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For the first time, abbreviations for counties, languages, county place-name surveys, and other frequently-cited publications can be found in the back of this volume.

The Bibliography for 2017 will appear in *The Journal of the English Place-Name Society* 51 (2019).

Dorking, Surrey

Rob Briggs

Published assessments of the place-name Dorking have noted it has some interesting aspects, in particular the possibility that it derives from a combination of Brittonic and Old English elements. Despite this, a full exploration of the etymological implications of the early attestations of the name has never been offered, and some ‘tricky’ issues skirted around or ignored. This article revisits all previous suggestions and enters new one into the debate, based upon British and continental European toponymy, as well as the archaeology and topography of the Dorking area. Subjecting all of the possibilities to critical evaluation, it finds the exact etymology cannot be established on the strength of the information presently available, but reveals Dorking to be a name formation of much greater complexity and interest than previously considered.

*

At the start of the nineteenth century, the Surrey topographers Owen Manning and William Bray offered a convoluted etymology for Dorking, a small market town situated in the middle of the county (Manning and Bray 1804: 548). They proposed its name to have originated from ‘the *British* word DUR, or DOR, *Water*, compounded with the *Saxon*, ꝥicinȝar, *Inhabitants*’, meaning ‘those who *dwelt* upon the *springs* of *Water*’, and envisaged subsequent reduction **Dorwicingas* > **Dorcingas* to yield the earliest known spelling, *Dorchinges* 1086 DB. The first element they had in mind would seem to be Brittonic **dubro-* ‘water’, which they wrongly believed also comprised the first element of Dorchester Do, a place-name with a complex history whose first syllable ultimately derives from Brittonic **durno-* ‘fist’ (CDEPN 191).

The above etymology may typify the haphazard and often wildly speculative nature of place-name interpretation in the early 1800s, but arguably it is not entirely devoid of merit. By seeing the name Dorking as deriving from a combination of Brittonic¹ and Old English (OE) elements,

¹ Or at least from a non-OE language. Uses of the term Brittonic in this article are as per Coates and Breeze (2000: 8), with specific languages referenced where necessary.

its authors prefigured some of the deductions of many much later (and more methodologically-rigorous) etymological analyses—the historic and present status of Dorking as a town and locally-important administrative centre means that it has featured in almost all relevant national and regional place-name studies (it is, however, conspicuous by its absence from the list of accepted Surrey *-ingas* place-names noted by Insley 2005: 139). Ekwall (1923: 53) aptly opined ‘The etymology is difficult in the absence of OE forms’, although would go on to posit a brace of possible solutions for Dorking in the work in question (discussed below); he would refine these in subsequent monographs. Others have followed suit, by and large repeating these suggestions with little or no supporting discussion.

What no previous piece of published research has done is to explore the implications of the earliest attestations of the place-name Dorking in anything close to the depth warranted by the philological evidence. In order to assess these implications as fully and credibly as possible in this article, a significantly larger corpus of early (but not OE) spellings of the place-name has been assembled. Even brief consideration of the name-forms therein not only serves to amplify the already-apparent shortcomings of one of the two generally-accepted identifications of the first element, but also prompts new doubts about the identification of the second element as OE *-ingas*. Dorking therefore typifies the difficulties in establishing a secure etymology for place-names lacking early or especially-plentiful (published) attestations.

Most of the etymologies for Dorking that will be suggested over the course of this article again make it in origin a part-Brittonic, part-OE name. Inherent in these suggestions is name formation taking place in a linguistic and socio-cultural environment of contact and borrowing from one language (Brittonic) into another (OE). Moreover, if the second element in Dorking goes back to OE *-ingas*, this essentially hybrid construction has social implications that challenge much received wisdom about the migratory and/or colonising origins of the ‘Anglo-Saxon’ groups who bore such names. English place-name studies still lags behind disciplines such as archaeology and history in consistently offering explanations founded on the balanced and integrated critical evaluation of a range of types of evidence. This article will subject the evidence pertinent to Dorking to patient, thorough analysis from multiple disciplinary perspectives, not only in order to obtain a firm handle on its complexities, but equally in the hope that it spurs further research into the origins of this and other names formed in the dynamic onomastic environment of post-Roman Britain.

Introducing and problematising the name data for Dorking

The following spellings attested before 1500 were collated as evidence used in the discussion of Dorking in PN Sr: *Dorchinges* 1086; *Dorkinges* 1180, 1225, 1255, 1241, c.1270; *Dorkingg* 1219; *Dorking(g)(e)*, *Dorkyng(g)(e)* 1219–1600; *Derkyng* 1431 (PN Sr 269). To these can now be added a larger number of other spellings from the twelfth to fifteenth centuries, all of which have been published in editions or discussions of medieval Surrey documentary sources.

Doreking’ [1138 x 47] 1444 (Blair 1980: 119)

Dorchinge 1138 x 52 (Blair 1980: 117)

Dorking’ 1153 x 67, 1191 x 98 (Blair 1980: 116; Franklin 1993: 44, 163), 1235 (Surrey Eyre: 410–11, 415), 1258 x 59 (Hershey 2004: 28, 250), 1263 (Stewart 2006: 27, 119, 313–14)

Dorkinge 1263 (Stewart 2006: 312)

Dorkyng’ 1263 (Stewart 2006: 36, 37 (p), 42, 314)

Dorkynge 1332 (Lay Subsidy: 31)

Dorkyng 1419 (Taxation Returns: 102), 1430 (Taxation Returns: 103), 1440 (Taxation Returns: 104), 1442 (Taxation Returns: 105), 1487 (Taxation Returns: 107)

Two initial points may be made about the combined corpus of name-forms. First, the near-ubiquity of *Dor-* spellings is amplified by the additional attestations, among which forms with a different first vowel are wholly lacking. Second is to note the lack of spellings with a terminal *-s*, the presence of which would be consistent with derivation from OE nominative plural *-ingas*. These two issues will be assessed in turn, ahead of discussing the various possibilities for the identity of the first element and the implications arising from its presence in the OE dithematic formation from which Dorking takes its name.

Before these assessments and discussions, it is worth drawing attention to the form *Doreking*’ [1138 x 1147] 1444. It stands out, inasmuch as it suggests an extra original syllable and hence a different derivation from that indicated by all of the other available attestations. As the second earliest known attestation of the place-name—albeit with the hefty caveat that it is found in a mid-fifteenth-century copy of a charter which does not survive in the original—it could afford considerable etymological insight. Its first element would appear to have parallels in Barking Ess (now Greater London; *Berecingas* [677 for 687 x 688] 16th (S 1246)) and its Sf namesake (*Berechinga* [1029] 12th (S 1051)). Both have been argued to derive from a hypothetical personal name **Berica* now considered to be

based on OE *bār* ‘boar’, with the outcome of *i*-mutation caused by the stem vowel of the original diminutive *-ikan* suffix (Ekwall 1962: 17–18, 51; Dict Sf 7).

Not one but two unattested personal names are suggested here in respect of Dorking as a consequence of the lack of any chronological evidence for when the name was first formed relative to the end of *i*-mutation in OE. Coates (1984) has proposed, on the basis of an analysis of *-ingas* name formations and their lack of *i*-mutated protothemes, that it had ceased by the mid-sixth century CE. There is nothing to preclude a personal name forming the first element of an *-ingas* name (or one with a singular *-ing* ending) also being a creation post-dating the end of active *i*-mutation in OE circa 550 CE. If so, *Doreking*’ might derive in part from an *-ikan*-variant byname **Dorica*, based on OE *dora* ‘bumblebee’. The word is not known to have been utilised in the OE anthroponymicon, but for other invertebrate-derived personal names one need look no further than the prototheme of *Beowulf* (if from *bēo* ‘bee’; see Fulk, Bjork and Niles 2014: 464–65), or else to *Wicga*, twice attested in Mercia in the period 785–845, from *wicga* ‘(some kind of) insect’ (PASE ‘Wicga 1’, ‘Wicga 2’; cf. Baker 2015: 234–35).

If, on the other hand, a personal name with which to explain the first element of *Doreking*’ is to be sought from the period in which *i*-mutation was still in effect in OE, perhaps the strongest possibility would be an *i*-mutated *-ikan* variant of *Dēor* in the sense ‘brave’. In non-Early West Saxon dialects this would yield **Dīorica* (Hogg 2011: § 5.84). A name of this composition could have an early parallel in a personal name recorded in a late copy of a South Saxon charter as *Diozsan* [733 x (747 x c.765)] 14th (S 46; see also Kelly 1998: 37–40, who reconstructs the name as *Diozsa*). If this is a scribal error on the part of the later copyist for **Diorsan*, it would be consistent with an etymology of **Dīorisan*, exhibiting *i*-mutation caused by an **-is-an* suffix and later syncopation of the stem vowel (see Insley 2013: 227). The extra syllable indicated by *Dorek-* points to no subsequent syncopation of the stem vowel, in contrast not only to *Diozsan* but also the early written forms of other *-ikan*-suffix names (e.g. Hogg 2011: § 6.19).

An alternative identification for *Diozsan*, one that takes better account of the terminal <n> that is a notable non-case-dependent characteristic of all three instances of the name in the source text, would be a miscopying of **Diorman* < *Dēorman*, a well-attested personal name, albeit not before the late OE period; among its recorded bearers was a mid-eleventh-century Steyning moneyer, the majority of whose recorded coins bear the spelling *DIORMAN* (PASE ‘Deorman 6’). Of far greater relevance so far as

Doreking’/Dorking is concerned is the single instance of the abbreviated form *DORI* found on a coin produced by a moneyer also named Deorman active in London in the mid-eleventh century. Six other coins attributed to the same moneyer give his name as *DIREMA*, exhibiting an intrusive medial <e> that could also be analogized with the one present in *Doreking*’ (PASE ‘Deorman 4’).

There are various ways of explaining the spelling *Doreking*’ in isolation, but they are very difficult to apply to the other early spellings of Dorking. The coin legend *DORI* is of potential significance because it demonstrates that the sequence /deor/ or /dior/ could be rendered orthographically as <dori> in the mid-eleventh century, and hence that it may have been possible for late OE /i/ here to be equivalent to early ME /e/ as found in *Doreking*’. However, the abbreviated name-form stands alone among the seventy-seven attestations of the personal name *Deorman* and its variant *Deormann* in the PASE database, most of which are also from numismatic contexts. *Doreking*’ thus may well represent nothing more than an isolated orthographical variation. Alternatively, the medial <e> could be a scribal flourish or emendation made under analogical influence from ME *dōr(e)* ‘door(way)’, perhaps introduced when the source charter text was copied in 1444. The MED contains many instances of compounds beginning *Dore-*, *dore-*, the earliest dated example being the byname of Galfridus *le Doreward* 1275 (MED ‘dōr(e), dōr(e (n.(1))’). Either way, the spelling *Doreking*’ in all likelihood provides no especial etymological insight.

Problematising an OE identification for the first element of Dorking

Often the primary etymology for the first element of the name Dorking proposed in past scholarship is the OE monothematic personal name *Deorc*, representing an original byname derived from *deorc* ‘dark, darkness’ (e.g. CDEPN 191). As *Derch*, the name is attested in a brace of Domesday Book (DB) entries for Cheshire (PASE ‘Deorc 1’). It has also been proposed for, among others, the minor place-names Ditsworthy D and Darhill So (*Durkesworth(y)* 1474 and *Durkeshale* c.1250; PN Sr 270). A name of this implication furthermore could be seen as having analogous colour/appearance-related bynames compounded with *-ingas* in place-names not so far distant: Reading Bk (OE **Rēadingas* < **Rēada* ‘the red-haired one’; CDEPN 495) and Basing Ha (**Basingas* < **Basa*, perhaps from *basu* ‘scarlet, crimson, purple’; CDEPN 41; cf. Insley and Rollason 2007: 168 s.n. ‘Basing’).

Developing this long-standing line of argument, it could be argued that the personal name in question was not *Deorc* but **Deorca*, a short-form of

a dithematic name, although evidence for the use of OE *deorc* as an anthroponymic prototheme is wholly lacking. Another unattested possibility might be **Dīorca*, a syncopated form of **Dīorica*, posited and discussed earlier; the ‘quarantining’ of the unique spelling *Doreking* does not preclude **Dīorca* from being the element that yielded the first half of the place-name (it might be added that Breeze 1997 argues OE *dēor* was loaned from Brittonic). What is of pivotal importance is whether any of these personal names would yield the run of spellings presented above. Ekwall (1923: 53) observed the etymology for Dorking involving *Deorc* would entail a vowel change /eo/ > /o/ but did not endeavour to explain this any further. However, the repeated spellings starting *Dor-* are not the expected outcome of *Deorc*, *Deorca*, or *Dīorca*.

Of the above-mentioned personal names, *Deorc* is the only one that is attested, and so the following discussion will largely focus on evaluating its credibility as the source of the first element in Dorking. In both Mercian and Northumbrian dialects of OE, ‘Anglian smoothing’ operated early on to turn the /eo/ diphthong to /e/ when found before a /rc/ cluster (Campbell 1959: § 222; Hogg 2011: § 5.93, 5.96; also Hines 2015: 270). Not only is this at odds with the early forms available for Dorking, it also seems unlikely given its geographical location. Later, in the ninth century if not before, there was a general trend towards the merging of the long diphthongs /ēo/, /īo/ and short equivalents /eo/, /io/, achieved most fully in late West Saxon, where all were written <eo>, but to a significant extent in Mercian as well (Hogg 2011: § 5.157–58). On the other hand, in Kentish, both <eo> and <io> spellings persisted in different and overlapping contexts (Hogg 2011: § 5.160). If the name of Dorking was based on the personal name *Deorc*, this would have produced the hypothetical mid- to late-Anglo-Saxon spellings **Deorcingas* or **Diorcingas*.²

OE monophthongization of /eo/ began somewhat later, in either the tenth or eleventh century (Hogg 2011: § 5.214). It is manifested in all OE dialects other than Kentish, where the long diphthong remained unchanged (Hogg 2011: § 5.210–11, 5.213). For those dialects in which it did take place, monophthongization in speech was to /ø/ (Hogg 2011: § 5.210). The textual testimony for how this was rendered orthographically is very limited. What little there is indicates the most common outcome was a change in spellings of <eo> to <e>, with numismatics exhibiting earlier divergence from previous convention than manuscript sources (Hogg 2011: § 5.210–11).

² For examples of <eo> spellings for /e/ and /io/ in particular phonological contexts in S 1508 of 871 x 889, as well as a cautious revivification of the idea of a distinctive OE Surrey dialect, see Brooks and Kelly 2013: 813.

OE spellings of the /eo/ diphthong using <o> have been identified as occurring ‘Rather less frequently’ (Hogg 2011: § 5.211). A toponymic / ethnonymic example that fits with the tentative chronology of its textual attestation is *W[r]ocen sætna* in Recension A of the so-called Tribal Hidage, of uncertain provenance but dateable on palaeographical grounds to the first half of the eleventh century; the spelling can be compared to a reliably-copied earlier charter attestation (*in*) *Wreocensetun* [855] 11th (S 206) (Dumville 1989; Insley 2006: 199). Perhaps significantly, such orthographical monophthongisation is not attested for OE *deorc* or its derivatives in any entry in the Dictionary of Old English Corpus, and furthermore there is only a tiny handful of instances among the relevant entries in the MED: *dorc* [c.1200?] c.1225 and *dorcke* c.1300 for adjectival *derk* ‘dark’—under which is also to be found superlative *dorkest* [c.1200?] c.1225 for *derkest* ‘darkest’, and the noun *dorknesse* a.1500 for *derknes(se)* ‘darkness’ (MED ‘derk’, ‘derknes(se)').

There is very little OE-period philological material pertaining to place-names in Surrey to bring into the equation, although the somewhat aberrant earliest form of Bermondsey (now Greater London), *Vermundesei* [708 x 715] 13th < OE **Beornmundesēg* ‘Beornmund’s island’, might be noted (PN Sr 16; CDEPN 52). The historic county area was far from unique in seeing the /ēo/, /ěo/ diphthong, where it survived the OE period, represented most frequently by <e> in ME, with far fewer instances of <o> and <u> (PN Sr xxiii–xxiv; Sundby 1950: 78). Particularly notable among the examples of the latter is the byname *le Durk* on record in Elmbridge Hundred in 1279 (Sundby 1950: 73). Spellings with <u> predominate for the ME forms of the other English place-names explained as deriving from *Deorc* or the adjective *deorc*.³ The number of ME spellings of Dorking with an initial vowel other than <o> is tiny (*Derkyng* 1431, *Darkyng* 1538–71; PN Sr 269) and, rather than corroborating derivation from *Deorc*, these may well be explicable as resulting from false analogy with ME *derkinge* ‘twilight, dawn; obscuration, impairment’ (MED ‘derkinge’).

The inconsistencies between the above-mentioned OE personal names and the available medieval forms of the place-name Dorking are not easily explained away. *Deorc* or **Deorca* would not be expected to produce the late OE- / early ME-period *Dor-* spellings, and neither would **Dīorca*. This may well be telling, and certainly the situation invites consideration of the etymology of Dorking from other angles.

³ E.g. Darklake D, *Durkelake* 1498; PN D 1 224. See also Wallenberg 1934: 89–90, for a wide-ranging yet ultimately unsatisfactory discussion of the lost minor name Dorkinghole in Penshurst K, which he concluded signified ‘the hole of the **Deorcingas* (**Durcingas*) “the dark men”’. The name is unlikely to be related to Dorking.

A key inspiration for revisiting the etymology of Dorking has been Coates' perceptive reinterpretation of Tarring Neville alias East Tarring Sx, *Toringes* 1086 (CDEPN 601). For a long time it was viewed as identical in origin to West Tarring Sx, earliest *Teorringas* [941] 13th (S 515), uncontroversially explicable as a personal name **Teorra* + *-ingas* (e.g. PN Sx 194). West Tarring shows a preponderance for *Te(o)rr-* spellings in OE and ME. This is not common to its supposed namesake, for which *Tor(r)-* spellings predominate until the final quarter of the thirteenth century, and even thereafter may represent analogy being drawn with West Tarring (Ekwall 1962: 40; the idea proffered in PN Sx 194, 339, that the two place-names were namesakes but were deliberately 'kept apart' through the use of different first vowels, is scarcely credible). Coates posited that the many <o> spellings of Tarring Neville could betoken its partial descent from OE *torr* 'rock, rocky outcrop', loaned from Brittonic **torr* 'rock-stack, crag' (Coates 1983a: 9; Coates and Breeze 2000: 355). The very similar basis of this suggestion to what has been identified as a primary shortcoming of purely OE explanations of the first element of Dorking confirms the validity of a fresh, open-minded appraisal of its etymology and the context of its formation.

-ingas or -ing?

With or without the problematic *Doreking*', the various additional twelfth- and thirteenth-century spellings presented above are united by their lack of a terminal *-s*. They challenge the generally-accepted status of Dorking as a name derived from OE *-ingas*, and thus its place among several examples from south-east England used by Bailey (2013: 44, specifically citing *Dorkingg* 1219) to illustrate the loss of inflectional endings in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in what by his estimation was 'usually a protracted process'. The predominance of post-Domesday forms without *-s* could be argued to be evidence for Dorking actually originating as a name with an OE singular *-ing* ending, with the minority that do boast appropriate ME *-inges* endings being the products of false analogies or errors on the parts of the scribes of the source documents.

In a short study considering the possibility of the survival of OE dative plural-inflectional endings into ME, Coates (1983b: 20, 22) adjudged two early-recorded Surrey *-ingas* place-names, Binton and Eashing, to be to varying degrees positive indicators for the phenomenon. The greater number of OE and early ME-period attestations of Godalming Sr provide even more consistent support for this hypothesis with the first instance with a final *-s* not appearing until 1154 ((*æt*) *Godelmingum* [?896 x 899] 11th (S 1507), *Godelminge* 1086, *Godelming* [1107 x 1117] 12th, *Godelminges*

1154; PN Sr 184, 195; Jones and Macray 1891: 3). This happens to be the same year in which the earliest published spelling without a final *-s* of Woking, another well-attested Surrey *-ingas* hundred-/place-name, occurs; all previous forms, beginning with *Uuocchingas*, *Wocchingas* [708 x 715] 13th, are consonant with the OE nominative/accusative plural inflectional ending (PN Sr 156; cf. 135). Nevertheless, it should also be noted that some *-ingas* place-names are attested in OE-period sources with more than one case ending, e.g. Cooling K (*Culingas* 808 (S 163), (*æt*) *Culingon* c.959 (S 1211); CDEPN 156).

The fact that known spellings of Dorking with final *-s* are in the minority throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is therefore equivocal evidence so far as ascertaining whether it was originally a singular or plural *-ing* name formation. The number and chronological spread of such forms are not sufficiently atypical when compared with the name data for equivalent place-names as to preclude its acceptance as an original *-ingas* formation. Even so, with the earliest attestations being from an Anglo-Norman context, the possibility remains that it began life as a singular *-ing* name, with the most probable of the available options being OE *-ing²* ‘place, stream, wood/clump’ (EPNE 1 288; CDEPN xlvi). Ultimate proof can only come from the future identification of one or more credible OE spelling, and consequently this article will countenance both possibilities throughout.

Option one: Brittonic or Late Latin personal names borrowed into OE

The majority of *-ingas* name formations preserved as toponyms look to have a personal name as their first element (see Ekwall 1962: 85–86), so it seems reasonable to begin consideration of alternative identifications for the first element in Dorking with non-OE personal names. The likes of Cammeringham (*Camelingeham* 1086) and Threkingham or Threckingham (*Trichinge-*, *Trichingham* 1086) L, recently explained as *-ingahām* compounds based on the Brittonic personal names **Kaduōr*/**Cadmor* and **Tric* (Dict Li 27, 127; Coates 2008: 50–51; Green 2012: 104), provide a reasonable degree of support for the possibility within the context of an uncompounded *-ingas* name.

Various postulations of this sort can be advanced in respect of Dorking. A personal name based upon a borrowing of Latin *dorcās* ‘antelope, gazelle’ seems too far-fetched, despite the evidence that the word was known in Britain by the eighth century, at least in a learned literary context, as demonstrated by Bede’s discussion of it in his *Expositio Actuum Apostolorum* of c.709 (Laistner 1983: 47). Slightly more conceivable would be a monothematic name **Dorc*, **Durc*, derived from an *o*-grade

form of the Proto-Indo-European root **derk-* ‘glance’.⁴ Although unattested, this would have parallels in *Derco*, *Derceia*, and *Dercinio*, recorded personal names from continental Roman contexts (Rivet and Smith 1979: 316; Hübner 1892: 1052 no. 6338ee), as well as the name of legendary Welsh king/hero Drych eil Kibdar < W *drych* ‘aspect, mirror’ (Bromwich 2014: 331).⁵

Another option would be to develop the contention made by a number of scholars, most recently Breeze (1994–95), that a better translation of OE *deorc* in the phrase *mid deorcum næglum* from line 46 of *The Dream of the Rood* would be the same as Old Irish *derg* ‘bloody’, to the extent that the OE word may be a loan from OIr. If a comparable process is to be postulated as part of the formation of the group-/place-name Dorking, then it requires a Brittonic cognate of *derg* to have existed either as an adjective, a personal name, or a group-name to which OE *-ingas* was later added. Irish sources indicate the use of *derg* in anthroponymy was limited to bynames (see O’Brien 2006). There are no examples of uses of OE comparable terms (*blōd/blōdig* ‘blood/bloody’, *drēor/drēorig* ‘blood, bloody’, etc.) in personal names, although *blōd* and *blōdig* are found in a small number of late-recorded minor place-names (VEPN 1 116). Moreover, as discussed above, this particular postulation necessitates monophthongisation of **Deorc* > **Dorc* by the late eleventh century.

For this and the previous two suggestions, there is not a single credible correlate attested in OE anthroponymy, either directly or as an element in toponyms. The status of OE and earlier toponymy as a repository for otherwise-unrecorded personal names is widely recognised and does not need to be rehearsed here. Nevertheless, such are the difficulties in marshalling evidence with which to construct an argument in support of any of the above possibilities that the ultimate effect is to render all of them exceedingly dubious propositions.

⁴ Whence also OE *torht* ‘bright’, well-evidenced as an element in the anthroponymicon and consequently in place-names, including Tortington Sx, *Tortinton* 1086, a possible example of a *Torht* + singular *-ing*⁴ combination with the generic *tūn* (CDEPN 623).

⁵ In this regard, and particularly given the date of the earliest record of the place-name Dorking, the DB spelling *Dorchesyg* for Torksey Li (CDEPN 622) might seem noteworthy. However, it can be safely discounted as a one-off scribal error, for the bulk of available early forms point towards derivation from an OE personal name **Turc*, borrowed from British and the etymon **torco-* ‘boar’ (Dict Li 128; Insley 2002: 163; Green 2012: 122 n. 51).

Option two: Brittonic *Dorce ‘clear, bright stream’

The progenitor of the main published alternative to *Deorc* as to the origin of the first element of the name Dorking was Ekwall, who, in several of his publications (although never with a thorough explanation), posited that it represented a British watercourse-name **Dorce*, meaning ‘clear, bright stream’.⁶ Derived ultimately from an *o*-grade form of the Indo-European root **derk-* ‘glance’, it has been repeated as an option for Dorking in all subsequent place-name dictionaries and other relevant reference works (e.g. CDEPN 191).⁷

In the case of Dorking, Ekwall (ERN 129) contended that the name **Dorce* applied to the stretch of the River Mole south of the Dorking Gap. The authors of PN Sr, who favoured a derivation from the personal name *Deorc*, countered that ‘no proof exists of such an early name for the river’ (269). The Mole (a late back-formation from Molesey near its confluence with the Thames) was previously known as the Emen or Emel; Ekwall (ERN 295) argued this represented an OE name **Āmen* ‘misty, causing mists’, which leaves the requisite space for a lost antecedent Brittonic river-name. Nonetheless, the case against **Dorce* as a lost name for the Mole does have a firm basis in medieval written record. The previous name for the Mole is found attached to stretches of the river downstream of Dorking at Thames Ditton ((*on, andlang*) *emenan* [983] 14th (S 847); PN Sr 4) and upstream of it at Horley (*Emelé* [1331] 15th; Bonner 1927: 135).

One means of reconciling these two positions is by postulating that **Dorce* referred not to the Mole but another local watercourse. By far the most obvious candidate is Pipp Brook, a stream that flows along the northern edge of the medieval urban centre of Dorking. Its name is remarkably late to appear on record, although related local minor place-names and bynames take it back to the fourteenth century (*Pepbroke* 1603; cf. *Puppemulle* 1366, *Pippemulle* 1400; PN Sr 5). As per PN Sr, it may derive from OE or, perhaps more likely, ME *pīpe* ‘water pipe, conduit, gutter’. Smith (2005: 82) postulated that **Dorce* was a ‘Celtic district name’ focused on the Pipp Brook valley. This may have some traction, for the stream and its valley form an axis along which can be found all known early Anglo-Saxon-period archaeological sites and find-spots in the Dorking area: a number of sixth- or early seventh-century artefacts, possibly once grave-goods, from the Vincent Lane area (Morris 1959:

⁶ The most detailed exposition of this is ERN 129; see also Ekwall 1923: 29; DEPN 148; Ekwall 1962: 29.

⁷ Dodgson 1966: 25 saw the first element as a topographical element and in doing so implicitly excluded the possibility of it having been a personal name.

139); a seventh-century inhumation cemetery located at the northern edge of the present town (Rapson 2004); and a brace of stray finds reported through the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS), to be discussed later in this article.

If Pipp Brook does constitute a ME name coined no earlier than the fourteenth century, then the earlier name for the stream might be expected to appear in written sources. So far any such antecedent name has not been identified. Making the case in favour of it reaching back to **Dorce* rests solely on the bynames of Thurstan *de Dork*' and Geoffrey *de Dork*' recorded in two separate entries pertaining to Dorking in the Surrey Eyre Rolls of 1235 (Surrey Eyre 411). The obvious explanation is that they stand for contractions of *Dorking(e)*, but they occur in different contexts in the text: one after two instances of *Dorking*', the other before a solitary instance of the same. In both cases, however, the less abbreviated form of the place-name is used in reference to the location of the events being described, rather than in locative bynames, so there may be a distinction to be drawn.⁸

On the other hand, elsewhere in the 1235 Surrey Eyre Rolls locative bynames derived from towns are not truncated in this way (e.g. William *de Reygate* not **Rey(g)*' [Reigate], and William *de Gudeford*' rather than **Gude(f)*' [Guildford]; Surrey Eyre 282, 285). In addition, the potential ME-era uses of the watercourse name **Dorke* in locative bynames might be compared with Robert *ate Brok*' and Robert *de vpbrok*, both named as Dorking contributors to the 1332 Lay Subsidy (Lay Subsidy 31; cf. Walter *ate Pippe* 1366; PN Sr 5).

Alongside an apparent example of a continental European place-name formed with the same element, Condorcet in France (*Castrum Condorcense* 998; cf. d'Arbois de Jubainville 1895), Ekwall (ERN 128–29) adduced in support of his etymology for Dorking a series of attestations for a minor Wiltshire watercourse he called the Dork, but which is generally referred to in later published scholarship as the Dorcan Stream (Anderson, Wachter and Fitzpatrick 2001: 1 *et passim*; Miller 2001: 34; but not Coates and Breeze 2000: 365, who prefer Dork and categorise it as being of Ancient origin). This rises at Chisledon and flows northwards to a confluence with the River Cole. For a considerable proportion of its course it formed a boundary between estates, hence being recorded in a number of vernacular boundary surveys. The credible OE spellings are as follows:

⁸ Cf. (*ecclesie de*) *Godelm*' 1175 x 1188 for Godalming in an *actum* of Richard of Ilchester, Bishop of Winchester (Franklin 1993: 125).

- (*innan, andlang*) *Dorcen* [901] 16th (S 366)
 (*of, on*) *Dorcyn* [940] 15th (S 459)
 (*innan*) *dorcan* [1047 x 1070] 12th (S 1588—this final record is ostensibly the inspiration for the present-day name).

What has not been interrogated in published scholarship is the potential for a direct link between the name of the stream and the place-name *Durocornovio* (for British **Durocornouion*) found in the Antonine Itinerary (Rivet and Smith 1979: 350). Rivet put forward a robust case for latinised **Durocornovium* to pertain to the Romano-British small town at Nythe Farm, Wanborough, an identification which has been and continues to be widely accepted (Rivet 1970: 57–58; Rivet and Smith 1979: 350; see also Rivet 1980: 15; Gelling 1997: 46; Powell 2011: 115, 117). This superseded the earlier contentions of Ekwall, who authored separate etymological discussions about **Durocornovium* and **Dorce/Dork* (alias Dorcan Stream), but did not countenance a link between them because he considered the former was a non-truncated form of the Ptolemaic place-name *Korínion*, in his eyes an error for **Kornion*, representing the Romano-British name for Cirencester (DEPN 108; this reading has been convincingly reinterpreted by Coates 2013). The authors of PN W (284 n. 1) made no comment on the watercourse-name, but did at least highlight in a footnote that the name *Nidum*, attributed to the Roman town site on older Ordnance Survey maps, was ‘a pure antiquarian invention for which there is no authority’ and not the ancestor of Nythe.

In recent decades, the proximity of settlement site and stream to one another has been commented on (notably by Eagles 2001: 213, 220), and the possibility of an etymological connection between the Romano-British place-name and the various OE forms of the watercourse-name recorded in the late Anglo-Saxon period has been noted in non-specialist writing (BBC Wiltshire 2014). However, the notion of a link between the two names has not been evaluated in toponomastic or archaeological scholarship. While it would be remarkable that a stream of such a name ran very close to the site of **Durocornovium* without it being derived from that toponym, strictly speaking, it is not an impossibility. In order to validate a connection between the two names, careful assessment of the evidence is required.

The lowering of /u/ to /o/ is a development well evidenced in OE-period derivatives of Romano-British or earlier place-names in **duro-*, although there may be an intermediary post-Roman Brittonic **dur* to be reckoned with (Coates 2006: 55). The precise reason or reasons for this change have been the cause of much speculation, and the matter has been profitably

revisited in recent years with reference to the Roman-era names of Canterbury K and Dorchester-on-Thames O. The Romano-British name for Canterbury, *Durovernum* (attested with the affix *Cantiacorum* in the Ravenna Cosmography), is frequently found reused in texts of the seventh century onwards with spellings beginning *Dor(o)-* (see the name data assembled in Carroll and Parsons 2007: 73–79). Jackson (1994: 259–60) believed these to be a product of scribal influence from continental Europe, rather than an Insular linguistic development, although this has since been challenged, with greater credence being lent to the possibility of the sound-change occurring in Vulgar/Late Latin (Carroll and Parsons 2007: 80; Parsons 2011: 130–31).

Partly informing this new approach was Coates' study of the etymology of Dorchester-on-Thames, a known Roman walled small town, the name of which is not on surviving record. Early forms of the historic place-name, beginning with Bede's *Dorcic* [731] 8th (HE 3 7; PN O 1 152), had led Ekwall to posit derivation from a name based on the root **derk* (DEPN 148). Coates, by contrast, uses them to reconstruct a Brittonic precursor **Durocuccium* 'boat fort' (2006: 55–59). Importantly, he argues for the borrowing of the British name into proto-OE happening very early, implying its transmission may have involved speakers of Vulgar/Late Latin. Coates concedes defeat in attempting to find a truly convincing explanation for the shift /u/ > /o/, positing possible analogical influence from the OE noun *dor* in the cases of Dorchester-on-Thames and Canterbury, while acknowledging that this does not account for identical developments in regions in which other languages were spoken, e.g. Drouais and/or Dreux in France < (*in pago*) *Dorcassino* 690 x 691 and *DOROCAS* on a Merovingian coin of similar date < tribal name *Durocasses* (Bruckner and Marichal 1981: 94, 97; Philipon 1909: 75; Prou 1892: 135). Nevertheless, there is a sound basis for accepting the rendering of British **Duro-* (and possibly Brittonic **Dur*) as *Dor-* in the area in which OE was spoken and written.

The remainder of **Durocornovium*, taken to be a tribal name *Cornovii*, is not so readily compatible with the *-en*, *-yn*, *-an* endings of the supposedly-reliable OE stream-name spellings. Indeed, viewed in isolation, it is a series of ME-period spellings of that hydronym which at first sight offers a better fit for *-corn(o)-*. The majority of these can be found alongside a credible OE form in an earlier fifteenth-century copy of a charter dated 901 in the Winchester New Minster archive, and adjudged by several authorities to have at least some basis in a genuine tenth-century text (S 366; the following spellings are taken from BCS 250–51):

OE: (*innan, andlang*) *Dorceri*⁹

ME: (*wythinne, along*) *Dorkerne*

Latin: *ad intra terminus nuncupatum latine angulus tenebrosus anglice the Dorkeherne; per longum Dorkerne*

In addition to the above is the name-form (*to*) *Dorternebroke*, a probable corruption (for **Dorcernebroke?*) of a name-form found in two fourteenth-century copies of a credible diploma of the year 955 (S 568; Ekwall ERN 129; Kelly 2012: 464–68). All the ME spellings are broadly consistent with one another. However, the glossing of the spelling *Dorkherne* with Latin *angulus tenebrosus* ‘dark corner, angle’ confirms false analogy with OE *hyrne* or more probably its ME descendant *hīrne* ‘angle or corner of land’, and this conclusion seems apt to be extended to the other contemporaneous spellings (MED ‘hīrn(e’). A more robust means of proposing a link between the Romano-British and OE names is to posit dissimilation occurring in the second syllable as a result of the influence of /r/ in the first syllable, plus loss of the following unstressed syllables (cf. Coates 2005: 59, for speculations about this process in the case of Dorchester-on-Thames). It is possible that analogical influence was at play here as well, this time from OE *dor*, to cause the retention of the first /r/.

The matter cannot be said to have been settled conclusively here, but, in the hope of more concerted future study of the above names, it has been shown that there are good philological and geographical grounds for seeing the OE *Dorc-*, ME *Dork-* spellings of the name of what is now known as the Dorcan Stream as deriving from the first half of **Durocornovium*. This British element would account for the *Dor-* spellings associated with the OE-period reincarnation of *Durovernum*, the Romano-British name for Canterbury, into the eleventh century (Carroll and Parsons 2007: 79), and of Dorchester-on-Thames through to the present day (with the solitary exception of *Derkecestr*’ [1226] c.1300, doubtlessly representing false analogy with ME *derk*; PN O 1 152). Seeing commonalities between the names of Dorchester-on-Thames and Dorking has a lineage stretching back centuries before Ekwall: John Trevisa, in his ME translation of Ranulf Higden’s *Polychronicon*, appears to have conflated the two in stating ‘*þat citee Dortic oþer Dorkynga, þat now hatte Dorchestre*’ (Book 6, 5 = Lumby 1876: 5). But if Dorking can start to be seen in this new light, and its OE form reconstructed in the most tentative manner as **Dorcing* or **Dorcingas*, how to account for its apparent derivation from **duro-*?

⁹ Miller (2001: 31–34) emends both instances to *Dorcen* on the basis of the other known OE spellings.

Option three: British *duro- ‘fort, walled town’; also ‘enclosed, gated place (of assembly)?’

The Celtic name element *duro- has been the subject of considerable discussion. It is descended from an IE root *dhouro- ‘gate(way) doors’, from which came a plurality of words in Celtic and Germanic languages (Delamerre 2003: 156–57). Translations of British *duro- (which could also be used as a second element, hence the Antonine Itinerary’s *Lactodoro* < **Lactodurum*, now Towcester Nth; Rivet and Smith (1979: 382–83)) tend to be restricted to ‘fort’ or ‘walled town’ (Rivet and Smith 1979: 346; Parsons 2011: 131; Carroll and Parsons 2007: 66, 80, add the sense of ‘stronghold’). Delamerre (2003: 156) has outlined a more detailed sequence of senses for its Gaulish cognate *duro-*, embodying a metonymic shift towards characterising the settlements with names containing the element: ‘portes > marché enclos, place, forum > ville close, bourg’ (cf. ‘gated fort? yard, forum?’ proffered by Sims-Williams 2006: 75). A generally-accepted qualification is that *duro- referred to enclosed or fortified sites on lower ground, as opposed to *duno-, applied to forts or fortified places positioned on hilltops or high ground (e.g. Rivet and Smith 1979: 346; but see also discussion on 274–75 of the same book).

Celtic *duro- is often characterised as having entered the toponymic lexica on either side of the English Channel at a relatively late date (Rivet and Smith 1979: 346). That it was already being used in toponyms prior to the Claudian invasion of Britain of 43 CE is corroborated by Julius Caesar’s reference to *Durocortorum* (Reims, France) and the legend *DVRO* on an Icenian coin of the late 20s or 30s CE (Rivet 1980: 13; Nash Briggs 2011: 89). Rivet (1980: 13) was of the opinion that names beginning *Duro-* were a ‘Belgic linguistic peculiarity’, emerging on the continent and spreading to southern Britain through Belgic migration. This has been challenged, but mainly in terms of the Belgic tribal link, and the clear cross-Channel parallels mean that a connection is still considered ‘plausible’ (Sims-Williams 2006: 308–9).

The frequent records of identifiable *Duro-*, *-duro* names pertaining to settlements with evidence for Roman-era defences but no obvious Iron Age antecedents intimate that it remained a productive name-forming element after the establishment of Roman rule (and hence the Latin language) in Gaul and Britain, with toponymic coinages occurring either through interactions between Roman administrators and vernacular-speaking locals, or at the innovation of Celtic language-speaking auxiliary units (Rivet 1980: 1, 15). Rivet (1980: 15) held up **Durocornovium* as a name which may be a British formation ‘recalling an early Roman garrison’,

quite possibly the *Cohors I Cornoviorum* drawn from members of the Cornovii tribe.

Appropriately (so far as Rivet's argument is concerned), despite an extensive history of excavations of the site of **Durocornovium*, no significant pre-Roman phase has been identified that would point to the name being of late pre-Roman Iron Age date (Anderson, Wachter and Fitzpatrick 2001: 9). By contrast, Dorchester-on-Thames could very easily owe its derivation from **duro-* to the substantial Iron Age bivallate earthworks enclosing a major settlement site at Dyke Hills (Coates 2006: 51). Another name of Late Iron Age coinage may be *Durolevum* = Syndale K. Here, archaeology has shown that Roman activity began in the mid-first century CE, but was preceded by a late Iron Age phase, associated with the cultivation or exploitation of brick earth and 'the possibility that a ditch was dug along the slope of the spur, although its (defensive) function is questionable' (Wessex Archaeology 2003: 24). The association of this linear feature with the place-name is therefore moot, but not out of the question.

It has long been postulated that a Roman roadside settlement on Stane Street, the road between London and Chichester, existed in the area now occupied by Dorking town centre (e.g. Bird 1987: 167 Fig. 7.1). The relative lack of archaeological evidence from the historic urban core of Dorking consistent with a Romano-British nucleated settlement has prompted rethinking of its status, one suggestion being that it was merely the site of a large villa (Bird 2004: 63). This has given renewed interest to an earlier hypothesis that a more likely site for a Roman-period nucleated settlement was to the north of the town at Burford Bridge (Neale 1973; Bird 2004: 43). The idea is founded partly on topographical evidence and partly on the etymology of the place-name as revealed by early spellings, e.g. *Burhgforde* 1311 < OE *burh* 'stronghold' + *ford* 'ford' (PN Sr 81). There may be a connection with the name of nearby Norbury (*la Northbury* 1294; PN Sr 82), but in neither case is there an obvious landscape feature (be it extant, recorded or excavated) that explains the use of *burh*. For this reason, Neale (1973: 209) contended it may be explicable as an OE-period reference to 'an encampment at the ford itself [i.e. Burford] or nearby and that could well have been of Roman origin and still visible to the Anglo-Saxons'.

Other possibilities involving local minor place-names derived from OE *burh* might also be advanced. South-west of Dorking and close to the projected line of Stane Street is Bury Hill (*Burihulle* 1366; PN Sr 274–75). This too is a minor name with a suitable specific element, but no extant or known *burh*-like earthwork. Further south again is Anstiebury Camp, a

large multivallate hillfort of Iron Age date (Hamilton and Manley 2001: 17, 23). Its present-day name is not known in medieval sources but is credible as a compound of the place-name first recorded as *Hanstega* 1086 < OE *ānstīg* or *anstig* ‘?ascent’ with the generic *burh* (PN Sr 270; Gelling and Cole 2014: 66–67). The hillfort was probably constructed on the site of earlier Iron Age or even Bronze Age settlement, and is also the provenance of early Roman pottery, suggesting some form of continued post-Iron Age activity which might admit the retention of a **duro-* place-name (Hayman with Jones 2008; Bird 2004: 29). In both cases, however, the elevated nature of the sites would be more compatible with a name in **duno-*, not **duro-*.

Each of the three possibilities mentioned so far would imply the borrowing and survival of a name formed in **duro-* into the period when the *-ingas* name that became Dorking was formed, followed at a later date by its replacement with OE *burh*. A different chronology can be set out for a fourth, and in many ways more credible, option. This is a rectilinear enclosure cropmark at the foot of the North Downs scarp slope due north of Westcott, a little over a mile to the west of Dorking’s historic centre. Westcott was assessed as a separate manor in DB but was part of Dorking parochially and has a name that intimates a status subordinate to it (PN Sr 273). The cropmark was first reported in print in the mid-twentieth century, when it was interpreted as a Roman marching camp owing to its shape (St Joseph 1953: 82). A Roman dating continued to be favoured until the feature was revealed to be of earlier, Iron Age, origin as a result of limited excavation allied to fieldwalking and resistivity survey work, plus informal periodic metal-detecting which has led to the reporting of a significant number of artefacts (Rapson 2017, superseding Rapson 2001 and 2003). The enclosure has been interpreted variously as a replacement for Anstiebury Camp (Rapson 2003: 7) and as a venue for ritual activity (Bird 2004: 24–25, 140, 159; 2008: 70).

Several facets mark out the Westcott enclosure as a credible candidate to have borne a **duro-* name:

Situation

The enclosure occupied a site atop an easterly-facing spur of raised ground at the end of a low ridge, representing a terrace of river gravel above the Pipp Brook (Rapson 2017: 143). The highest point encompassed by the enclosure exceeds 80 metres AOD, but this is considerably less than the 190+ metres AOD of the North Downs to the north on Ranmore Common, and likewise the 100+ metres AOD of Lower Greensand ridge due south of the site. This would befit the use

of **duro-* as opposed to **duno-* in a place-name describing the situation of the enclosure.

Morphology

Excavations have shown the enclosure ditches were substantial, up to seven metres wide in the case of the southern ditch, with an internal bank, possibly faced in stone (Rapson 2003: 4). This, along with the fact there was only ‘a single 10m-wide entrance midway along the eastern side’ (Rapson 2017: 143–44), tallies with the senses of British **duro-* and its cognates suggested by various authorities, especially concerning physically-bounded space and ‘gatedness’.

Date

A considerable quantity of Late Iron Age pottery sherds was recovered from a trench dug across the eastern ditch, indicating the ditch was formed in the earlier part of the first century BCE, thereby proving it was not a Roman-period creation but one dating from the time when **duro-* names seem to have begun to be coined (Rapson 2017: 153, 160).

In the absence of a thorough survey of all settlements at or in the vicinity of *Duro-*, *-duro* named places, none of the above-mentioned characteristics can be treated as probative of the use of **duro-*, but, individually and collectively, they correspond to present understandings of the approximate date and form of places so-named.

Metal-detected small finds have added a multi-periodic dimension to the story of the Westcott enclosure and its immediate environs, indicating an enduring locus of activity. A Roman Republican denarius dating from 116–15 BCE has been found just east of the enclosure—the same side as the one entrance/gateway—and only a little further away on lower ground are the find-spots of two *denarii* of Mark Antony of the years 41–31 BCE (Rapson 2001: 3; PAS SUR-A0ADE0, SUR-DFB3B5). From the same vicinity came a first-century CE Roman cavalry pendant (Bird 1999). Roman coins and two brooches, together spanning the first to fourth centuries CE, have been found in the same area (Rapson 2017: 143; PAS SUR-257158, SUR-C20E45). These constitute possible threads of continuity between the late Iron Age and Roman periods, a context in which a name in **duro-* could have survived.

Perhaps more significant are the post-Roman finds from the same vicinity which hint at a similar context for survival of the place-name through the transition from British Celtic to Brittonic and its subsequent

borrowing into OE. Currently, two finds are recorded: a small-long brooch attributed to the period 450 x 550 CE (PAS SUR-545C71), and an incomplete pale gold Pada type sceat of c.665 x 680 CE (PAS SUR-2CF753). The brooch is the earliest Anglo-Saxon-period object on record from the Dorking area. It has been explained as a casual loss from along a major routeway (Harrington and Welch 2014: 100), but its find-spot is distant from Stane Street and careful consideration of its precise provenance suggests the brooch is an element of a much more interesting picture of continuous or repeated use of the environs of the late Iron Age enclosure, perhaps for secular and/or religious assembly, distinct from the one and possibly two burial sites further east down the Pipp Brook valley (Rapson 2004; Morris 1959: 139).

Any etymological explanation for Dorking involving British **duro-* must reckon with the medial <c(h)> or <k> present in every identified medieval and modern spelling. Rivet and Smith introduced the possibility of a diminutive **duroco-* ‘small fort’ as one means of accounting for the spelling of the name *Durocibrivis* (Dunstable Bd). Watts (CDEPN 191) applied this suggestion to Dorchester-on-Thames, postulating an etymon of **Duro-c-* for the Bedan spelling *Dorcic*. This proposal was rightly criticised by Coates (2006: 54) for not taking account of the second syllable in *Dorcic* and other early spellings—although it is not wholly incompatible with the DB and later philological evidence for Dorking. Watts furthermore failed to cite Rivet and Smith’s (1979: 513) own advocacy of **Duro-c-* in the context of a brief appraisal of the name of Dorchester-on-Thames (or rather of *Dorocina*, its supposed Roman-era name asserted in the fictive *De Situ Britanniae*), despite it being an obvious inspiration for his conjecture.

Another difficulty with accepting the existence of **duroco-* is that there is at most one recorded instance of **duro-* being used to form a simplex place-name (the questionable *Duru(m)* > Dur-Yakin, now Tel-al-Lahm, Iraq; for name data, see Sims-Williams 2006: 76–77). In this regard, the element stands in contrast to **duno-*, for which there are two credible British examples in the place-name *Dunum* < British **Dūnon* (Rivet and Smith 1979: 344). Recently, it has been cautiously posited that the aforementioned Icenian numismatic legend *DVRO* could stand for a Latin locative singular inflected form of a simplex place-name **Duron* (Nash Briggs 2011: 90–91). This seems unlikely for the reason given above, and the name-form can be analogised with the abbreviation *DORO* (for *DOROVERNIA*) used on a number of coins struck in Canterbury in the later ninth century (Carroll and Parsons 2007: 74; also Nash Briggs 2011: 89, who goes on to note it is quite possible that the Icenian inscription

represents one part of a compound place-name, **Canidurum*). Therefore, the notion of a diminutive simplex toponym **Durocum* lying behind the name of Dorking has little of substance in its favour.

Acceptance of *Dorcen/Dorcyn/dorcan/Dorcan* as reflexes of **Durocornovium* opens up a related but very different means of explaining the stem of Dorking. The sequence <Duroco> is common to both **Durocornovium* and *Durocibrivis*. In the case of the latter, the first element of the name has also been identified as Brittonic **duroco-*, a cognate of the attested Gaulish *duorico-* ‘portico’ (Rivet and Smith 1979: 349). It is not impossible that the term could have been used in the formation of a simplex place-name, but there is no identified parallel for this in Britain. Moreover, the credibility of a standalone portico is dubious from an architectural standpoint. Therefore, the philological case admitting the possibility of such a derivation is comprehensively outweighed by a broader consideration of its credibility.

A more tenable solution lies in accepting that Coates is probably right to read Rivet and Smith’s **Duro-c-* not as a diminutive, rather a combination of an initial **Duro-* with a second element beginning with *c-* (Coates 2006: 54). Thus, the <c(h)>, <k> in attestations of Dorking would bear witness to a truncated compound place-name made up of **duro-* + a second element **c-* that was borrowed into OE via Brittonic and underwent significant reduction, to the extent that the second element cannot be identified with any degree of conviction. Nonetheless, it is surely sufficient to negate the idea that the antecedent toponym was one in **-duro*, i.e. as the terminal element, as this would require it to have been an unwieldy tripartite name (i.e. element + **duro-* + element beginning *c-*) for which there is no parallel.

A potential analogue for the more straightforward explanation is Dorn Wo/Gl, the site of a ramparted Roman roadside settlement (McWhirr 1981: 60–62). It has *Dor-* spellings stretching back into the OE period—earliest *Dorene* [963] 12th (S 731)—for which Ekwall tentatively introduced an etymology of British **Duronum*, based upon a Gaulish place of the same name (now *Étrœung* in France; DEPN 148; cf. Sims-Williams 2006: 77, for the revived place-name *Duronia* in Italy).¹⁰ If Ekwall was broadly accurate in his speculation, then Dorn exhibits far less reduction from **Duronum* than *Dorcan* does (and likewise its ancestors) if it is derived from **Durocornovium*. Such is the lateness and meagreness of the evidence relating to Dorking, however, that it is not possible to establish

¹⁰ It is too much of a stretch to associate Dorn with the name *Dolocindo* in the Ravenna Cosmography, which Rivet and Smith (1979: 348–49) reconstructed as **Durocintum* and placed ‘apparently not far from Gloucester’.

the level of reduction of an antecedent place-name—if this line of interpretation is applicable at all.

Synthesis

As was highlighted in the introduction, the early attestations of Dorking throw up not one but two fundamental issues: the identification of the first element of the name, and the question of whether it was a singular *-ing* or plural *-ingas* formation. This makes the onomastic analysis of Dorking a much more complicated enterprise than hitherto admitted. Above, various possibilities regarding the first element have been presented and evaluated, so here the focus will turn to the level and quality of support for their use in combination with *-ing* and *-ingas* endings provided by other recorded place-names and group-names. Particular attention will be paid to the use of Brittonic elements in equivalent place-name formations.

The identification of the first element of Dorking as the OE monothematic personal name *Deorc* needs no further discussion beyond what was offered much earlier in this article, at least not so far as the likelihood of its combination with *-ingas* is concerned. In some ways this is the orthodox interpretation, corresponding as it does to the very common formula of OE personal name + *-ingas*. Much the same could be said of the alternatives **Deorca* and **Dīorca* introduced above; criticisms that these personal names are unattested and thus dubious can only go so far given that the same is true for the first elements of a substantial number of other OE *-ingas* names and is first and foremost a consequence of patchy textual survival, not the quality of the onomastic analyses in which such solutions have been hypothesised.

There is ample evidence for *-ing*² name formations being derived from OE personal names. The Kentish evidence is especially rich, as Ekwall (1962: 218–23) noted. An early-recorded example is Scotney Court in Lydd, K, formerly (*ad*) *Bleccing* 774 (S 111), probably a stream-name incorporating the personal name **Blecca* (a Kentish form of the attested *Blæcca*); Ekwall (1962: 184) was forthright in stating that direct derivation from OE *blæc* ‘black’—broadly analogous with the meaning of *deorc*—‘is not to be thought of’ here. A compound of the adjective *deorc* + *-ing*² has analogues in recorded toponymy, notably Deeping Li (e.g. *Depinge* 1086) and Weeting Nf (e.g. *Watinge* [1042 x 1066] 12th S 1051), from OE *dēop* ‘deep’ and *wæt* ‘wet’ respectively (Ekwall 1962: 200). The latter possibility for Dorking would be particularly appropriate for a watercourse like the Pipp Brook, hence ‘dark stream’ or such like, paralleled by the Burghal Hidage stronghold-name (*to*) *Eorpeburnan* [?10th] 11th < OE *eorp* ‘dark’ + *burne* ‘stream’ (Dodgson 1996: 98).

None of the above possibilities readily accounts for the historic *Dor*-spellings of the place-name; for example, in normal circumstances *Deorc* should have yielded ME **Derchinges* etc. Complex explanations can be constructed to explain the available early written forms, but they rely on emphasising exceptions to a rule, rather than the rule itself. The only exception to this pattern is monophthongisation that took place as a result of early and lasting false analogy with OE *dor*. In support of the general idea of analogical influence perhaps arising from the local topography, it is worth noting Dore WRY—(to) *Dore* in the annal for 827 in MSS A–E of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, with MS A of c.900 being the earliest (Bately 1986: 42; cf. Latin (*ad*) *Dorem* in MS F; Baker 2000: 62)—a name generally understood to signify ‘door, narrow pass’ in reference to ‘a pass on the ancient boundary between Mercia and Northumbria’ (CDEPN 191). Dorking sits at the southern end of the Mole Gap, cut through the North Downs by the River Mole, and it is not difficult to imagine that such a major feature of the local topography might have exerted some influence over at least one adjacent group- and/or place-name. Nevertheless, this would necessitate the reanalysis and re-segmentation of **Deorcing*, *-ingas* as OE *dor* + *cing*, *cingas* ‘king, kings’, which is scarcely credible as neither compound makes any sense—at least not without positing some kind of local legend for which there is no shred of evidence.

Although never explicitly stated, the main previously-published alternative explanation of the first element in Dorking’s name, as an erstwhile Brittonic hydronym **Dorce*, does not suffer from the same explanatory shortcomings. Furthermore, a name comprised of **Dorce* + *-ing*² is credible in having several very probable parallels of an originally Brittonic watercourse-name suffixed by OE *-ing*. Notable examples are Douling So (remembering an earlier hydronym *Duluting* [705 x 706] 10th or 11th (S 248)), perhaps based on a cognate of W *dylad* ‘flood, deluge’ (Coates and Breeze 2000: 90–92; compare with the less conclusive speculations of Ekwall 1962: 196; and CDEPN 192), and Glynch Brook Wo ((*of, on*) *Glencing* [963] 11th, S 1306), perhaps Brittonic **Glanic* < Celtic root **glano-* ‘pure’ (DEPN 199; Ekwall 1962: 197). Others may be identified within longer compound names, e.g. Cowan Bridge La (*Collingbrigke, Collingbrige* [c.1200] 1268), perhaps incorporating a much earlier stream-name **Colling* related to Primitive Welsh (PrW) **coll* ‘hazels’ (CDEPN 162–63).

Similar evidence can be adduced to add weight to the argument for Dorking to derive from a combination of **Dorce* + *-ingas*. Amongst the non-OE protothemes postulated by Ekwall in respect of *-ingas* name-formations used as toponyms, the largest subset (a total of three examples)

relates to rivers. These are: Avening, Gl ((*to*) *Æfeningum* [896] 11th (S 1441); first element PrW **aβon* < Brittonic **abona* ‘river’: Ekwall 1962: 48); Loddon, Nf (*Loth-*, *Lotninga*, *Lodinga* (hundred) 1086; first element Brittonic **Lutna* ‘muddy river’: Ekwall 1962: 59; CDEPN 378–79); and Ulting, Ess (*Vltingam* 1086; first element Brittonic **Ult*, of uncertain meaning but cognate with the French river-name Lot, earlier *Ulda*; Ekwall 1962: 25). The whole matter of Brittonic hydronyms being retained in OE and receiving singular or plural *-ing* suffixes warrants much more detailed investigation, but the pattern is already sufficiently established to permit either scenario to be countenanced in the case of Dorking.

For all the suitable correlates, however, the likelihood of **Dorce* having derived from a root **dork-* has been greatly reduced by closer inspection of its two other supposed instances in Britain. Extending the work done by Coates on Dorchester-on-Thames (< **Durocuccium*?) to the Dorcan Stream strongly suggests that the latter preserves (in a much-reduced form) the name of the proximate Romano-British small town of **Durocornovium*. With there now being archaeological evidence for a Late Iron Age enclosure at Westcott apt to be identified as the kind of site that might be given a name in **duro-*, none of the three British examples of **Dorc(e)* names suggested by Ekwall seems to sustain interpretation in the way he believed. But to reject the notion of an *o*-grade form of the Celtic root **derk-* in British or Brittonic is one thing; to uphold the new notion of the first element of Dorking going back to a toponym in **duro-* is quite another. Is there adequate evidence for compounds of Romano-British toponyms, directly attested or otherwise, with OE *-ing* and *-ingas* endings?

To take singular *-ing*² first, it must be conceded that the correlate evidence is meagre. Smith (EPNE 1 286) noted the glossing of Latin *Riphaei montes* with *Riffeng ðam beorgum* in the late ninth-century OE *Orosius*, but the root name is of Greek origin and was limited to geographically-indistinct literary usage. A highly speculative suggestion of an example in English toponymy would be Dinting Db (*Dentinc* 1086), tentatively connected by Ekwall (1962: 201–2) with the simplex names Dent WRY (*Denet* c.1200) and Dent Cu ((*mons*) *Dinet* c.1200). Their common element is possibly PrW **Dinnéd* < Brittonic **Dindeto-*, *-ēt(i)ō* ‘hill’ (CDEPN 184). An extra layer of interest is added by arguments that these two names share an element with the early-recorded (*in regione*) *Dunutinga* [712 x 715?] 12th (Wilfrid: Chapter 17) < OE **Dunutingas*. This group-cum-district-name is possibly related to Dent in Yorkshire, and by implication with nearby Ingleborough. It is a moot point whether the first half of the name stands for the prominent hill or a place of active or

remembered human activity; the uppermost heights of Ingleborough are covered by the remains of a large and perhaps regionally-significant Iron Age hill fort occupied until the first century CE, so both may be considered feasible (Ekwall 1962: 77; Higham 1999: 63, 68–70; CDEPN 184).

The body of evidence supportive of an *-ingas* name-formation incorporating a reflex of a Romano-British place-name beginning **Duroc-* extends a little further beyond **Dunutingas*, but not a great deal. A rare toponymic example with a run of very early spellings is Glastonbury So (e.g. *Glastingabirg* [682] 16th (S 237), *Glestingaburg* 732 x 754; Tangl 1916: 224) incorporating a group-name **Glæstingas* postulated to be from a British-Latin place-name *Glaston(ia)* that probably went back to Celtic **glasto-* ‘blue, green; woad’ (EPNE 1 203; Cox 1975–76: 33; CDEPN 251–52). Considerably more common are what seem to have been entirely literary formations, i.e. they did not become demonstrably attached to a place; hence *Eoforwicingas* in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle annal for 918, ultimately derived from Romano-British *Eboracum*, but clearly based on the OE emporium-name *Eoforwic* (EPNE 1 300; CDEPN 711; Rivet and Smith 1979: 356–57), and *Dalreadingas* for Latin *Dalreudini* ‘people/inhabitants of Dál Riata’ in the OE version of Bede’s HE (I.i; Langenfelt 1920: 59).

Perhaps rather closer in scale to Dorking is the district-name Archenfield He, recorded earliest in MSS A–D of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in forms beginning with (*on*) *Ircingafelda*, (*wið*) *Ircingafeldes* s.a. 918 (originally 914, and then 917: Bately 1986: 65). The first element is agreed to derive from the Romano-British place-name *Ariconium*, originally pertaining to the Roman settlement at Weston under Penyard, transmitted into OE via PrW—the district is on mid-twelfth century Welsh record as *Erchin*, *Ercincg* (CDEPN 16; Coates and Breeze 2000: 304; other spellings are reproduced in Jackson 2012: 30; see also Petts 2012: 133–34). The Chronicle attestations of Archenfield would seem to represent assimilated forms of OE **Ergingingafeld* (from a group-name **Ergingingas*), with later loss of the *-inga-* element by the end of the OE period (hence *Arcenefelde* 1086; Rivet and Smith 1979: 257–58). Here again, it could be argued that the OE-period forms are no more than literary variants, but this must be set against the not-inconsiderable number of enduringly-attested *-ingafeld* place-names (Gelling and Cole 2014: 276).

Discussion

It has been shown above that all of the suggested identifications of the two elements that make up the place-name Dorking are, to varying extents, compatible with one another. Therefore, in order to seek the most probable etymology for Dorking, the strengths and in particular the weaknesses of each suggestion will now be revisited. Careful reconsideration of this kind allows most options at hand to be rejected or called into question, and the one that emerges from the process with its credibility most intact will be explored in even greater detail thereafter.

Arguments for the continued favouring of OE *Deorc* (or of a personal name like **Dīorca*) as the first element must rely on the presumption of an unusual outcome of Late OE monophthongisation to account for the many spellings beginning <Dor>, very probably in concert with analogical influence of the OE noun *dor* (as entertained by Coates in respect of Dorchester-on-Thames, albeit qualified by the likelihood of there being a better explanation in view of the broader Celtic linguistic context). In the case of Dorking, however, it would entail the reanalysis of the name as a compound of scarcely-credible meaning. Preference of derivation from a Brittonic river name **Dorce* ‘clear, bright stream’, meanwhile, founders if it is seen as being a product of an *o*-grade form of the Celtic root **derk-* in British or Brittonic; now credible alternatives have been found for the other two supposed occurrences in Britain, in all likelihood there was no such form.

Two further possibilities are innovations of this article. A Late Latin and Brittonic personal name (e.g. **Dorc*, **Durc*) might be countenanced on the basis of observable trends in *-ingas* name formation, but none of the options has any equivalent in British/OE toponymy, to the extent that it is not possible to construct a serious case for any of them. A link with a truncated compound name containing British Celtic **duro-* plus another element, unidentifiable beyond it having *c-* as its first letter, generating an OE reflex **Dorc*, is able to sustain extended exploration. Yet it too has shortcomings, notably in the credibility of the hypothesis that there was a place in the Dorking area to which a name in **duro-* was attached.

The aforementioned options must be set against a second criterion: compatibility (in the sense of having some kind of parallel in recorded names) with OE *-ing* and *-ingas*. Dorking has always been treated as an *-ingas* name (unless its absence from Insley 2005: 139 is tacit rejection of its credentials by one scholar), but the testimony provided by the enlarged corpus of its early written forms is insufficient to ascertain whether the name is based on a singular or plural ending. Therefore, both endings must be considered possibilities. It is also the case that most of the candidates

for the first element of Dorking can be analogised with those of names recorded in OE-period or slightly later written sources.

Because the idea of an OE prototheme **Dorc* < Romano-British place-name **Duroc-* has not been advanced in print before, and might be characterised as less obvious than the other main possibilities, it is worth reviewing in greater detail. It has the advantage of an archaeological correlate of appropriate date, form, and situation: the Late Iron Age enclosure near Westcott. One criticism might be that citing the Westcott enclosure as the inspiration for a **duro-* name flies in the face of the circumstances of other recorded place-names containing the same element, which tend to be Roman-era fortified towns or roadside settlements. The premise of an unrecorded Brittonic **duro-* name is far from incredible. It is clear that such a name could have arisen in the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age, but would only be recorded in something approaching its original form if the settlement was within the conspectus of one of the handful of surviving texts that attest the vast majority of known Romano-British place-names, or in a limited range of other circumstances. This happened in the case of the Roman small town of **Durocornovium*, but not for the similar settlements at Dorchester-on-Thames and Dorn. The Westcott enclosure lay about one mile west of Stane Street, an important Roman road between the urban centres of *Londinium* (London) and *Noviomagus* (Chichester), but not one of the routes recorded in the Antonine Itinerary or Peutinger Table. Short of the future discovery of epigraphic corroboration of a **duro-* place-name in the Dorking area, there is no way of being able to prove that it is the element behind the historic and present-day *Dor-* spellings of the place-name.

The putative **duro-* name responsible for the first element of Dorking would have to have survived throughout the Roman period and into the post-Roman period in order for contact with and borrowing by OE speakers/name-coiners to have occurred. Its retention suggests its attachment to an important place or social institution. This borrowing may have been as a place-name (as seems to have been the case for Dorchester-on-Thames); a watercourse-name (cf. **Durocornovium* > *Dorcen/Dorcyn/dorcan* > Dorcan Stream); or a social-group-name (Gaulish *Durocasses/Dreux*). These categories are not mutually exclusive. The evidence of **Durocornovium* and the OE precursor(s) to the name Dorcan Stream hints that a Romano-British place-name could be reattributed to a local watercourse. If Dorn is indeed derived from **Duronum*, then the Romano-British name was perhaps a combination of **duro-* and the **-ōn(o)* suffix; interestingly, the latter was often used in the formation of tribal or group-names (see Rivet and Smith 1979: 277, 301).

This echoes the Gaulish tribal name *Durocasses* cited earlier, which in turn has a solitary definite British analogue in *Durotrages/-triges*, the name of a major Iron Age tribe of south-west Britain (Rivet and Smith 1979: 352–53). Any equivalent social group-name lying behind the first element of Dorking, it must be added, would have been of significantly lesser size and status.

Two scenarios can be sketched out to explain the evolution of the place-name. In both, a place-name in **duro-* was first coined and attached to the location of a Late Iron Age enclosure. Crucially, this persisted in the local toponymicon into the post-Roman period. There is also evidence, albeit limited, that points to this location retaining some kind of significance as a place at which people were present and lost (or deliberately deposited?) items of material culture between the fifth and seventh centuries CE. Owing to this significance, the first scenario sees the name subsequently becoming the eponym for a wider area, whether defined by the watershed of the Pipp Brook valley or the boundaries of what would become the medieval parish of Dorking. It was from this broader, ‘territorial’ attribution that the inhabiting **Dorcingas* derived their group-name.

The second scenario envisages the name for the Westcott enclosure becoming attached to the nearby Pipp Brook at a point in time subsequent to its original coinage. The line of the southern ditch of the Westcott enclosure is about two hundred metres from the Pipp Brook (and would have overlooked it from atop the ridge on which it sat), closer than the Dorcan Stream ever comes to the site of **Durocornovium*. This hydronym was loaned into OE, subsequent to which it gained an *-ing²* ending, perhaps in order to emphasise or clarify that it was the name of a watercourse. The resultant **Dorcing* became the name by which the wider territory/estate became known, but, owing to a dearth of other OE *-ing²* major place-name formations in the surrounding region, in written records it was frequently mistaken for an *-ingas* name formation and rendered with a terminal *-s*.

Permutations on the above can also be entertained. For example, the sense of OE *-ing²* as ‘place’ could be hypothesised to pertain in this conjunction to the Westcott enclosure site and its immediate environs, given that it is the provenance of so much Late Iron Age to early medieval material evidence. This might have produced a group-name **Dorcingingas* > **Dorcingas* through loss of the rather confusing and perhaps redundant medial element. Nor can it be ruled out that **Dorcingas* might have been an elaboration of an existing non-OE social group-name. On balance, this has fewer correlates to back it up than toponymic alternatives, but the strong possibility that Dorking as an historically-attested name represents

an *-ingas* group-name formation must not be ignored. If it does have some bearing, then it has immense implications for the lineage of the **Dorcingas*, suggesting continuity in name and some form(s) of group identity that might even have stretched across several centuries prior to the coinage of the OE name.

Ultimately, a blend of the two above might be admitted, maybe even preferred, as a means of best explaining the complexities of the evidence. In this reading, the Romano-British place-name, by virtue of proximity, came to be used as a hydronym, one that in the OE period then became the basis for an *-ingas* group-cum-place-name—either directly (as per the trio of Brittonic river-name + *-ingas* formations) or via a district-name (for which Archenfield would form a parallel, albeit via the direct borrowing of the pre-OE place-name in question). It is worth noting that where such names have been identified in other English place-names, e.g. in the specifics of Leicester (< **Ligore*) and Worcester (< **Weogoran*), these tend to derive from earlier river-names (Rivet and Smith 1979: 496; CDEPN 468, 700). The watercourse-name may have endured into the thirteenth century, when possibly it is glimpsed in the byname *Dork'*, although this lacks the *-ing* ending and as such is exceedingly equivocal evidence.

Conclusions

It is not possible to be certain as to the true origin of the name Dorking—at least not on the strength of the evidence assembled and analysed over the course of this article. What is certain is that Dorking has not been well-served by the authors of previous published etymological accounts of its name. At best, they chose to note in passing the implications arising from the name data before them; at worst, to ignore them altogether. Consequently, the assembly and critical assessment of a much larger number of medieval attestations of the place-name has served to weaken rather than strengthen previous suggestions. There remains a need for further research into Dorking, certainly in an etymological capacity, but also in terms of some of the broader implications of this study.

The notion of the first element of Dorking being one of non-OE origin should come as no surprise. Not only has Ekwall's suggestion of a river-name **Dorce* been treated favourably (if unquestioningly) by most subsequent accounts of the name, but toponomastic scholarship has identified a sizeable number of singular *-ing* place-/river-names and *-ingas* group-names for which there are overwhelming grounds for the names to be formed using names or words borrowed from Brittonic. This raises an important issue, at least so far as the *-ingas* names are concerned.

A feature of the vast majority of published scholarship on OE *-ingas* group-/place-name formations is that it is couched in traditional conceptions of the Anglo-Saxon migration and settlement of post-Roman Britain. This applies most directly to the line of argument that *-ingas* place-names represent the settlements of some of the first groups of Germanic immigrants to reach British shores, propounded by a succession of influential scholars from J. M. Kemble in the mid-nineteenth century (especially Kemble 1849: 64–71) through to Ekwall in the revised 1962 edition of his *English Place-Names in -ing* (and that has enjoyed a half-life in more recent contributions to OE place-name studies by some German scholars: Piroth 1977; Kleinschmidt 2003). However, it also inflects the current prevailing interpretation of the date and background of OE *-ingas*, *-inga-* toponyms ushered in by John Dodgson (1966: 19, in collaboration with Audrey Meaney), who concluded they were products of ‘a colonizing process later than, but soon after, the immigration-settlement’ that he took to be evidenced by a dearth of ‘early pagan-burials’ (see Kuurman 1974–75: 35, for a comparable conclusion). The issue is that *-ingas* names with a first element identified as being of Brittonic origin—or at least from a non-OE language—have not been, and arguably cannot be, adequately explained in terms of the migratory-cum-settlement model (if it can be accorded such a unitary identity).

These names can be interpreted as betokening some form of continued ‘British’ as opposed to ‘Anglo-Saxon’ social identity, whether primary or residual. The notion that they might all stem from non-Brittonic Celtic sources can surely be discounted; the most logical explanation of the bilingual constitution of these names, particularly those with topographical protothemes, is that they were not group-names brought from the continental homelands, but were instead geographically British coinages. Those responsible for their creation were therefore choosing to articulate some level of ‘British’ identity of the eponymous groups as opposed to any real or imagined ‘Germanic’ or ‘Anglo-Saxon’ migrant origins (cf. Green 2012: 104).

A recent study of the OE place-name element **funta* (Hawkins 2016) repeatedly underscores that its borrowing, via Brittonic, from Late Latin *fontāna* was a consequence of there being ‘a space’ in the OE toponymicon that needed filling, perhaps arising from the special significance of the springs to which the word ultimately pertained. The same could be said of the retention and adaptation of individual Brittonic hydronyms. Arguably, however, it is best not to see the borrowing/use of Brittonic elements in *-ingas* group-name formations as directly analogous to **funta*. Nonetheless, the process entailed choices being made, both in terms of the

selection of the constituent elements, and their compatibility. It seems unlikely in such circumstances that a Brittonic element, be it a personal name, toponym, or appellative, would be borrowed simply to ‘fill a gap’. Instead, it must have held particular significance over and above all other possibilities at the level of the social group that chose to become the eponymous *-ingas*—or to those outside the group applying a name to it.

Future research could address some fundamental points that for now remain unclear. It has been argued above that the first element of Dorking could bear witness to great continuity in local social memory, but also that the place-name is the end product of a complex, multi-phase developmental process. Does the use of an element of non-OE provenance make the compound-name formation contemporary with or later than ones of wholly-OE composition? Taking his cue from A. H. Smith, Dodgson (1966: 2) argued that *-ingas* names with ‘a topographical term or older place-name’ as a first element could have been formed at any time in the OE period, whereas ones with a personal name for a first element were always of earlier coinage. Certainly, variants like *Centingas* ‘people/inhabitants of Kent’ look very much like textual creations of the later Anglo-Saxon period (see Langenfelt 1920: 59). But ‘topographical’ *-ingas* names should not necessarily all be interpreted thus. Not only is *Dunutinga[s]* on early eighth-century record, it also occurs in a chapter of Wilfrid’s *Life* describing events of the years 671–78. Ideally, before reaching any general conclusion, the factors pertaining to each place-name of this subtype would be examined in order to reach a judgement as to the date of its coinage. As Dorking shows, however, when the corpora of evidence are not substantial, this is a far from straightforward exercise.

Another key issue is the sense(s) of *-ingas* in names in which the stem is a topographical element as opposed to a personal name. In names of the former type, it seems difficult to believe the ending carried the same patrilineal significance as would be the case if it was the plural of *-ing*³, ‘sons/heirs/descendants of’. If there were a deeper significance than identifying a defined population associated with a given topographical feature, one suggestion might be that—reframing the orthodox translation ‘people called after’ (CDEPN xlvi)—in these cases *-ingas* referred to people who based their shared identity on a river or upland considered to possess a deific character. This is much harder to argue for a place of habitation or other form of human activity, although it could be that there was a link with the type(s) of activities that happened at such locations. Limited though it may be, there is a distinctive body of archaeological data that spatially and chronologically focuses on the Westcott enclosure and its immediate environs, suggesting a place of interface between Romano-

British and post-Roman ‘Anglo-Saxon’ material cultures, and by extension Brittonic–OE language contact that could preface the formation of a group-name like **Dorcingas*. Precisely what took place in the area of the enclosure, especially in the post-Roman period, remains to be established, and therefore so does the extent of its bearing upon the formulation of the name.

There can be no doubt that the OE singular *-ing* and plural *-ingas* endings were used to form names in combination with elements of Brittonic origin, albeit borrowed into the former language either prior to or as part of the name-forming process. Those names were products of the dynamic socio-cultural conditions operating within post-Roman Britain, especially in terms of language contact and the catalysts for new social and territorial identities. However its ending is interpreted, Dorking would appear to be among their number, with the cumulative evidence in favour of an element from Brittonic language forming the first part of the place-name now stronger than for one from OE. Those who remain in favour of a wholly OE etymology have their work cut out to put forward a case that provides a thorough explanation of the available written forms. But there remains the strong possibility that further, at present unknown, early forms will come to light, which could drastically alter how the name of Dorking is understood. It is hoped that this article catalyses the search for additional philological data, as well as feeding into more penetrating, interdisciplinary work on the place of Brittonic names and elements in OE toponymy. Place-name studies has been very slow to discard traditional approaches to ‘Anglo-Saxon’ migration and colonisation in favour of the new models devised by archaeologists and historians, in spite of the volume and significance of the relevant material. It is high time that this situation be the subject of a concerted effort through which new perspectives can be introduced into the mix.¹¹

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¹¹ The author hopes to publish an article that explores some of the ways in which OE place-name studies might take on board new views of the period of the *Adventus Saxonum*, and furthermore to contribute fresh insights of its own to the ongoing debates. A related article taking a closer look at the significance of the post-Roman archaeology of Dorking is also in the early stages of preparation for eventual publication in the *Surrey Archaeological Collections*.

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