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St Gregory's Minster, Kirkdale, North Yorkshire: Archaeological Investigations and Historical Context

PHILIP RAHTZ† (AUTHOR), LORNA WATTS (AUTHOR)

The result of c. 20 years of work on and around the church of St Gregory's Minster, Kirkdale, North Yorkshire, this work is concerned primarily with the 8th century onwards, but also extends the time-period of this isolated site, particularly for the post-Roman to middle Saxon period, but also as an earlier probably religious landscape.

St Gregory's Minster, Kirkdale, North Yorkshire: Archaeological Investigations and Historical Context is the result of circa 20 years of work on and around the church of St Gregory's Minster, Kirkdale, North Yorkshire. It is primarily concerned with material relating to approximately the late 8th century onwards, detailing the fabric as well as excavations around the church and in the fields immediately adjacent. Associated material culture was sparse but reflected high-status. It is open to doubt whether any building was identified to equate with the earliest Anglo-Saxon artefacts, although these are considered too numerous to have been introduced to the site subsequently. A succession of three church buildings are linked to a putative focus on the north side of the church, to which, it is argued, pre-Conquest elite burials were orientated. A pre-Conquest 'building site' to the north of the churchyard overlays an area of earlier burials.

Against the background of this data, it is argued that the area of Kirkdale may have been linked to the neighbouring Roman villa of Beadlam. The church's dedication to St Gregory is suggested to be important in understanding the milieu of its Christian origins and to its regional significance at one stage of its development. A possible evolution in the character of lordship is explored, from circumstances marked only by high-status objects to conditions that can be linked more securely to a secular family associated with the nearby town of Kirkbymoorside. Finally, Kirkdale's position in the landscape is considered and an explanation sought for the long use of this non-settlement locale.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS VOLUME

Professor Philip Rahtz was founder of the Department of Archaeology at the University of York, where he was primarily interested in equipping students with techniques that would enable them to be able to excavate and produce reports on all periods.

Lorna Watts has worked as a freelance archaeologist since the 1970s.

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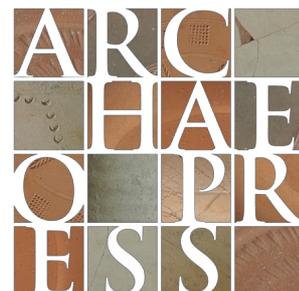
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