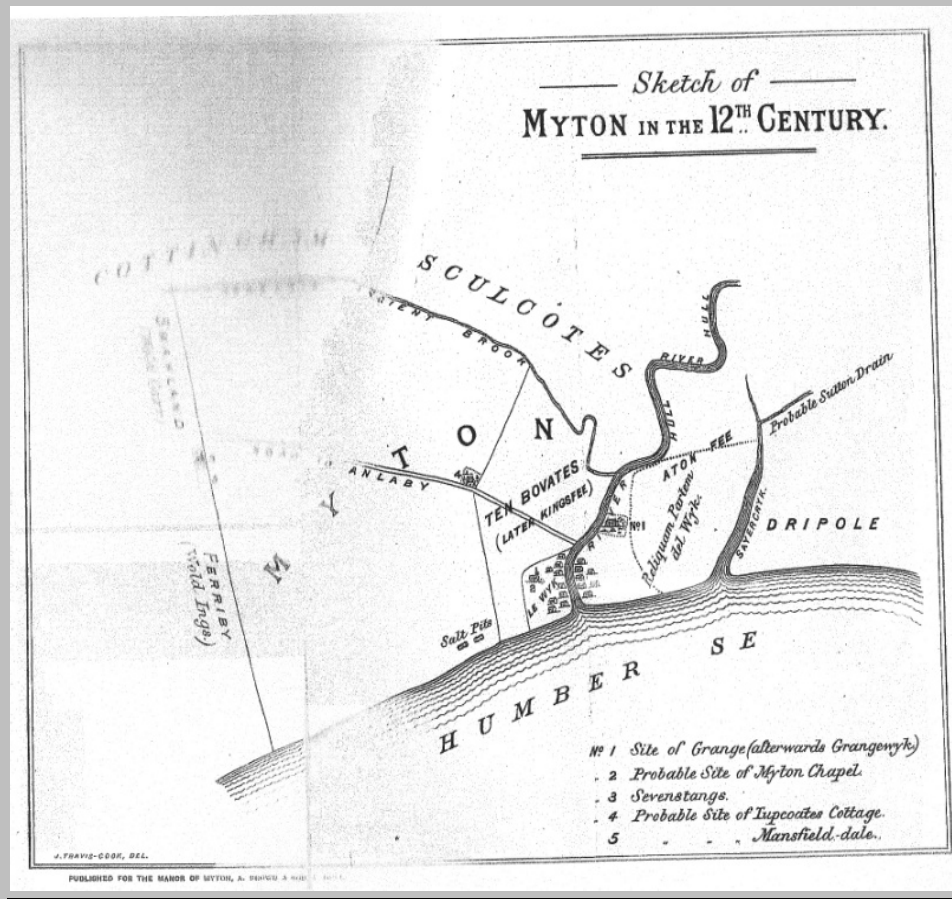# Hull in the Beginning – the History of the lower Hull valley prior to Hull becoming a royal borough.

Richard Clarke.

Hull in the Beginning (the history of the lower Hull valley prior to Hull becoming a royal borough).

Introduction.

Some time ago I resolved to research this topic as I felt that the general histories I had read up to then rather sketched over the origins of the town before Wyke received the Royal Charter in 1297. Early in the research I realized that my inquiry had been paralleled by that of a group of antiquarians and researchers starting with Abraham De la Pryme (1671-1704). A whole body of new evidence is now available from post-war archaeological sites as recorded at the Sites and Monuments Record for Hull and the East Riding, Northumberland Avenue, Hull, from the Humber Wetlands Project of the late-20th century and from the Victoria County History. Having studied these sources I felt the project was still valid, especially from a landscape history perspective as much as from a political, social or economic perspective. To see the relevant reference works in chronological sequence see Bibliography A.

The Natural Environment.

Most of the subsoil below the early 21st century City of Hull consists of recent alluvium[1], with areas of till[2], or sands and gravels towards the periphery (Van de Noort and Ellis 2000, 193 and see Fig. 1). In the lower River Hull valley the alluvium is estuarine (saltmarsh), deposited by the tidal action of the Humber Estuary, whereas in the middle and upper Hull valley the alluvium is riverine ('carr'-land), deposited by rivers flowing from the spring-line of the Yorkshire Wolds or westwards from the plain of Holderness (see Fig. 2).

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[1] This formed by successive wafer-thin deposits of silt left by retreating flood and tidal waters.

[2] Unconsolidated soil deposited by retreating glaciers/ice sheets during periods of glaciations between two million and 12 thousand years ago.
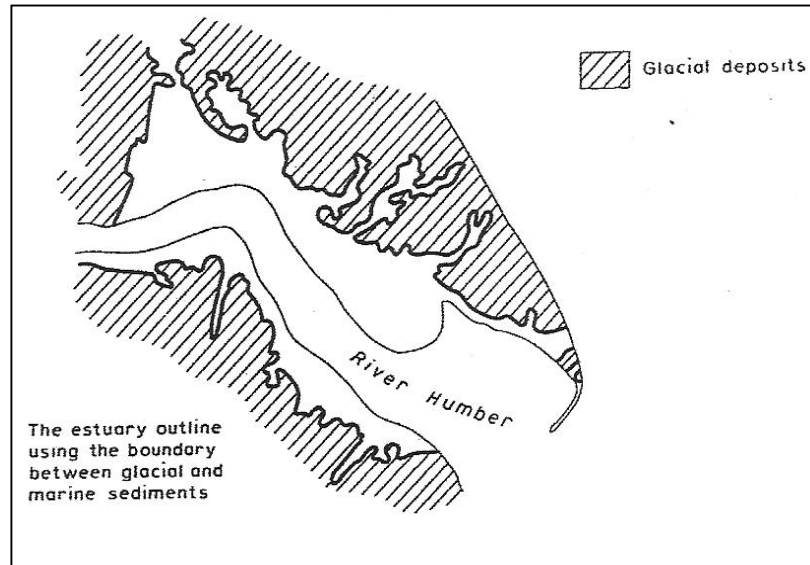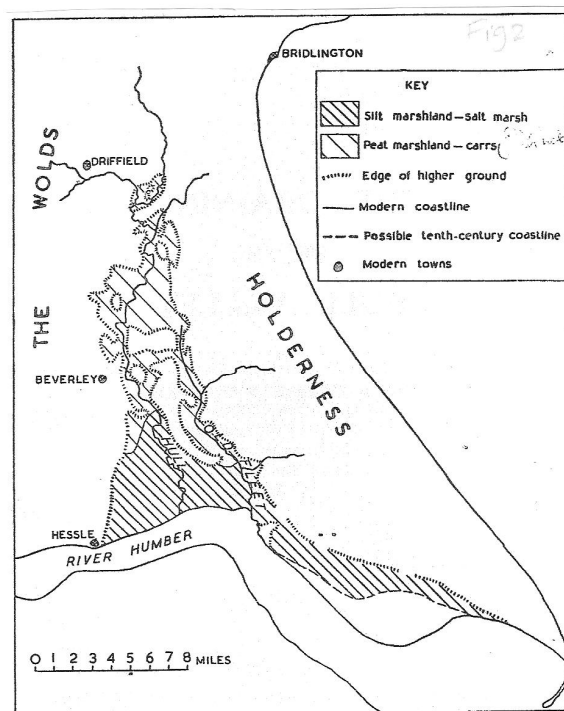
Fig. 1 Map showing the lower and mid-Humberside region. Shaded area shows where till is the principal subsoil, blank areas where alluvium forms the subsoil (taken from Jones 1988, 36).

The Hull valley before drainage.

Fig. 2 Map and key showing the two areas of alluvial subsoil; 'salt-marsh' and 'carr' (taken from Sheppard 1958, 1).

Dock excavations, diggings for building foundations and modern excavations have all revealed a layer of oak bog and peat of varying thicknesses sandwiched in the alluvium. After the last ice age (the Devensian in Quaternary terminology) the sea level only slowly rose to its modern level, and with the climate warming vegetation migrated north. Gradually a flora of mixed oak woodland became established across the lower River Hull valley before being inundated, and killed off, by a rising sea level. Thus the Holocene[3] peat layer was formed, now overlain by subsequent alluvial deposits.

Thomas Sheppard, the first curator of Hull Museum, was well aware of the significance of the peat layer below the City. A newspaper article (Sites and Monuments Record 19429, ref. no. 1) described trees, acorns and hazel nuts preserved in the anaerobic conditions of the peat layer discovered while West Dock was being excavated (West, later Albert, Dock was built between 1863 and 1869 – for details see Gillett and MacMahon 1989, 336). The article also referred to similar finds when the 'Victoria Dock Extension was in progress'. Tindall-Wildridge, writing in 1886 (Tindall-Wildridge 1886, 42), recorded similar finds in 1884 while excavating for the foundation of a new warehouse at 50/51 High Street. Here the tree trunks were upright and surrounded by branches and quantities of animal bones – this led the writer to suppose that here was evidence of a 'British platform-dwelling situated at the mouth of the river Hull' with associated 'kitchen middens'. Sheppard recorded the discovery of red deer antlers found 10 feet down in a Clarence Street excavation of 1907 and concluded that the prehistoric Holocene fauna was beaver, bison, wild boar and deer while the flora was alders, willows and sedge where seasonal flooding occurred, and reeds and rushes on the margins of permanent inundation (Sheppard 1911, Introduction). Thus may be gained a mental image, at least, of very early Hull, *c* 5000 BP (see Figs. 3 and 4).

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[3] The geological name for the modern, post-glacial era.

Fig. 3 An area of dense alder and willow woodland at Barrow Blow Wells Nature Reserve, Barrow on Humber. As a consequence of modern drainage systems, urban development and intensive agriculture it is hard to find local environments that replicate those of the 12th century Hull floodplain. Alder 'carr' would only survive on the freshwater floodplain and would have been much reduced by intensive grazing. B.B.W. is one of the reserves administered by the Lincolnshire Trust for Nature Conservation, Far Ings Road, Barton.

Fig. 4 The grassland of the alluvial soils (which underlay the city of Hull) probably looked much like this in the 12th century, especially once grazed. Picture taken from the road through North Wootton 'Marsh', Kings Lynn, Norfolk, originally an area of estuarine alluvium of the Wash. The rest of the extensive 'Marsh' is now intensively farmed.

Early History to the Twelfth Century

Post-war archaeology, especially of the 1990s,[4] has done much to disprove Tom Sheppard's contention that the Danes were the first settlers in the area later to develop as the City of Hull. Sheppard's opinion was partly based on the etymology of the word 'Wyk (or Wyke – see later) being derived from the Norse word for 'creek', presumably referring to the lower reaches of the River Hull. Frost had previously (see above) come to a similar conclusion, believing Wyke could define the mouth of a river or 'a place of retreat'.

In 1962 an excavation by the East Riding Archaeological Society on a site just south of Salthouse Road[5] revealed a pattern of man-made ditches, outlines of three or four round huts with central hearths and shards of pottery, all dated to the 1st century AD (see Fig. 5). This Iron Age Parisi[6] settlement had been built on till subsoil, just above the River Hull floodplain but sited to take advantage of marshland assets such as fish, wildfowl and reeds. It was also easily defendable.
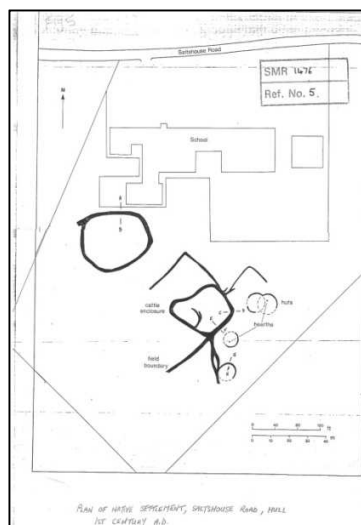

Fig. 5 Plan of native settlement, Salthouse Rd., Hull, 1st century AD (see S.M.R. 1476, ref. no5).

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[4] See P. Didsbury's article in Ellis and Crowther, 1990. Mr. Didsbury then worked for Humberside Archaeology Unit.
[5] Salthouse Road is between Sutton village/suburb and Holderness High Road. The site is immediately behind buildings that were then a primary school and are now Wilberforce Sixth Form College.
[6] Celtic tribe based in the north of Humber region.

A 1994 excavation off Preston Road (see Fig. 6), east Hull and carried out by Humberside Archaeology Unit found evidence of Iron Age salt workings near the edge of the alluvial plain[7] whilst the Iron Age sword found in 1977 off Hymers Avenue may have been a votive offering. (This archaeological evidence is mostly from Van de Noort and Ellis),
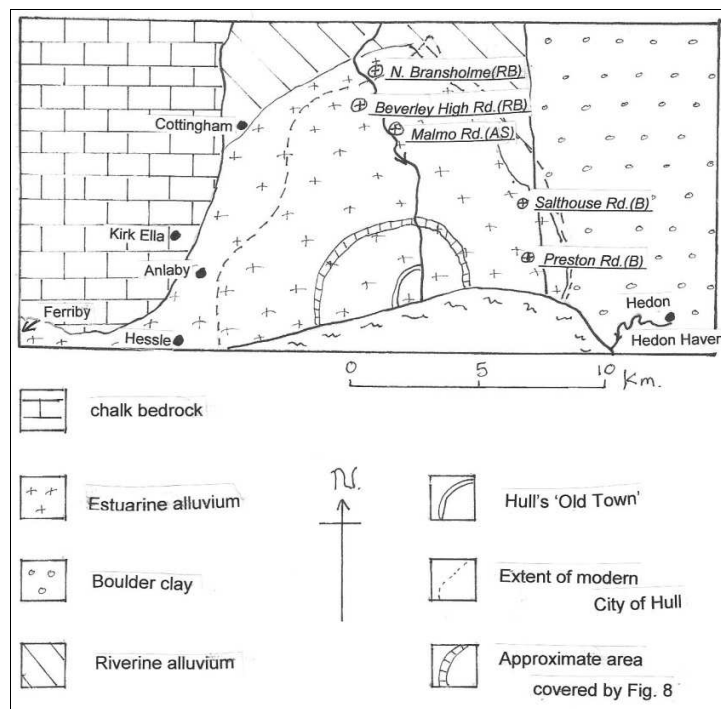

Fig. 6 Map of lower Hull floodplain showing the approximate location of sites mentioned in the text. Key; (B) = British, (RB) = Romano-British, (AS) = Anglo-Saxon. (Compare with Fig. 7).

As yet there seems to be no evidence of a Roman road crossing the Hull floodplain as was the case, for example, across the lower River Ancholme floodplain at South Ferriby, an identical geophysical area (see H.E.R. no Sls1395 and *Third Annual Report of the Humber Wetlands Survey*, 1996 - '97). However, the Hull and East Riding Sites and Monuments Record of finds dated to Romano-British times identifies 24 coins, four hoards, 21 datable pottery artifacts and four 'others'. Evidence gathered in the last quarter of the 20th century suggests that between the 2nd and 4th

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[7] The 'briqueage' (small blocks of coal or coal-dust) found may have been used to evaporate trapped tidal water to produce salt. The word can also refer to surviving pieces of pottery from the vessel in which the water was evaporated.

centuries there was 'ladder settlement' occupation along parts of the levee of the River Hull, these farms at ½ to ¾ mile intervals, probably pastoral and certainly relying on river transport. Such evidence came from North Bransholme in 1975[8] and in 1984 from the Greylees Avenue housing development off Beverley High Road (see Fig. 6). An excavation of the 1990s near Malmo Road, on Sutton Fields Industrial Estate and near the River Hull, located a man-made ditch, postholes and a cobbled track as well as various domestic finds such as coins, ceramics and a grit-stone quern, all dated to the 5th century.

Surprisingly the Romano-British sites in and around the Hull floodplain seem to have all been abandoned by the mid 5th century with little or no evidence of subsequent Anglo-Saxon occupation. The etymology of the names of settlements in the lower Hull valley and along the spring line at the base of the Yorkshire Wolds would seem to comply with this apparent retreat of occupation. Hessle, Cottingham, Marfleet and Myton are likely to have originally been English settlements but places with names suggesting Scandinavian or Anglo-Scandinavian origins are more numerous; Drypool, 'Soythcoates', Sculcoates, Wyke, Anlaby, Willerby, Tranby and Ferriby (North) for example (see Smith 1937, 205 – 218).

Calvert speculated that by the end of the 6th century there would have been some English settlers on 'holms'[9] on the west side of the lower Hull valley, the area of Myton, (see Calvert 1978, 7). If so they would originally have been citizens of the English kingdom of Deira.[10] Writing in the early 700s the Venerable Bede recounts the story of John, 4th Archbishop of York, who retired to a small monastic site 'in Deira wood' – this almost certainly was on, or near, the site of the present medieval Beverley Minster. Interestingly this site was (and is) on the fringe of the Hull floodplain, the 'woodland' on the dip slope of the Yorkshire Wolds just above the lowland floodplain.   John (of Beverley) further endowed this small monastic community which would have been contemporary with the isolated 'holme' colonies further south. Possibly the colonies suffered the same fate as the

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[8] Discovered during the building of the Bransholme satellite estate.

[9] 'Holm' or 'holme' can be variously interpreted but often denoted low islands above surrounding 'carr' or marsh.

[10] In 560 the kingdoms of Deira and Bernicia were combined to form the Kingdom of Northumbria.

monastic community in being ransacked by Danish invaders in the 9th century. However the monastic community recovered and the re-founding of the community by King Athelstan as a College of Secular Canons dedicated to Saint John the Evangelist, and the canonization of John of Beverley in 1037, led to a lucrative trade created by pilgrims to the site. This was the economic basis for the emerging town of Beverley in the 11th century.

There can be no doubt that the Humber region was radically changed by Scandinavian settlement from the 8th to the 11th centuries, the Estuary being a highway for Viking incursion, invasion and immigration. Between the 9th and the 11th centuries political control across the region, and beyond, see-sawed between English and Danish authorities. On or about 876 the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle recorded that the Danes 'partitioned out the land of the Northumbrians…..and made their livelihood by it' (see Calvert 1978, 10 and generally 7 – 12). There seems to have been significant Viking occupation on the fringes of the Hull valley, evidenced by the cluster of 'by' suffix names in the south-west of the estuarine plain; Skidby, Willerby, Anlaby, Tranby (see map Binns 1963, 28-29). This cluster was distant from the political centre of the Kingdom of York and from its turbulent history from the mid-9th century to the mid-10th century. Perhaps here, like in the Kingdom of Five Boroughs to the south of the Humber, the Scandinavians had found areas to settle and interact harmoniously with the existing English population.

In 993 and again in 1013 Danish fleets ravaged the Humber region and, of course, it was up the Humber Estuary that Tostig's and Harold Hardrada's combined fleet sailed in 1066. It is hard to know exactly how these events impacted directly on the low density settlement pattern across the lower Hull valley. There must at times have been disruption, possibly destruction, but it is also likely that some settlements of foreign invaders developed with successive generations and interacted with the established English population.
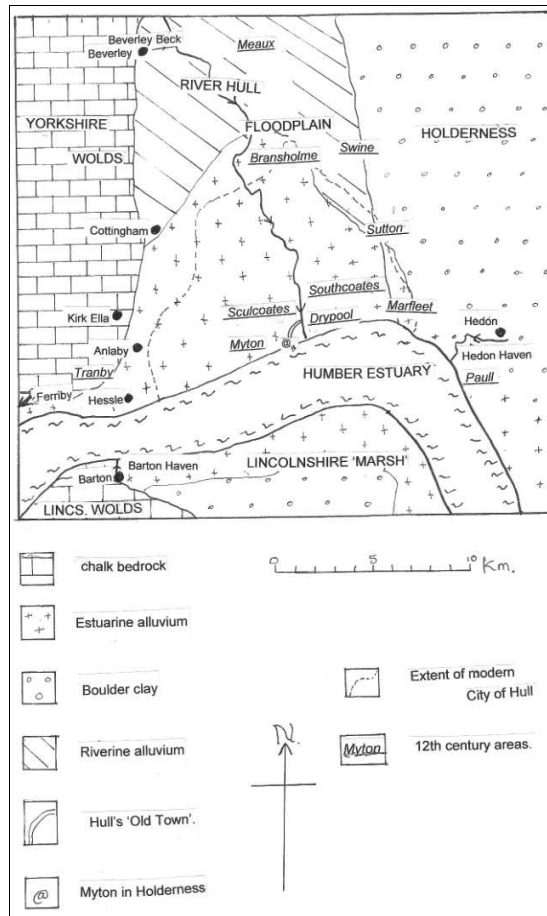
Fig. 7 Map to show approximate areas of parishes, manors and berewicks mentioned in the text. Precise boundaries are unknown or uncertain.

By the time that the Normans were imposing their occupation of England, 1066 – 1071, virtually the whole country had already been partitioned for religious, secular and administrative purposes, 'In England…..the parochial system was developed in its essentials before the Norman Conquest' (Tate 1969, 10). Parishes evolved following the 7th century papal dictate that tithes, or tenths, should be paid to the local church, thus each man must know his parish church and the boundaries of the parish. Large parishes developed across areas of low population; Hessle parish stretched east to the River Hull, as did Ferriby (North) and Cottingham parishes (see Fig. 7). Sculcoates parish was bordered to the north and west by Cottingham parish, to the south by that of Ferriby. Similarly, to the east of the lower Hull valley, here also the scattered population was incorporated into large parishes dominated by distant settlements; Drypool was in the parish of

Swine and Marfleet in the parish of Paull while Sutton was a large independent parish. Any privately funded chapel-of-ease that may have been built to serve the residents of some part of the floodplain might have baptismal rights to supplement the priest's income but not burial rights. Interments would have to be in the churchyard of the mother church.

As regards the secular or commercial areas across the lower Hull valley[11] Myton was part of the extensive manor of Ferriby; Myton then being a berewick or sub-manor (see Fig. 7). Whereas a parish should have had a resident priest (whether rector, vicar or chaplain) a manor (or berewick) might not have a resident lord. However, normally each manor had some building akin to a manor house which might be a temporary residence for the lord or a residence for his bailiff and certainly a place where the manorial court (court-leet) was held. The Domesday Survey of 1086 described the berewick of Myton as 'waste'. Assuming that the damage to the area was a result of the 'Harrying of the North' it can only be speculated as to what had actually happened 15 years earlier!

By 1086 Drew de Beuvere, the first Lord of Holderness, was lord of the 'estate' (manors?) of Drypool and Southcoates, while within this area the Archbishop of York had a berewick. Here again formerly cultivated land (prior to 1066) was described in 1086 as 'waste'. The Marfleet area of the parish of Paull included the Manor of Marfleet , and a further berewick of the Archbishop of York – an outlier of his principal manor at Swine (see Fig. 7).

Across the very large parish of Sutton the lord of the chief manor was the Lord of Holderness. Sutton and Preston stood on a curved ridge of higher ground created on the fringe of the Hull valley by post-glacial deposition. It was along the sides of this ridge that Sutton's linear open fields developed, beyond was carr[12]-land interspersed by low 'holmes'. Bransholme, for example, is thought to translate as 'Brand's water meadow' or 'island in the marsh'.

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[11] The following is mostly taken from the Victoria County History, Vol. 1.

[12] Low lying land created by freshwater (rather than estuarine) flooding and deposition. Once drained carr-land provided year round grazing although the grassland was generally considered less 'rich' than that growing on estuarine deposits nearer the Humber.

The Archbishop of York was lord of the manor of Sculcoates, this hamlet, next to the River Hull bank, being possibly a 'second generation' levee settlement (see above, Romano-British settlement in Hull valley).

So, by the end of the 11th century the site of the present day City of Hull was a vast expanse of low-lying wetland, roughly wedge-shaped with Beverley to the north, spring line settlements at the base of the Yorkshire Wolds to the west, the 'ridge' settlements to the east and the Humber foreshore and coastal lowlands to the south. This wedge was bisected by the meandering River Hull with sluggish left-bank tributaries flowing from Holderness and right bank tributaries from the spring-line. In places low 'holmes' rose just above the surrounding marsh and at such locations across Marfleet, Drypool, Myton and Sculcoates there may have been mud or turf and thatch huts, these maybe near the manor court-house (timber framed?) and a private chapel of ease. The only 'town' was the ecclesiastic centre at Beverley. Except on the 'holmes', the environment would have been unsuited to mature woodland other than willow, bushes and grassland likely to have been more dominant in the landscape. Along the Humber foreshore would have been a linear expanse of salt-marsh. Commercially the area was suited to grazing, although not to winter grazing when very wet. In the 11th century the River Hull was becoming a transport artery; stone for the expansion of Beverley's monastic close and for the building of the Anglo-Norman church was presumably transported this way.[13]

The Twelfth Century.

Nineteenth and early-20th century researchers and writers concentrated their studies on the area of Myton berewick, in particular that part later to become Hull's 'Old Town' (see Fig. 7). Frost's important study (see above)[14] of early documents and his conclusions about the early history of Myton set a benchmark later followed up by Travis Cook, Sheppard and Boyle, Hull

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[13] It was this church which was much damaged by a great fire in 1188 and the collapse of the central tower in 1213. The re-building programme then started at the east end and resulted, by the late 15th century, in the church we see today.

[14] As was still usual in the early-19th century, Frost's book begins by listing its subscribers. This long and interesting list included antiquarians, business people and the landed gentry from both north and south banks of the Humber, and some from further afield.

Corporation's first archivist. With no archive office or History Centre then Frost was given leave to study the ancient documents in the Town Hall.[15]

Frost's 1827 publication included a facsimile of a sale of lands *c.*1160, plus a translation from the latin, this the earliest surviving document relating to Wyke. By its terms Matilda (or Maud) Camin sold land to the Abbot of the Cistercian Abbey at Meaux[16] for 91 marks of silver, this being land she had inherited from her late father in 'Wyc of Mitune' ('Mitune' being the spelling used also in the Domesday Book). The sale included other lands in the 'vill of Mitune'[17]; 'a toft in which the Hall was situate', 'the bed of one fishery' and two parts of the 'salt pits…..of my (Maud's) fee in the vill'.[18] The use of the past tense in reference to the 'Hall' (moot hall?) suggests it was not then in use, maybe even derelict, no clues being given as to its site. The 'fishery' may have been the site of nets erected permanently in the shallow Estuary margins to catch fish on the incoming tide. The 'salt pits' were presumably akin to those of prehistoric times, (see above).

Matilda Camin's sale was confirmed by her husband Robert of Meaux, who was presumably a neighbouring landowner of the Abbey. Matilda's father must have acquired the berewick of Myton either by inheritance or by purchase, the inheritance presumably related to some family connection with the Norman Conquest. Quite possibly also Matilda, Robert and the Abbot of Meaux shared Norman French as their everyday language. The contract between Matilda and the Abbot was a commercial one, not a transaction to fast-track her soul through purgatory.

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[15] In 1813 the 17th century Town Hall at the south end of Market Place was demolished at which point Mayor W. Jarratt leased his house on Lowgate for use as the Town Hall and Mansion House (Gillett and MacMahon 1989, 419). It was here that Frost must have conducted his research. Cuthbert Broderick's Italianate Town Hall, standing on the site of the present Guildhall, was not completed until 1864.

[16] Founded in 1151 and sited on a 'holme' in the expansive carr-lands of the north Hull valley. It seems likely that the pre-existing hamlet of Melse was depopulated on the orders of William Le Gros the founding baron. Cistercians sought remote sites for their abbeys. Building stone for the later crossing church and cloistral range is thought to have come from quarries at Brantingham and Newbald – presumably sailed up the River Hull and possibly up an early drainage/navigation channel to the site.

[17] 'Vill' usually denoted a small group of cottages – forerunner of the term village.

[18] 'Fee' may be generally defined as an estate held from a person of superior rank on certain conditions, or an inherited estate.

So, Calvert writes (Calvert 1978, 25) 'under this deed the Abbey acquired the site of the old town of Wyke except Aton fee' (see later). By 1200 the Abbey had also acquired an area called 'Wyk in Holdernesse' (see Fig. 8) from William de Sutton and Benet de Sculcoates.

As to why the Abbey bought the land in Myton, the original transaction identified 'pasture for 800 sheep', but this may have referred to a larger area than that sold. Exporting wool, mostly to the Low Countries, was fast becoming England's main trade and east coast ports were well situated to service that trade. Possibly Hugh Camin (Matilda's father) had already profited from this trade. Meaux Cistercian Abbey was to become wealthy mainly by the export of wool and woolfells[19] from its granges in Holderness, Lincolnshire and Myton.[20]

J. Travis-Cook (1909) considered that the 'vill (berewick) of Myton' extended west from the River Hull to present day Walton Street and north from the Humber to present day Spring Bank West (see Fig. 8). Assuming this to be correct, it was this area (including the later Old Town) which provided grazing for hundreds of sheep in the 1100s. Presumably there must have been some means of defining boundaries across a large area that otherwise would have looked like a vast common pasture stretching away into the distance – unless some sort of stinting prevailed between interested parties. It is not clear whether any open-field arable farming existed in 12th century Myton, either way Meaux Abbey must have had a grange somewhere (see later).

It seems likely that a chapel-of-ease had been built for the scattered population of Myton living far from the mother church at Hessle. This chapel would have been privately endowed (maybe by Hugh Camin?) for the landlord's family and tenants. It probably had the right of baptism but not burial, the latter reserved to the mother church. Also tithes were

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[19] The un-sheared skins of sheep which had been slaughtered.

[20] A valuable source of information on Myton and other Humberside areas the *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa* was compiled by Thomas Burton, 19th abbot of Meaux , who after his retirement lived in the monk's infirmary where he spent his remaining years writing the chronicle on vellum. The *'Chronica'* was a history of Meaux Abbey up to 1396. It was later translated and published in three volumes in the Rolls Series in 1866. For an interesting account of Meaux's granges see Burton 1989, 39-41.

becoming established by the 12th century, these payable annually to the mother church – after 1160 Meaux Abbey was to take an interest in these (for some consideration of this sort of medieval situation see Tate 1946, 141).
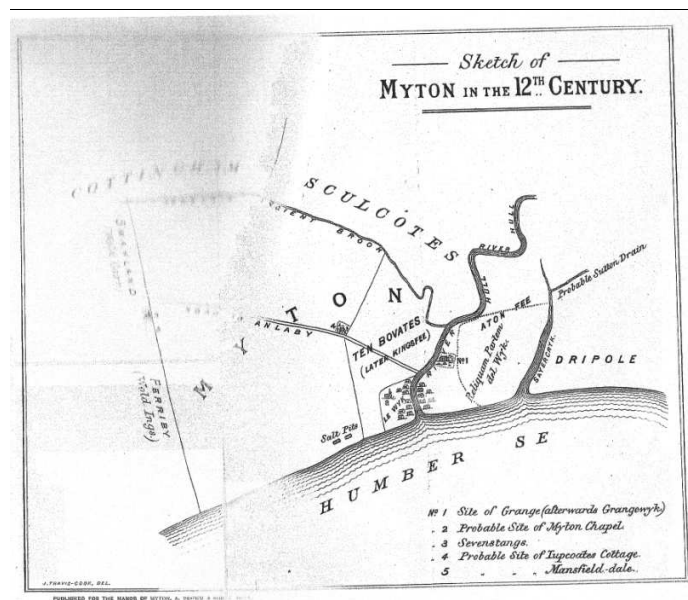

Fig. 8 A reproduction of the speculative sketch map composed by Travis Cook; Travis Cook F.R.H.S. *Notes relative to the Manor of Myton* **(A. Brown, Saville St., 1890, 182). Here the area sometimes recorded as 'Wyk (or Myton) in Holdernesse' is identified by the phrase 'Reliquam Partem del Wyke'.**

Frost and Travis-Cook speculated much on the lower course of the River Hull in the 12th and 13th centuries. The consensus was that from a point in the Stoneferry area the River Hull meandered west then south, the mouth being roughly where the lock of Albert Dock was later constructed (see Fig. 8). South of this west meander there was another watercourse Sayer Creek, this possibly originally dug as a drainage channel in this south-west corner of Holderness (that is using the term 'Holderness' for all land east of the River Hull and in Holderness Wapentake). It was hypothesized that at some point the River Hull broke through the watershed thus making Sayer Creek the lower course of the River Hull (as today). After this point the previous lower course of the River became known as Old (or 'Ald') Hull, so identified in a number of documents. Gradually 'Ald' Hull silted up, although centuries later a stream called Limehouse Creek followed the same course

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and is shown on Phillip's plan of Hull, 1725 (see Sheppard 1911, 67) and Cragg's plan of 1817 (see Sheppard 1911, 111).

As to when the River Hull changed course, Frost thought it probably 1253 when the whole lower Hull valley was inundated by severe flooding. Over a century and a half later Gillett and MacMahon agreed. Initially Travis-Cook thought the change in the River's course must have happened earlier but by the time of his final publication he had decided that no such change had taken place (except maybe in geological time) and that Limehouse Creek had always been a separate stream. Blashill (see above) further added to the melting-pot of hypotheses by believing (seemingly) that the emerging settlement was east of the River Hull in the Stoneferry area, the later 'Old Town' being an implanted new town soon after the issue of the royal charter.

Both Frost and Travis-Cook use the above hypothesis to explain the term 'Wyk de Holdernesse' (see Figs. 7 and 8 and above) used in some early documents. The land between 'Ald' and New Hull would have originally been in Holderness wapentake, the River Hull being traditionally the boundary between Holderness and Harthill wapentakes.

Finally in this consideration of history on the ground across the site of the City of Hull in the 12th century the question must be, was a port evolving? Calvert decided that 'By the end of the 1100s a trading settlement had become established close to the west bank of what we now call the River Hull' (Calvert 1978, 31). Certainly this was not a town but rather a trading post, a place of trans-shipment much related to the trade of Beverley, nevertheless with some riverside buildings and, presumably, staithes. A further conundrum is, did this trading post originally develop at the mouth of 'Ald Hull'? If this was so, when the River's course changed the buildings would have had to be moved, or replacement ones built. Certainly this would not have been impossible although it may seem improbable.[21]

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[21] There are recorded examples of medieval timber-framed (box frame) buildings being taken down and re-built at another site, the sequence of demolition tasks being the opposite of those for the building.

Interestingly earlier Hull historians believed the pre-royal charter trading post to be east of the lower River Hull (Sayer Creek), an opinion repeated by Thomas Blashill (see above and see later). Sheppard (1911) took a detached stand on the issue stating simply that the 'Old Fleet' ('Ald Hull') became silted up, a development likely to have happened even if the Old Hull had remained the principal channel. Alison (V.C.H. 1969) opted for a more open ended explanation, stating that 'Saer de Sutton', lord of the manors of Sutton and Drypool, had built a drainage channel 'which reached the Humber as Sayer Creek and which provided a new course for the River Hull' (V.C.H. 1969, 474).

The Humberside Region in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries.

During these centuries the Humber Estuary continued as an artery of trade and transport. A number of settlements expanded as ports prospering mainly from the export of wool. None of these medieval ports were on the Estuary shore itself but on channels (inlets) that flowed into the Humber. The 'towns' to be considered are Beverley, Patrington, Hedon, Ravenser Odd, Grimsby, Barton-upon-Humber and South Ferriby (see Fig. 9). During the 13th century Hull emerged as a trading competitor to all these.
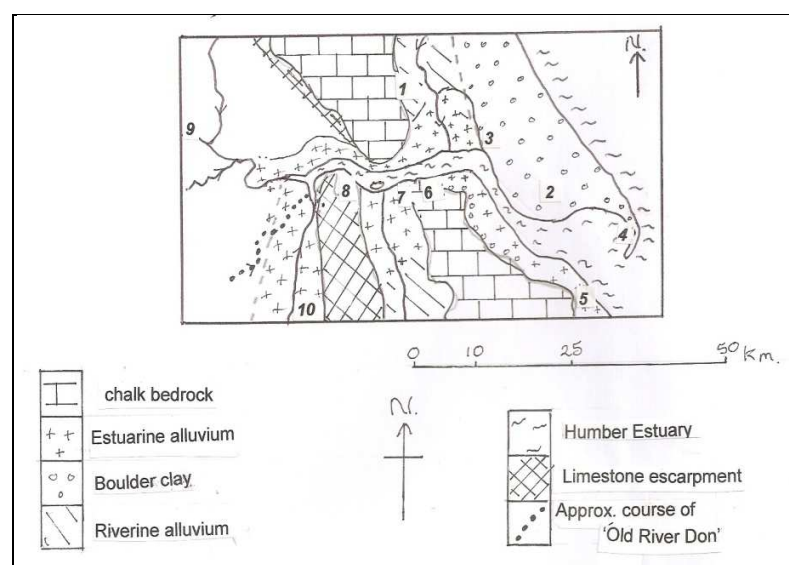

Fig. 9 Sketch map of Humberside region locating early medieval ports discussed in this section.

<u>Beverley (1 on Fig. 9).</u>

In the 1060s the Archbishop of York was confirmed as Lord of the manor of Beverley, an expanding religious and commercial centre (see above). Successive archbishops were considerable landowners in the Hull valley and they claimed (contentiously, see later) to be 'Lord of the waters of the River Hull', (much of the following is taken from the V.C.H. Vol. VI, 1989, 2 – 63). In the 1120s Henry I gave Beverley the right to increase the length of its annual fair from two to five days, thus recognizing the volume of buying and selling of goods at this regional centre. In 1129 the Archbishop of York issued a charter granting the same rights to Beverley as his burgesses enjoyed at York.

The 12th century Beverley Beck[22] was a product of the canalization of the lower section of a spring fed tributary of the River Hull, a capital investment mirrored in the canalization of Barton and Winteringham Havens. By 1200 a merchant class had emerged in Beverley society and between 1298 and 1305 three of the four greatest exporters of wool through Hull (town and River) were Beverley-based traders. The export of wool to the Low Countries was Beverley's principal trade but also important were the tanning industry and the production of quality woolen cloth. 'Until the rise of Hull at the end of the 13th century Beverley was the trading centre of the region' (V.C.H. Vol. VI, 34). All of Beverley's imports and exports had to be transported down the River Hull to and from the Humber Estuary.

The physical extent of 12th century Beverley formed an elongated triangle with the apex at the Beck Head and the other corners at the Minster and the Wednesday market place. Toll Gavel followed the course of a meandering stream beyond the then town. A similar situation occurred in Barton where Whitecross Street followed the course of a stream in contrast to the late-Saxon grid plan of streets to its west, also in Hull where Hull Street (later High Street) followed the meanders of the lower River Hull.

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[22] Archbishop Thurston is credited with ordering the digging of the Beck although surviving references only begin in the 13th century.

Patrington (2 on Fig. 9).

In 1086 there was a church at Patrington, the Archbishop of York was lord of the manor and Tharlesthorpe was a berewick (see V.C.H. Vol. V 1984, 97 – 111). Much of the parish was composed of a vast mudflat (similar in area to the later Sunk Island) that had become colonized with vegetation and on which were the hamlets of Tharlesthorpe and Frismarsh (see map in SKEALS 2012, 9). Inland, the church stood on the highest point of the boulder clay deposits. However, what 'the Humber giveth the Humber taketh away' and in the great flood of 1253 the Meaux Abbey grange at Tharlesthorpe was flooded. In the 14th century the grange buildings had to be removed and by the 1400s the Estuary had eroded away the mudflat.

In the 13th century the sale of wool from the manor and the berewick was lucrative. The port, south of the town, was accessed by a scoured channel which flowed into the Humber. This may have been affected adversely by the changes along the foreshore, for by the 1400s trade had declined.

Hedon (3 on Fig. 9).

Hedon like Hull, Ravenser Odd and Barton (earlier) was a 'new town'. Hedon was created in the early 1100s by the Count of Aumale (Lord of Holderness) with a grid plan of streets, and later in the century was given a royal charter (see V.C.H. Vol. V 1984, 168 – 186). By the late-1100s Hedon was served by three churches although only the present St Augustine's survived the Middle Ages.

Hedon was created to serve as a port for the shipment of produce to and from the plain of Holderness. Already the most densely populated region in England, the diverse environments of Holderness; its fertile arable 'holmes' and its pasture, meres, streams and marsh all provided for the needs of the local populace. Rich grasslands were grazed by thousands of sheep and the port of Hedon (south of the town) was intended to service the wool trade. However, craft had to navigate a two kilometer channel to and from the Humber with all the attendant problems and tendencies to silting (see Fig. 10). In 1203 - 04 a royal tax on the property of merchants required those of Hedon to pay £60 and those of Hull £345 (although surely this

latter figure must have included some from Beverley). The Lay Subsidy of 1334 raised £11 from Hedon, £15 from Ravenser Odd and £33 from Hull, these figures broadly reflecting the relative importance of the ports.

Fig. 10 Hedon Haven looking east from a point on the Humber bank. St Augustine's church is in the middle distance. (photo)

Hedon's rise and comparative decline were rapid. A combination of logistical problems related to the site and growing competition for trade from Ravenser Odd and Hull (Wyke) resulted in Hedon's comparative medieval decline.

Ravenser Odd (4 on Fig. 9).

Ravenser Odd was the last of the medieval Humberside towns to be created and the first to be lost (see Crowther and V.C.H. Vol. V 1984, 67 – 71). The port and town developed very rapidly on a sandbank (mud-flat) near the mouth of the Humber Estuary. Presumably this sandbank had risen to a height just above normal high-tide levels and had become colonized with vegetation – as with Frismarsh before and Read's Island centuries later. Clearly Ravenser Odd was near to the ancestor of Spurn Head but whether physically connected to it or the mainland west (east?) of it seems uncertain (see Fig. 11).[23]

Useful evidence comes from the Chronicle of Meaux Abbey which describes the 'island' as being accessed from the mainland of Holderness

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[23] The exact locations and relationship of Ravenser Odd, Ravenser and Ravenspurn are uncertain.

by a 'sandy road strewn with rounded yellow pebbles … (and) scarcely a bowshot in width … marvelously withstanding the floodwaters of the sea' (Crowther), this seems to have been much like a spit. As a new town created by the Lord of Holderness (like Hedon) in the mid-13th century it rapidly expanded as a trading settlement and soon acquired the features of a medieval town including a church with burial rights. In 1295 it sent an M.P. to the 'Model Parliament'.

Ranvenser Odd's commercial rise was meteoric and by the early-14th century it seemed destined to become the Humber's principal port. Its built environment must have rapidly expanded pro-rata. Trade in fish, in particular herrings, was one of its main occupations, Meaux Abbey having there a large store for herrings (whether salted or dried is not clear). The poaching of trade, along with other disputes, brought it into conflict with its nearest trading neighbour, Grimsby (see Fig. 11). By 1300 ships were docking at Ravenser Odd from the Baltic and the Low Countries bringing cargoes of; fish, ashes, salt, pitch and tar (V.C.H. 1984, 71). However, its demise was as rapid as its rise.

Fig. 11 Where was Ravenser Odd? View south from point near the entrance to the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust nature reserve. The SKEALS publication (p. 9) locates it as having been east of the tip of the present Spurn Point.

By 1330 the dynamics of the channels in the Humber Estuary were changing and the sandbank on which Ravenser Odd had developed was now being eroded. Abbot Burton records for the 1340s that 'At that time the chapel of Ravenser … and the majority of the buildings … by the inundations of the sea and the Humber … were almost completely destroyed'. Wherever possible human remains so exposed were re-interred in Easington churchyard. Abbot Burton saw the hand of God in this destruction, divine retribution for the unscrupulous commercialism exhibited by the traders of Ravenser Odd. More prosaically it certainly benefitted the now royal port of Hull to which most of Ravenser's traders removed – maybe Hull was blessed by a greater status than just that of the monarch!

<u>Grimsby (5 on fig. 9).</u>

Physically Grimsby developed in as precarious a location as Ravenser Odd and Hull, but much earlier. It 'lay on a flat, low-lying peninsula, extending northwards to the tidal waters of the haven and hemmed in by salt marshes on the east and west sides' (Gillett 1970, 1). Grimsby originated in the 9th century as a Danish settlement, the story of its original colonist being very similar to the story, four centuries later, of how Ravenser Odd was first settled. By 1086 it generated custom's income for the monarch and it had a church, a priest and a ferry (to Paull?, to Spurn?). Furthermore it had increased in value since 1066, the 'Harrying of the North' having been concentrated north of the Humber.

By the 12th century Grimsby was a 'remoter suburb of Norway', its links with Norway, the Orkneys and Scotland being very strong (Gillett 1970, 8). Items traded were; imported wine, timber and ship's tar and the export of corn and herrings. The manor of Grimsby evolved in a region of high density Scandinavian population and included a semi autonomous area known as a 'soke' (of the manor of Bradley). By the early-12th century Grimsby had two churches and by the end of that century was an established borough (albeit without a charter) with a rising population and increasing trade (Gillett 1970, 9). In 1201 King John granted Grimsby a royal charter which 'confirmed the traditional privileges derived from a soke' (Gillett 1970, 12). By the 1203 - 04 duty on merchants Grimsby was

assessed at one quarter that of Hull (see above) but more than that of Hedon.

Like other towns such as Hull and Ravenser Odd which evolved in a marshy environment, Grimsby was always deficient in timber for box frame house building, warehouse construction and for boat building. As in Hull and Beverley there is evidence of brick making in Grimsby from the early-1300s.

Barton-upon-Humber (6 on Fig. 9).

By the 11th century the planned settlement had developed into an important trading town, although the port was by then a quarter of a mile west of the town's church and market place.[24] The Haven was probably already canalized with local spring fed streams diverted to the canal head to increase scouring. The founding of a second church (to St Peter's) in the early-12th century, initially dedicated to All Saints and later changed to St Mary, evidences the prosperity of the early medieval town and port. No charter survives but early references to burgage plots suggest that Barton had borough status by the mid-12th century. (I am indebted to Keith Miller for this point and others from his unpublished notes on Medieval Barton).

Fig. 12 View north from modern footbridge over the Haven, nearby on the left were two jetties, one serving the Hessle Haven ferry and the other the Hull ferry (foundations of which now under the extension of the boatyard). All Saints, Hessle spire is showing in the distance.

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[24] See Bryant, G. *The Early History of Barton on Humber* (Barton W.E.A., 1981, revised 1994) for a detailed study.

Fig. 13 View north-east taken from the mouth of Barton Haven, where now stands the modern Water's Edge Country Park building. After 1313 the Hull ferry set off for Blackfriargate Staith in the 'Old Harbour'. The mouth of River Hull located next to 'The Deep' is seen in the distance.

Throughout the Middle Ages and up to the early-19th century Barton remained the south Humber bank terminus for both principal ferry crossings; to Hessle and, after 1315, to Hull (see Figs 12 and 13). Services were provided to high status travelers and, although the dramatic rise of Hull as a port doubtless reduced Barton's trade, its ferry connection with Hull, along with its market and agricultural hinterland, enabled it to retain some regional importance.

South Ferriby (7 on Fig. 9).

Although the smallest of the 12th century Humberside harbours the one (maybe two) at Ferriby[25] had previously existed for the longest time. In the early 20th century 'Tommy' Sheppard pioneered the excavation of the two Romano-British occupation sites on the west and east sides of the Ancholme vale. Thousands of artifacts were recorded from the eastern site

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[25]The name 'South' Ferriby later came into common usage to distinguish two communities – the one on the south Humber bank now lost to erosion and the inland community, where the present village stands (not to distinguish it from Ferriby on the north Humber bank).

at South Ferriby Cliff (listed by Van de Noort and Ellis 1998, 236, compiled from the catalogues of Hull, Baysgarth and Scunthorpe museums). However, Sheppard recorded that even by 1907 there were far fewer finds than 20 years previously, this being because of rapid erosion along this southern 'bend' of the Humber.[26] This Romano-British site was surely the descendent of the harbour closely linked with the Bronze Age ferry and trading site at North Ferriby, evidenced by the 'Ferriby boats' discovered in the tidal shoreline mud of the north bank.

In 1086 Ferriby was recorded as having a church and a ferry (later two ferries, one for each manor). These ferries suggested 'a prosperous trading community that sustained the village for several centuries' (Carey 2000, 3).

Fig. 14 The site of the medieval harbour at South Ferriby. The traditional village site near the base of the scarp slope is in the middle distance.

The western Romano-British site excavated by Sheppard in the 1920s (near to the present Sluice) revealed stone hearths, much pottery and four coins of the 1st century. There was some evidence of pottery kilns to produce the local 'course grey ware' and Sheppard claimed to have found a coracle in which lay a body (inhumation?), but no remains survive.

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[26] A process which also eroded away the 'pleasure gardens' of the surviving, early 19th century, Ferriby Hall.

By the later Middle Ages it seems that South Ferriby's port had moved to a point half way across the Ancholme vale at which point a stone bridge crossed the old, meandering Ancholme channel (see Fig. 14). Thus all three of South Ferriby's trading posts had been detached from the village.

The Upper Humber Estuary.

Although significant long before the 12th century, the trading havens at Brough and Old Winteringham were less so in the Middle Ages. Winteringham (not Old W., and see 8 on Fig. 9) did become a small medieval harbour by virtue of the canalization of the lower reaches of a spring fed stream flowing into the Humber (as at Barton and Beverley). As at Barton Waterside and Beverley Beckside the port was somewhat distant from the early medieval church and village site. The church at Winteringham incorporates some very early building fabric and inland of the port site the survival of two medieval street names, High Burgage and Low Burgage, suggest a place of some wealth.

Certainly sailing craft sailed[27] from Beverley, Hull, Barton and South Ferriby to service the trade of Selby (9 on Fig. 9) and York on the River Ouse and that of Gainsborough (10 on Fig. 9) on the River Trent. There was, for example, to be much competition between Hull and Gainsborough for the right to export lead mined in the Peak District.

The Thirteenth Century.

There can be no doubt that by the late-13th century a substantial port existed along the west bank of the lower River Hull at Wyk in Myton. Indeed the trading station had been evolving in the previous century. The simplistic assumption by De la Pryme, and other early Hull historians, that Hull almost 'sprung into life' once it became a royal borough is understandable in that they didn't have the benefit of Frost's researches on which to draw.

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[27] For some consideration of medieval vessels plying the Humber see Clapson 2005, Ch. 2.

As merchants' warehouses, houses and staithes were built they fronted onto a street that snaked parallel to the right bank of the River Hull, this initially called Hull Street, later High Street. As land was taken up on the east side of Hull Street so some properties were built on its west side, the rear of their burgage plots developing into Lowgate. This evolution was taking place when Meaux Abbey still owned Wyk, but not Aton fee, although the same building development was also happening there. At the southern end of Lowgate there was a market area that Calvert identified as Monkgate 'where in the 13th century the monks (of Meaux) built a courthouse for their tenants' (Calvert 1978, 32). Sixty-nine households were recorded in Hull (Wyk) at the time of the King's purchase in 1293. By transcribing documents related to the royal purchase Boyle suggested that the street plan of the 'Old Town' was already in place although it is tempting to think of the grid-plan of streets west of Lowgate as being a royal implant. The peripheral ditch was almost certainly built after 1293.[28]

The evolving port of Wyk was a source of friction, and not the only one, between the Archbishops of York and the Abbots of Meaux. As Lords of the Manor of Beverley the Archbishops traditionally claimed control over the 'waters of the Hull'. They based this claim on liberties supposedly granted back in the 10th century by King Athelstan to the minster of Saint John of Beverley. Frost's researches revealed that early in the 13th century the right of passage for the Archbishop's Beverley tenants down the central stream of the River Hull was confirmed. The merchants of Hull thus had no right to block the passage of ships from Beverley sailing to and from the Humber. It might seem odd that if an embryonic port was developing on the west bank of the River Hull the Archbishops did not foster a similar development on the east bank in their parish and manor of Drypool. Maybe this might have happened had not in 1213, following a dispute with Saer of Sutton, the then Archbishop transferred his trade to Wyk. Bailiffs

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[28] The famous brick built Town Walls of Hull were constructed between the 1320s and the end of the century. They were defensive in purpose and incorporated a series of strongly built gates. The previous ditch, like the ramparts of Medieval Beverley and Barton on Humber, were more a defining of the town's boundaries and offered little deterrent to invaders. Most of the bricks are thought to have been made at the 'Tilery' sited outside the town walls and near the mouth of 'Ald Hull'. Medieval bricks were often known as 'walling tiles' having more the dimensions of tiles than modern bricks.

overseeing the trade of Wyk were appointed by the Archbishops of York up to 1279. However, in that year royal judges decided that land in Wyk was not part of the 'liberty of St John'. Thereafter the port bailiffs were royal appointees – a necessary prerequisite to the king's purchase of the site.

Already by the early-13th century Hull (Wyk) was an important north-east port, its figures for King John's levy on merchants between 1203 and 1205 being five times that of Hedon and ten times that for Barton (Frost 1827, 97-98). Also at this time Hull was importing tuns[29] of wine from Bordeaux (Gascony still being then ruled by English kings). In 1281 - 82 over 3000 sacks of wool were exported through Hull Haven, the fourth largest figure for any English port. In the same year the Pipe Roll for the New Customs on wool, woolfells and leather showed Hull's trade to be third in volume (for England),[30] lower only than that of Boston and London, the figures for 1286 being similar (Frost 1827, 105). In 1295, 3040 sacks of wool were exported from Hull and in the following year 3024 woolfells (Frost 1827, 108).

Thirteenth century documentary mercantile evidence always used the name 'Hull', presumably identifying the river rather than the emerging town. However, as there seems to have been no other significant trading settlement between Wyk and Beverley it seems reasonable that the figures relate to the trading station of Wyk-upon-Hull.

The question of where 13th century names referred to was one that Frost, Blashill and Travis Cook wrestled with, with questionable success. It seems that as the port expanded so the name of the place came more into common usage than just the name of the River, only then to be dropped once it gained a royal charter? Frost records that in 1278 the Abbot of Meaux petitioned Edward I to have a weekly market at 'Wyke near Mitton upon the Hulle'. After 1299 the name became 'Kyngston super Hull', King's town upon (beside) the River Hull. The term Wyk(e) was dropped and in a sense Edward I was returning to the old convention of referring to the place by the name of the River. It was reasonable to drop the reference to

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[29] These being large barrels of a defined (legal) capacity.

[30] The figures were recorded by the merchants of Lucca. Already Italian mercantile families and companies were controlling Hull's trade (for further details see Gillett and MacMahon 1989, 6). Their influence had declined by the end of the 14th century.

'Mitton' as the king elevated Kingston-upon-Hull to manor status, independent of Myton manor.

Whatever developments were taking place in the 'Villa de Wyk' in the 13th century the berewick of Myton remained 'a large grange, a farmstead … accommodation for lay brethren … with its appendant sheep-cotes, cowhouses and rights of extensive pasturage' (Travis Cook 1890, 58 and see Figs. 7 and 8). The open nature of these extensive grasslands of the lower Hull valley led inevitably to conflict, such as that of the early-13th century, when some residents of Swanland on their adjacent common land were accused of stealing sheep belonging to Meaux Abbey. Magnanimously the Abbot gave the lord of the manor of Swanland 15 marks to erect a fence to separate the respective grazing lands (story told in *Liber Melse* and reported by Travis Cook 1890, 65).

The estuarine alluvial soils of Myton berewick would have produced good quality grass capable of grazing a density of 10 – 15 sheep per acre.[31] Medieval sheep were raised mainly for their wool, woolfells presumably taken from sheep slaughtered for meat. It seems likely that the sheep grazed in the open all year, there seems no evidence of vast enclosures built for winter shelter nor could sufficient hay have been cut from meadows to provide winter fodder. Surely then the main problem would have been soil conditions as sheep are susceptible to liver fluke and foot rot if constantly grazing on wet ground. Maybe there was a high mortality rate among the flocks or maybe already networks of drainage channels had been dug. The saltmarsh of the Humber littoral would have been accessible for summer grazing on the halophytic grass and dwarf brushwood, but unsuitable in winter. However the saltmarsh did provide winter grazing for migratory geese, wildfowl and waders, surely a potential food source that wouldn't have been ignored (for much of the above see Sutherland and Hill 1995, 64 - 65 and 210 - 212).

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[31] The suffix 'cotes' is generally thought to have denoted good summer pastures – the name survives e.g. 'Dairycotes' (the eastern part of Hessle common), Somercotes (in Marfleet parish) and Sculcoates.
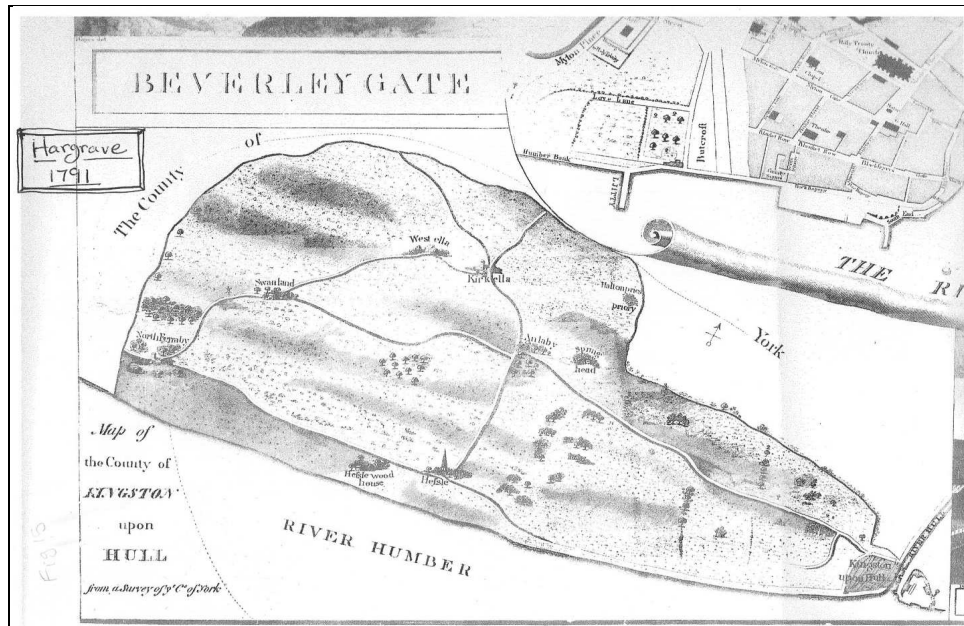
Fig. 15 Part of Hargrave's *Map of the County of Kingston upon Hull, 1791*. This map shows that even at this late date the land of the manor of Myton and beyond remained very open and rural. This sketch map has no scale but the distance 'as the crow flies' from the Old Town to Hessle village is about four and a half miles.

Buildings on Myton berewick would have been few and far between (see Fig. 15). In his translation of Maud Camin's charter Frost found references to an apparently significant building called the 'Aula'. He concluded that this 11th century building, possibly the berewick's moot hall, was replaced by a grange of Meaux Abbey in the 13th century and then again replaced by a manor house built on the orders of Edward II. Travis Cook agreed with the building sequence but decided that all three were on different sites. He thought the 'Aula' might have been a place where from Anglo-Saxon times the steward of Ferriby Manor met the tenants of Myton to receive rents. Travis Cook further noted evidence from the Meaux Chronicle of a 'store house' at Myton built in the 1230s in an enclosure called 'Grangewyk'[32] this was later recorded by ex-Abbot Burton as having been destroyed (see Fig. 8).

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[32] In a predominantly pastoral area a 'grange' (an outlying monastic farmstead) might have been living accommodation for lay shepherds, for shearing and the storage of wool. The term 'stone built' suggests there may have been some arable land in Myton, the grange incorporating a granary. The term 'Grangewyk' is interesting in the context of evolving names.

In the 1290s Edward I acquired the 'manor' of Myton where his son Edward II later built a manor house. However Travis Cook recorded an Inquisition of 1312 which stated that the roofs, walls of the hall, chamber, kitchen and outlying buildings of Myton manor house were all 'in decay' (this five years after Edward II became king)! Also the bridge over the moat needed repairing. When the De la Pole brothers Richard and William acquired the manor of Myton from Edward III they had a new manor house built at 'Tupcotes'. In 1552 Edward VI granted the royal manor of 'Tupcotts with Myton' to the mayor and burgesses of Kingston-upon-Hull.

The 'Aton fee' referred to in early documents must have been a small 'estate' immediately north of Camin fee, beside the River Hull and in the eastern part of Myton berewick (see Fig. 8). The Abbot of Meaux did not purchase the land of Aton fee, but later Edward I did. Aton fee formed the easternmost part of Ferriby parish which was to become the northern part of the 'Old Town'. As such it acquired a separate chapel-of-ease to that of Hessle parish (Holy Trinity) in the form of the original St Mary, Lowgate.

A Note on the Early Medieval churches of the Humberside region.

It is not the intention here to present detailed evidence of relevant churches but to make the general point that medieval churches reflect the history of the locality in their fabric (assuming that that fabric survives).

Apart from some evidence in the fabric of St Andrew's, Immingham and that shown in an illustration of the medieval church of St Peter's, Drypool (in the possession of Hull City Museums and Art Galleries and reproduced in Neave 1991, 56) the most remarkable surviving evidence of Saxo-Norman church building in the Humberside region is the west tower and baptistery of St Peter's, Barton on Humber.[33] Probably already a port in 1086 Barton also had the highest valued ferry in Lincolnshire, the Barton Haven to Hessle Haven Humber ferry crossing having superseded the pre-

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[33] A detailed history of St. Peter's, 'the most intensively excavated parish church in Britain', has recently been published by Prof. W. Rodwell and C. Atkins St. Peter's Church, Barton-on-Humber , Lincolnshire, Vol. 1, Parts 1 and *2* (Oxbow, 2010).

historic Ferriby crossing and the Roman crossings from South Ferriby and Winteringham.

Very little evidence survives of the medieval church buildings for a number of Humber-side parishes. Apart from remnants of an earlier church set into 19th century brickwork and a Norman tympanum set into the apex of the west porch no evidence remains of South Ferriby's earlier church (see above). Similarly, at North Ferriby where only simple representations exist of the church which existed before the present one, built in the 1840s. No picture or fabric evidence survives of Marfleet's medieval church which was replaced in 1793, whilst only a drawing of Drypool's medieval church remains (see Neave 1991, 56). Apart from its location, no reliable evidence exists of St Mary's Sculcoates which was replaced by a Georgian church of the 1770s and for which the earliest surviving reference is dated 1233.[34]

The north door of Drypool church and the upper section of St Peter's Barton evidence 12th century building styles, but it is in the styles of 13th century church architecture that Humberside churches are notable. The early Gothic style was later to be termed 'Early English' with 'Geometric' later in the century. Typical features of the 'Early English' style were; pointed arches, lancet windows, 'stiff-leaf' capitals and 'dog-tooth' ornamentation.

Apart from the upper sections of the crossing tower, the vast church of St Augustine's, Hedon was almost entirely built in the 13th century and reflects the ambitions the Lords of Holderness had for their planned town and port. Similarly parts of St Mary's Barton, and St James' Grimsby, are fine examples of 'Early English' architecture, particularly the south doorways and, at St Mary's the west tower. St Andrew's Immingham and All Saints Hessle also incorporate 'Early English' work of high quality.

Surely the rich 13th century church architecture of the region can be seen to reflect the growing wool trade with the Low Countries. This, and the increasing Baltic trade, was reflected in church building/extension programmes of the 14th century with Holy Trinity Hull, and St Patrick's

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[34] My thanks to Sheila Dixon of the University of Hull for her information on early Sculcoates.

Patrington, being fine examples; the former being the 'earliest major case of the use of brick in England' (Pevsner 1972, 268).[35] Holy Trinity and Patrington churches are also fine examples of the 'Decorated' style of church architecture, it progressing to the 'Perpendicular' style by the turn of the century.

St Andrew's Paull, the nave and tower of Holy Trinity Hull, St Mary's Lowgate and both Barton's medieval churches provide fine examples of the elegant style of architecture employed in the 15th century. Although some 15th century windows were installed in Hedon church the fact that the bulk of the fabric was not later 'modernised' reflects the failure of Hedon's trade to realize its anticipated potential.

Conclusion

The lower Hull valley, like the other estuarine alluvium lowlands of the Humber region, sustained rich grazing pastures once the daily tidal flows were held back by the ancestors of today's sea defenses. Had these tidal defenses been continuous, which in the 12th century they almost certainly were not, a person walking them would have experienced extensive mudflats or the high tide lapping on the Estuary side, and inland expansive grasslands feeding vast flocks of sheep. Wool produced 'on the door-step' was bagged and exported, it being the raw material of a large-scale, capitalistic international trade. Certainly throughout the summer months, the single-mast, single sail trading ship of the day might be seen entering or leaving one or more of the Humber ports virtually every day.[36]

With the exception of Ravenser Odd Humber ports evolved, or were 'planted', on the inlets of rivers leading to the Estuary in order to gain a sheltered harbour. Wyk(e) evolved as a trading station up to the late-13th century by taking advantage of the River Hull inlet, by virtue of its closeness to the open Estuary and because of the deep water channel at

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[35] St James' Sutton also incorporates much early brick and is mostly a product of the 14th century.
[36] Writing of these ships Childs (Childs 1990, 24) writes that they were 'round-hulled sailing vessels, generally described as *naves*, occasionally as cogs, and more rarely as barges and balingers. Ketches, keels, and 'hodulcogs' acted in the Hull and Humber as lighters for bigger vessels'.

the mouth of the River Hull maintained by the flow of the River.[37] Clearly there was a port evolving at Wyk by the mid-12th century, most probably as a trans-shipment point and out-port for Beverley and York. The fact that early Hull developed entirely on water-born trade is shown by the fact that only in the second decade of the 14th century were roads laid out across the land of Myton and Sculcoates to Hessle, Anlaby and Beverley (Gillett and McMahon 1989, 7 – 8). By the mid-13th century Wyk had become a place of residence for some merchants, seamen and those in associated trades. Purchase by the king and the subsequent granting of a royal charter confirmed Hull as an independent port but large scale trading had been going on here for the previous 150 years. The debate about the lower course of the River Hull in the 12th and 13th centuries is interesting in its self but makes little difference to the overall picture.

The historiography of the researches and analyses of Frost, Blashill, Travis Cook and others is fascinating. To be able to stand today at the busy junction of Carr Lane, Anlaby Road and Ferensway and to visualize that here in the 13th century, according to Travis Cook, stood the grange of Meaux Abbey surrounded by expansive grasslands with the warehouses of Wyk in the middle distance to the east (or south if 'Ald Hull' existed), surely cannot fail to excite one's imagination. Travis Cook's determination to reconstruct the early medieval landscape of Myton was admirable, even if sometimes for the modern purist, assumptions were too readily made.

If a foreign seaman sailing up the Humber in the reign of William I could have returned in the reign of Edward I the landscape of the coastal lowlands would have seemed much the same except for the intermittent low sea banks and large flocks of grazing sheep. This commercialization of the north bank would be further apparent from the urban areas which had sprung up at Wyk, Hedon and Ravenser Odd. The sailing ships on the Estuary would by then be those of seamen and merchants, rather than those of invaders.

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[37] By modern standards medieval ships had a shallow draught. If sailing on a flow tide in the Estuary they were probably independent of the deep water channels. Once the tide turned they would have needed to be aware of submarine hazards.

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