant ways with evidence of *eorðburh* being used for Iron Age hillforts. The bounds of Stanton St Bernard in *Ch 368*, *Ch 647* and *Ch 685* use *eorðburh* and *eald burh* to refer to the same site on the circuit, likely Milk Hill. The unidentified *eorðburh* in the bounds of *Ch 999* for Leigh Delamere shares features with the unidentified *eald burh* in the bounds of the neighbouring estate of Grittleton in *Ch 472*, hinting that both may refer to the same lost site. Finally, the *eald burh* in the bounds for Badby in *Ch 495* likely refers to the Iron Age hillfort on Arbury Hill, a name which derives from *eorðburh*.[553] The evidence does not suggest that an *eald burh* necessarily commonly referred to Iron Age hillforts, as the *eorðburh* evidence does, but clearly it could and did sometimes refer to such prehistoric sites.

The analysis of these two descriptors is valuable to our understanding of Anglo-Saxon perceptions of the word *burh* and of prehistoric landmarks. The use of

[553] David Mills, *The Place-Names of Lancashire* (London: Batsford, 1976), 56.

burh in these instances, as well as in various place names for hillfort sites, supports Hogg's statement that contemporaries "felt no doubt as to [the] original use" of these defensive settlement sites.[554] That *eald* could be used to describe Iron Age hillforts suggests that the age of these monuments was both understood and seen as a defining characteristic. Iron Age hillforts were also feats of landscape shaping, formed of earthen ramparts consisting of one or more banks and often ditches.[555] It is therefore fitting that *eorðburh* ('earth-*burh*') was the borderline conventional description for such sites. However, it also points out that the predominance of the earthworks in the formation of these defensive sites was distinctive and that it was possibly the fortification morphology, as well as age, that for Anglo-Saxons distinguished Iron Age *burga* from their own constructions.

Individual examples of *burga* in boundary clauses are limited in the information they can provide. However, this section has shown that targeted comparison can illuminate aspects of *burh*'s meaning, as well as patterns in language use. Boundary clauses relied on local knowledge or visual clues, and this shows in the language applied to *burga* in these instances. It is noteworthy, in particular, that the compound *eorðburh* and uses of *burh* for Iron Age hillforts appear rarely outside of place names and these landscape-focussed text sections.[556] Once again, context

[554] Quotation from A. H. A. Hogg, *Hill-Forts of Britain* (London: Hart-Davis, MacGibbon, 1975), 17; see also chapter 2, Forde-Johnston, *Hillforts of the Iron Age in England and Wales: A Survey of the Surface Evidence*; Gelling, *Signposts to the Past: Place-Names and the History of England*, 143; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 240–41.
[555] Hogg, *Hill-Forts of Britain*, 59; Forde-Johnston, *Hillforts of the Iron Age in England and Wales: A Survey of the Surface Evidence*, 4–14.
[556] Nicholas Howe, *Writing the Map of Anglo-Saxon England: Essays in Cultural Geography* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 78.

and theme impact our understanding of *burh*, and the analysis of uses of *burh* highlights textual biases across the written OE corpus.

7.3 Lordly Residences

There are relatively few examples of *burh* in administrative documents which can be positively identified as private residences. However, as in glosses and legal texts, the examples we do have are valuable witnesses to a clearly fundamental referent of *burh* that is less commonly represented in written OE. Unlike the highly comparative work of the previous section, these limited instances allow us to think about the people connected to the *burga* and the history of individual sites. This section will focus on four uses of *burh* from across four centuries which show the continued productivity of the word to describe lordly residences throughout the Anglo-Saxon period.

The first example considers the formation of the place name Bibury, derived from the compounding of *burh* with the personal name *Beage*. Many such place names can be found in charters, as attested by the 25 examples of personal names qualifying *burh* in Table 9 above. Such descriptions indicate the proprietorship or influence of a significant individual in the history of these *burh* sites, and they are typically used by onomasts as evidence of *burga* as private residences.[557] However,

[557] Cameron, *English Place-Names*, 113; Gelling, *Signposts to the Past: Place-Names and the History of England*, 180–84; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 243–45.

some of the 'personal name + *burh*' place names can actually be seen to describe Iron Age hillforts, such as Cadbury, meaning we cannot rely on such place names to represent lordly residences.[558] As they appear with so little context, we can only speculate on the significance of such names in boundary clauses.

The evidence of Bibury in *Ch 1254* is, therefore, of particular interest as the use of *burh* and the creation of the place name are given valuable contextual details. The main part of the diploma *Ch 1254* is dated to 718x745 and describes the lease of an estate next to the river Colne in Gloucester to Leppa and his daughter Beage. A later scribe, perhaps in copying, then entitled the document "Beagan byrig" ('Beage's *burh*', R6.367), a name for the estate which we know to have been in existence by 899 as it appears also in the Latin charter *Sawyer 1279*. It is noteworthy that no settlement or structure is named in the diploma, where the estate is described as *terra* ('land'), *quinque cassatos* ('five hides') and *agelli* ('small plots of land'). Indeed, it is possible that the *burh* was built by Beage herself, and her tenancy occurs in a period when settlements were stratifying and becoming characterised by a "profusion of boundaries."[559] Analysis of the use of *Beaganbyrig* allows us to infer certain aspects of the *burh*'s nature. The use of the name to represent the estate indicates that the *burh* was Beage's private residence, and that it was the estate's centre. That the site was of high status is indicated by the rank of Beage's father Leppa, who is described in the diploma as a *comes* ('king's minister or nobleman'). It is also perhaps significant that the estate consists of five hides, comparable to the connection between a five-hide

[558] Cameron, *English Place-Names*, 112–13.
[559] Gelling, *Signposts to the Past: Place-Names and the History of England*, 181–82; Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society in Anglo-Saxon England*, 75.

estate, a *burh* and service in the king's court seen as *þegn*-worthy in *LawGeþyncðo* (see §6.5).

A further use of *burh* for a high-status private residence appears in *Ch 1432*, a memorandum dating from 822x823. The document records a dispute over the estate of Inkberrow, Worcestershire, between its leaseholder Wulfheard and the bishop of Worcester. In order to regain the financial rights over the estate, the bishop requests Wulfheard to relinquish it, and we are told:

> þa wæs he eaðmodlice ondeta þæt he swæ wulde 7 to him wilnende wæs þætte hio him funden suelce londare swelce he mid arum on beon maehte 7 his wic þære on **byrig** on his life.
>
> then he [Wulfheard] humbly agreed that he would [do] so and he asked them [the community at Worcester] that they find him such a landed estate where he could live honourably and [have] his dwelling there in its ***burh*** during his life.
> R6.392

What followed was a botched attempt on Wulfheard's part, despite his promise, to obtain full possession of Inkberrow for himself, something he had been attempting to do for over thirty years, as shown in the accounts of *Sawyer 1430* and *Sawyer 1260*.[560]

The quotation makes it clear beyond doubt that the *burh* is a private residence, and its high status is implied by Wulfheard's inferred noble rank: the events of *Ch*

[560] For more information on these lawsuits, see: Patrick Wormald, 'A Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Lawsuits', *Anglo-Saxon England* 17 (1988): 256.

1432 show he had friends with royal influence and the witness list of *Sawyer 1260* indicates that he may have been a bishop in 803.[561] Yet, as Williams correctly points out, "the interest [in this quotation from *Ch 1432*] lies in the description of the residence which Wulfheard considered suitable to his status; a matter quite separate from what kind of structure actually existed at Inkberrow in the ninth century."[562] The use of *burh* in the context of this dispute is inherently tied to the expected living conditions of a man of Wulfheard's rank.

Indeed, for this reason it is plausible that a *burh* did in fact exist at Inkberrow in the late eighth and early ninth centuries. No archaeological evidence of Anglo-Saxon settlement exists at Inkberrow, which has only been excavated at its twelfth-century church.[563] However, the repeated machinations of Wulfheard to keep the estate suggest it already had all he could have wanted. Comparison of descriptions of the estate from *Sawyer 53* (from 693) and *Sawyer 95* (from 723x737) show that, in the seventh and eighth centuries, Inkberrow consisted of 16 hides, with an additional six at the attendant estate of Bradley; in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the estate at Inkberrow held by Worcester is shown to have a total of five hides in *Sawyer 1331* (from 977), *Sawyer 1349* (from 984) and *Sawyer 1460* (from 1010x1023), as well as the

[561] See 'Wulfheard 3' in 'PASE Database'; For more information on the value of witness lists in identifying individuals, see: A. T. Thacker, 'Some Terms for Noblemen in Anglo-Saxon England, c. 650–900', in *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History*, ed. David Brown, James Campbell, and Sonia Chadwick Hawkes, vol. 2, British Archaeological Reports, British Series 92 (Oxford: B. A. R., 1981), 201–36; Duncan Probert, 'What Has Ingold to Do with Domesday? An Exercise in Identification in Late Anglo-Saxon England', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 60 (2016): 1–30.
[562] Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', 223.
[563] Alistair Barber, *St Peter's Church, Inkberrow, Worcestershire: Archaeological Evaluation* (Cotswold Archaeological Trust, 1993), 2, http://reports.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk/content/uploads/2014/07/0330-St-Peters-Church-Inkberrow-Eval-93131-complete.pdf.

Domesday Book of 1086.[564] Although we are not told the hidage of the estate in Wulfheard's time, it was clearly a significant holding of at least equal size to *Beaganbyrig*, making a *burh* as an estate centre a strong possibility. Furthermore, if Wulfheard could "eaðmodlice" ('humbly') expect a *burh* at an alternative estate, it seems reasonable to assume that he already had something equal at Inkberrow for which he wanted an equivalent. Nevertheless, the value of the use of *burh* in *Ch 1432* is in the implication that a *burh* was an honourable and expected dwelling for a high-ranking man of the early ninth century.

The third example returns us briefly to boundary clauses and a singular example of *burh* which can be reliably attributed to a single owner and estate. The following quotation comes from the bounds of Nackington, Kent, in *Ch 877* (dated 996):

> fram hloþgewirpe to wulfrices milne æt his **burhgatan**, fram þare milne andlang wulfrices stræte ut to sewehlinc
>
> from the troop-mound to Wulfric's mill at his ***burh*-gate**, from the mill along Wulfric's street out to *sewe*-bank
> R6.235

Unlike the concatenations of personal names with *burh* in boundary clauses, which may represent fixed onomastic forms referring to long-departed proprietors, the attribution of the *burh*-gate to Wulfric with the pronoun "his" shows that the description is active and relevant. The details of Wulfric's property also give us some

[564] Frank Thorn and Caroline Thorn, eds., *Domesday Book: Worcestershire*, Domesday Book 16 (Chichester: Phillimore, 1982), 2.2.

insight into the *burh* itself. The use of *burh*-gate as a landmark suggests that the gate itself was a significant feature and the excavation evidence of gates and towers in some high-status Anglo-Saxon settlements has already been mentioned (see §6.5 and §7.2).[565] The fact that the mill could be located by its proximity to the gate specifically, not the *burh* as a whole, may also hint at the large size of the *burh*'s perimeter. The mill further indicates the size and prosperity of his estate, as mills were not as common in early medieval England as on the continent, and were an amenity that probably only a lord could afford to provide.[566] Indeed, we can infer that Wulfric is a man of high rank, as he appears in the charter's witness list as a "minister" ('servant [of the king]'), associating *burh* once again with high status. This quotation, therefore, uses *burh* to refer to the relatively grand, late-tenth-century residence of an affluent and influential man with a valuable estate.

The final example appears in the writ-charter *Ch 1117*, dated to 1042x1044, in which King Edward states:

> þæt <se> **byrig** æt Winintune & feower hidan landes þærto mid þære cyrice & mid þære cyricsocne & mid ælce ðære <þinga> þe þær to gebyrað & mid ðam lande æt þære lea liggen into Westmynstre to ðære muneka bigleofan swa full & swa forð swa Ætsere Swearte & his wif Ælfið hy fyrmest ahten

[565] These are noted, for example, at Bramford, Steyning, Little Paxton, Cheddar, Portchester, Goltho and Bishopstone: Reynolds, 'Boundaries and Settlements in Later Sixth- to Eleventh-Century England', 111; Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 245; Hamerow, *Rural Settlements and Society in Anglo-Saxon England*, 111; Thomas, *The Later Anglo-Saxon Settlement at Bishopstone: A Downland Manor in the Making*, 196.
[566] Philip Rahtz and Donald Bullough, 'The Parts of an Anglo-Saxon Mill', *Anglo-Saxon England* 6 (1977): 15–37, esp. p. 19; Fleming, *Britain after Rome: The Fall and Rise, 400–1070*, 284–85.

> that the ***burh*** at Wennington and four hides of land thereto with the church and with the church-privileges and with all the things which belong to there and with the land at the lea are to go to Westminster for the monks' subsistence, as fully and as thoroughly as previously Ætsere Swearte and his wife Ælfgyth had them before
> R6.321

It is immediately noticeable that the *burh* is at the forefront of this endowment, and all the lands and other components of the estate are presented as additions to it. The previous proprietors Ætsere and Ælfgyth also gifted land at Leyton to Westminster in 1065 (*Sawyer 1040* and *Sawyer 1043*), suggesting that they were significant landowners of high rank.[567] Furthermore, we see here a connection between a lord's *burh* and the estate churches which flourished in the tenth and eleventh centuries, indicating that *burga* could be central to those high-status estates which later grew into parishes, and connecting it Williams's reading of the bell(-house) in *LawGeþyncðo* (p. 276 of this thesis).[568] *Ch 1117*, therefore, shows that *burga* continued to describe lordly residences long into the eleventh century.

Although quite rare, the references in administrative documents to *burga* as high-status residences are meaningful. The evidence shows that *burh* could be used to refer to estate centres from the period of early social stratification of settlements all the way through to the profusion of manors and proto-villages in the eleventh century. The use of the word in these examples is never laboured, and is at times quite incidental. This suggests that the meaning was neither unusual nor unclear in

[567] See 'Atsere 3' and 'Ælfgyth 8' in 'PASE Database'; see also R. Widmore, *An Enquiry into the Time of the First Foundation of Westminster Abbey* (London: J. Stagg in Westminster Hall, 1743).
[568] Blair, 'Introduction: From Minster to Parish Church', 6–9; Williams, 'A Bell-House and a Burh-Geat: Lordly Residences in England before the Norman Conquest', 223.

context, and indicates that *burh* was often used to describe lordly residences throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. Once again, our understanding of the word is impacted by what was written and what has been preserved, and these instances give us a tantalising glimpse of language use beyond the scriptorium.

7.4 The Monastic and the Secular

The evidence of this thesis has already shown that *burh* was more than a "vernacular equivalent of *mynster*" before the mid-eighth century, but nevertheless *burh* was often used to represent sites of ecclesiastical importance then and later.[569] However, the boundary between the monastic and the secular is often blurred. It is difficult to tell in the archaeological record if a high-status settlement had been used for secular or monastic purposes, or a mixture of both, over its lifetime, as can be seen from excavations at sites like Flixborough and Staunch Meadow.[570] Indeed, we can see overlap in sites of the previous section, such as Inkberrow, which began life as a *monasterium* called *Penintanham* and was probably a "family monastery" throughout the early eighth century, before becoming a leased property of Worcester

[569] Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 250, 269–70; Hall, '*Burhs* and Boroughs: Defended Places, Trade, and Towns. Plans, Defences, and Civic Features', 1.
[570] R. D. Carr, A. Tester, and P. Murphy, 'The Middle-Saxon Settlement at Staunch Meadow, Brandon', *Antiquity* 62, no. 235 (1988): 371–77; John Blair, 'Palaces or Minsters? Northampton and Cheddar Reconsidered', *Anglo-Saxon England* 25 (1996): 97–121; Keith Dobney et al., *Farmers, Monks and Aristocrats: The Environmental Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon Flixborough*, Excavations at Flixborough, Vol. 3 (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2007), 220; Christopher Loveluck and David Atkinson, *The Early Medieval Settlement Remains from Flixborough, Lincolnshire: The Occupation Sequence, c. 600-1000*, Excavations at Flixborough, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2007), 146–61; Christopher Loveluck, *Rural Settlement, Lifestyles and Social Change in the Later First Millennium AD: Anglo-Saxon Flixborough in Its Wider Context*, Excavations at Flixborough 4 (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2007).

Cathedral.[571] This section will consider how examples of *burh* in administrative documents can represent the tangled ecclesiastical and secular identities of settlements and what this tells us about the meaning of *burh*.

The first examples to be examined concern uses of *burh* for ecclesiastical precincts which exist within larger *burh* settlements. *Ch 1268* is a Latin charter dated 825x832 with a contemporary OE endorsement (charter summary) *ChHead 1268*, possibly produced alongside the rest of the document.[572] The charter is described by *ChHead 1268* as:

> Sceldes fordæs boec & ðeara wica on **byrg**
>
> The charter of *Sceldesford* and of the dwellings in the ***burh***
> R6.536

Primarily, the Latin charter concerns grants of land at *Sceldesford* and elsewhere to Christ Church, Canterbury, but also defines the reversion of "illum curtem quem Dodda monachus in monasterio habuit" ('that enclosure which monk Dodda had in the monastery'). As no other structure is mentioned in the *Ch 1268*, it is likely that "wica" is used to render "curtem," while "byrg" is used to translate "monasterio." The *monasterium* refers fairly conclusively to the precinct of Christ Church, as the "curtem" of *Ch 1268* is likely the same sort of structure called a *domus*

[571] Patrick Sims-Williams, 'Cuthswith, Seventh-Century Abbess of Inkberrow, near Worcester, and the Würzburg Manuscript of Jerome on Ecclesiastes', *Anglo-Saxon England* 5 (1976): 11–18; Steven Bassett, 'The Landed Endowment of the Anglo-Saxon Minster at Hanbury', *Anglo-Saxon England* 38 (2009): 94.
[572] Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 524; C. R. Hart, 'The King's Haligdom [and the Codex Wintoniensis]', in *Land, Church and People: Essays Presented to H. P. R. Finberg*, ed. J. Thirsk, Agricultural History Review, Supplement no. 18, 1970, 20–21; Charles Insley, 'Charters and Episcopal Scriptoria in the Anglo-Saxon South-West', *Early Medieval Europe* 7, no. 2 (1998): 193.

('house, building') in *Sawyer 1265* in 813, where the archbishop of Canterbury laid down a set of living rules for the community at Christ Church.[573] *Burh*, in this case, appears to refer to the monastery at Christ Church which lies within the larger, and at least partly secular, *burh* of Canterbury.

Similarly, *burh* is used in the compound *Paulesburh* ('Paul's *burh*') to refer to the site now known as St Paul's Cathedral. The name appears in three OE charters, *Ch 1483* (946x951, R6.428), *Ch 1494* (962x991, R6.443) and *Ch 1478* (1053x1055, R6.425), with the latter two charters stating clearly that *Paulesbyrig* was in London, itself often called *Lundenbyrig* in OE texts. Two Latin charters, *Sawyer 1786* and *Sawyer 1790* also use *Paulesbyrig*. These two charters purport to date from 704x709 and 757x796 respectively, and scholars often use them as evidence for this designation of St Paul's originating as early as the eighth century.[574] However, Susan Kelly holds that these represent eleventh-century forgeries.[575] Thus, *Paulesbyrig* appears to be a name of only tenth- and eleventh-century usage.

For Blair, Kelly and Pamela Taylor, the use of *burh* to describe St Paul's is suggestive of a (walled) enclosure surrounding the minster precinct, but we lack archaeological evidence for the Anglo-Saxon St Paul's due primarily to the modern cathedral's superimposition over the putative early medieval site.[576] However, there

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[573] Nicholas Brooks and Susan Kelly, eds., *Charters of Christ Church Canterbury: Part 1*, vol. 1, Anglo-Saxon Charters 17 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 623.
[574] Pamela Taylor, 'Foundation and Endowment: St Paul's and the English Kingdoms', in *St Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London 604-2004*, ed. Derek Keene, Arthur Burns, and Andrew Saint (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 6; Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 250; John Schofield, *St Paul's Cathedral Before Wren* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2011), 44.
[575] S. E. Kelly, ed., *Charters of St Paul's, London*, Anglo-Saxon Charters 10 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 74, 77, 144–45.
[576] Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 250, note 17; Kelly, *Charters of St Paul's, London*, 7; Taylor, 'Foundation and Endowment: St Paul's and the English Kingdoms', 6; Alan Vince, *Saxon London: An Archaeological Investigation*, The Archaeology of London 1 (London: Seaby, 1990), 10; John Schofield,

is much we can learn by comparing the use of *Paulesbyrig* with other terms used for St Paul's in Anglo-Saxon texts.

In OE, St Paul's is also described with ecclesiastical vocabulary: *mynster* ('minster, monastery') in *Sawyer 1495* (900x1100), *Ch 1486* (1000x1002), *Ch 992* (1033x1035) and *Ch 1104* (1042x1066), and *cyrice* ('church') in *Ch 1526* (942x951). Latin documents likewise use ecclesiastical vocabulary for St Paul's, calling it either a *monasterium* ('monastery, minster') in *Sawyer 5* and *Sawyer 1790* or an *ecclesia* ('church') in *Sawyer 1786*. Indeed, *Sawyer 1786* and *Sawyer 1790*, which also use *Paulesbyrig*, make it clear that the vernacular name refers unequivocally to an ecclesiastical site: *Sawyer 1786* calls the site "ecclesia sancta quæ sita est in Londonia et noto notamine Paulesbyrig dicitur" ('the holy church which is situated in London and is called by the known name Paul's *burh*') and *Sawyer 1790* describes it as "monasterium quod celebri uocabulo Paulesbiri iuxta linguam huius insulae vocatitur" ('the minster/monastery which is called by the famous/often repeated name Paul's *burh* according to the language of this island'). These examples, therefore, encourage us to read *burh* here as denoting the physical enclosure of the monastery, and the fact that no equivalent Latin term is used to describe St Paul's implies that Latin lacked vocabulary which had the semantic range of *burh*. It is important to note that Anglo-Saxon texts often locate St Paul's within London, itself often called a *burh* (see §7.5). Thus, *burh* was capable of referring to both the secular and the ecclesiastical, and evidently it was context which allowed readers to

'The Archaeology of St Paul's', in *St Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London 604-2004*, ed. Derek Keene, Arthur Burns, and Andrew Saint (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 125; Schofield, *St Paul's Cathedral Before Wren*, 44–45, 49–50, 54.

distinguish conceptually between the ecclesiastical *burh* of St Paul's and the fortified and urban *burh* of London within which it existed.

However, there are also various examples of urban sites which grew around significant ecclesiastical sites, and the use of *burh* to describe these places appears to blur the monastic and secular identities at play. Bury St Edmunds offers the clearest case of this. Possibly founded as a minster in the seventh century by Sigeberht, king of the East Angles, and originally known by the name *Bedericesworþ*, the site's first record connects it to St Edmund, king of the East Angles, who was martyred by the Vikings in 869 and whose body was translated to *Bedericesworþ*.[577] For example, the name *Bedericesworþ* is equated with "sancte Eadmunde kirke" ('St Edmund's church') in *Ch 1526* (942x951) or "seynt/sanctæ Eadmundes stowe" ('St Edmund's place') in *Ch 1483* (946x951) and *Ch 1494* (962x991). Many documents grant land or rights simply to St Edmund himself, and only to the monastery by extension. This saintly proprietorship of the site is similar to that of St Peter and Peterborough.[578]

The use of the name *Bedericesworþ* continues into the eleventh century, but uses of *burh* first appear for the site in the 1020s. A number of these uses make it clear that *burh* refers to the religious establishment. *Ch 1528*, made sometime after 1020, grants land to "seynt Eadmunde to Biry" ('St Edmund at *Burh*', R6.471), with money promised to "se Abbot on Byri" ('the abbot in *Burh*', R6.472) and a copy of the charter being held in the archive "on Byri" ('in *Burh*', R6.473); *Ch 1489* (1023x1038)

[577] Margaret Statham, 'The Medieval Town of Bury St Edmunds', in *Bury St Edmunds: Medieval Art, Architecture, Archaeology and Economy*, ed. Antonia Gransden, The British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions 20 (Leeds: The British Archaeological Association and contributors, 1998), 98.
[578] See, for example, *Sawyer 1060*.

grants land "into sancte Eadmunde" ('to St Edmund'), but requires that "þa munecas on Byrig sellan sixtig punde" ('the monks in *Burh* give sixty pounds', R6.440) in exchange; while *Ch 1521* (1035x1044) grants land "into þe holy stowe þer ic self resten wille þat is at seynt Eadmundes byri" ('to the holy place where I myself wish to rest [i.e. be buried], that is to say at St Edmund's *burh*', R6.467). We also see references to the *hired* ('religious community') which is "binnen seynt Eadmundes byri" ('within St Edmund's *burh*'), for example in *Ch 1468* (1043x1044, R6.418–9), while in *Ch 1608* (1044x1052) we are told that the abbot "at sancte edmondes bery… beth þis minstres mund" ('at St Edmund's *burh* ... is the protector of this minster', R6.531). These examples show that *burh* is commonly used to refer quite clearly to the monastic community and complex at Bury St Edmunds.

However, there are also uses of *burh* for Bury St Edmunds in the mid-eleventh century which appear to connect secular urban activities with the *burh* name. Although the current town layout descends from the Norman re-planning in the late eleventh century, it is believed that an Anglo-Saxon town stood on the site, and evidence of an Anglo-Saxon road hints at an early commercial centre there.[579] A mint was also established at Bury St Edmunds during Edward the Confessor's reign: coins from the period have been found bearing the mark *MORCERE ON EAD*, interpreted as referring to a moneyer in Bury St Edmunds, and *Ch 1085* from 1065x1066 records Edward's grant of a moneyer to Abbot Baldwin in Bury St Edmunds, with all the rights the king has "on enig minre burge" ('in any of my

[579] Bernard Gauthiez, 'Planning of the Town of Bury St Edmunds', in *Bury St Edmunds: Medieval Art, Architecture, Archaeology and Economy*, ed. Antonia Gransden, The British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions 20 (Leeds: The British Archaeological Association and contributors, 1998), 94; Statham, 'The Medieval Town of Bury St Edmunds', 99.

burga', R6.297). The granting of a mint to an abbot was unusual, and R. J. Eaglen considers that the mint represented the site's ecclesiastical, rather than urban, importance.[580] However, *Ch 1085* also suggests a parallel between Abbot Baldwin's *burh* and those of the king, and thus franchisal similarities with other urban sites at the time. The secular population at Bury St Edmunds is also indicated in *Rec 5.6*, an undated but vernacular memorandum likely from the eleventh century, where it is stated that "ælc man in sancte Eadmudes Byrig husfast on his owe land" ('any man in St Edmund's *burh* who has a house on his own land') is set to pay a penny to the cellarer on St Peter's Day. No one is exempt from paying except "sancte Eadmundes þewes 7 sea cnihtas" ('St Edmund's servants and the serving men'), suggesting that all those who pay are secular residents of the settlement around the monastery, but that the monastery is still conceived of as part of the *burh*.

Uses of *burh* to refer to eleventh-century Bury St Edmunds appear to blur the ecclesiastical and the secular. While some instances of *burh* refer quite specifically to the monastic environment, secular residents and urban activities are also associated with the term in contemporary texts. However, the secular aspects of St Edmund's *burh* are enmeshed with the monastic: the mint belongs to the abbot, and the exemption of members of the religious community from the payment of Peter's penny must be specified. The terminology of Bury St Edmunds, like the settlement, grew out of the ecclesiastical and only later encompassed the secular.

[580] R. J. Eaglen, 'The Mint at Bury St Edmunds', in *Bury St Edmunds: Medieval Art, Architecture, Archaeology and Economy*, ed. Antonia Gransden, The British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions 20 (Leeds: The British Archaeological Association and contributors, 1998), 111–19.

On the other hand, we also find examples where the secular is defined by use of the term *burh* in contrast to the ecclesiastical. In some charters for settlements with important ecclesiastical centres, we see presumably secular *burhware* textually abut cathedral communities in witness lists. In a manumission to *Rec 16.3* (of uncertain date), we are told that a grant was made "be þære burhwara gewitnysse on Hrouecæstre and be ealle þæs biscopes geferan" ('in the witness of the *burh*-residents in Rochester and all the bishop's fellow clerics', R6.614). Having been built on land within the third-century Roman walls granted by Æthelberht of Kent in the early seventh century, it is likely that Rochester Cathedral and its inhabitants still lived within the bounds of what the Anglo-Saxons would have considered the *burh* of Rochester.[581] Yet, the community of the cathedral is counted as a separate group from the *burh*-inhabitants. Similarly adjacent, distinct descriptions of *burh*-residents and ecclesiastical communities appear in *Ch 1215* (968, R6.358–9) and *Ch 287* (amendment dated to 959x988, R6.36) for Christ Church and St Augustine's in Canterbury and in *Ch Thomas* (c. 1100, R6.684) for York. The *burh*-residents, therefore, appear to represent the lay population of these towns, while the ecclesiastical community is represented as a separate entity. The adjacency of the two categories in the witness lists appears to present them as opposing pairs, the lay and clerical populations of one location.

We can also see similar contrasts and connections made between the secular and ecclesiastical populations of Canterbury and Bath in *Ch 1400* and *Rec 2.3*, although they are not placed adjacent to one another. In *Ch 1400* (1038x1050, R6.388)

[581] J. Philip McAleer, *Rochester Cathedral: 604–1450: An Architectural History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 8.

the *burhware* of Canterbury and the community at Christ Church are found in different parts of the witness list, but are the only groups of witnesses from Canterbury mentioned. *Rec 2.3* is a collection of various manumissions for Bath, all but one of which are witnessed by the *hired* ('ecclesiastical community') in Bath; the only manumission not witnessed by the cathedral community is instead witnessed by the "burhware on baðon" ('*burh*-residents in Bath', R6.587).[582] Both of these examples still suggest an oppositional relationship between the lay and clerical inhabitants of these places.

The evidence of this section shows a somewhat tangled relationship between the secular and the ecclesiastical in the use of *burh*. The term can clearly be used to refer to exclusively monastic sites, even with an ecclesiastical *burh* existing within a larger non-ecclesiastical *burh*, as was the case with Christ Church, Canterbury and St Paul's, London. However, the evidence of Bury St Edmunds shows that the use of *burh* could be more fluid, with the term referring sometimes only to the monastic site, while sometimes encompassing the blurred identities of the cathedral and its attendant burgeoning town. On the other hand, the contrast between religious communities and *burh*-resident compounds in witness lists lends the term *burh* secular connotations. The mutability of *burh*'s use for ecclesiastical, secular or mixed sites suggests that the distinction was immaterial to the word's denotation, and that it was the context in which the word was used which would determine its connotations.

[582] The death in 1087 of Abbot Ælfsige, mentioned in the manumission, gives a likely mid-to-late-eleventh-century date for that text. John Earle, *A Hand-Book to the Land-Charters, and Other Saxonic Documents* (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1888), 269.

7.5 Alfredian 'Burhs' and Trading 'Wics'

In studies of the Alfredian 'burhs', administrative documents have always held an important place due to the prominence of the *BH* (*Rec 26.1*) in our understanding of the defence system. Nevertheless, as has been pointed out previously in this thesis, the word *burh* only appears in the *BH* as part of three pre-existing place names (*Burham*, *Tissanbyrig* and *Mealdmesbyring*, R6.632–4) and the 33 listed sites are never associated explicitly with the term.[583] Indeed, the many places typically associated with the Alfredian/Edwardian defence system appear very rarely in conjunction with the term *burh* throughout Anglo-Saxon administrative documents. This section will consider briefly the earliest uses of *burh* to describe *BH* sites Worcester and Winchester, which are often seen to coincide with their foundation as 'burhs'. The primary focus, however, will be on London and the narrative of its conversion from *Lundenwic* to *Lundenburh* following Alfred's refortification, questioning if reading the history of London through the archaeological 'wic' and 'burh' lenses masks a more complex conceptual progression.

Worcester and Winchester are two of the best-excavated *BH* sites, both showing significant evidence of late-ninth-century defences and street planning.[584]

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[583] Baker, 'The Language of Anglo-Saxon Defence', 68.

[584] Nigel Baker et al., 'From Roman to Medieval Worcester: Development and Planning in the Anglo-Saxon City', *Antiquity* 66, no. 250 (1992): 72–73; Baker and Holt, 'The City of Worcester in the Tenth Century', 132; Haslam, 'Planning in Late-Saxon Worcester', 158; Martin Biddle, '*Felix Urbs Winthonia*: Winchester in the Age of Monastic Reform', in *Tenth-Century Studies: Essays in Commemoration of the Millennium of the Council of Winchester and* Regularis Concordia, ed. David Parsons (London and Chichester: Phillimore, 1975), 127; Frank Barlow et al., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages: An Edition and Discussion of the Winton Domesday*, ed. Martin Biddle, Winchester Studies 1 (Oxford: at the

Furthermore, both sites are referred to as *burh* for the first time in charters which are broadly contemporary with their refortification, and these examples are often read as representing new nomenclature in response to their Alfredian 'burghal' formation.

Worcester is first described as a *burh* in *Ch 223* (884x901), which states:

> Æðeldred ealdorman 7 Æðelflæd … hehtan bewyrcean ða **burh** æt Weogernaceastre eallum ðæm folce to gebeorge 7 eac ðæron Godes lof to arærenne.
>
> Æthelred ealdorman and Æthelflæd … ordered the ***burh*** at Worcester to be constructed for the protection of the all the people and also to raise up God's praise therein.
> R6.19

Sections of a rampart with revetments dating to the late ninth century were discovered extending northwards from the Roman walled area containing the cathedral, and this defended construction is generally associated with the *burh* in the above quotation.[585] It is likely that this area does reflect the new construction of Æthelred and Æthelflæd, as evidence of a High Street can be related to the *ceapstow* ('marketplace') mentioned also in *Ch 223*, as well as the identification of the plot of a *haga* granted Æthelred and Æthelflæd "binnan byri æt Wigraceastre" ('within the *burh* at Worcester', R6.370) in *Ch 1280* dated to 904.[586] Fig. 10 below is a map of

Clarendon Press, 1976), 259, 273–75; Martin Biddle, 'The Study of Winchester: Archaeology and History in a British Town, 1961–1983', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 69, no. 1983 (1984): 119–25; Derek Keene, *Survey of Medieval Winchester*, vol. 1, Winchester Studies, 2.i (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 42–43.

[585] Baker et al., 'From Roman to Medieval Worcester: Development and Planning in the Anglo-Saxon City', 72–73.

[586] Baker and Holt, 'The City of Worcester in the Tenth Century', 132.

Worcester showing excavated and conjectured locations of Roman, Anglo-Saxon and later medieval defences, as well as the *haga*, reproduced from Baker and Holt.[587]

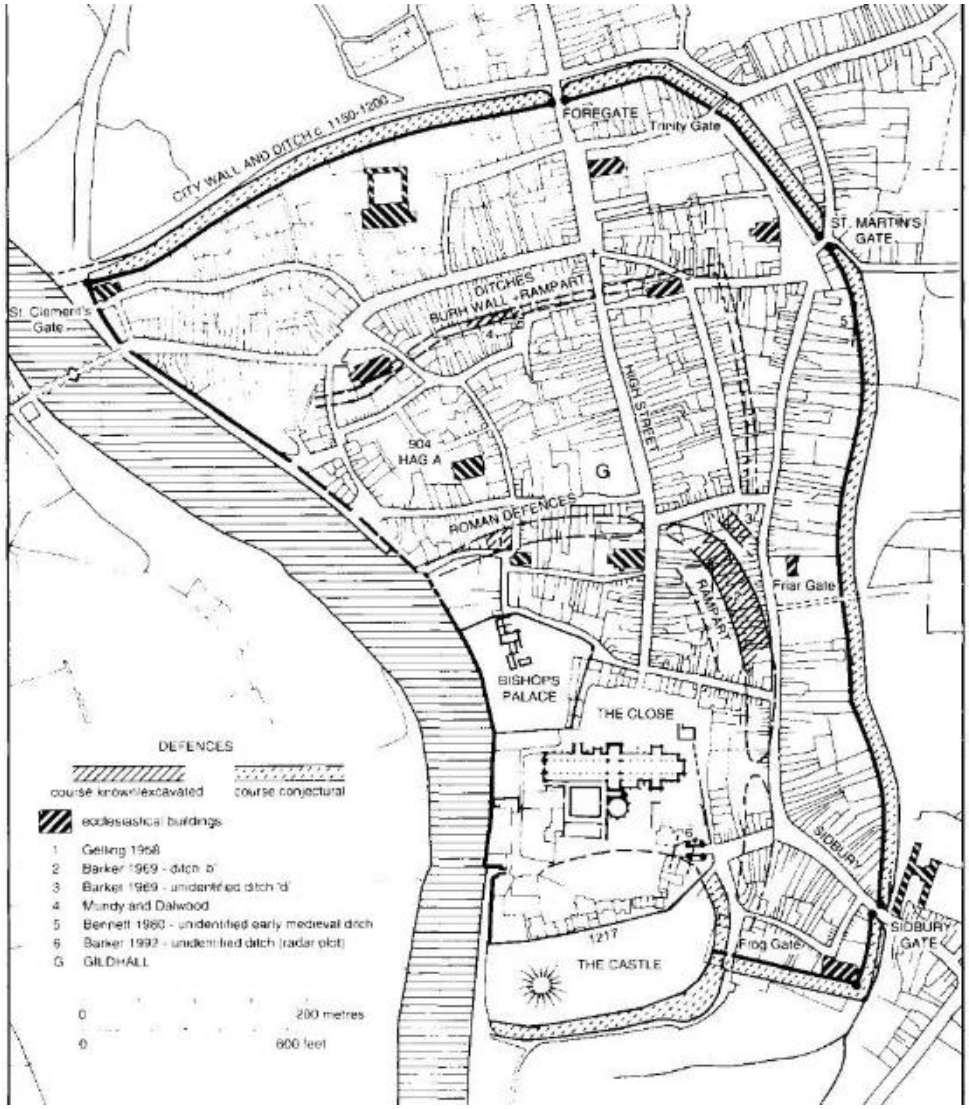

Fig. 10: Worcester's defences and the *haga* of Æthelred and Æthelflæd

In addition to the evidence of the two charters discussed above, *Rec 23.5*, the Worcester Calendar of Lands (date uncertain), opens with two statements regarding Worcester's foundation:

[587] Baker and Holt, 131.

> Cenulf Mecna cyng gebette 7 gefrede þæt to Wigerna ceastre lið on two healfe Sæferne .xxx. hida 7 Æþelred 7 Æþelflæd getrumedon þa **burh** 7 þa stowe wel gegodedan mid heora ælmessan.
>
> Coenwulf, king of the Mercians [796-821] restored and made exempt [from obligations] to Worcester three hides [which] lay on both sides of the Severn, and Æthelred and Æthelflæd established/strengthened the ***burh*** and bestowed the place well with their charity.
> R6.616

This text certainly associates Æthelred and Æthelflæd with the late-ninth-century fortifications, leading us to believe that the new construction was indeed considered to be a *burh*. However, the verb *getrymman* (which occurs with *burh* in this quotation) can be interpreted as 'to strengthen, fortify' as much as 'to establish, found', opening up the possibility of the *burh*'s pre-existence. Indeed, Haslam believes the *burh* at Worcester to have been fortified first by Alfred in the 880s.[588] Nevertheless, the evidence suggests that the northern extension from the Roman walls was considered to be a *burh* by contemporaries, which may be unsurprising considering *burh*'s common use for defended sites.

The first use of *burh* for Winchester is harder to define. *Rec 22* records the boundaries of a *haga* held by Alfred's wife Ealhswith (d. 902), which includes the earliest topographical description of Winchester, showing that features such as the market street (*ceapstræt*), waterways and mills were in existence by the turn of the

[588] Haslam, 'Planning in Late-Saxon Worcester', 159; Haslam, 'The Burghal Hidage and the West Saxon Burhs: A Reappraisal', 160.

tenth century.[589] What appears to be the north-east corner of the *haga* by the Winchester's eastern gate is described as follows:

> … andlanges ðære ceap stræte oð cyninges **burghege** on ðone ealdan mylen gear …
>
> … along the market street until the king's ***burh*-hedge** onto the old mill-yair …
> R6.615

The likely bounds of this *haga* were reconstructed and mapped by Rumble:[590]

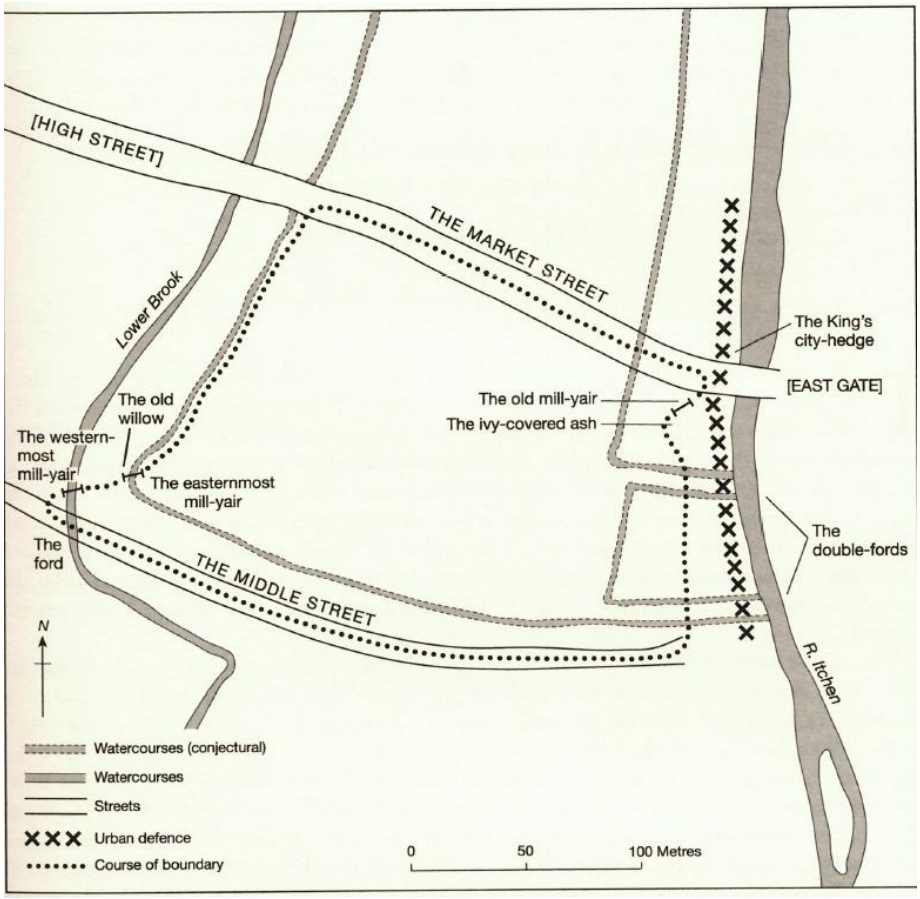

Fig. 11: The bounds of Ealhswith's *haga*

[589] Alexander R. Rumble, *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester: Documents Relating to the Topography of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman City and Its Minsters*, Winchester Studies, 4.iii (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 45–48.
[590] Rumble, 49, Fig. 7.

The *burh*-hedge has, at times, been interpreted as Alfred's defences at the eastern gate, with *burh* read as a description of the refortified site.[591] However, Rumble questions if the informality of such hedge-defences, by comparison to the *weallas* ('walls') we see mentioned in later documents, could indicate that *Rec 22* describes Winchester's topography before its redevelopment in the 880s.[592] Such a reading of the document would suggest that Winchester had been considered a *burh* before Alfred's refortification.

There is also a possible, if tenuous, second interpretation of the *burh* in *Rec 22*, which requires us to overhaul our presumption that the term is referring to Winchester as a whole. Excavations from Lower Brook Street in Winchester revealed evidence of a complex of domestic buildings joined by or surrounded by timber fences dating from the late seventh century to the mid-to-late ninth century.[593] Martin Biddle considered it to be likely a "small private estate of relatively high social rank, perhaps of *thegn* status," which predates the Alfredian street plan that overlays it.[594] Biddle even suggests such a site may have been called a *burh*, comparing with the name *coitburi*, describing what may have been a second such enclosed estate nearby.[595] Both the Lower Brook Street and putative *coitburi* sites are in the same area of Winchester as the "burghege," on the other side of the market street from Ealhswith's *haga* by the eastern gate. Comparison with other uses of

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[591] Barlow et al., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages: An Edition and Discussion of the Winton Domesday*, 273; Rumble, *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester: Documents Relating to the Topography of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman City and Its Minsters*, 48.
[592] Rumble, *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester: Documents Relating to the Topography of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman City and Its Minsters*, 46, 48.
[593] Biddle, 'Winchester: The Development of an Early Capital', 242–45; Biddle, 'The Study of Winchester: Archaeology and History in a British Town, 1961–1983', 118.
[594] Biddle, 'Winchester: The Development of an Early Capital', 244.
[595] Biddle, 244–45.

hege/*hecg* in OE texts, especially where it appears in collocation with *burh*, gives the impression of the "burghege" as something more typically found on a lord's estate than as fortification against Viking attack.[596] Therefore, it is not unthinkable that the "cyninges burghege" may have represented the boundary of an estate he held across the road from his wife's.

It is impossible now to prove what the *burh* of Winchester's "burghege" referred to, but the possibilities presented show that we cannot presume it represents a site with specifically *BH* morphology and function. Indeed, even in the case of Worcester, where its physical remains accord so closely with the textual descriptions, we cannot interpret the use of *burh* as having such a limited meaning as the modern technical term 'burh'. It is important to note that both of these sites had been important Roman towns which left significant stone defences.[597] In Latin texts of the eighth and ninth centuries, both Worcester and Winchester are described as *civitates*, a term which contemporary Alfredian translations often render as *burh*, and their OE place names *Wigornaceaster* and *Wintanceaster* contain the element *ceaster*, often seen as a near-synonym of *burh* when describing Roman sites. Furthermore, the Roman precincts of both were the sites of early and important episcopal sees and minsters, the types of sites often described in other texts and in place names as

[596] *Hege*/*hecg* is defined as 'hedge, boundary-fence', and its uses throughout the OE corpus associate it very clearly with plants and translates the Latin *saepes* ('something planted or erected to form a barrier, fence, hedge'). In several texts *hege*/*hecg* is used to represent a boundary on farmland which can be, for example, broken by cattle, and where it appears in *LawRect* and *LawGer*, *hege*/*hecg* appears in collocation with *burh* as the boundaries around a private property. It appears also in *ChronA* and *ChronE* anno 547, where early descriptions of Bamburgh (*Bebbanburh*) show its *hege*-defences being quickly superseded by walls (R4.101 and 520).

[597] Biddle, 'Winchester: The Development of an Early Capital', 229; Barlow et al., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages: An Edition and Discussion of the Winton Domesday*, 272; Baker et al., 'From Roman to Medieval Worcester: Development and Planning in the Anglo-Saxon City', 69, 72.

burga.[598] It is therefore very plausible that at least the Roman enclosures would have been considered as *burga* before their late-ninth-century refortifications, or that the meaning of their later *burh* appellations drew on a variety of connotations inherent in the sites' histories.

London also has Roman heritage and an intramural, early episcopal minster in the form of St Paul's. Although not part of the *BH*, London is recorded as having been refortified by Alfred in 886 in the *Chronicles* (R4.126, 218, 297, 407, 568), and scholars associate this with "a change in the name used for London from *Lundenwic* to *Lundenburh*."[599] Like *burh*, *wic* has a dual identity as both a broadly denotive OE word and a narrowly defined technical archaeological term. OE *wic* is defined as a 'dwelling-place, abode, habitation, residence', deriving from the equally wide-ranging Latin *vicus*, which is itself defined as a 'settlement (as unit, applied to variously sized collections of dwellings...), village, township… district, locale'.[600] In north-west European medieval studies, however, 'wic' describes an unprotected trading site in the shadow of an old Roman town, a model established based upon sites with *wic* place names such as Ipswich, Southampton (*Hamwic*) and Sandwich in England, and continental sites such as *Quentovic* in northern France and Schleswig in

[598] Biddle, 'Winchester: The Development of an Early Capital', 234–37; Biddle, '*Felix Urbs Winthonia*: Winchester in the Age of Monastic Reform', 124–25; Barbara Yorke, 'The Foundation of the Old Minster and the Status of Winchester in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club Archaeological Society* 38 (1982): 75–76; Steven Bassett, 'Churches in Worcester Before and After the Conversion of the Anglo-Saxons', *The Antiquaries Journal* 69, no. 2 (1989): 225–56.
[599] Vince, *Saxon London: An Archaeological Investigation*, 22; Susan Kelly, 'Eighth-Century Trading Privileges from Anglo-Saxon England', *Early Medieval Europe* 1 (1992): 3; see also Creighton and Higham, *Medieval Town Walls: An Archaeology and Social History of Urban Defence*, 58; Fleming, *Britain after Rome: The Fall and Rise, 400–1070*, 255.
[600] Joseph Bosworth, 'Wic', in *Bosworth Toller's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*, ed. Thomas Northcote Toller and et al. (Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, 2019), https://bosworthtoller.com/35494; 'Vicus', in *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2015), http://clt.brepolis.net/dmlbs/pages/QuickSearch.aspx.

northern Germany.[601] Also like *burh*, scholars consistently read *wic* through this narrow filter, even while recognising the breadth of its meaning in OE.[602] The benefit of re-evaluating vocabulary for Anglo-Saxon London is that it speaks to the use of both *burh* and *wic* in archaeological and historical studies and shows the value of interdisciplinary historical semantic research.

Lundenwic and *Lundenburh* are seen as representing "twin settlements" of London: *Lundenwic* an undefended trading settlement outside of the Roman walls from the seventh, eighth and early ninth centuries, *Lundenburh* the Alfredian intramural settlement which grew into an urban centre in the tenth and eleventh centuries.[603]

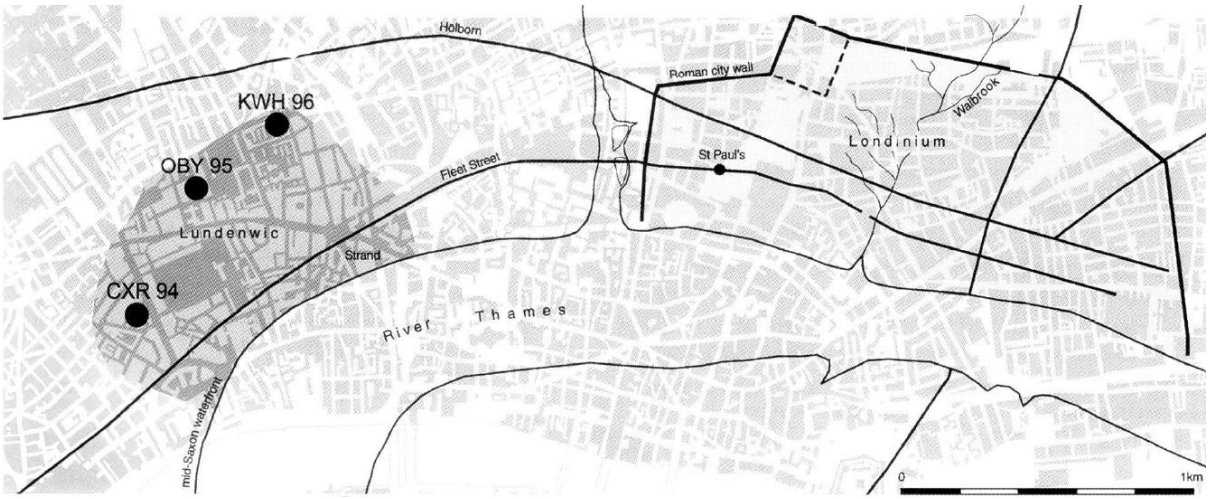

Fig. 12: Map showing the areas of Anglo-Saxon London typically known as *Lundenwic* and *Lundenburh*[604]

[601] Tim Tatton-Brown, 'The Topography of Anglo-Saxon England', *Antiquity* 60, no. 228 (1986): 24; David Hill, 'End Piece: Definitions and Superficial Analysis', in Wics*: The Early Medieval Trading Centres of Northern Europe*, ed. David Hill and Robert Cowie (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 75–84; Rumble, 'Notes on the Linguistic and Onomastic Characteristics of Old English *Wic*', 2; Gordon Malcolm and David Bowsher, *Middle Saxon London: Excavations at the Royal Opera House 1989-99*, Museum of London Archaeology Service Monograph 15 (London: Museum of London, 2003), 2.
[602] Rumble, 'Notes on the Linguistic and Onomastic Characteristics of Old English *Wic*'; Hill, 'End Piece: Definitions and Superficial Analysis'.
[603] Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 247.
[604] Image reproduced from Nick Holder et al., 'Across the Saxon Town: Three New Sites in *Lundenwic*', *London Archaeologist* 9, no. 6 (2000): 151, Fig. 1.

The reality of the two phases of London's secular occupation, moving from the extramural to the intramural in the late ninth and early tenth centuries, is certainly proven by the archaeology. Bede's often-cited eighth-century description of London as a great *emporium* ('marketplace') in the *HE* Book II raised expectations of rich Middle Saxon finds in the City of London. However, to date very little evidence has been recovered of any occupation in the intramural area before the ninth century, other than the existence of early churches.[605] However, in the 1980s, evidence of settlement around the Strand was discovered by Biddle and Alan Vince.[606] Since then large amounts of information have been gathered from excavations which confirm the existence of a vibrant trading settlement on the site in the seventh, eighth and early ninth centuries.[607] Furthermore, dark earth deposits found seem to suggest that the site was, indeed, abandoned in the mid-ninth century.[608] At the same time, from the late ninth century onwards, secular occupation in the Roman walls appears to increase, with evidence of pottery, street grids, coins and street names like Cheapside (from *ceap* meaning 'purchase, trade'), although there is notably little sign of Alfred's restored defences.[609] Thus, the

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[605] Vince, *Saxon London: An Archaeological Investigation*, 4–12; Jim Leary, *Tatberht's Lundenwic: Archaeological Excavations in Middle Saxon London*, Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited Monograph 2 (London: Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, 2004), 3; Schofield, *St Paul's Cathedral Before Wren*, 44; Robert Cowie, 'London', in Wics*: The Early Medieval Trading Centres of Northern Europe*, ed. David Hill and Robert Cowie (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 87.

[606] Martin Biddle, 'London on the Strand: Saxon Occupation along Fleet St, Aldwych, Strand', *Popular Archaeology* 6, no. 1 (1984): 23–27; Alan Vince, 'The Aldwych: Saxon London Discovered?', *Current Archaeology* 8 (1984): 310–12.

[607] See especially: Cowie, 'London'; Vince, *Saxon London: An Archaeological Investigation*; Leary, *Tatberht's Lundenwic: Archaeological Excavations in Middle Saxon London*.

[608] Leary, *Tatberht's Lundenwic: Archaeological Excavations in Middle Saxon London*, 5.

[609] Vince, *Saxon London: An Archaeological Investigation*, 25, 85–87; Tatton-Brown, 'The Topography of Anglo-Saxon England'; although Schofield points out that an assemblage of Middle Saxon pottery near St Paul's suggests that the area south of St Paul's was important before the traditional 886 date for London's restoration; Schofield, *St Paul's Cathedral Before Wren*, 52.

archaeological record proves that secular occupation of the London area did indeed shift from an extramural trading settlement to an intramural proto-town at around the time of the Viking attacks in the mid-ninth century. This section does not intend to question the narrative of the archaeology, but instead to re-evaluate the terminology used by scholars to discuss Anglo-Saxon London.

The designation of the two London settlements by the names *Lundenwic* and *Lundenburh* tends to be justified as deriving from contemporary sources, although specific examples are rarely cited.[610] Indeed, for Vince, the perceived use of these names in Anglo-Saxon documents acts as supporting evidence for the archaeological model, clearly interpreting the terms *wic* and *burh* in the light of the historical 'wic' and 'burh' frameworks.[611] Certainly, we can see that *Lundenwic* is not used in authentic texts later than the mid-eighth century, while *Lundenburh* only appears in texts from the late ninth century onwards. This transition in vocabulary does suggest a change in perceptions of London at the time, but does not indicate in what way the *wic* or *burh* of London were viewed individually.

While *Lundenwic* is used by archaeologists exclusively to refer to the extramural trading settlement in opposition to the walled Roman town, the textual evidence suggests that the term referred to a conceptual 'London whole' which encompassed both parts. This is hinted at by Robert Cowie and Robert Whytehead briefly, when they note that "it is not certain that Saxon sources were referring specifically to this part of London [the Strand settlement] when they used this name,

[610] Creighton and Higham, *Medieval Town Walls: An Archaeology and Social History of Urban Defence*, 58; Vince, *Saxon London: An Archaeological Investigation*, 20.
[611] Vince, *Saxon London: An Archaeological Investigation*, 20.

which may also have applied to the walled area, known in the late Saxon period as Lundenburh (John Clark pers. comm.)."[612] This is so far the only scholarship I have found which alludes to this possibility. Cowie and Whytehead do not give any source evidence to support this, nor do they linger on the point, and as Clark's comment was private there is no evidence published anywhere for his statement. However, Clark clearly considered plausible what I believe the linguistic evidence confirms: *Lundenwic* cannot be considered to refer exclusively to the Strand settlement.

In OE texts, *Lundenwic* only occurs four times: in *LawHl*, a law code from kings Hlothere (673–85) and Eadric (679–86) of Kent, and in a 'Common Stock' entry in three versions of the *Chronicles*.[613] *LawHl* 11 states:

> Gif cantwara ænig in **lundenwic** feoh gebycge, hæbbe him þonne twegen oðde ðreo unfacne ceorlas to gewitnesse oþþe cyninges **wicgerefan.**
>
> If any of the people of Kent buys property in ***Lundenwic***, let him have then two or three honest men as witness or the king's ***wic*-reeve.**

The reference to trading and the fact that the text has its origins in the seventh century encourages us to read the referent of *Lundenwic* in this quotation as indeed being the extramural trading settlement. However, the second part of this law also states:

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[612] Robert Cowie and Robert Whytehead, 'Lundenwic: The Archaeological Evidence for Middle Saxon London', *Antiquity* 63, no. 241 (1989): 706–8.
[613] Lisi Oliver, 'Hlothere and Eadric's Code (Hl)', Early English Laws, 2019, http://www.earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/hl/.

> Gif hit man eft æt þam mæn in Cænt ætfo, þonne tæme he to **wic** to cyngæs sele to þam mæn ðe him sealde, gif he þane wite & æt þam teame gebrengen mæge.
>
> If someone afterwards lays claim to it from that man in Kent, then may he vouch to warranty in the ***wic*** at the king's hall the man who sold [it] to him, if he knows him and may bring him to the vouching.

While no evidence has yet been found in the archaeological record, some scholars nevertheless maintain that there was a royal palace within the City of London, which is sometimes considered to have been preserved for elite settlement in the Middle Saxon period.[614] Jim Leary and K. Bailey, in direct reference to this law code, state that we could expect that the king's hall would have been in the intramural settlement.[615] This would indicate that the use of *wic* referred to the intramural as well as the extramural, although it requires us to presume the location of the king's hall.

However, the example of *Lundenwic* in the *Chronicles* makes it clear that the term could refer to the old Roman town. Entries for 604 in *ChronA*, *ChronE* and *ChronF* refer to the founding of St Paul's and the see of London: "Æðelberht gesealde Mellite biscopsetle on Lundenwic" ('Æthelberht [king of Kent] gave Mellitus the episcopal see in *Lundenwic*'). As we know that St Paul's was sited within the Roman

[614] Malcolm and Bowsher, *Middle Saxon London: Excavations at the Royal Opera House 1989-99*, 2; Schofield, *St Paul's Cathedral Before Wren*, 55–56; Taylor, 'Foundation and Endowment: St Paul's and the English Kingdoms', 6–7; Kelly, *Charters of St Paul's, London*, 8.
[615] Leary, *Tatberht's Lundenwic: Archaeological Excavations in Middle Saxon London*, 3; K. Bailey, 'The Middle Saxons', in *The Origins of the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, ed. Steven Bassett (London: Leicester University Press, 1989), 110.

walled area, these entries (compiled originally in Alfred's reign) explicitly use *Lundenwic* to refer, if not exclusively to the Roman walled town, then certainly to a larger concept of London which evidently encompassed the intramural area. It is clear, therefore, that none of the examples of *Lundenwic* in OE texts can be taken as direct evidence that it referred only to the extramural trading settlement.

The OE name *Lundenwic* appears also in Willibald's eighth-century Latin Life of St Boniface (*Vita Bonifatii*), who is recorded as sailing from London, which the text states "usque hodie antiquo Anglorum Saxonumque vocabulo appellatur Lundenwich" ('is called *Lundenwic* up to today in the old language of the Angles and Saxons').[616] It is quite possible, as an important churchman, that Boniface would have spent his time in London at St Paul's within the Roman walls, and both the intramural and extramural areas were riverside. Therefore, we cannot state with certainty that Willibald's use of *Lundenwic* referred exclusively and explicitly to the extramural trading settlement.

Finally, the area where the trading settlement once stood is now known as Aldwych, from *eald wic* ('the old *wic*'). For some, this reflects the use of *wic* to refer to this extramural trading settlement, a designation which evidently outlasted the site's original use.[617] However, I would argue that, again, we need not read such a specific definition into the term *wic* here. *Wic* can refer simply to a 'settlement, dwelling-place'; it is just as likely that the settlement, having been abandoned and then its

[616] Wilhelm Levison, ed., *Vitae Sancti Bonifatii Archiepiscopi Moguntini*, Monumenta Germaniae Historica; Scriptores Rerum Germanicorum in Usum Scholarum Separatim Editi (Hannover: Honnoverae et Lipsiae, impensis bibliopolii Hahniani, 1905), 16, the life of author Willibald and his connection to Boniface are summarised on pp. vii–xi.
[617] Leary, *Tatberht's Lundenwic: Archaeological Excavations in Middle Saxon London*, 5; Cowie, 'London', 88.

ruins re-occupied, would have been dubbed the 'old settlement' as it is that the name specifically referred to the site's previous role as a trading settlement in the shadows of a Roman town.

It is also important to bear in mind that *Lundenwic* was by no means the only term being used in authentic seventh-, eighth- and early ninth-century charters to refer to London: it is also described once as a *tun* ('enclosed yard, sometimes Roman town'), three times as a *vicus*, twice as a *portus* ('port, harbour', both uses occur in discussions of tolls due on ships) and six times as a *civitas*.[618] These terms show the variety of connotations and denotations with which London was associated. *Vicus*, like *wic*, has a broad meaning and likely describes London simply as a 'settlement'. Only *portus* can be seen to refer explicitly to the trading settlement. *Civitas*, indeed, recalls London's Roman heritage and thus cannot exclude the intramural area; likewise, the use of *tun*, though unusual and difficult to interpret, may also refer to Roman London. At this time, the concept of London clearly encompassed both the Roman and the trading settlements. It is also worth looking at the famous quotation in Bede's *HE,* Book II, chapter 3, where he describes London as a great *emporium*:[619]

> metropolis Lundonia **civitas** est, super ripam præfati fluminis posita, et ipsa multorum **emporium** populorum terra marique venientum
>
> the capital/mother-city is London ***civitas***, positioned on the shore of the aforementioned river, and this is an ***emporium*** of many people coming from land and sea

[618] See *Sawyer 98*, *Ch 168*, *Sawyer 170*, *Sawyer 208*, *Sawyer 86*, *Sawyer 88*, *Ch 1283*, *Sawyer 103a*, *Sawyer 103b*, *Sawyer 91*, *Sawyer 1791* and *Sawyer 1194*.
[619] Latin taken from Venerabilis Bedæ, *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, ed. Joseph Stevenson (London: Sumptibus Societatis, 1838), 104.

Here, the eighth-century concept of London as a *civitas* ('town, especially with Roman heritage') and as a trading settlement are inextricably linked, highlighting the conceptual whole of London within the walls and London without. It is also useful to compare the Latin with the translation of this passage *OEB*:

> Is heora **aldorburg** nemned **Lundenceaster**, on ofere geseted
> þæs foresprecenan streames; ond seo is monigra folca
> **ceapstow** of londe & of sæ cumendra
>
> Their **capital *burh*** is called ***Lundenceaster***, situated on the
> shore of the aforementioned stream; and it is a **market-place**
> of many people coming from land and sea
> R4.21

London here is conceived of in OE as an *ealdorburh* ('capital *burh*'), a *ceaster* and a marketplace. Although a late-ninth- or early-tenth-century translation, this would still have been understood as a description of London in the past, showing again that the idea of London as a Roman city and as an extramural trading settlement were not mutually exclusive.

Considering administrative documents from the period of growing occupation within the Roman walls does show a change in overall language used to describe London: authentic late-ninth-, tenth- and eleventh-century charters call London a *civitas* once, an *urbs* twice and a *burh* twice.[620] *Civitas* continues to be used from earlier documents, but the appearance of *burh* and *urbs* to the exclusion of terms such as *wic* and *vicus* does indicate a rise in intramural activity. Certainly,

[620] *Sawyer 1328*, *Sawyer 346*, *Sawyer 1628*, *Ch 1526* and *Ch 1457*. *Ch 1526* and *Ch 1457* contain examples of *burh* and are found at R6.468 and R6.415.

other OE texts from this period onwards refer to London only as a *burh* or a *ceaster*. That *Lundenwic* gave way to *Lundenburh* does appear to be a linguistic reality. However, I would argue that, having explored the use of *wic* and other terms in relation to London, we can begin to paint a different and more nuanced story for this linguistic change than simply that *wic* represented the undefended extramural trading settlement and *burh* the post-Alfredian town, mutually exclusive to one another.

The various descriptions in earlier documents show that London was understood to encompass both the old Roman walled town and the extramural trading settlement. Investigation of *Lundenwic* has shown that it referred to both parts of London, and it is likely that the use of *wic*, and indeed *vicus*, to refer to London may have been influenced by a need for a term which could encompass both an elite/ecclesiastical intramural sector and an extramural trading sector in one unifying whole. As *burh* has been shown throughout this thesis to refer exclusively to defended and enclosed areas, it is possible that it appeared an inappropriate term to refer to a London split across a walled boundary, and thus only came into use for London once occupation was entirely intramural and when defence against Viking attack became a prominent concern.

It appears, therefore, that the shift in vocabulary from *wic* to *burh* does not represent an abandonment of the focus on an extramural site for an intramural one. Instead, the linguistic evidence suggests that contemporary perceptions of London narrowed from a diverse settlement comprising an elite and ecclesiastical Roman centre with an extramural, yet still integrated, trading port to an enclosed and newly

reorganised settlement for which defence suddenly became a more prominent and important characteristic.

This section has shown that there is much to be gained in re-evaluating uses of *burh* for typical Alfredian 'burh' sites with a fresh perspective, for our understanding both of the word and of the histories of the sites themselves. The analysis above also highlights once again the issues apparent in the use of 'burh' as a modern technical term. The designation of Worcester and Winchester as *burga* is always read through a *BH* filter, but closer investigation shows that various factors can contribute to their *burh* appellation. The case study of London is even more illuminating, showing that the perceived linguistic binary of *Lundenwic* and *Lundenburh* is more complex than often thought. Clearly both *burh* and *wic* have suffered from being taken into modern technical archaeological terminology, and the scholarly connotations placed upon the terms 'burh' and 'wic' often mislead those looking back to original sources. Overall, this section has shown the value of close and interdisciplinary reading of these texts and demonstrated that it is important to read these instances as part of *burh*'s wide-ranging usage across contemporary OE texts, rather than as defining the word's meaning.

7.6 Urban Identity

That *burh* can be used to refer to urban sites has been shown throughout this thesis. Administrative documents from the tenth and eleventh centuries show *burh* being used to describe places which are often now considered to have been urban at the time, such as London and Canterbury. We can also see *burh* explicitly connected with recognisably urban activities in various charters. For example, we have already seen the *burh* at Bury St Edmunds associated with minting and a significant secular population in eleventh-century documents. Likewise, Winchester shows evidence by the 960s of dense population, trade and a general increase in "urban conditions and activities."[621] The mid-tenth-century charter *Ch 488* grants the thegn Æthelgeard a seven-hide estate in Hampshire with attendant *haga* "binnan ðære byrig into wintan ceastre" ('within the *burh* of Winchester', R6.103), which likely represents the type of urban tenement commonly associated with rural estates in the later Anglo-Saxon period.[622]

However, as we have seen previously, urban connotations are contextual in OE writings, and the relationship between *burh* and urbanity appears to have changed over time from an aspect of *Romanitas* to a lived reality. This section will focus on two uses of *burh* which can be associated with urban identity: the formula *binnan byrig ond butan* ('within the *burh* and without') and references to *burh-*

[621] Biddle, '*Felix Urbs Winthonia*: Winchester in the Age of Monastic Reform', 131–32.
[622] This system of connecting rural estates with urban property is discussed thoroughly in Fleming, 'Rural Elites and Urban Communities in Late-Saxon England'; see also Rumble, *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester: Documents Relating to the Topography of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman City and Its Minsters*, 189.

residents in greetings and witness lists. Analysing these examples will highlight the complexities of urban identity as represented by *burh* and question how these fit into the overall picture of *burh* in administrative documents.

Writ-charters, often called writs in Anglo-Saxon scholarship, represent notifications of royal grants addressed to an assembly, which first appear in the early eleventh century.[623] These texts were brief and concise due to the use of highly formulaic language. A key part of a writ-charter is the 'sake and soke' clause, formed usually of multiple formulae which enumerate the financial and jurisdictional rights awarded in the grant and emphasise the extent of the subject's power over their lands.[624] A typical example is as follows:

> ...þæt he beo his saca 7 socne wyrðe 7 griðbrices 7 hamsocne 7 forstealles 7 infangenes þeofes 7 flymene fyrmðe ofer his agene men **binnan byrig 7 butan** 7 ofer Cristes cyrcean 7 ofer swa feale þegna swa ic him to lætan hæbbe...
>
> ...that he is worthy of his sake and soke and of [the fines for] the breach of peace and home attacks and obstruction and thieves caught within [his] jurisdiction and the harbouring of fugitives over his own men **within the *burh* and without** over Christ Church and over as many thegns as I have permitted him...
> R6.276

[623] The essential introduction to such texts is: Harmer, *Anglo-Saxon Writs*; on the term writ-charter, see: Sharpe, 'The Use of Writs in the Eleventh Century', 247–51; John Hudson, 'Review: Charters and Charter Scholarship in Britain and Ireland, Ed. M. T. Flanagan and J A. Green (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, Pp. 234 . £ 45', *The English Historical Review* 121 (2006): 902; Mark Hagger, 'The Earliest Norman Writs Revisited', *Historical Research* 82 (2009): 181–85.
[624] On 'sake and soke' and 'sokeright', see: C. A. Joy, 'Sokeright' (Leeds, University of Leeds, 1975); Alan Harding, 'Political Liberty in the Middle Ages', *Speculum* 55, no. 3 (1980): 423–43.

Despite the importance of sokeright to social and economic historical study, the 'sake and soke' clause itself has received little linguistic investigation. The meaning and authenticity of certain individual formulae regarding specific rights have been analysed by Richard Sharpe and particularly Florence Harmer, but always from a socio- and economic historical perspective.[625] As can be seen in this example, one of the typical formulae used in 'sake and soke' clauses was *binnan byrig ond butan*, and the comparison of the clause across writ-charters offers us insight both into this formula and the use of the clause as a whole.

Authentic pre-Conquest 'sake and soke' clauses rarely use the same combination of formulae, and it is generally only forgeries or the few post-Conquest OE writ-charters which borrow wholesale 'sake and soke' clauses from earlier documents. This suggests that, generally, active choices were being made by the composers. There is a wide range of formulae used across OE 'sake and soke' clauses, which can be split into two categories: formulae for particular rights, such as *griðbrices* ('breach of peace'), and formulae which affirm the extent to the grantee's power, such as *binnan byrig ond butan*. In total there are 15 different 'extent of power' formulae which occur in writ-charters with more or less regularity. Table 12 summarises the data:

Type of Construction	**OE**	**Translation**	**Occurrences**
Total Jurisdiction	swa ful 7 swa forð swa…	as fully and as thoroughly as… [I held it/it was held in the days of X king]	64

[625] Sharpe, 'The Use of Writs in the Eleventh Century', 266, 273–74; Harmer, *Anglo-Saxon Writs*, 73–91.

	ofer his/heora land 7 over his/heora men	over his/their land and over his/their men	14
	ofer his/heora agene men	over his/their own men	10
	on eallan ðingan	in all things	10
	ofer his/heora agene land	over his/their own land	2
Opposing Concepts	on wude 7 on felde	in the wood and in the field	20
	on strande 7 on streame	on the shore and in the stream	17
	be lande 7 be strande	on the land and on the shore	8
	on wude 7 on felde 7 on læse	in the wood and in the field and in the meadow	3
	in felde 7 alle other thinge	in the field and all other things	1
Within and Without	binnan byrig 7 butan	within the *burh* and without	39
	binnan porte 7 butan	within the market/town and without	12
	inne tide 7 ut of tide	in festival time and out of festival time	11
	on stræte 7 of stræte	on the street and off the street	10
	inne freols 7 ut of freols	in festival season and out of festival season	2

Table 12: 'Extent of power' formulae

All the formulae are used to represent the concept of 'everywhere, everything', either through a blanket statement or through metonymy, i.e. the use of one element to represent another. *Binnan byrig ond butan* appears as the second-most common

formula used in all 'sake and soke' clauses and one of several which represent 'everywhere, everything' by contrasting the within and the without of a single concept. Like many of the 'sake and soke' formulae, *binnan byrig ond butan* forms an "alliterative jingle."[626] Harmer considers such formulae to be "undoubtedly ancient," and considers their having been used originally as mnemonic, oral legal constructions, noting cognates for the construction *binnan ond butan* in Old Frisian and Old High German.[627] It seems, therefore, likely that the formula comes from an oral tradition and that *burh* was in part chosen to fit the alliterative structure.

It is difficult to ascertain what the intended referent of the *burh* in the formula is in these examples. Unlike witness lists and greetings, there is no consistent pattern connecting the formula to a particular type of site: it appears in writ-charters of all types and referring to many different places. Therefore, it seems that *binnan byrig ond butan* in writ-charters refers not to specific locations, but to a more general concept of the word.

The formula's first written appearance is in the late-ninth-century *Ch 223* in a claim of rights which seems to anticipate eleventh-century 'sake and soke' clauses and where the use of *burh* evidently refers to the defences newly built at Worcester: "oððe on ceapstowe oððe on stræte, ge binnan byrg ge butan" ('either in the market or in the street, be it within the *burh* or without', R6.20). It later reappears in *Ch 1280* from 904 when Æthelred and Æthelflæd are granted both a *haga* in Worcester and an estate called *Beferburnan*, which they shall hold "a ge binnan byrig ge butan"

[626] Hubert Hall, *Studies in English Official Historical Documents* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908), 204.
[627] Harmer, *Anglo-Saxon Writs*, 90 note 3; see also Otto Hoffmann, *Reimformeln Im Westgermanischen* (Leipzig: G. Fock, 1886).

('always, be it within the *burh* or without', R6.371). It seems here likely that it represents 'everywhere', as *a* represents 'at all times', but also makes reference to the defensive walled settlement. It is noteworthy that the two earliest examples of the formula appear at this time in Worcester. The formula next reoccurs in *LawIIAtr* 5.2 where it is considered a breach of peace if more than eight men are killed "binnan byrig oððon buton" ('within the *burh* or without', R5.30), which associates *burh* clearly with an enclosed, but also a densely populated, settlement, suggesting it is an urban site. *Binnan byrig ond butan* also appears in the eleventh century as a final catch-all at the end of four Canterbury witness lists (R6.361, 365, 390, 424), referring both to the town itself, while also representing 'everywhere' more abstractly. In writ-charters, it also appears that the non-alliterative formula *binnan porte ond butan* was modelled on *binnan byrig ond butan*. In addition to this, a single pre-Conquest Latin version of the formula occurs in *Ch 1091* as "infra ciuitate et extra." This connection to *civitas* and *port*, along with its uses in other types of text, would indicate that we can read uses of *binnan byrig ond butan* in an urban light.

However, it is also important to recognise that the formula's putative oral origins realistically preclude urbanity having been the original framework in which it was created. Furthermore, alongside the several OE examples of the formula in post-Conquest writ-charters, there are also two Latin writ-charters from the end of the eleventh century which use translated versions of *binnan byrig ond butan*: "infra burgum et extra" in *Ch IWm (Gibbs 9)* and "infra burgos et extra" in *Ch IIWm (PRO1906)*. As we have already seen with laws in *Quadripartitus* in §6.4, the Norman Latin uses not *civitas* to render *burh*, but the *burh* loanword *burgus*. This indicates

either a semantic change of *burh* in late OE, or that non-native speakers interpreted the word in relation to Latin differently. In either case, it suggests that no pre-existing Latin word was seen as sufficient to translate *burh*, indicating that it was interpreted as more than simply urban in this context. The evidence of the formula *binnan byrig ond butan*, therefore, shows a complicated and dynamic relationship between *burh* and urbanity.

Urban referents are also evident in compounds referring to *burh*-residents (*burhware*, *burhwerod* and *burhmen*), which appear in the witness lists for diplomas and the greetings of writ-charters. §7.4 has already shown how *burh*-residents were used in six witness lists to refer to the secular occupants by contrast to the ecclesiastical community within a single urban settlement. *Burhware* is by far the most common of these compounds in OE, and is typically interpreted as representing a body of citizens of a town. Indeed, throughout OE texts, the compound is generally only extant in circumstances describing the residents of urban settlements: it appears predominantly in prose and poetic texts set in the ancient Mediterranean and appears especially in the tenth and eleventh centuries in Anglo-Saxon texts, such as the *Chronicles*, to refer to inhabitants in large urban centres.

The urban identity of the *burh*-residents in administrative documents is also demonstrable. Overall, there are eight charters whose witness lists contain the compound *burhware* (*burh*-residents'), with the earliest dating to the mid-tenth century: four for Canterbury, and one each for Lincoln, York, Bath and Rochester (R6.36, 358–9, 388, 426, 454–5, 584, 587, 614). All of these sites were of Roman origin

with important ecclesiastical centres, and all had urban features by this late period. The examples found in *Ch 1215* and *Ch 1506* give further insight into urban activities, as they were witnessed by various peoples including "ðreo geferscipas innanburhwara 7 utanburhwara" ('three fellowships/societies of in-*burh*-dwellers and out-of-*burh*-dwellers', R6.358–9, 454–5). This description is suggestive of companies of men which had significant identities and could represent united interests at the presentation of a charter. *Burh*-residents also appear in the greetings of seven writ-charters from the mid-to-late eleventh century (R6.305, 310, 322, 334, 337, 340, 560), addressing men in London six times and in Winchester once. These seven texts also represent the only OE writ-charters addressed to urban recipients rather than men in one or more shires, and this absolute overlap between *burh*-compounds and place in writ-charter greetings suggests that in this context *burh* is referring exclusively to these large urban centres.

The evidence suggests that *burh*-residents in administrative documents also refer reliably to those who live in urban *burga*, but the status of the residents themselves is not entirely clear. In *Ch 1215* and *Ch 1506*, the fellowships of *innanburhware* and *utanburhware* are presented in contrast to the description "micle mættan" or "micle gemettan" ('many poor people').[628] This implies a mass of low-status witnesses in opposition to the fellowships of *burhware*, indicating a possible urban elite among the fellowships. Furthermore, the *burh*-residents of writ-charters are members of *burh*-courts comprising men of rank, and we may question if the

[628] Robertson, *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, 317.

burhware of witness lists also represent *burh*-assemblies at which charters were presented.[629]

On the other hand, five of the eight uses of *burhware* in witness lists emphasise that the charter was witnessed by 'all the *burh*-residents', implying perhaps presentations of charters at public gatherings. That such references may refer to open readings rather than private assemblies is indicated by the parallel *burh* and market presentation of *Ch 1478*, which was "on eallra ðara burhware gewitnesse on Lincolne 7 on eallra ðæra manna ðe seceað gearmarkett on Stowe" ('witnessed by all the *burh*-residents in Lincoln and by all the men who seek the year-market in Stowe', R6.426). In addition to this, high-ranking members of the *burh*-courts in writ-charter greetings are specified by the use of *burhþegn* ('*burh*-thegn'), suggesting that *burhware* denoted a wider range of social ranks. Indeed, *AntGl 2* uses "heanra burhwered" ('lower *burh*-residents') to render "uulgus" ('the commoners', R2.230) and "yldest burhwara" ('most senior *burh*-residents', R2.231) to translate "proceres" ('member of the social elite'), indicating that the terms *burhware* and *burhwerod* did not indicate rank (see §3.4).

No matter how we interpret the residents of these examples, the *burga* in question are nevertheless undeniably urban. Yet, it is important here to recognise the potential impact of textual bias on our understanding of *burh*-resident compounds. The overwhelming urban use of *burh* in texts set in the ancient Mediterranean has already been noted, and there is a predominant focus on either great churches or urban centres in the later years of the *Chronicles*. Residents of private estates are not

[629] On the subject of the representation of assemblies in witness lists: Insley, 'Assemblies and Charters in Late Anglo-Saxon England'.

mentioned as witnesses in any charters, and although ecclesiastical precincts may be described as *burga*, their inhabitants are defined by their relationship to the Church. Therefore, despite the fact that many types of *burga* appear in administrative documents, those which lend a specific identity to their residents tend to be urban.

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter has shown the multiplicity of *burh* in administrative documents and has additionally showcased the value of a flexible and pluralistic methodology which can adapt to the data at hand. The analysis demonstrated again how context impacts the aspects and connotations of *burh* visible in any given instance. Under different circumstances *burh* may refer contemporaneously to an Iron Age hillfort, a private residence, an ecclesiastical precinct, a town, or indeed may draw on a variety of connotations to describe a multifaceted settlement. Iron Age hillfort *burga* represent most clearly the impact of textual bias, as they only appear in boundary clauses and are almost entirely obscured in the written record outside of these instances. Many of the different possible connotations of *burh* coalesce around issues of the Church and urbanism. Recognisable use of *burh* for towns does not appear commonly until later texts, consistent with the rise of urbanism in England, but the putative histories of phrases such as *binnan byrig ond butan* and the growth of Bury St Edmunds suggest a complex development of urban connotations in *burh*. Furthermore, the evidence throughout this thesis has proven the limitations of the

appellation 'burh' to Alfredian defences, and especially the study of London has shown the benefit of re-evaluating how we read commonly-studied instances of *burh*. The rich findings from the fertile analytical ground of administrative documents, drawing on the work of previous chapters and a range of interdisciplinary evidence, offer a layered understanding of *burh*. From this basis, we can finally approach poetic texts, where concepts of *burh* from the lived world are used to paint the imagined.

8 Poetry

8.1 Introduction

Although what has been identified as verse makes up less than 0.5% of the corpus of OE written material,[630] the importance of these poetic texts for Anglo-Saxon literary studies cannot be underestimated. Many multi-faceted studies have aimed to analyse, historicise, categorise and scrutinise these texts, but, as is pointed out by Stanley Greenfield and E. G. Stanley, nuanced understanding of Anglo-Saxon poetry is limited by our knowledge of the vocabulary of OE.[631] Therefore, it is fitting that the exploration of *burh* in poetry comes at the end of this thesis, as I am able to approach these texts from the rich semantic foundation created by the interdisciplinary research of the previous chapters.

We lack any contemporary stylistic treatises for OE poetry, meaning that both the identification of such texts by contrast to prose and also the subsequent analysis of their form has been a product of modern scholarship.[632] It is clear, however, that the core poetic texts are highly formulaic and conventional, with a recognisable, if hard-to-define, style which remained stable for centuries.[633] The formal requirements

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[630] Paul G. Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse: Studies in* Genesis, Exodus *and* Daniel, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 16 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 12–13.
[631] Stanley B. Greenfield, *The Interpretation of Old English Poems* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), 30; E. G. Stanley, 'Two Old English Phrases Insufficiently Understood for Literary Criticism: *Þing Gehegan* and *Seonoþ Gehegan*', in *Old English Poetry: Essays on Style*, ed. Daniel G. Calder (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 90.
[632] Fred C. Robinson, 'Two Aspects of Variation in Old English Poetry', in *Old English Poetry: Essays on Style*, ed. Daniel G. Calder (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 127.
[633] Hutcheson, *Old English Poetic Metre*, 4; Tyler, *Old English Poetics: The Aesthetics of the Familiar in Anglo-Saxon England*, 1.

of OE poetry, as far as can be ascertained, are metre and alliteration. It was these features which first allowed early scholars to reconstruct the poems from manuscripts, where they are virtually always written in the same format as continuous prose. These two formal requirements are intimately intertwined and the exact rules which govern the metre in particular prove impossible to pin down.[634] However, the form may be most simply described thus: "[e]ach half-line must have one alliterating word, … the a-verse often has two," and those words which alliterate tend to be stressed in the metre.[635]

Alongside, or indeed growing out of, metre and alliteration are various conventions and stylistic features which also shape the language of OE poetry.[636] The formal requirements made it necessary for a poet to have many near-synonyms for important concepts at their fingertips, which were often used in quick succession to refer to a single referent, a technique known as variation.[637] Poetic texts also contained collocations (certain words which appear commonly together), half-line

[634] Hutcheson, *Old English Poetic Metre*; Thomas A. Bredehoft, *Early English Metre* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 3 lists many other recent studies which have attempted to ascertain the rules of Old English poetic metre, showing the complexity of the issue:; David L. Hoover, *A New Theory of Old English Metre* (New York: Peter Lang, 1985); Daniel Donoghue, *Style in Old English Poetry: The Test of the Auxiliary* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987); Geoffrey Russom, *Old English Meter and Linguistic Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Calvin B. Kendall, *The Metrical Grammar of* Beowulf, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Thomas Cable, *The English Alliterative Tradition* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991) (whose title proves the interconnection of alliteration and metre) ; R. D. Fulk, *A History of Old English Meter* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992); F. H. Whitman, *A Comparative Study of Old English Meter* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993); Haruko Momma, *The Composition of Old English Poetry*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 20 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Mary Blockley, *Aspects of Old English Poetic Syntax: Where Clauses Begin* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001).
[635] Dennis Cronan, 'Alliterative Rank in Old English Poetry', *Studia Neophilologica* 58 (1986): 145.
[636] Tyler, *Old English Poetics: The Aesthetics of the Familiar in Anglo-Saxon England*, 2.
[637] Greenfield, *The Interpretation of Old English Poems*, 60; Robinson, 'Two Aspects of Variation in Old English Poetry', 130–37.

formulae and innovative compounds.[638] All of these features use vocabulary efficiently to present complex and layered concepts, making poetry a rich, if sometimes cryptic, ground for lexical investigation. Indeed, it is important to consider the poetic-ness of an individual word, something which can be judged by its appearance in non-poetic environments, its rate of alliteration and its typical position in poetic lines.[639]

Despite the formal similarities recognised across OE poetry, the corpus is by no means homogenous: a lot of studies explore the different genres discernible in Anglo-Saxon poetry.[640] The texts vary greatly in terms of theme, source material and setting. Poems such as *Mald* and *Beo* depict the northern European world of the Anglo-Saxons' lived experience or imagined ancestry.[641] However, a large proportion of OE poems are based on Latin religious source material and take us back to the ancient Mediterranean, which, as in hagiographies, is treated quite differently from the northern European settings.[642] Indeed, it is also important to note the impact of Latin textual models on extant OE poetry.[643] *Burh* appears across this poetic corpus, straddling themes and settings. Most commonly the term is

[638] Donald K. Fry, 'Old English Formulas and Systems', *English Studies* 48 (1967): 204; Tyler, *Old English Poetics: The Aesthetics of the Familiar in Anglo-Saxon England*, 8, 101ff.
[639] Cronan, 'Alliterative Rank in Old English Poetry'; Matthew Townend, *Antiquity of Diction in Old English and Old Norse Poetry*, E. C. Quiggin Memorial Lectures 17 (Cambridge: Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, University of Cambridge, 2015).
[640] See, for example: Pilch, 'The Elegiac Genre in Old English and Early Welsh Poetry'; Howlett, 'Form and Genre in *Widsith*'; Garner, 'Oral Tradition and Genre in Old and Middle English Poetry'; Foley, 'How Genres Leak in Traditional Verse'.
[641] Discenza, *Inhabited Spaces: Anglo-Saxon Constructions of Place*, 102–24.
[642] Discenza, 56.
[643] Donoghue, *Style in Old English Poetry: The Test of the Auxiliary*, 2; Janie Steen, *Verse and Virtuosity: The Adaptation of Latin Rhetoric in Old English Poetry* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

discussed in relation to city-imagery in poetry, but this chapter will show the variety of connotations and topics with which *burh* is used.[644]

Another important aspect of Anglo-Saxon poetry is that, due to the conservative maintenance of stylistic features and the preservation of the poems in late manuscripts, most of the texts are very difficult to date.[645] Therefore, other than the few poems for which we can ascribe a secure date, this chapter will not seek to historicise uses of *burh* in poetry. Instead, the analysis will build upon the findings of this thesis thus far and look internally at uses of *burh* within the poems, considering the themes, concepts and vocabulary with which *burh* appears.

Although interacting little with physical evidence, the methodology of this chapter will be diverse in its scope, combining close-reading with qualitative comparison across the poetic corpus and the OE corpus as a whole. The descriptive and creative use of vocabulary in OE poetry highlights connotations of *burh* which were most productive and allows us to see aspects of *burh*'s meaning which may not be as clear in other sections of the corpus. This chapter will begin with a general overview of *burh*'s poetic usage before moving onto thematic analyses which each showcase a different set of connotations.

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[644] Ferhatović, '"Burh and Beam", Burning Bright: A Study in the Poetic Imagination of the Old English "Exodus"'; Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*; and the introduction of North and Bintley, Andreas*: An Edition*.

[645] Fulk, *A History of Old English Meter*, on poets' conservation of forms see p. 34, but chronology is a concern throughout this study and Fulk offers a proposed timeline for some poems on p. 71; see also: Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, 4; Tyler, *Old English Poetics: The Aesthetics of the Familiar in Anglo-Saxon England*, 122, 157.

8.2 Overview of *Burh* in Poetry

There are 275 examples of *burh* across the OE poetic canon, and it is considered to be a fairly common word in poetry.[646] Nevertheless, it far from being a primarily poetic word. This is apparent firstly from its huge array of instances in prose and glossed texts, but is also clear from how it is used within poetic texts. Ignoring compounds, which always alliterate, the 154 simplex instances of *burh* alliterate 59% of the time; often they occur in non-alliterative line-positions, but sometimes they do not alliterate even when they could. This places *burh* low on Dennis Cronan's alliterative rank, as his poetic terms often have an alliteration rate of over 90%.[647] Alongside the 154 simplex examples of *burh*, there are also 66 compounds with *burh* as the first element, which mostly occur for physical features, such as *burhweall* ('*burh*-wall'), or inhabitants, such as *burhsittende* ('*burh*-sitter'); and there are 49 compounds with *burh* as the second element, such as *goldburh* ('gold-*burh*'), which show a range of descriptions which could be applied to *burh*.

By comparison to core poetic vocabulary, *burh* does not vary often with near-synonyms. However, considering the words *burh* does vary with gives us some insight into *burh*'s semantic range within poetic texts. Table 13 below summarises *burh* and its poetic synonyms, showing their simplex occurrences in the poetic corpus, their alliteration rates as well as how often and where they vary with *burh*:

[646] Anita R. Riedinger, '"Home" in Old English Poetry', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 96 (1995): 53.
[647] Cronan, 'Alliterative Rank in Old English Poetry', 148ff.

OE	Denotation	Simplex Instances	Alliteration Rate	No. of Variations with *Burh*	References in Report 7
Burh	Fortified place (broadly)	154	59%	N/A	N/A
Ceaster	City/town of Roman origin	48	66%	7	1, 6, 26, 29, 83, 130, 188
Ceastergeweorc	*Ceaster*-work	N/A	N/A	1	58
Fæsten	Fastness, fortress	32	93%	4	1, 26, 27, 65
Ham	Home	117	61%	3	76, 253, 261
Byht	Dwelling, abode	3	0%	1	18
Tun	Yard, farm	12	8%	1	270

Table 13: Poetic near-synonyms of *burh*

The terms *burh* interacts with clearly vary greatly in terms of their commonality in poetry and their poetic-ness. *Byht* and *tun* represent unusual words in poetry which only occur in a few limited contexts, affecting their alliteration rates. The other entries highlight just how prevalent *burh* is in poetry by comparison to other words in its conceptual field.

Overall, the evidence suggests that *burh* was commonplace in poetry, not because it was a primarily poetic word, but because it was simply a very prevalent word in OE. Nevertheless, it was evidently a flexible and productive term in poetry, able to lend description to other elements, but also able to be qualified and shaped to the poet's needs. The following sections will consider the way in which *burh* was used according to theme, highlighting key connotations of the word.

8.3 Physicality and Fortification

Throughout this thesis we have seen that *burh* primarily denotes a fortified site, and it is therefore perhaps to be expected that physicality and fortification would be key aspects in poetic uses of *burh*. The clearest implicit connection of *burh* with the concept of physicality is in its variation with the word *fæsten* ('fortification'); in these circumstances the apposition of those two words is enough to suggest defences as inherent to the meaning of *burh*. However, the context in which *burh* is used in poetry and its collocations also emphasise this central aspect of its denotation.

In some instances, the physicality of *burh* is made clear through its association with defensive features. Walls are the most common fortification feature presented in connection with *burga* in poetry: we see this with the compound *burhweall* ('*burh*-wall', R7.74, 94, 144, 170) or through association, such as when the king of Babylon sits "wealle belocene" ('locked in by a wall', *Dan* 695) within Babylon, itself called a "heahbyrig" ('high *burh*', R7.66).[648] *Burh* is also compounded on several occasions with *locan* 'locks' to describe enclosures or prisons, and *locan* itself is often used in correlation with themes of confinement and isolation.[649] In addition to this, there are three examples of gates associated with *burga* in the poetic corpus, which, as we have

[648] See also R7.21, 22, 191, 226 and 243.
[649] See R7.28, 96, 99, 100 and 217, and also Lori Ann Garner, 'The Old English *Andreas* and the Mermedonian Cityscape', *Essays in Medieval Studies* 24 (2007): 57–58.

seen in previous chapters (especially §6.5 and §7.3), suggest a secure perimeter through which they are the only entrances.[650]

Burga are also represented as physical sites through their infrastructure. *And*'s Mermedonia, called a *burh* and a *ceaster*, contains stone streets ("stræte stanfage," l. 1236) and columns ("sweras unlytle, stapulas", ll. 1493–4), while *Dur* sees the probably twelfth-century *burh* of Durham as having many steps ("steppa gestaðolad," l. 2).[651] Some *burga* are shown to contain other buildings, either through compounding, such as *burgsalo* ('*burh*-halls', R7.150, 152, 175 and 187), in a genitival phrase, such as "ofer burga geseotu" ('over the habitations of the *burga*, R7.79 and 145), or through association, such as the battle around the *heall* ('hall') at *Finnsburuh* (R7.259).[652] These examples make it clear that the *burga* in question are not single structures themselves, but contain other buildings or indeed complexes of buildings.

One type of evidence which has been missing thus far from this thesis is artwork, as finding examples of Anglo-Saxon art which correlate reliably to instances of *burh* is difficult. However, *GenA,B* stands out among OE poetry for the illustrations which accompany the first 1800 or so lines in its manuscript, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 11. Traditionally, there is a perceived disjointedness between the poem's narrative and its accompanying artwork.[653] However, Catherine Karkov shows that attentive analysis reveals that the "apparent lack of coherence" is

[650] See R7.23, 95 and 192.
[651] Dobbie, *The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems*, xliv–xlv points out that *Dur* was likely composed between the years 1104 and 1109.
[652] Other examples of compounds are: "burhræced" ('*burh*-buildings', R7.200) and "burgsele" ('*burh*-hall', R7.174). A further genitival phrase is: "on þære byrig bur" ('in the *burh*'s bower', R7.184).
[653] Catherine Karkov, *Text and Picture in Anglo-Saxon England: Narrative Strategies in the Junius 11 Manuscript*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 31 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 4–6.

not as important as we may think, and her work demonstrates how we can see shared themes and concepts between the text and the illustrations. Two images from the manuscript depict structures or settlements described in the text as *burga*, and these highlight the gated and walled nature of the sites.[654]

In ll. 1057–9, Cain's children, Enoch and his brothers, are said to have built themselves a "ceastre," which was "weallfæstenna / ærest ealra" ('the first of all walled fortresses'). We are then told in l. 1062 that Enoch's wife gave birth to a son "on þam burhstede" ('in that *burh*-stead', R7.1). These lines are found on folio 50, facing a tripartite illustration on folio 51 showing the fall of Cain's lineage. Fig. 13 is the bottom-most part of this illustration, showing a man, woman and child within a walled, gated and arch-roofed settlement:

Fig. 13: Enoch and family in their city, from folio 51 of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 11

[654] The three images taken from Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 11, which are presented as Figs. 13, 14 and 15, are reproduced from the digital facsimile of the manuscript, found at Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, 'Cædmon Manuscript', Digital Bodleian, 2020, https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/inquire/Discover/Search/#/?p=c+0,t+,rsrs+0,rsps+10,fa+,so+ox%3Asort%5Easc,scids+,pid+d5e3a9fc-abaa-4649-ae48-be207ce8da15,vi+82365036-24f3-4c43-95fe-0a4a4d94d90a.

Even when just comparing the textual description with the image, it seems likely that Fig. 13 represents Enoch and his family within their city. However, this interpretation is corroborated by the fact that the word "burhstede" appears on the facing folio not only in line with the image, but also highlighted by an expanded script and the fact that the word unexpectedly finishes the text on that folio, as shown in Fig. 14 below:

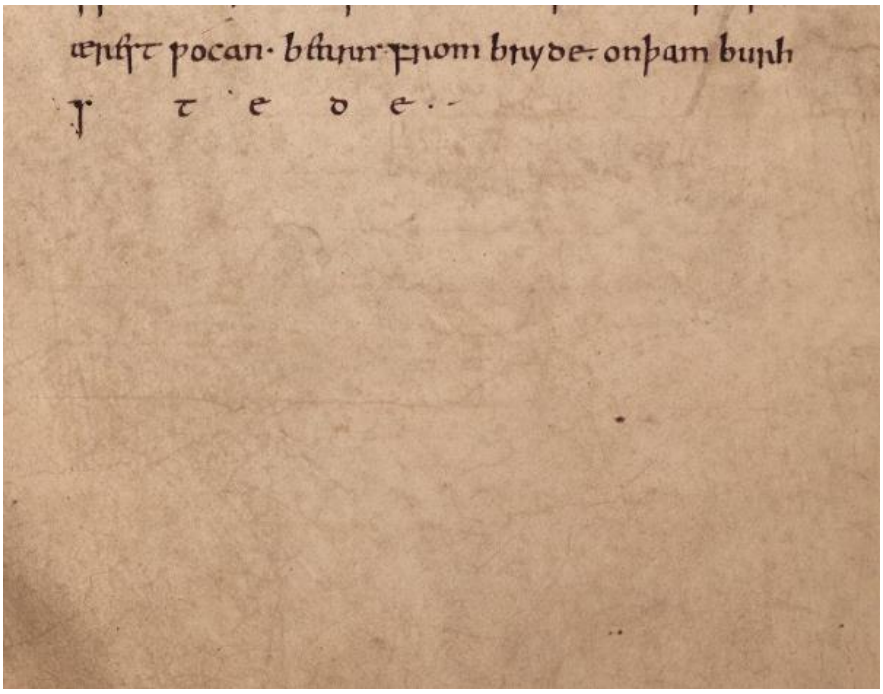

Fig. 14: Instance of "burhstede," from folio 50 of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 11

Whether this was intended or not, the manner in which the word is written and the space at the bottom of folio 50 certainly focuses attention on "burhstede" and its relationship to the image of the walled settlement directly opposite.

The second image presented (Fig. 15) shows the image of Abraham and his retinue approaching Egypt, found on folio 88. This image does not appear opposite an instance of *burh*, as in the previous example, but instead is on the other side of the

folio from the description in l. 1821 of Abraham first seeing Egypt, which is a "hea byrig beorhte blican" ('a high *burh*, brightly shining', R7.11).

Fig. 15: Abraham approaches Egypt, from folio 88 of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 11

Egypt is illustrated as having tall walls, towers, a gateway and inhabitants who can look down on the approaching visitors from on high. Although *burh* is not the only term used to describe the city, it is meaningful that it is the settlement term used in the poem when Abraham first sees the site.

Both of these images can be reliably associated with a use of *burh*, and both characterise the settlements in question predominantly through the visual symbols of walls, gates and towers. Although this art-historical evidence is limited, it is

certainly noteworthy that these settlement illustrations and the uses of *burh* in the poem share these infrastructural elements as fundamental and defining components.

It is also interesting that these physical features, especially the walls, locks and gates, appear with *burh* most commonly in poems which deal with the ancient Mediterranean, such as *GenA,B*, *And* and *ChristA,B,C*, where the uses of *burh* are generally in reference to sites such as Jerusalem, Babylon and the fictional, but no less distant, Mermedonia. It is difficult to attribute this tendency to the original Latin descriptions: where we know the source material, we do not often see "direct verbal parallelism" and poems could have taken inspiration from unknown texts and even visual analogues, perhaps like those we have seen.[655] Rather, as noted by Richard North and Michael Bintley in their introduction to *And*, these features of great gates, towers and stone streets would have been recognised by Anglo-Saxon readers as Roman, both from ruins on the English landscape, as well as descriptions in other texts.[656] Although North and Bintley are speaking only in reference to Mermedonia in *And*, their comment is valid for the rest of the poetic corpus.

Thus, we can understand the propensity for attributing these large fortification features to ancient Mediterranean *burga* in poetry not simply as a reminder of their physicality, but to encode the *burga* with Romanising characteristics. The awe felt at the magnitude of Roman remains and the technological skill of their architects is clear in Anglo-Saxon poetry. Indeed, as well

[655] Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse: Studies in* Genesis, Exodus *and* Daniel, 437; Jessica Brantley, 'The Iconography of the Utrecht Psalter and the Old English *Descent into Hell*', *Anglo-Saxon England* 28 (1999): 43; Samantha Zacher, *Rewriting the Old Testament in Anglo-Saxon Verse: Becoming the Chosen People*, New Directions in Religion and Literature 1 (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 14.
[656] North and Bintley, Andreas*: An Edition*, 91–92.

as associations with walls, gates and locks, adjectives denoting size, such as *heah* ('high'), *steap* ('steep'), *micel* ('large') and *wide* ('wide') also appear in poetry to describe *burga* in *GenA,B* and *Dan*, both biblical narratives.[657] Furthermore, where we see the formula *enta geweorc* ('the work of giants') used to describe *burga*, they are always of ancient or Roman origin.[658] The reference to giants associates this *burga* with an vanished race, and P. J. Frankis notes that *enta geweorc* always appears alongside Latin loanwords, contributing to the concept of "technically superior architecture."[659] Therefore, we can see that explicit and impressive fortification features are among various techniques used by poets to make ancient Mediterranean *burga* both recognisable and "recognizably other."[660]

However, concepts of physicality and fortification are also observable in poetic uses of *burh* without explicit descriptions of individual construction components. Metaphor is a valuable way of stripping a word's meaning back to key attributes, bringing "the physical or sensory into our thoughts" and revealing "the concrete grounding to most of our concepts."[661] The few uses of *burh* in a metaphorical context show that its key attribute is the concept of a physical boundary. The compound *scyldburh* (lit. 'shield-*burh*') appears in *Jud* and *Mald* not

[657] *Heah* appears with *burh* at R7.11, 26, 47, 49, 56, 58 and 62; *steap* appears at R7.9, 18 and 21 (compounded with *weall*); *micel* appears at R7.59; *wide* appears at R7.63.
[658] This formula appears in association with examples of *burh* at R7.105, 106, 166 and 199.
[659] Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, 'Old English Literature and the Work of Giants', *Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 24, no. 1 (1993): 10; P. J. Frankis, 'The Thematic Significance of *Enta Geweorc* and Related Imagery in *The Wanderer*', *Anglo-Saxon England* 2 (1973): 256–57, 267; Anderson, 'The Uncarpentered World of Old English Poetry', 69–70.
[660] Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, 33.
[661] Ruth Wehlau, *'The Riddle of Creation': Metaphor Structures in Old English Poetry*, Studies in the Humanities: Literature-Politics-Society 24 (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 1.

referring to settlements, but representing shield-walls in battle.[662] This usage draws on *burh* as a concrete visual aid, suggesting that the concept of a defensive, wall-like boundary is inherent to the word's meaning. These instances of *scyldburh* also appear with the sort of violent and destructive language we have seen associated with *burh* throughout the *Chronicles*: in *Jud* the soldiers on one side "scæron" ('cut, sheared') the *scyldburh* of their enemies and in *Mald* the *scyldburh* of the Anglo-Saxons is "tobroken" ('broken through') at their defeat. This indicates that *burh* brings with it not only foundational ideas of fortification, but also martial connotations.

A further metaphorical use of *burh* can be seen in *Ex* at the narrative of the parting of the Red Sea. The passage expands greatly upon the biblical description of this event, adding in typically Anglo-Saxon poetic martial imagery.[663] The collapse of the parted sea back upon the Egyptians is characterised with defensive and military terminology: we are told that "randbyrig wæron rofene" ('the border/shield-*burga* were broken', R7.43) and that "wigbord scinon / heah ofer hæleðum, holmweall astah, / merestream modig" ('war-boards [shields] shone high over the men, the sea-wall rose up, proud sea-stream', ll. 467–469). The first element of the compound *randburh* can refer to a border or margin, but often refers metonymically to shields, making its use parallel to *scyldburh* and giving the visual impression of the tall, wall-like sides of the parted sea falling down. In this metaphor, too, the defensive image of the *burh* is collocated with terminology of destruction ("rofene"). That *burh* is used

[662] See R7.233 and 260. The compound is also used with literal meaning at R7.75 to describe a border-city of Heaven.
[663] Zacher, *Rewriting the Old Testament in Anglo-Saxon Verse: Becoming the Chosen People*, 57.

in this way in metaphors shows that ideas of defence and physicality are fundamental to its denotation.

Outside of metaphor, we can see further examples of the connection between *burh* and violent imagery in poetry. In *Hell*, Christ travels to Hell to release the souls trapped there. The poem is seen as an "oddity both thematically and generically," which anticipates a battle with strongly martial imagery, but which then rejects the violence at its climax.[664] In expectation of Christ's martial action, the poem states in ll. 34–40:

> wolde heofona helm helle weallas
> forbrecan ond forbygan, þære **burge** þrym
> onginnan reafian, reþust ealra cyninga.
> Ne rohte he to þære hilde helmberendra,
> ne he byrnwigend to þam **burggeatum**
> lædan ne wolde, ac þa locu feollan,
> clustor of þam ceastrum
>
> The helm of Heaven wanted to break down and humble Hell's walls, to begin to plunder the might/majesty of the ***burh***, the cruellest of all kings. He did not care for the warring of helm-bearers, nor did he wish to lead mailcoat-warriors to the ***burh*-gates**, but the locks fell, bolts from the cities/fortifications
> R7.91–2

In OE texts, Hell is rarely described as a *burh*, a term usually reserved for earthly settlements and Heaven; instead, we more commonly see Hell described with

[664] Brantley, 'The Iconography of the Utrecht Psalter and the Old English *Descent into Hell*', 43, 46–47; E. G. Stanley, '*The Descent into Hell*: A Poem in the Exeter Book', *Notes and Queries* 62, no. 1 (2015): 7.

confining terminology such as *hus* ('house'). It is therefore pertinent that it is described as a *burh* in this poem at a moment of warlike depiction.

Burh also appears in other battle situations in poetry. The battle of *Finnsburuh* in *Finn* is centred explicitly round a *heall* ('hall'), but it is made clear also that this is a *burh*, both in the name *Finnsburuh* (R7.259) and in the "buruhðelu" ('*burh*-planks', R7.258) which resound with the fighting. In *Jud*, Judith's home *burh* of Bethulia is under siege from enemies. Although the city is described several times as a *civitas* in the *Book of Judith* from the Vulgate Bible, the OE poem much expands on the role of the city, which Magennis sees as representing the people's defiance against their besiegers.[665]

It is also worth paying attention here to some of the verse passages found in the *Chronicles*, which are striking as some of the few poems which can be dated with some accuracy and contextualised historically.[666] We see warfare centred around a *burh*-site in *Brun*, found in *ChronA*, *ChronB*, *ChronC* and *ChronD* for 937; however, *burh* only appears in the name *Brunanburh* (R7.262). On the other hand, *Capt*, found in the same manuscripts for 942, commemorates military success with a use of *burh* which fits into the political framework already explored in the *Chronicles* in Chapter 5. The poem celebrates Edmund's recapture from the Dane Anlaf Guthfrithson of the "burga fife" ('five *burga*') of Leicester, Lincoln, Nottingham, Stamford and Derby, otherwise known as the Five Boroughs which we have already discussed in relation

[665] Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, 164.
[666] Debates around which poems belong in the poetic corpus have often centred on the tenth- and eleventh-century poems found in annals of individual chronicles; burh appears only in those poems which have been generally agreed to be accepted into the canon corpus, allowing me to circumvent this area of disagreement. See Beechy's introduction for more information on the debate. Beechy, *The Poetics of Old English*.

to *LawIIIAtr* in §6.4. The use of *burh* in this poem recalls the territorial expansion of the Edwardian annals, explored in §5.3.3. Thompson Smith states that, although the annals change in style greatly after Edward and Æthelflæd's sections, "the Chronicle continues to write the bounds of the [kingdom's] domain through its accumulative record of the actions of triumphant dynastic protagonists."[667] Indeed, in *Capt* the five *burga* and other geographical markers outline the boundary of the newly reconquered territory, and the poem ends by explicitly referring to Edmund as Edward's descendant. This *Chronicles* poem clearly associates Edmund's victories with Edward's, for whom *burga* played an important role in the *Chronicles* in representing both political and defensive nodes in the landscape. It is also important to point out that battles for these sites are implicit in the victory, once again situating *burh* in the context of warfare.

Even where warfare is not the cause, images of destruction are still associated with *burga* in various poems. In *MSol* we are told of the impact of snow upon the world, including that it "gebryceð burga geat" ('breaks the gates of *burga*', R7.269). The decay of the city in *Ruin* is also expressed with alliterating verbs of destruction: we are told that "burgstede burston" ('*burh*-steads burst', R7.199) and "brosnade burgsteall" ('the *burh*-places rotted', R7.201). Likewise, in images of the apocalypse in *ChristA,B,C* we see the violent destruction of *burga*: "burgstede berstað" ('*burh*-steads [will] burst', R7.143) and "hreosað geneahhe / tobrocene burhweallas" ('broken *burh*-walls will fall down instantly', R7.144). This repeated collocation of

[667] Thompson Smith, *Land and Book: Literature and Land Tenure in Anglo-Saxon England*, 188.

burh with terminology of violence and destruction suggests that physicality is inherent to the word's meaning.

A final example that underlines the physical and defensive quality of *burh* occurs in *PPs*, which are metrical adaptations of Psalms 51–150, considered by M. S. Griffith to be "a pedestrian and unimaginative piece of poetic translation."[668] The majority of the examples of *burh* in this text are direct translations of *civitas* or semi-glosses of place names, much as is seen in prose Bible translations. However, one example of *burh* does stand out as an active and creative choice on the part of the poet in order to emphasise concepts of physicality, where "winbyrig" ('wine-*burh*', R7.243) is used to translate *vinea* ('vineyard'). In Latin, *vinea* has no connotations of a defensive boundary, and the word is translated six other times in *PPs* more accordingly as *wingeard* ('vineyard').[669] In fact, the very vineyard called a *winburh* in 79:12 is called a *wingeard* just 11 lines before and again 5 lines after. We must question, therefore, why the poet felt the need to use a *burh*-compound in this one line.

The answer lies in the line's contextual imagery. *Winburh* is used in a moment where the concept of a destroyed boundary is associated with the vineyard. The Latin Psalm 79:13, from which this OE line is translated, reads:

[668] Mark Griffith, 'Poetic Language and the Paris Psalter: The Decay of the Old English Tradition', *Anglo-Saxon England* 20 (1991): 167.
[669] See *PPs* 77:47, 79:8, 79:14, 104:29, 106:36 and 127:3.

> Ut quid destruxisti maceriam ejus, et vindemiant eam omnes qui praetergrediuntur viam?
>
> Why hast thou broken down the hedge thereof [of the vineyard]; so that all they who pass by the way do pluck it?[670]

This is rendered in OE at 79:12–3 as:

> Forhwan þu towurpe weallfæsten his?
> Wealdeð his **winbyrig** eall þæt on wege færð.
>
> Why do you destroy his wall-fortification? All who pass on their way take control of his **wine-*burh***
> R7.243

In this adaptation we can see the physicality in the Latin has been enhanced with more martial imagery: the hedge is now a wall, the plucking of fruits is now a seizure of power and the vine-yard has become a vine-*burh*. The sense of physicality and defence inherent in *burh* has clearly influenced the poet's choice of vocabulary as they attempted to paint a visual and aggressive image of this vineyard allegory.

This section has shown that physicality and fortification are key aspects of *burh*'s meaning throughout the poetic corpus, and in the OE language generally. Indeed, the concepts are so inherent that examples of *burh* are actively chosen in order to lend physical connotations to a passage. The word clearly does not need

[670] Rev. Dr. Challoner, *The Holy Bible Translated from the Latin Vulgate, Diligently Compared with the Hebrew, Greek and Other Editions in Divers Languages. The Old Testament; First Published by the English College at Douay, A.D. 1609; and The New Testament First Published by the English College at Rheims, A.D. 1582; with Annotations by the Rev. Dr. Challoner* (London: Richardson and Son, 1847), 462.

physical features to be explicitly identified in order to create this impression of fortification, and we have seen that where construction elements are described, they often lend awe-inspiring and othering connotations to ancient Mediterranean urban *burga*. It is also evident that the physicality and fortification of a *burh* are emphasised particularly within contexts of warfare and destruction. Where the fortifications of a *burh* are imagined in these examples, so too is the threat from outside. There are many other examples in poetry, however, which imagine the other side of this coin: the internal peace and prosperity of a *burh* which successfully protects its interior.

8.4 Home and Prosperity

Burga often appear in poetry in a positive social light, where connotations of domesticity and prosperity are highlighted. While it does not appear in her primary list of synonyms for 'home', Anita Riedinger does admit the "very common *burg*" to the collection of words which can sometimes be used to denote a home.[671]

We can most easily see the use of *burh* in this way where it varies with *ham* ('home', R7.253, 76 and 261), and these examples make clear the domestic potential of the word. In addition to these instances of variation, there are also examples where *burh* and *ham* are closely associated. The riddle-poem *Rid 34* solves as 'a rake', a farming tool of predictably domestic productivity. The first clue to the rake's identity is that it is kept in "wera burgum" ('the *burga* of men', R7.185), and among

[671] Riedinger, '"Home" in Old English Poetry', 53.

its distinctive actions are that it "to ham tyhð" ('pulls towards home', l. 4), suggesting that the *burh* is to be interpreted as a homestead. Likewise, in *Rid 29*, we are told at ll. 4–5 that the moon brings spoils "to þam ham" ('to the home') from the battle-field, desiring to build a bower "on þære byrig" ('in the *burh*', R7.184). In the Finnsburh episode of *Beo* (the same story as is related in *Finn*), Frisian warriors return from a violent feud-battle to their "hamas ond heaburh" ('homes and high-*burh*', R7.214). Furthermore, in *Beo*, while anticipating a deathly struggle with Grendel, Beowulf's men fear that they will never again see their "eardlufan" ('beloved homeland', l. 692) nor their "folc oþðe freoburh" ('people or noble *burh*', R7.210). Although not associated here with *ham*, *eard* has similar connotations of home.

What is particularly interesting about the examples in *Rid 29* and *Beo* is that, in distinct contrast to the examples of the previous section, the *burh* is not the focal point of a battle, but in fact represents the safety of home away from war. This sense of refuge can be seen all the more clearly in the case of *Mald* 291–3, one of the examples where *burh* and *ham* vary with one another. The warrior Offa promises his lord:

> þæt hi sceoldon begen on **burh** ridan,
> hale to hame, oððe on here crincgan,
> on wælstowe wundum sweltan
>
> that they should both ride to the ***burh***, hale to home, or fall in the army, die from wounds in the slaughter-place
> R7.261

The language here recalls the use of *burh* in the 'Wars of Alfred' section of the *Chronicles* (§5.3.2), which emphasises *burh* as a place of stable security where soldiers were garrisoned away from battle. As *Mald* dates from the early 990s, it is possible that the Alfredian *Chronicles* entries influenced this representation of *burh*. Yet, Elizabeth Tyler points out the pains to which the *Mald* poet went to maintain classical OE poetic traditions, and it is more likely that the poem and the *Chronicles* were all drawing on the same connotations inherent to *burh*.[672]

Even where 'home' terminology is not used alongside *burh*, this idea of a *burh* as a protective and domestic site still can be evident. In *Beo*, the young maiden Hygd is said to have always lived in the *burhlocan* ('burh-locks', R7.217), which is representative of her sheltered upbringing. Similarly, in *Sea* the sailor-narrator contrasts his harsh life on the seas with the easy life on land, commenting in ll. 27b–28a that "se þe ah lifes wyn, / gebiden in burgum" ('he who has experience life's joy in the *burga*', R7.167) cannot understand the narrator's suffering. The *burga* in all of these examples are places of protection and safe-guarding, often in clear contrast to the dangers of the outside world. Jennifer Neville states that "the positive, constructive act involves the establishment of an enclosure within which light, order, value and safety prevail, and without which darkness, chaos and danger rage."[673] Although she is talking about the act of divine creation and the Beowulfian hall Heorot, her comment appears equally valid for *burh*. The physical and defensive capabilities of the *burh* are not absent in these circumstances, but instead of

[672] Tyler, *Old English Poetics: The Aesthetics of the Familiar in Anglo-Saxon England*, 159.
[673] Jennifer Neville, *Representations of the Natural World in Old English Poetry*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 27 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 57.

envisioning the defences in the context of the external threat against which they guard, the defences of the domestic *burh* are what afford it its internal peace and safety.

Where this security is successful, we see *burh* associated not just with domesticity, but also with all the positive social elements which accompany a prosperous community. An important scholarly framework for this discussion is Hugh Magennis's study of the concept of community within OE poetry.[674] It is especially with the hall (*heall*) that he associates ideas of joy, peace and prosperity.[675] Nevertheless, he also recognises the interrelation between such imagery and the concept of the 'city', which "provides an evocative symbol of community and security which Anglo-Saxon verse shares with the wider tradition of Christian literature."[676] *Burh* is the OE word which most commonly represents the 'city' in Magennis's work, meaning that the *burh* examples he studies are all evaluated through this urban lens, and the majority derive from poems set in the ancient Mediterranean. However, the connection he observes between *burh* and positive communal concepts can be shown to be reminiscent not of the 'city', but of the success of a *burh* generally in terms of its protection of society.

That a *burh* can be connected with the concept of joy is clear from the quotation above from *Sea*, where it is in the *burh* that one experiences "lifes wyn" ('life's joy'). An even more transparent example comes from the quotation given in the very opening of this thesis. *MRune*, which gives a descriptive stanza for the

[674] Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*.
[675] Magennis, 11.
[676] Magennis, 40.

meaning of each symbol in the runic alphabet, uses gnomic *biþ*-statements to relate generic and accepted wisdoms.[677] *Burh* appears in the stanza for rune ᚹ, whose name is *wynn* ('joy'):

> ᚹ wenne bruceþ ðe can weana lyt,
> sares and sorge, and him sylfa hæfþ
> blæd and blysse and eac **byrga** geniht
>
> He experiences joy who know little of woes, pain and sorrow, and who have for themselves prosperity and bliss and also an abundance of ***burga***
> R7.268

Here, *burh* alliterates with synonyms for joy and is notably the only concrete noun in the stanza. Halsall comments that these gnomic statements should not surprise the readers, but rather give them only the "shock of recognition," meaning we must interpret such positivity as a conventional connotation of *burh*.[678] It is also important to note that there is no description in either *Sea* or *MRune* which suggests these uses of *burh* should be read in an urban light. Indeed, as was noted on p. 21 of this thesis, the use of *burh* in *MRune* has been interpreted in a myriad of ways.[679] The gnomic force of this poem makes it likely that it draws on the concept of *burh* at the forefront of the reader's lived experience or to the most generic sense of *burh* as a fortified place.

Even when not at the heart of community, *burh* can still represent a site of peace and joy. In *GuthA,B*, Guthlac leaves the safety of his social world to live in

[677] Halsall, *The Old English* Rune Poem, 38–39.
[678] Halsall, 40.
[679] Halsall, 87, 117–19.

dangerous wastelands.[680] His hermitage is sometimes called a *burh*, which emphasises his resilience against outside threats and temptations, but also represents his inner serenity, and we are told that he was "bliþe in burgum" ('happy in the *burga*,' R7.148). By contrast, the strange and hostile 'home' the wife is forced to inhabit in *Wife* is described as "bitre burgtunas" ('bitter *burh*-dwellings', R7.189). We are perhaps to read the bitter *burh* as ironic: instead of being her joyful home, she is oppressed by the *burh*.

Communal activities and wealth also represent the positive social aspects of a *burh*. Magennis notes that the feasting imagery of the hall can also be extended to the *burh* in compounds such as *meoduburh* ('mead-*burh*') and *winburh* ('wine-*burh*').[681] These largely occur in positive contexts, emphasising the prosperous community within the *burh*, but can also be seen to describe the cities of heathen enemies in *Jul* (R7.162). Bernard Huppé interprets the *winburh* as always being a sign of worldliness and false delights, while Magennis sees this description of heathen *winburga* as indicating the enemy's excess and lack of self-reflection.[682] However, I would argue that the use of *winburh* in these circumstances expresses prosperity, not necessarily morality: a secure, stable and rich heathen *burh* could celebrate with feasting as much as a righteous Christian one could.

Burh is also compounded with words for treasure: *hordburh* ('hoard-*burh*', R7.15 and 207) and *goldburh* ('gold-*burh*', R7.29 and 112). In *GenA,B*, Sodom and

[680] Neville, *Representations of the Natural World in Old English Poetry*, 125.
[681] Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, 42 See examples of *winburh* at R7.50, 60, 113, 162, 171, 243 and 275; see examples of *meoduburh* at R7.198 and 229.
[682] Bernard F. Huppé, *Web of Words: Structural Analyses of the Old English Poems* Vainglory, The Wonder of Creation, The Dream of the Rood *and* Judith (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1970), 13–14; Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, 100–101.

Gomorrah are called both hoard-*burga* and gold-*burga*, which Magennis sees as a representation of the favour bestowed upon the cities by God, and which the cities then abused.[683] The presentation of them as successful communities blessed by God makes their inevitable falls all the harder. We also see the alliterative collocation between *burh* and *beag* ('ring') at R7.45 and 209, as well as connections in *And* between *goldburh* and *beagsele* ('ring-hall') at R7.112 and *winburh* and "sinchroden salu" ('treasure-adorned halls') at R7.113. In *Beo*, the success and length of Beowulf's own reign as king are measured in part by how long he enjoyed "burhwelan" ('*burh*-wealth', R7.224). Such images are also part of the imagined ideal homeland: in *Ex*, the promised land is presented as having "burh and beagas, brade rice" ('*burh* and rings, a broad kingdom', R7.45), which associates *burh* not just with prosperity, but also with society and community.[684]

The ultimate ideal home, however, is naturally Heaven. Following St Augustine's model, Heaven is often presented as a city or *civitas*, making it not surprising that it would be modelled as a *burh* in OE texts.[685] Across various poems Heaven is described as a *wuldres burh* ('*burh* of glory', R7.164, 156 and 157) or as a *burh* with positive attributes such as *beorht* ('bright', R7.74, 76, 121, 136 and 149), *wlitig* ('beautiful', R7.159) or *mære* ('famous', R7.158 and 77). In *GDPref* we are told of "blis on burgum" ('bliss in the *burga*', R7.272), which are in the "heofonlican hame" ('heavenly home'). In *Sat*, Satan mourns the loss of his home in Heaven, and in this poem *burh* once varies and three times appears in association with *ham* (R7.71, 72, 73

[683] Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, 155.
[684] Magennis, 154.
[685] James H. Wilson, *Christian Theology and Old English Poetry* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1974), 145.

and 76), and is also associated with *eard* ('homeland, dwelling') at R7.77. Although it is striking that the worldly features of wealth and feasting do not appear with it, the *burh* of Heaven shares concepts of community and joy with earthly *burga*.

Thus far we have seen that a *burh* can be characterised by its physicality and associated with violence, or that it can be characterised by positive social values and associated with community. Indeed, a single *burh* can be both, as is noticeable in the cases of the unidentified *burh* in *Ruin* and Mermedonia in *And*, the two most described urban places in OE poetry.[686]

Ruin paints a complex image of what is evidently a city of Roman origin, as it is called both a *burh* and a *ceaster*, and its location is often interpreted as Bath.[687] The poem deftly intertwines and juxtaposes images of the city's hey-day in the past and its decay in the present: the language used in association with *burh* throughout the poem promotes images either of a thriving community or of physical destruction.[688] In its imagined past, there were "beorht burhræced" ('bright *burh*-buildings', R7.200) and ll. 35–7 emphasise the worldly prosperity enjoyed by this city:

> Seah on sinc, on sylfor, on searogimmas,
> on ead, on æht, on eorcanstan,
> on þas beorhtan **burg** bradan rices
>
> [One] looked on treasure, on silver, on precious gems, on prosperity, on possession, on precious stones, on the bright ***burh*** of the broad kingdom
> R7.202

[686] North and Bintley, Andreas*: An Edition*, 91.
[687] Krapp and Dobbie, *The Exeter Book*, lxiv.
[688] Renée R. Trilling, *The Aesthetics of Nostalgia: Historical Representation in Old English Verse* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 54.

Yet, this bright image is interwoven with descriptions of the contemporary ruined state of the *burh*, using violent, alliterative language to underline the destruction and to call up connotations of the physical nature of *burh*. We are told that "burgstede burston" ('the *burh*-steads burst', R7.199) and "brosnade burgsteall" ('the *burh*-place decayed', R7.201), and the compounding with *stede* and *steall* anchors the *burh* as a physical location, not a conceptual home. The imagery associated with *burh* vacillates throughout the poem, changing hue depending on the concepts collocated with the word and allowing the poet to blend the past and the present of the site together in one word.

While the use of *burh* in *Ruin* allows the poet to merge positive and negative, *burh* in *And* allows the poet to make clear how we should perceive Mermedonia, first as a heathen, cannibal settlement and then as a newly Christianised city. *And* is an Anglo-Saxon Christian epic narrating the story of St Andrew, which is sometimes attributed to the poet Cynewulf and appears to be adapted fairly faithfully from the Greek text *Πράξεις Ἀνδρέου καὶ Ματθεία* (known as *Praxeis*), probably via a now-lost Latin intermediary.[689] The action takes place in the city of Mermedonia, which is much described in the poem and much expanded from the *Praxeis* and other versions of Andrew's story.[690] Mermedonia is unnervingly ambivalent as a physical site, being both a *burh* or *ceaster*, but also an *igland* (l. 15), usually taken to mean 'island'. Magennis states that the presentation of Mermedonia as an island is an

[689] Michael D. Cherniss, *Ingeld and Christ: Heroic Concepts and Values in Old English Christian Poetry* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1972), 193; John Miles Foley, *The Singer of Tales in Performance* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995), 183–84, 189–90; Garner, 'The Old English *Andreas* and the Mermedonian Cityscape', 54; Steen, *Verse and Virtuosity: The Adaptation of Latin Rhetoric in Old English Poetry*, 29.
[690] North and Bintley, Andreas*: An Edition*, 81.

addition on the part of the OE poem, while Lori Ann Garner comments that normal prose descriptions of Mermedonia make its island status far clearer.[691] Nevertheless, scholars agree that the ambiguity makes Mermedonia seem all the more remote.[692] The last few decades have seen an increased interest in the representation of Mermedonia, both conceptually and linguistically, and scholars have noted the transformation of the *burh* from one of negative to positive descriptions.[693] Here, the examples will be reconsidered in light of a broader semantic understanding of *burh*.

Overall, *And* contains 27 uses of *burh* to describe either Mermedonia or its inhabitants, 21 of which occur before the city's conversion, a narrative event found near the end of the poem. The pre-conversion *burh* is described as *hæðen* ('heathen', R7.85 and 106) or *mære* ('famous' or, rather, in this case 'infamous', R7.83, 89 and 97).[694] When Andrew arrives at Mermedonia, the physical descriptions are unsettling and awe-inspiring. He first sees the *burh*-walls (R7.94) and the *burh*-gates (R7.95), before finding himself soon "under burhlocan" ('under *burh*-locks', R7.96, 99 and 100). Garner notes also that various architectural details, such as grey stone ("harne stan", l. 841), align with descriptions of other dangerous and negative places in OE

[691] Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, 175; Garner, 'The Old English *Andreas* and the Mermedonian Cityscape', 54.
[692] North and Bintley, Andreas*: An Edition*, 82.
[693] Brooks gives little attention to Mermedonia in his edition's introduction, Kenneth R. Brooks, ed., Andreas *and* The Fates of the Apostles (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1961), xxvii–xxx; by contrast, North and Bintley dedicate a large portion of their introduction not only to discussing Mermedonia, but particularly in analysis of its representation as a *burh* North and Bintley, Andreas*: An Edition*, 81–96; Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, 173–75 also notes the change in Mermedonia's representation; and Garner's article focuses especially on Mermedonia as a city: Garner, 'The Old English *Andreas* and the Mermedonian Cityscape'.
[694] Garner, 'The Old English *Andreas* and the Mermedonian Cityscape', 55 interprets the adjective *mære* as a positive description at this point; however, I agree with Magennis' interpretation that *mære* here represents a fame of iniquity, or rather infamy Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, 173.

poetry, signalling the peril Andrew is now in.[695] §8.3 showed how such infrastructural features encode a sense of the ancient onto *burh*, but in *And* they also emphasise the oppressive and antagonistic physical nature of the place Andrew is attempting to access and evangelise.

In the first 1600 lines, none of the uses of *burh* are positive and the instances occur on average about once every 76 lines. However, at around l. 1600, Andrew's acts finally convince the Mermedonians of the grace of God, and they choose to convert. Between ll. 1637–1697 there is an intense explosion of five uses of *burh* to describe Mermedonia, each one very positive. It is twice called a *winburh* (R7.110 and 113), as well as a "beorhtan byrig" ('bright *burh*', R7.111), a *goldburh* (R7.112) and a *wederburh* ('weather-*burh*', R7.114). This final compound is unique and can be interpreted as representing the strength of the *burh* against bad weather, but perhaps also metaphorically against sin. Magennis sees this as a move towards the communal, and North and Bintley associate the qualification of wine in *winburh* with the city's acceptance of the eucharist.[696] What is valuable is that *And* shows the importance of *burga* in creating a perception of place, especially for somewhere so distant in time, space and even reality.

North and Bintley also try to associate this transformation of Mermedonia with the Alfredian 'burhs', commenting that Alfred's programme often re-used old Roman towns which were otherwise unoccupied, and rejuvenated them into vibrant, living settlements. They use the conversion of Mermedonia, its movement from evil

[695] Garner, 'The Old English *Andreas* and the Mermedonian Cityscape', 56.
[696] Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, 173; North and Bintley, Andreas*: An Edition*, 320.

to good and from pagan to Christian, and the placement of a church within the walls, to tie the composition context of *And* into the height of Alfred's 'burghal' movement in the late ninth and early tenth centuries.[697] However, I would contest North and Bintley's argument. This thesis has shown repeatedly that the use and meaning of *burh* is far wider than the archaeological and historical 'burh' model allows, and we cannot automatically associate the use of *burh* with this defensive system or its urban heirs. Furthermore, the parallel between Alfred's refortification of Roman sites does not accord thematically with the representation of Mermedonia in *And*. The walled Roman sites refortified by Alfred, while not widely occupied, were already Christian sites with churches and royal patronage. Thus, these sites would not have been conceived of as 'evil' or 'pagan' before being refortified. Consequently, we cannot reasonably use the *burh* evidence to date the poem to Alfred's reign.

What we see in *And*, as well as in *Ruin*, is the employment of latent connotations in the word *burh*, which could be exploited by the poet in order to present a single site in multiple lights. In the case of *Ruin*, this is a change over time from a vibrant city to a decaying ruin, while in *And* the ominous heathen city flourishes after its conversion to Christianity.

[697] North and Bintley, Andreas*: An Edition*, 94–96.

8.5 (Royal) Power

The use of *burh* for centres of power, be they ecclesiastical or secular, lordly or royal, has been seen throughout the OE corpus and is certainly not absent from the poetic texts. Many of the examples of *burga* in poetry, especially those characterised as prosperous, are associated with power, often royal. Indeed, kingship is another key theme in Magennis's concept of community.

The possession and control of *burga* are sometimes used as a way of epitomising a lord's power. The construction *burga ealdor* ('lord of *burga*', R7.64, 67 and 225) describes the power of Balthazar in *Dan* and Holofernes in *Jud*, and in *Dan* Nebuchadnezzar is called the "winburge cyning" ('king of the wine-*burh* [Babylon]', R7.60). Furthermore, in *El*, the nails from Christ's crucifixion are to be made into bridles for the horses of the "æðelstan eorðcyninga / burgagendra" ('most noble, *burh*-possessing earth-kings', R7.129).

Power is also represented by the collocation of *burh* with verbs meaning 'to rule, control'. In *Wid*, Caesar's authority is shown, among other things, by the fact that he "winburga geweald ahte" ('had control of wine-*burga*', R7.171); in *Jul* Heliseus is described as a "rice gerefa" ('powerful reeve') who "[r]ondburgum weold" ('ruled border-*burga*', R7.161), and also guarded the land and held the treasure hoard in the *ceaster* of Commedia (ll. 19–22); and in *Deor*, the power of the famous Gothic king Theodoric is encapsulated entirely in the phrase "ðeodric ahte þritig wintra / Mæringa burg" ('Theodoric had the *burh* of the Mærings for thirty winters', R7.176). Association with, rather than necessarily possession of, *burga* can

further indicate lordly power. In *Jul*, Juliana's father flatters Heliseus by appealing to his "hyldu winburgum in" ('grace in the wine-*burga*', R7.162). Meanwhile, in *El*, the Roman emperor Constantine comes back from a great victory both to "þryðbold secan" ('seek the troop of thegns', l. 151) and "burga neosan" ('to visit *burga*', R7.118), where *burh* is connected to the "beadurof cyning" ('battle-valiant king') through alliteration, and to his military dominance via the context. These examples show the way in which *burga* can stand as tokens of political, and royal, power.

As we can see in Magennis's work, this power is not divorced from the community it leads. (Royal) power and *burga* are often connected also with power over a kingdom (typically a *rice*), of which the *burh* is in some way representative. In *Dan* the success of the Hebrew peoples is expressed by the fact that they "þy rice rædan moston, / burgum wealdan" ('might lead that kingdom, control the *burga*', R7.46), and we are also told that Nebuchadnezzar "weardode wide rice, / heold hæleða gestreon and þa hean burh" ('guarded the wide kingdom, held the wealth of the men and the high *burh*', R7.62). Likewise, the city in *Ruin* is described as a "beorhtan burg bradan rices" ('bright *burh* of the broad kingdom', R7.202). In these examples, the *burh* could be read as representing the centre of power, while the *rice* presents the breadth of power.

These connotations of *burh* shown in earthly settlements appear also in the divine and the devilish. God and Christ are presented as the leaders and possessors of the *burh* of Heaven: in *Rid 59* Heaven is referred to as "godes ealdorburg" ('God's chief *burh*', R7.188) and in *ChristA,B,C* it is "þeodnes burg" ('the prince's *burh*', R7.140). Christ is also defined by his protective and authoritative relationship to the

burh of Heaven: in *And*, he is called a *burhweard* ('*burh*-warden', R7.92), and in *Sat* 560 he is the "burhleoda fruma" ('leader of the *burh*-people', R7.78). Satan also declares his desire for divine power in *Sat* by stating he wishes to have "burga gewald" ('control of the *burga*', R7.71). We can further see the idea of seizing control of another's dominion represented by the breaking of a *burh* in the case of *Hell*. Alongside the martial uses of *burh* discussed on pp. 366–7, we also see Christ topple Satan, called the "reþust ealra cyninga" ('cruellest of all kings', l. 36), from his seat of power, destroying "þære burge þrym" ('the power/majesty of the *burh*', R7.191).

But nowhere can this representation of *burh* as a centre of power be seen more clearly than in *Beo*. A poem almost as impossible to introduce concisely as it is to define, *Beo* is a text ambiguous in terms of dating, location and theme.[698] It is iconic and hard to avoid in a discussion about OE poetry, even more so when that discussion covers ideas of kingship and community, themes in which the poem is deeply invested.[699] It is therefore fitting that *burh* appears in *Beo* 16 times, always in situations which focus on the social experience. Two examples, as we have already seen on p.372, connect *burh* with the concept of home. However, the majority of examples of *burh* in *Beo* reflect upon a lord's sovereignty.

Acts of kingship in *Beo* often take place within *burga*. Hrothgar's ancestor Beow, the "leof leodcyning" ('dear king of the people') is introduced as being "on burgum" ('in *burga*', R7.206), with this phrase evidently setting up his nobility and

[698] Scott Gwara, *Heroic Identity in the World of* Beowulf, Medieval and Renaissance Authors and Texts 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 2–13; Tyler, *Old English Poetics: The Aesthetics of the Familiar in Anglo-Saxon England*, 149.
[699] Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, 60; John M. Hill, *The Anglo-Saxon Warrior Ethic: Reconstructing Lordship in Early English Literature* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2000); Gwara, *Heroic Identity in the World of* Beowulf; Trilling, *The Aesthetics of Nostalgia: Historical Representation in Old English Verse*, 3–9.

power; later, Beowulf returns to his king Hygelac, who holds court "burgum in innan" ('within the *burga*', R7.218); Beowulf recalls his fostering with king Hrethel, who treated him no less than one of his sons "in burgum" (R7.220); and the same king Hrethel is described mourning the loss of his heirs as he sits "burgum in innan" (R7.221). These examples make it clear that there is an undeniable association between *burh* and the seat of a king, either where he holds court, greets guests or as a focal place for thoughts on inheritance. The use of *burh* in the plural for what appears to be a single location, however, is difficult to interpret, and we see similar uses in *GuthA,B* (R7.148 and 153) and *And* (R7.84). It is possible that these uses do, in fact, intend to reference more than one site, but it may also emphasise the plurality of the fortifications around a single site. No matter how we choose to comprehend this usage, the collocation between kingship and *burh* is nevertheless irrefutable.

The nostalgic notion of ideal society and lordship reflected in *Beo* also commonly combines the concepts of kingship, prosperity, nation and *burh*. In ll. 465–7a, Hrothgar reminisces on his youth, saying:

> Ða ic furþum weold folce Deniga
> ond on geogoðe heold ginne rice,
> **hordburh** hæleþa
>
> Then I first ruled the people of the Danes and in my youth
> held a vast kingdom, the **hoard-*burh*** of men
> R7.207

Similarly, when the jealous Unferth recounts Beowulf's loss in a swimming contest against a man named Breca, he builds up the image of Breca as a hero and lord in an attempt to humiliate Beowulf, stating in ll. 521b–3a that Breca wanted to return to:

> lond Brondinga,
> **freoðoburh** fægere, þær he folc ahte,
> **burh** ond beagas
>
> the land of the Brondings, the fair **peace-*burh***, where he had
> a people, a ***burh*** and rings
> R7.208–9

This quotation stands out for the double use of *burh*, once seemingly as the focal point of the nation and once as a lordly dwelling. The collocation here between *burh* and *beag* ('ring') associates formally, as well as thematically, the idea of the *burh* and the gift-giving customs key to community and the lord's rule in the hall.[700] This emphasises the idea that this second *burh* is associated particularly with Breca's lordship. A third demonstrative example is in reference to the inadequate king Heremod, whose people wished that he would:

> fæderæþelum onfon, folc gehealdan,
> hord ond **hleoburh**, hæleþa rice
>
> take on his father's nobility, rule the people, hoard and
> **shelter-*burh***, kingdom of men
> R7.211

[700] Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, 154.

In each of these three quotations the image of sovereignty is represented by a land, a people, riches and a burh, these four elements appearing to combine to create the concept of ideal and complete lordship. The role of the *burh*-words appears to be the representation of the seat of power, the centre of operations, but also the defence and protection of the kingdom. Indeed, it is the *burh*'s ability to protect that affords its king and people peace and prosperity. In the first quotation, *burh* is a hoard-*burh*, *hord* itself connoting the safeguarding of a treasure. In the other quotations, the first elements of the *burh*-compounds specify them to be defensive sites: the *friþu* in "freoðoburh" means 'peace, protection, security' and *hleo* from "hleoburh" means 'cover, shelter, protection'. This implies that defence is at the very heart of *burh*'s meaning here and its role as a centre of power.

The examples discussed in this section show that *burh* as a word aligns closely with ideas of lordly power, as a centre of control, as the focal point of a kingdom and as the defence of the nation. Importantly, furthermore, the *burh* represents where the people of the kingdom may live in safety and prosperity. Indeed, we can see on many occasions throughout OE poetry that there is a profound connection between a *burh* and the people who inhabit it, as the next section explores.

8.6 The Peopled World

As a fortification and settlement term, *burh* is always defined in some way by its creators and inhabitants, be they named or implied, current or long-gone. This final section will show the importance of the concept of inhabitants to the meaning of *burh*, and also how this inherent connection means that *burh* can be used to represent humanity at large.

The previous section showed the association between *burga* and kingdoms, but we can also see *burh* connected with the people who inhabit those realms and who are subject to their lords. In *Beo* we see examples of *burh*-words alliterating with terms for 'people': it is their "folc oþðe freoburh" ('people or noble *burh*', R7.210) which Beowulf's men would miss, and Breca wanted to return to the "freoðoburh fægere, þær he folc ahte" ('fair peace-*burh*, where he had people', R7.208). We can also see *burga* described by the people who inhabit them. In *Beo* Hrothgar holds the "hordburh hæleþa" ('hoard-*burh* of men', R7.207) and king Hrethel left to his heirs his "lond ond leodbyrig" ('land and nation-*burh*', R7.222). We see a further example of *leodburh* in *GenA,B* (R7.25), referring to Sodom. A particular nation may also define a *burh*, such as the "Mæringa burg" ('*burh* of the Mærings', R7.176) in *Deor*, the "Caldea byrig" ('*burh* of the Chaldeans', R7.52) in *Dan*, and also Hell, which is a "feonda byrig" ('*burh* of fiends', R7.163 and 141) and the "helwara burg" ('*burh* of Hell-dwellers', R7.186). Indeed, Hell is only described by its devilish inhabitants, who paint the *burh* in a negative light and determine its character.[701]

[701] Magennis, 156 points out that a city can be defined in worth by its inhabitants.

The notion of a *burh* containing a nation or a people continues into more metaphorical ground. The compound *mægburh* translates literally as 'kin-*burh*', but is interpreted generally as meaning 'lineage' or 'family'.[702] Evidence suggests that it is a highly poetic word: there are only 19 examples of the word across the entire OE corpus, and of those 16 appear in poetry with a 100% alliteration rate.[703] While it is a difficult metaphor to unpick, it shows a meaningful connection between populace and *burga*.

As much as *burga* can be characterised by their people, so too can the people be defined by their habitation in or connection to a *burh*. Throughout the whole OE corpus, as we have seen, the most common compounds with *burh* as the first element denote *burh*-inhabitants. In poetry, these compounds (or equivalent genitival noun-phrases) are often used to refer to the inhabitants of specific, individual cities such as Babylon in *Dan* (R7.54, 61, 68–70), Bethulia in *Jud* (R7.228, 230–1), Rome in *El* (R7.117 and 119), Mermedonia in *And* (R7.86–7, 101, 104 and 109) and Sodom in *GenA,B* (R7.24). §7.6 has already discussed the consistent connection between *burh*-resident compounds and urban settlements, and, considering the majority of OE poetry is set in the ancient Mediterranean, it is perhaps not surprising that all of the specific sites inhabited by poetic *burh*-residents are all distant urban spaces.

Yet *burh*-inhabitant compounds are not only used to refer to people living in specific settlements. They can also be used with a sense of universality,

[702] Ferhatović, '"Burh and Beam", Burning Bright: A Study in the Poetic Imagination of the Old English "Exodus"', 513 sees the tying of concepts of kinship to the word *burh* in this compound.
[703] Its other occurences are in one gloss in *ClGl 1 (Stryker)* translating *cognatio* ('kinship'), and in two law codes (*LawIne* and *LawAf*), a type of text which has connections to oral formula and poetic language: see chapter 3 of Beechy, *The Poetics of Old English*.

metonymically referring to all people throughout the world. *Az* and *Dan* both use *burhsittende* to refer to all of God's people who have broken his commandments (R7.57 and 154). In *GenA,B*, human technological advancement is described by saying that all *burhsittende* know how to use iron (R7.3), where the compound varies with "folca bearn" ('children of men'). *Rid 25* comments that an onion harms "nængum burhsittendra" ('none of *burh*-sitters', R7.183), except he who cuts it. None of these examples use *burhsittende* to refer to inhabitants of an individual site, nor even necessarily inhabitants of *burga* at all: the cook at an undefended farmstead is no more protected from onions than those living within the enclosure of a *burh*. Instead, these references to *burh*-inhabitants simply indicate 'everyone'.[704] This may also hint that *burh*-resident terms may not always have had urban connotations, and that this urban impression has been created by textual bias, something also hinted in §7.6.

Alongside these compounds, other references to men living in *burga* can be used to suggest universality. For example, *Rid 8* states that the riddle's answer (a jay or jackdaw) brings joy with its singing to "eorlum … in burgum" ('men in the *burga*', R7.180); *Rid 34* tells us that the object in question (a rake) is to be found in "wera burgum" ('the *burga* of men', R7.185); and *Rid 57* comments that the answer (either midges or swallows) sometimes fly into the "burgsalo niþþa bearna" ('*burh*-halls of men' [two terms used tautologically for 'man'], R7.187). In these three examples there is no particular *burh* intended, indeed it is important that it can be almost anywhere.

[704] For other examples of *burhsittende* or *burhware* being used to refer to all people, see R7.20, 34, 36, 134, 166 and 256.

Furthermore, even where its inhabitants are not explicitly mentioned, *burh* alone can still be used to suggest a sense of 'everyone, everywhere', particularly where we find the construction '[preposition] + burgum'. In *And* 332–6a, God tells Andrew to travel and preach across the world:

> Farað nu geond ealle eorðan sceatas
> emne swa wide swa wæter bebugeð,
> oððe stedewangas stræte gelicgaþ.
> Bodiað æfter **burgum** beorhtne geleafan
> ofer foldan fæðm
>
> Now travel through all the corners of the earth, even as widely as the waters reach, or the open plains lie near the street. Proclaim throughout the ***burga*** the bright faith, over the earth's embrace
> R7.90

The passage makes clear the world-wide extent of Andrew's preaching, with *burga* being the only settlement or dwelling word used. Thus, the context shows that we should interpret this use of *burh* with universal force. Other uses of *æfter burgum* appear in *Jul*, where the evil emperor's thegns are described as travelling "æfter burgum" (R7.160) while committing their widespread felonies, or in *Met* where we are told that the sun shines brightest of all stars "æfter burgum" (R7.251).[705] The phrase *in burgum* is equally used with this meaning of 'everywhere': for example, in *Rid 95*, the riddle's answer (either the moon, a minstrel, or a riddle itself) is said to have "blæd in burgum" ('glory in the *burga*', R7.205).[706] Examples also occur with the

[705] For other examples of *æfter* used with *burh* to represent 'everywhere', see R7.91 and 257.
[706] For other similar examples of *in burgum* see R7.128, 155, 179 and 204.

preposition *geond* ('around') in *Met*, where skills of good men are hidden by evil men "geond burga fela" ('around many *burga*', R7.250), and with the preposition *ofer* ('over'), for example in *Rid 3*, where thunderstorms cause "breahtma ofer burgum" ('noise over *burga*', R7.177).[707]

It is noteworthy that many of these 'universal' examples of *burh* appear in the Riddles, texts which use gnomic wisdom, as well as metaphorical and symbolic imagery, to imply conceptual truths. This universalising use of *burh* is an example of metonymy, where one concept is substituted with another closely related concept, and in this case *burga* stand in for humanity. What this shows is that another foundational aspect of *burh*'s denotation is its connection with people, either its creators or its inhabitants. *Burh* has a physical, constructed referent, a creation of man, but it is also the site where men abide and protect themselves against the dangers from outside. Magennis sees the cities of biblical poetry as representing both strongholds and the achievements of man, but I would see this comment as valid for *burh* across the entire OE poetic corpus.[708] Within the fortified boundaries of a *burh* is the world of human success and dominion, and we can see *burga* as representing the human in the face of nature.

In OE poetry, human society is often defined against the natural world, and nature represents those forces which can destroy social order.[709] We see various examples where *burh* is used to represent not just 'everywhere', but more particularly the manmade in contrast to the natural. Neville holds that the impact of

[707] For a similar use of *ofer* with *burga* see R7.145.
[708] Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, 156.
[709] Neville, *Representations of the Natural World in Old English Poetry*, 53–55.

weather in the Anglo-Saxon period upon the populace was severe, and, indeed, we see examples of *burh* used to show the experience of men in the face of dire weather conditions. *MSol* 302–8 describes the negative impact of snow: the poem first states the afflictions suffered by plants, then those by wild animals and, finally, the effect of snow on humanity is expressed by saying that it "gebryceð burga geat" ('breaks through the gate of the *burga*', R7.269). The storm's noise in *Rid 3* is shown to be "ofer burgum" (R7.177), and later in the poem at ll. 50–1, the great fear of lightning among the people is expressed by stating that there is "micel modþrea monna cynne" ('great pain of mind in mankind') and "brogan on burgum" ('terror in the *burga*', R7.178).

Men presents an unusual example. In l. 75 we are told that Spring will come to the *burh* (R7.270) as well as to "wudum and wyrtum" ('woods and plants'), where *burh* appears to represent mankind while the plants represent nature. Yet, generally in this poem, human experience is expressed by the word *tun* ('farmstead, village'), and it is important to note that, although *tun* never alliterates in *Men*, this example of *burh* does. While this shows that *burh* is not unique in being able to express the experience and existence of man in the natural world, it is also largely only *Men* which makes use of *tun* in OE poetry. Therefore, it is still clear that *burh* can be used to represent the effects of the natural world upon men.

Furthermore, *burh* can be used in conjunction with natural landscape features to refer metonymically to the world at large in apocalypse imagery. In *ChristA,B,C* ll. 809b–11a, the fire of the Apocalypse is described thus:

reþe scriþeð
geond woruld wide. Wongas hreosað,
burgstede berstað.

[it] will go fiercely throughout the wide world. Plains will go to ruin, ***burh*-places** will burst.
R7.143

Later in lines 968–81 there is a longer description of the Apocalypse's doom, largely referring to the destruction of natural features, but also to the collapse of "heahgetimbru" ('high buildings'), and stating that "hreosað geneahhe / tobrocene burhweallas" ('broken *burh*-walls will fall down instantly', R7.144).

These examples of *burh* representing mankind in the natural world do not strip *burh* of its other vibrant connotations. In fact, these uses are incredibly multi-layered, drawing on all the connotations of *burh* that we have seen previously. As well as the word's inherent physicality lending connotations of violence and destruction to these dramatic moments, the implicit population inside the *burh* contextualises the impact within the human experience. The associated communal aspects of the *burh* as a centre of power and prosperity raise the stakes significantly. It is this rich tapestry of connotations which makes *burh* such a unique and potent word within OE poetry, and indeed throughout the OE corpus. The connection between *burga* and people is not always explicit, but in almost all circumstances the inhabitants and creators of the *burga* are implied in the use of the word as much as its defences are.

8.7 Conclusion

As this thesis has shown generally, *burh* is a flexible, potent and yet curiously vague word. Many of the themes and elements we have seen associated with *burh* in other text types come to the fore in the poetry, a medium which relies so much on words and the images they create to paint its narratives colourfully. The poets use words both conventionally and inventively, drawing on conceptual expectations and layering meanings of lexical items to weave denotation and connotation, experience and imagination, into the fabric of the stories they tell.

While it may not be a poetic term, *burh* is certainly productive. It appears commonly across OE poetry and with a wide range of connotations and collocations. Depending on the context, *burh* can connote home, prosperity, joy, power and urbanity. However, looking at where the term is used metaphorically and metonymically gives us insight into the principal aspects of its denotation. Compounds such as *scyldburh* and *randburh* used for shield-walls indicate the foundational denotation of fortification in *burh*, while *mægburh* ('lineage') and uses of *burh* to represent all people show that the word is inherently linked with the idea of habitation and humanity. From these two key denotative elements, *burh* in poetry is able to represent the social and the communal, the power and prosperity afforded to a people who can protect themselves against the dangers of the world. A *burh* is the achievement of mankind, their stamp upon the world, where they lived, where they ruled, where they fought and what they left of themselves behind.

9 Discussion and Conclusions

Throughout this thesis, *burh* has proven itself to be a word of many facets. The range of sites *burh* is used to describe makes it evident that the denotation of the word is incredibly broad, supporting the idea that its most fundamental meaning is simply 'a fortified place'. Yet it is also clearly not a word whose breadth engenders blandness. Across the whole corpus we have seen *burh* used productively and imaginatively in compounds, individualised by multifarious descriptions and evoking a number of different connotations. It is now valuable to bring together the findings of each of the chapters and consider what the whole corpus of evidence tells us about the meaning and use of *burh*, as well as offering some suggestions about the use of language in OE writings.

Having split the corpus synchronically, it is worth beginning with a diachronic overview of the meanings of *burh*. I shall begin by thinking about uses of *burh* in OE texts dated to before the Alfredian educational reforms of the late ninth century, as these texts are few in number by comparison to the relatively prolific writings of the tenth and eleventh centuries. Nevertheless, these texts cover a cross-section of the written corpus and, although the examples of *burh* are sparse, by combining them we can reconstruct a broad set of meanings for *burh* even in this early period of vernacular writing.

One of the questions prompted by the historiography of *burh* studies in §1.2 was whether the use of *burh* for towns originated in the late ninth and early tenth

centuries, with the rise of Alfredian proto-urban defences.[710] The evidence of early glossaries and glosses shows that *burh* was capable of translating Latin urban terms from long before Alfred's innovations, perhaps as early as the seventh century. Admittedly, these early uses are very few, even relative to the limited texts of the time, with *burh* only translating the term *municipium* or its derivative. Indeed, it is quite possible to be able to trace the origin of this translation back to particular glosses on Aldhelm, which were then transferred into glossaries. The common terms *urbs* and *civitas*, so overwhelmingly seen rendered by *burh* in texts from the late ninth century onwards, do not appear with *burh* in these early glosses and glossaries. Furthermore, outside of these related glosses we do not see *burh* and *municipium* connected again in the OE corpus. Thus, it appears that the use of *burh* to render *municipium* in these early texts is not representative of *burh*'s overall ability to render urban concepts at this time, and is instead incidental.

However, taking into account the full scope of Latin-OE writings throughout the Anglo-Saxon period, we can instead see patterns which suggest that the change in Latin urban vocabulary translated by *burh* has more to do with changes in translation practice at the time than shifts in *burh*'s meaning. Glossaries and scattered glosses, by their nature, do not render every word in a Latin text. Instead, they tend to choose more unusual or difficult vocabulary, for which Aldhelm in particular was famous. *Urbs* and *civitas*, as we have seen in other texts, are incredibly common Latin words, likely fundamental vocabulary learnt early. Certainly, we see *urbs* and *civitas* glossed very rarely in Aldhelm texts. It is only unusual derivatives of

[710] As stated especially clearly by Draper, 'The Significance of Old English *Burh* in Anglo-Saxon England', 245.

the words which do receive such glosses, and this only occurs in later Aldhelm manuscripts: for example, the rendering of *urbanitas* ('city life, refinement') with, among other *interpretamenta*, *burhspæc* ('*burh*-speak') in *AldV 1* and *AldV 8*, from the early eleventh and late tenth/early eleventh centuries respectively.[711]

Likewise, *urbs* and *civitas* appear incredibly rarely in OE glossaries of any date, mostly occurring as *interpretamenta* for other Latin *lemmata*. It is only with continuous glosses and full translations that we begin to see *urbs* and *civitas* really rendered into OE, translated by both *burh* and *ceaster*. Therefore, rather than seeming out of place or incidental, it is in fact very noteworthy that *burh* could be used in these early glosses to render *municipium*, one of the few Latin urban terms glossed at this time, and that this interpretation was considered appropriate enough to be copied into glossaries and later manuscripts. Indeed, what we see quite clearly is the early potency of *burh*'s urban potential.

The only other connection with urban vocabulary in these early centuries of OE written evidence is in Bede's use of *urbs* to translate OE *burh* place names, done twice explicitly by him and once implicitly in the case of *Coludesburh*. However, all of these sites are evidently monastic, rather than urban, in nature. This usage potentially shows us something about contemporary conceptions about the meaning of *urbs*, at least where used to refer to sites within their own linguistic space. Certainly, monastic sites are another key referent of *burh* in these pre-Alfredian writings, as noted by Blair.[712] There is clearly some connection between *burh* and early monastic

[711] Goossens, *The Old English Glosses of MS. Brussels, Royal Library, 1650 (Aldhelm's De Laudibus Virginitatis) Edited with an Introduction, Notes and Indexes*, 5; Napier, *Old English Glosses: Chiefly Unpublished*, xvi.
[712] Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 250.

sites in place names, as shown by Rye and Williamson.[713] However, it is important to note that this association appears to be limited to only place names, and it is certainly not the overwhelming meaning of the word in texts before the late ninth century, as Blair had suggested.

The type of site *burh* refers to most recognisably in these early texts is high-status private residences. *LawIne*'s use of *burh* makes it clear that it refers to the private, presumably fortified, property of various high social ranks. We have also seen references in early vernacular administrative documents to *burga* as private residences, such as the case of Wulfheard and Inkberrow, the dubbing of an estate *Beaganbyrig* after its female tenant, and the frequent use of personal names as qualifiers for *burh* in boundary clauses. Although the relationship between the secular and the early monastic is tangled in this period, and sites may well have been subject to both types of occupancy within a few generations of each other, the fact that *burh* was commonly used to refer to high-status residences is undeniable.

There are some other interesting uses of *burh* in these early texts. A mid-ninth-century reference to an Iron Age hillfort as an *eorðburh* in the boundary clause of *Ch 329* shows that this usage of *burh* has a fairly early origin. In addition to this, there are mentions of *burga*, especially in the boundary clauses of diplomas from the eighth century onwards, whose referents or character cannot now be easily identified. Yet their relative abundance suggests a landscape full of *burh* sites by even the eighth century.

[713] Rye and Williamson, 'Naming Early Monasteries: The Significance of *Burh* in East Anglia'.

Understanding the meaning of *burh* in pre-Alfredian vernacular texts is an exercise in cross-referencing evidence, reading against the grain and astute contextualising. Although the evidence is sparse, it is significant. We certainly cannot assert that *burh* predominantly referred to monastic sites at the time, nor that it was incapable of referring to urban settlements. Instead, these uses indicate that *burh*'s broad semantic potential was there from the very start of its written history.

The reign of Alfred sees a great change of gear in vernacular writings, with the inception of the *Chronicles* and the programme of translation at his court, which was at the very least paralleled by other contemporary translations, if not the source of them all. It is in these translations that we first see the prolific use of *burh* to translate *civitas* and most especially *urbs*, cementing *burh* as a word with urban potential alongside its contextual near-synonym *ceaster*. However, at this time, we see little evidence of any use of *burh* for urban settlements outside of these Latin translations. Chapter 4 showed that *burh*, as a native word, had the power to make the distant familiar, unlike the loanword *ceaster*. While it would be generations before urbanism was recognisable on the Anglo-Saxon landscape, it is clear that the urban connotations which *burh* extended to encompass were very much tied up to concepts of *Romanitas* and the ancient Mediterranean in this period.

The use of *burh* to refer to private residences is visible still in the story of Cynewulf and Cyneheard in the 'Common Stock' of the *Chronicles*, as well as Alfred's evolution of Ine's law regarding fines for *burgbryce*. However, in the late ninth and early tenth centuries, there is a conspicuous lack of reference to private residences in texts. The laws of Edward make no mention of any *burh* which can be

securely associated with high-status estate centres and indeed no such residence is described explicitly as a *burh* again in the *Chronicles*.

What we do see during these years of war in Alfred's and Edward's reigns are uses of *burh* which evoke connotations of fortification, strength and stable dominion. In the 'Wars of Alfred' section of the *Chronicles* now-unidentifiable *burga* appear as garrisoned, permanent centres from which armies may gather. In these examples, *burh* does not represent innovations, but pre-existing fortified centres of power, secure in their position, longevity and defensive capabilities. In the Edwardian and Æthelflædian annals particularly, the *burga* have become weapons of territorial expansion. Whether founded, refortified, recaptured or simply upgraded from a *geweorc* by the linguistic authority of a scribe, the use of *burh* to mark out the expanding kingdom stamps Edward and Æthelflæd's victories with connotations of stability and control. To achieve this, these qualities must have been inherent to the meaning of *burh*. Indeed, the fact that we cannot be sure of the exact nature and morphology of the sites physically and economically may not be a concern. The power of the word was possibly more important than the accuracy of the appellation.

Certainly, we can note that during this period in the late ninth and early tenth centuries, at the zenith of the Viking wars, *burh* appears most prominently in texts emanating from official court authorities and is used with cultural power. In the 'Alfredian' translations, *burh* describes urban sites of cultural and theological importance, shaped by a memory of the Roman Empire and the Roman home of Christianity. In the *Chronicles*, launched in the same intellectual milieu as the

translations, the uses of *burh* draw upon pre-existing connotations of power, but also inevitably capitalise on associations made in theological texts between *burh* and Roman sites. Indeed, a number of the Edwardian and Æthelflædian *burga* were created at post-Roman sites. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that this was all that *burh* could mean in the period. The charter boundary clauses remain abstruse, but offer tantalising insights into the landscape beyond the military and political. Iron Age hillforts still appear under *burh* descriptions, but so do many sites which appear to be smaller, are mentioned incidentally and do not form part of the large-scale discussions about *burga* that usually dominate modern scholarship concerning these years. Thus, it seems that other aspects of *burh* were not forgotten, merely masked by the needs of writing at the time.

The mid-to-late tenth century sees several key changes in Anglo-Saxon society which impact writing and the use of *burh*: the formation of the kingdom of England under Athelstan, the scholarly impact of the Benedictine Revival and the rise of urbanism in England. Religious texts, as always, continue to use *burh* to refer to ancient Mediterranean urban settlements. It is in the mid-tenth century that we see the appearance of early homilies and hagiographies, as well as glosses on the Gospels and possibly early Bible translations. All of these texts use *burh* regularly to refer to distant urban centres described as *urbes* and *civitates* in Latin sources. Indeed, it is noticeable that where these saints' lives are set in local places, *burh* appears very rarely outside of standard place names, showing the word's potent function of familiarising readers with far-off places.

However, it is also during these decades that we begin to see hints of urbanism in uses of *burh* outside of these Latinate religious texts. In the laws of Athelstan from the early-to-mid-tenth century, we first see *burh* explicitly related to commerce, where it appears in conjunction with the market-town word *port* and with rules about mints. Similar commercial legislation for *burga* also appears in laws of Edgar a few decades later. Likewise, it is in the laws of Athelstan and Edgar that *burh* is legislated as a site of regional administration. Athelstan's laws regarding the jurisdictional duties of men belonging to a *burh* are relatively obscure, and beyond the connotations of *burh* as a centre of power, it is unclear if this is a lord's seat, a royal centre or a burgeoning town. However, the contrast between *burh* courts and witnesses and hundredal courts and witnesses represented in Edgar's laws brings to mind the distinction between the urban and the rural, even though the system was short-lived. Certainly, by the eleventh century, *burh*-residents of important urban sites appear semi-regularly as identifiable groups in witness lists of diplomas. It appears, therefore, that an urban identity is growing for some places in England and *burh* is the term with which they often appear in association.

Nevertheless, other aspects of *burh*'s meaning are still recognisable, if less prominent, in texts during this time. *LawIIEm* allows men to claim sanctuary in churches and the king's *burh*, interpretable as the king's residence rather than a town. Furthermore, uses of *burh* in Gospel glosses to render words such as *prædium* ('estate, land') suggest that not only was the meaning of *burh* for estate residences still current, it was productive and could be used to make sense of the Latin. As ever, the charter boundary clauses remain difficult to pin down, but Iron Age hillforts

continue to be referred to as old *burga* or earth-*burga*, and many now-unidentifiable, but evidently small, *burga* still dot the landscape of privately held estates. This evidence suggests a world of *burga* beyond that of royal legislation and religious imagination.

The last 75 or so years of English pre-Conquest history see another great upsurge in vernacular writing. Especially under the auspices of Ælfric, this period sees significant OE religious writing, and once again we see *burh* refer to ancient Mediterranean urban settlements. Urban uses of *burh* for English sites also become even more prominent in this period, particularly in the laws and administrative documents. Places such as Canterbury, London and York, known to have urban features by this time, are described as *burga* in the *Chronicles* and documents, laws use *burh* with reference to trade, and *burh*-residents appear in administrative documents with clear urban identities. Furthermore, various places such as Peterborough and Bury St Edmunds are known to have changed their names around the millennium to incorporate the element *burh*, in reference to towns which grew up around important ecclesiastical centres. However, instances of *burh* in this period also refer to ecclesiastical precincts themselves, such as the case of *Paulesbyrig* describing Anglo-Saxon St Paul's in London, which represents a monastic *burh* within a secular urban *burh*.

Nevertheless, non-urban uses of *burh* are also visible in the late tenth and eleventh centuries, even if overwhelmed in quantity by urban examples. Laws from Æthelred's reign refer to the king's *burh*, evidently representing the king's private residence and the authority with which it was invested. *Burh* also appear

representing a lord's private residence in the social treatises *LawGeþyncðo* and *LawGer*, as well as the similarly prescriptive *Ch 1555*, which describes the duties of an estate. Certain incidental uses in charters also indicate the continued currency of *burh* as a private residence in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. The fact that these uses are uncommon does not indicate that this meaning of *burh* was becoming irrelevant; rather, the understated casualness with which these few instances appear suggests that the meaning was not at all extraordinary and needed no contemporary justification. There are likewise continued uses of *burh* to describe Iron Age hillforts in the boundary clauses of certain charters all the way into the mid-eleventh century.

Some glossed manuscripts and certain glossaries, whose individual *interpretamenta* can be difficult to date but which were evidently arranged in this later period, also preserve uses of *burh* which show its range of semantic capability. Alongside uses of *burh* to translate a range of Latin urban vocabulary, we also see it used productively to create nonce-compounds which rely upon the ability of *burh* to represent lordly complexes and protective enclosures. Furthermore, it is in the Antwerp-London Glossaries that we see the only uses of *eorðburh* to describe earthworks outside of charter boundaries and place names, showing the continued productivity of the term.

Less easily dated, but no less influential in our understanding of *burh*, is its use in poetry. Here, too, we see it refer to a wide variety of sites, from ancient Mediterranean towns, to lordly residences in Northern European narratives, all the way up to Heaven and even all the way down to Hell. But the poetry particularly

shows us the range and potency of *burh*'s connotations, giving us representations of home, of haven and of humanity itself across the whole poetic corpus.

There are few texts containing what is recognisably OE following the Norman Conquest. Examples of *burh* in OE which continues into the late eleventh and even the early twelfth century are found predominantly in the late manuscripts of the *Chronicles* and in the 'sake and soke' clauses of writ-charters. These post-Conquest uses of *burh* in the *Chronicles* refer only to important towns, although this is unsurprising considering the *Chronicles*' use of *burh* since the mid-tenth century had been exclusively urban. The post-Conquest OE writ-charters maintain the use of the formula *binnan byrig ond butan*, which possibly had developed urban connotations as a formula. However, post-Conquest Latin translations of 'sake and soke' clauses and of certain law codes using the loanword *burgus* indicate that in this period of very late OE, the word was difficult to define with pre-existing Latin terminology.

Overall, *burh* proves to be a word whose denotation is broad in all periods of its OE usage, and whose connotations are as varied as they are powerful. While we can see shifts in the word's usage over time, its meaning does not change as significantly as has been suggested in previous scholarship. Its use for high-status settlements and private residences continues all the way through the Anglo-Saxon written period. Even where there is a paucity of explicit mentions of lordly *burga*, such as during the reigns of Edward and Athelstan, their re-emergence in later texts indicates that those connotations were by no means lost to the language during those decades, but simply not relevant to written texts at the time. *Burh* was also capable of referring to urban sites from its earliest uses, contradicting the claim that this aspect

of *burh*'s meaning originated in the late ninth or early tenth centuries. However, what we can recognise is that the resonance of urban uses of *burh* evolved as urbanism rose in England itself. What had begun as semantic extension to accommodate descriptions of distant settlements and Latin concepts of urbanity became enmeshed in economic, social and political developments in their own territory. Ideas of *Romanitas* borrowed into *burh*'s meaning may have equipped Anglo-Saxons with the vocabulary to describe their own burgeoning towns, but the urban developments in England will also have played a role in concepts of the ancient Mediterranean from the tenth century onwards. Time is naturally an important factor. This chronology shows both that, rather than shifting, *burh*'s meaning expanded over time, and also that, in all periods of written OE, *burh* offered a wide range of meanings.

However, it is important to recognise that not all referents or connotations of *burh* were equal in all cases. Context perhaps plays the most important role in shaping the meaning of *burh*. The purpose and purview of a text has a distinct impact on the aspects of *burh* it presents. The legal corpus provides a particularly good example of this. Royal law codes deal primarily with issues of theft and feud, and fittingly it is specifically in these texts that we see the connection made between *burga* and commerce, but also between the concept of the king's peace and his own *burh*. Furthermore, from Edward the Elder onwards, the royal law codes do not concern themselves with the matters of private estates, and accordingly *burh* is never used in reference to a lordly residence after *LawAf*. However, the quasi-legal treatises often studied alongside the royal codes focus more on the social than the political,

and several uses of *burh* refer to estate centres in those texts. Such evidence indicates that we do not see a change in the meaning of *burh*, but simply variations in which aspects of the word the written texts present.

We can see similar skewed views on *burh* depending on which texts we examine. The *Chronicles* focus on political and ecclesiastical events of kingdom-wide importance, and *burh* is used to represent defensibility, but also political stability. It is not surprising, therefore, that from the mid-tenth century onwards the *burga* mentioned tend to have urban features, as these are the sites of national importance. The focus on the ancient Mediterranean urban landscape in narratives of biblical or Late Antique origin naturally encourages the use of *burh* for almost exclusively urban settlements in religious prose and glossed texts. On the other hand, the ecclesiastical lens through which English landscapes are viewed in the lives of local saints and Bede's *HE* gives the impression of *burga* being monastic sites. It is for this reason that administrative documents offer such a valuable insight into the language of the physical world. Each of the texts opens a door onto a unique slice of (often) local history and the corpus interacts with a wide variety of places. Indeed, it is often the incidental uses of *burh* in administrative documents which offer the most interesting information, such as the appearance in landscape-focused boundary clauses of *burga* as Iron Age hillforts, a referent otherwise invisible in the OE written corpus.

Yet, context plays a role in shaping *burh*'s meaning even within a single text. Thus, in the Lindisfarne Gospels, *burh* is used to render both *urbs* and *praedium* ('farm, estate') with no apparent contradiction nor need for justification. Within a

single diploma the *burh* of the place name *Westburh* in the grant may conjure up images of an ecclesiastical precinct, while in the boundary clause the old *burh* represents uninhabited earthworks and the *burhware* of the witness list evoke connotations of citizenship. We can state, therefore, that the meaning of *burh* was contextually defined and contextually understood. *Burh* can be interpreted as a town or as a lordly residence, as a hillfort or a monastery, depending on the circumstances in which the word appears; and it can come with connotations of dominion and fortification, or domesticity and prosperity, depending on the topic at hand.

Therefore, the impression of *burh* that we can sketch from OE texts really depends on what is being written and when. It is necessary to recognise that we view the OE language through a scribal aperture and that in drawing conclusions about a word's meaning, we must be prepared to read between the lines accordingly. The OE written corpus is dominated by Latin-based biblical and Late Antique narratives, and therefore it is unsurprising that, quantitatively, urban uses of *burh* are pre-eminent in my dataset. By contrast, the focus on the local and the personal is relatively sparse, limited typically to administrative documents. Vernacular writings of the time are largely Latinate and aspirational, and they can lead us to believe that *burga* were typically sites of kingdom-wide importance. But by reading closely, and by paying attention to uses of *burh* which may appear incidental, we are given glimpses into a landscape filled with *burga* of all shapes and sizes. Indeed, a word with the contextual mutability of *burh* is valuable in indicating certain aspects of the OE written corpus, showing the way language changes with

text type and purpose, and how we might better understand what was being written at any given time.

Having taken all of these aspects into account, it is possible now to present some final conclusions about the meaning and use of *burh*. *Burh* cannot be defined simply by a list of its possible referents. Although speaking in terms of hillforts or towns can be necessary for comprehending the term with our modern mental landscapes, speakers of OE may not have made the same conceptual distinctions as we do. Indeed, the way in which *burh* straddles denotations and connotations, which we tend to separate, indicates that modern English has different semantic maps than OE had. Instead, it is useful to examine the elements shared across uses of *burh*, considering those concepts which appear to be fundamental to the word's meaning and thus form part of its denotation, and those concepts which are associated with the word and represent connotations.

The evidence of the entire corpus seems to support the assertion that *burh* essentially meant 'a fortified place': there are no instances in which fortification, or at least strong enclosure, were not an inherent part of the *burh*'s form. The word often appears in conjunction with enclosure features such as walls, often appears in defensive and military situations, and is used to represent safety, defence and home. *Burga* are also always connected with people and habitation. The most common compounds of *burh* describe *burh*-inhabitants; all the *burga* are sites of residence, even the Iron Age hillforts which were recognised as ancient settlements at the time; and the term is connected inherently with ideas of humanity and human achievement in poetry and rhetoric. But more than this, a *burh* always appears to be

high-status and a centre of power in some way, be that the power of one nobleman, of the Church, or of the king. *Burh* is used to represent stable dominion over the landscape or to define the rule of a lord. Rome is a *burh*, but so is Heaven. Therefore, it is surprising that the walled centres of power in which commerce flourished and to which residents flocked were considered *burga*. It seems reasonable, therefore, to consider the denotation of *burh* to be 'a high-status fortified settlement'. Associations such as permanence, domesticity, urbanity and indeed *Romanitas* appear with the word in some cases, but not all. Its many connotations are mutable and context-based. Yet it may be possible to say that, as the Anglo-Saxon period drew to a close, urbanity was creeping into the word's denotation and that the seeds may have been sown for the semantic split between the lordly and the urban that we see clearly in the later Middle Ages.

Thus far, this conclusion has focused on just *burh*, but this study has also offered insight into the meanings of other OE words within the conceptual fields of 'fortification' and 'settlement'. The most important word considered alongside *burh* in various chapters has been *ceaster*. As we have seen, when referring to fortified urban settlements, *ceaster* can act as a near-synonym for *burh*. But the evidence has shown that it is very specifically used for settlements of Roman character. We can see this in various features: the range of texts it appears in, the settlements it refers to, the vocabulary it translates, and the fact that it is a loanword from *castrum*, with its Latin origin always obvious and reflecting the Roman character of its referents. It is not possible to find a site, or even a Latin term, which *ceaster* can represent and *burh* cannot, although *burh* has already been shown to have a far wider range of

connotations and referents than *ceaster*. We could possibly propose, therefore, a taxonomy in which *ceaster* is a subordinate of *burh* that only refers to ancient Mediterranean or Roman urban settlements.

Other words have appeared as relevant in particular text groupings or situations. While *geweorc* and *burh* both appear in the *Chronicles* to refer to fortifications, sometimes referring to the very same site, *geweorc* appeared with connotations of construction, industry and impersonal impermanence, by contrast to the powerful and political stability of the *burga*. Likewise, in poetic texts *fæsten* refers to fortifications in a purely physical sense, emphasising the strength of the enclosure, but lacking the social resonance of *burh*. *Wic* appears in the London case study as a particularly interesting counterpart to *burh*, both in terms of its OE meaning and its adoption into modern technical terminology. Like *burh*, *wic* was shown to have a very broad denotation, seemingly referring generally to settlements and habitations with none of the sense of fortification inherent to *burh*. Finally, the word *port* appears with *burh* only in the very specific circumstances of commercial legislation in tenth-century royal law codes. While the two words could evidently refer to the same space, *port* was used only to represent the market-centric interpretation of the site, while *burh* was able to represent the whole fortified settlement. Here, therefore, we can see the further value of a historical semantic study, even where it is primarily semasiological: by illuminating the meaning and uses of one word, it will naturally throw light onto others.

Alongside the primary semantic research questions, this thesis has also sought to reflect on methodological matters regarding interdisciplinarity, as well as

managing a large corpus. Throughout, the contribution of other disciplines has greatly enriched the semantic analysis, providing invaluable context and points of comparison without which the complex conclusions about *burh* presented above would have been impossible. The methodology of this thesis worked to interact with textual, historical and other linguistic studies; however, as *burh* is a word with physical referents, it was particularly important to integrate archaeological research into the semantic analysis.

As there were few precedents for linguistic study using archaeology, ways of bridging these two disciplines were developed for this thesis. It was necessary, firstly, to recognise where archaeological evidence could be meaningfully related to the linguistic, such as in the analysis of Iron Age hillforts in boundary clauses and the case studies on *Coludesburh* and London. Likewise, it was important to be aware of when it would be presumptuous to connect references too closely with excavations, such as with descriptions of *burh* in biblical texts or the imagined landscapes of poetry. Being cautious about when to bring in archaeological research has helped me to avoid certain pitfalls of assumption, but also offered an interesting insight into which sorts of texts deal explicitly with the real, experienced world. It was also important to analyse the archaeological evidence on its own terms and within its own framework before seeking to align it with textual evidence. There are many places where one of the disciplines can fill gaps in the knowledge of another. However, there are also many times where the methodological drawbacks of one can exacerbate those of the other, for example where the survival bias of OE texts

impacts which sites are considered to be worthy of identification and archaeological investigation.

The complexity of such interdisciplinarity makes it difficult to produce a consistent blueprint for how to engage the two disciplines, but this thesis has shown that there is an untapped well of potential for future interdisciplinary and collaborative research. The ever-growing corpus of archaeological findings can enrich and invigorate OE semantics. Conversely, examining OE vocabulary with physical referents can help reconstruct a more accurate understanding of contemporary concepts of the physical. It would be particularly fruitful to explore other architectural and settlement vocabulary in OE with the same approach taken in this thesis. However, this methodology would also be valuable in the study of other OE concrete terminology such as weaponry, clothing, tools or anatomy, among many other semantic fields.

Furthermore, this interdisciplinary methodology offers a new perspective on the linguistic evidence used by scholars of other disciplines. This thesis has shown how a deeper understanding of *burh* can be beneficial to ongoing scholarly debates in various fields of study. However, the semantic study of the word is most clearly valuable to archaeological and historical 'burghal' studies. The findings of this thesis have shown that the network of Alfredian defences are not supportable either as a primary definition of the word *burh*, nor as a filter through which to read OE texts. Across the entire corpus of writings, *burh* has been shown to refer to a wide range of fortified sites from before the inception of this system and long after its immediate relevance. Indeed, even some examples which we understand to be core textual

evidence for this system, such as in the *Chronicles*, can be seen to engage with wider political connotations of *burh*, rather than denoting specific morphological features shared only by these few sites.

This thesis does not suggest that these defensive sites were not considered as *burga* by contemporaries, but instead argues that *burh* would have been used for any important fortified site. The OE written corpus shows no evidence of specialised vocabulary for the system, and the unified conceptual entity of the 'burghal' network appears to be something which has been created in hindsight by modern scholarship. To that end, the use of *burh* to refer to a modern scholarly framework is counterproductive, creating a circular exchange between modern labelling and OE descriptions which impacts textual analysis and the understanding of contemporary concepts. I would therefore strongly encourage scholars to use different vocabulary to describe this system. While I recognise that the circumlocutions needed to describe the system accurately with modern vocabulary, such as 'Alfredian defence network', are awkward, the avoidance of *burh* would be advantageous to future research, as this thesis has proven.

However, *burh* is not the only OE word which has been used in this way. Albeit limited to one case study, the evidence of London suggests a similar conversion of the broad settlement word *wic* into a specific, modern technical term, whose use has likewise impacted textual analysis and even affected fundamental ideas about numerous sites. A similar, thorough study of *wic* would be able to explore the uses and connotations of the word in OE writings, and could question how accurate the archaeological and historical concept of *wic* is. This thesis has demonstrated the

contribution historical semantic studies can make to other disciplines, giving new perspectives on texts and terminology, but also the great benefit to historical linguistic studies of engaging dynamically and critically with every relevant discipline.

The final research question of this thesis dealt with the creation of a predominantly qualitative methodology which could cope with a dataset the size of OE *burh*. When dealing with several thousand examples, it is naturally impossible to give each instance individual attention, and it is inevitable that some details may be lost when working on this scale. However, by separating the texts into groups related by contemporary textual features and modern scholarly frameworks, it was possible for the analysis to be more streamlined, while still rich and context-based. By starting with a big-picture overview of the instances of *burh*, it was possible to recognise which texts belonged together, which areas of the corpus would benefit from detailed analysis, and where it would instead be more constructive to analyse wider trends. Such focused divisions allowed for a multi-scalar approach throughout the thesis, ranging from analysis using more quantitative approaches where *burh* appeared in significantly comparable situations, all the way down to an in-depth exploration of individual instances within an interdisciplinary context. This variation in perspective added a layer of pluralism into an already holistic methodology, and allowed me to return a widely scoped, yet subtle understanding of the word *burh* both in context and as a whole. Even though quantitative methods can be incredibly enlightening, the complex nature of OE writing and the need for

interdisciplinarity makes it necessary to conduct studies which are fundamentally qualitative in nature.

The ability to use database technology to gather, store and build basic queries about relatively large amounts of historical semantic data has been invaluable to this thesis. Indeed, the study of a word such as *burh* would not have been feasible before the resources afforded by digital humanities. However, the *burh* dataset looks small and inconsistent by comparison to the big data of modern corpus linguistics, and it is not possible to rely upon statistical models for analysis. This thesis has shown that it is possible to combine the digital and the human, the quantitative and the qualitative, in historical semantic analysis, offering a robust and pluralistic methodology for the digital age.

In conclusion, *burh* has proved to be a valuable word to study from many perspectives. The study has shown that it is a word with broad denotation, but which is rich in connotation and contextually mutable. However, this thesis has also demonstrated a new, productive methodology, which integrates a wide range of interdisciplinary evidence into linguistic research, and which offers new insights back to the disciplines from which it draws information. This methodology also reveals a pluralistic way in which large datasets gathered from digital corpora can be meaningfully studied from various angles. It is my hope that the findings of this thesis will be valuable to scholars in many fields of research, and that the methodology will offer a springboard for further interdisciplinary historical semantic studies.

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