



for 'Yorkshire's Past from the Air'
 at D.N. Poley. Stephen Bradburn Press
 for the Yorkshire Archaeological Society
 Clewton, Clewton Rd., Leeds

27. ALL SAINTS' CHURCH,
 BRAMHAM, WEST YORKSHIRE
 (formerly in West Riding), SE 428 431

The air photograph of Bramham church emphasizes the unusual character of the site and immediately raises the question whether this was a religious community in the pre-Viking period. Three factors are suggestive. Firstly, Bramham, like Stanwick, is close to the line of a Roman road (off, left margin). Good communications were important to the founders of religious communities. Secondly, the churchyard is large and is oval in shape, greater than the needs of the present village burials; but of course many churchyards have at least one curved side, often where a passing road has influenced the shape. Thirdly, and most significantly, the church stands on the western edge of the churchyard. In the period 650-850 religious communities often possessed several churches in a single enclosure. In Ireland it was not unusual for an oratory to adhere to the boundary. Despite the absence of documentary record, it is this combination of factors which marks out Bramham as a candidate for future study.

R.K. Morris

Photograph by West Yorkshire Archaeology Service (R.E. Yarwood), May 1985

Sept. T 2-8.30 R
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Church and Grave

