Transformations of Identity and Society in Essex, c.AD 400-1066

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the archaeological reflections of group identity and socio-economic networks in the region of Essex and London in the Anglo-Saxon period, between *c.*400 and 1066. Given its location in the south-east of England, Essex was a key zone of socio-political interaction during the early medieval period. This doctoral research has brought together the stray and excavated archaeological material from the region for the first time. The thesis presented here is centred on diachronic, quantified distributional analyses of three key material culture classes: dress accessories, pottery, and coinage. The discussion synthesises the results of these analyses, examining the observed patterns within their broader archaeological context.

The thesis reveals the emergence of a hybrid dress style in the 5th and 6th centuries. This appears to have been actively created in Essex to reflect a diverse cultural inheritance, but not a specific ethnic identity. However, from the mid-7th century these styles were rejected in favour of dynamic fashions, reflecting the maritime focus of the region, and especially links with the Merovingian/Carolingian Continent. From the later 9th century, Scandinavian dress and cultural practice are also apparent, particularly in north Essex

This Continental orientation reflects the emergence and transformation of the North Sea network. The engagement of Essex communities with this network is studied in detail in this thesis. The coinage and pottery analyses reveal the

emergence of several exchange hubs along the North Sea coast, as well as a generalized engagement with long-distance exchange among coastal communities. This system was disrupted, but not destroyed, by the Vikings, who linked Essex with wider Scandinavian networks. However, the long-term pattern shows the decline of coastal sites in favour of urban centres from the later 9th century.

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Chapter 1

General introduction, aims, and background

1.1. General introduction

This thesis examines social identity, economy, and socio-political development in Anglo-Saxon Essex, between AD 400 and 1066. This is the first time that there has been a comprehensive synthesis of the archaeological evidence for the entire duration of the Anglo-Saxon period in Essex. Furthermore, this thesis is the first to integrate London into an analysis of Essex in the early medieval period.

The Essex and London region provides an exceptional case study for examining many of the key themes of the Anglo-Saxon period. Located in the southeast of England, Essex is one of the first places in England where a diagnostic 'Anglo-Saxon' material culture is archaeologically visible. Further, Essex became one of the first attested major Anglo-Saxon kingdoms; and was only the second such polity to receive a missionary from the Augustinian mission in the 7th century. The recently excavated 'Princely' burial at Prittlewell is one of the finest archaeological manifestations of developing social complexity concurrent with the establishment of Christianity in Anglo-Saxon England.

The inclusion of London in this region means that, for the first time, the re-emergence and development of this major centre can be examined in its Essex context. As a coastal society, Essex itself is an excellent case study for the examination of long-distance trade networks in early medieval Europe. Furthermore, the socio-economic and ideological impact of foreign overlordship or influence can be explored in the latter half of the period as the kingdom of Essex was ruled successively by Mercian, West Saxon, and Danish kings before being subsumed into the late Saxon English state.

As an area of primary settlement or contact, Essex provides an opportunity to look in detail at the formation of an Anglo-Saxon identity and society in eastern England. Beyond this the changing expressions and character of group identity, social complexity, and the evolution of trade networks can be explored in relation to all of the major socio-political transformations of the Anglo-Saxon period.

Themes pursued in this thesis include the nature of settlement and lifestyles, social affiliation, social networks in the rural world, and the origins and development of central places. This comprehensive thematic analysis is only possible thanks to the large amount of archaeological data from Anglo-Saxon Essex and London which has been accumulated by heritage bodies, such as the Portable Antiquities Scheme, the Fitzwilliam Museum, the Museum of London, and county Historic Environment Records. Until now there has been no attempt to synthesise this data for the Essex region.

1.2. Previous work in the region

Previous syntheses of the archaeology of Anglo-Saxon Essex have focussed almost exclusively on settlement and burial sites. By far the most comprehensive analysis of the archaeology of Essex in the Anglo-Saxon period is Keith Challis' unpublished MPhil thesis *Early & Middle Saxon Essex* (1992) which reviewed the archaeology, primarily from settlement and cemetery sites, between the 5th and 9th centuries.

Challis' work was the first modern attempt to bring together both published excavated material and HER data for the period between *c.*AD 400 and 850. The result was a major contribution to the archaeological scholarship on Anglo-Saxon Essex. In particular, Challis' thesis included new presentations of the important burial at Broomfield, and the cemetery/monastery at Bradwell, which were both excavated in the 19th century.

The broader result of the thesis was a tracking of the development of early Anglo-Saxon-style settlement, from its earliest emergence in coastal Essex. Challis (1992: 186, 188-9) posits a mixed socio-political context for these settlements, with some established by immigrant folk groups, and others fitting into sub-Roman territorial arrangements. It is further argued that these small groups coalesced to form larger polities within Essex, attested by place-name groupings and great social differentiation in burials. These polities were then ultimately united under a single 'East Saxon' dynasty (*ibid.*: 189-93).

However, the research questions and discussion of the thesis were significantly focussed on the earlier period. Challis examined in particular the nature of the

adventus Saxonum (i.e. to what extent this involved native acculturation), the formation of the kingdom of Essex, and the nature of Anglo-Saxon settlement in Essex more generally. As a result, Challis' work was limited in its scope (though nonetheless impressive for an MPhil thesis). The present study engages far more with the post-*c.*700 material than Challis' thesis. In particular, this project examines the nature, functioning, and development of exchange networks over the period, which is not a major concern for Challis.

Indeed, while Challis (*ibid.*: 196) notes the presence of imported Frankish items at early Saxon sites (attributing this to social ties, rather than trade), and the presence of Ipswich ware at Barking and Wicken Bonhunt, he concludes that *"There are no real candidates for emporia or trading stations of any permanence within Essex, though London was under fluctuating East Saxon control"*.

The present doctoral research shows how Challis' work has unavoidably dated. A huge number of artefacts and sites have been unearthed in the intervening 20 years. There is now a lot more we can say about Anglo-Saxon society in Essex. In this light, this new appraisal of the Anglo-Saxon archaeology is long overdue.

Furthermore, the current project is the only study to review the archaeology of Anglo-Saxon Essex over its full length, including the later Saxon period. This has been made feasible by the accessibility of digital databases, such as those

of the Portable Antiquities, Fitzwilliam Museum, Museum of London, and county SMRs.

This doctoral project is also the only work to consider the relationship between Essex and London. Though Challis sought to investigate the formation of the kingdom of Essex, he failed to include its diocesan centre at London.

Beyond Challis, the only relatively recent syntheses of the archaeology of Anglo-Saxon Essex have been the short papers of Tyler (1996) and Rippon (1996) for the 1993 Writtle Conference; and a brief review as an adjunct to place-name analysis (Baker 2006).

The Writtle Conference papers built significantly on papers from *The Archaeology of Essex to 1500* (ed. Buckley 1980). Though clearly long out of date, this seminal work included reviews of the known cemeteries (W.T. Jones 1980), early settlements (M.U. Jones 1980), and early medieval archaeology of Colchester (Crummy 1980); as well as presenting in short form the findings from Wicken Bonhunt (Wade 1980).

Tyler (1996) reviewed the known archaeological sites dating to the period between *c.*AD 400 and 700. Tyler's discussion of the archaeology almost entirely excluded unstratified finds, with just a few listed. Early settlements and cemeteries were discussed particularly in the context of their relationship with previous Roman settlement and prehistoric features.

Particular reference was made to the cemetery at Springfield Lyons, later published jointly by Tyler and Major (2005). Like Challis, Tyler (*ibid.* 1996:

113) also noted the lack of 7th-8th-century material. Tyler's recommendations (*ibid.*: 115) were for further work on the nature of the creation of Anglo-Saxon society in Essex, as well as increased survey and excavation.

Baker (2006) also reviewed the archaeology of early Saxon Essex. His research, however, focussed on the the transition from the Roman period into the Anglo-Saxon period between AD 350 and 650, in the Chilterns and Essex region. Baker's project aimed to bring together the archaeological data with specialist place-name analysis to assess the level of continuity of occupation and culture from the Roman period into the Anglo-Saxon period.

Baker briefly reviews the archaeology in sub-regional sections. His conclusion (2006: 131-7) is that the earliest and strongest manifestation of *"Germanic"* culture is in eastern Essex; and further, that this culture spreads west. As first observed by Wheeler (1935), Baker also notes the late appearance of early Anglo-Saxon material culture at St Albans/*Verulamium* in particular, and posits (*ibid.*: 131-4) this as evidence for the survival of Romano-British ethnic communities here. As far as the extent to which the native inhabitants were replaced by migrants, Baker (*ibid.*: 134-5, 245) concedes the difficulty assigning a change of culture to a change of population. Baker (*ibid.*: 245-59) infers that, though archaeologically invisible, the continuance of 'Romano-British' communities should be assumed, especially on the basis of certain place-names of British origin or Old English place-names referring to British speakers.

Though it is the most recent overall survey, Baker's review of the archaeological material is certainly not profound enough to stand alone. It provides us with few new ideas pertaining to the nature of early Saxon societies in Essex prior to *c.*AD 650. Concerning the early Saxon period, the present thesis, though touching on the perennial issues picked up by Baker, moves beyond these to discuss in more depth the active creation of Anglo-Saxon cultures in Essex after *c.*AD 400.

Thus, while the questions Baker asks are relevant to this thesis, the current project moves well beyond Baker's short review. The focus here is also squarely on the archaeological material, and covers the entirety of the Anglo-Saxon period, asking many more questions of the data.

Stephen Rippon (e.g. 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2008) has perhaps provided the greatest individual contribution our understanding of the later Saxon Essex. However, Rippon's published work in Essex deals primarily with the exploitation of the landscape (e.g. 1997, 1999, 2000, 2008), rather than material culture, burial, and settlement morphology. These publications have mostly been in the form of papers and chapters (1996, 1997, 1999, 2000), though his 2008 monograph included Essex within a much larger landscape study.

Rippon's work on coastal Essex has proposed (1997: 130-3) the existence of sites of exchange at Tilbury, Goldhanger Creek, and Canvey Island; and noted (e.g. 1999, 2000) the great value placed on the Essex marshes, which were

maintained throughout the Anglo-Saxon period for grazing and salt production. Inland, Rippon (2008: 181) has also noted the maintenance of a predominantly Roman, dispersed pattern of settlement in Anglo-Saxon Essex.

Though Rippon specialises in landscape analysis, he is also responsible for the only significant synthesis of Anglo-Saxon material culture and settlement remains from the period between *c.*AD 700 and 1066 (1996). Though a significant proportion of this paper was dedicated to historical landscape analysis – charting estate groupings, land use, and settlement patterns – Rippon also reviewed some of the historical and material evidence relating to Essex between *c.*AD 700 and 1066. In particular, Rippon focussed on the archaeological and historical evidence from the areas of known or suspected royal vills in Essex, and other sites he argued to be early 'central places'. He argued these formed nuclei for later communal central places. This analysis relied a great deal on historical evidence and inference, with a few excavated sites, such as Wicken Bonhunt, which Rippon linked with the mint at Newport (1996: 121).

Rippon's paper also reviewed archaeological material and contemporary textual accounts relating to the Vikings in Essex (1996: 122-3). The only archaeological sites mentioned were the hall and burial in Waltham Abbey; the burial at Saffron Walden; the 19th-century grave finds at Leigh-on-Sea; and the coin hoard at Ashdon. Rippon suggested (1996: 123) that the Ashdon hoard might imply that north-west Essex was economically engaged with Danish East Anglia, rather than 'English' regions to the south.

In concluding, Rippon (1996: 125) recommended that future research should be conducted into the development of rural settlement, church-hall complexes, and towns in Essex during the later Saxon period; and on how London impacted upon Essex's urban and rural worlds. The present study goes some way to furthering these aims, as well as examining in far greater detail the operation of exchange networks in the Essex region.

One of the major limitations of Rippon's synthesis was that it made little attempt to include stray finds, despite aiming to present a *"first synthesis of the available material"* (1996: 117). For example, just 12 locations were noted as having produced imported *sceat* coinage (*ibid.*: 118). This is another area in which the present study moves beyond this previous work, to produce a more comprehensive and – hopefully – more accurate picture of Essex between *c.*AD 650 and 1066.

For London, there have been recent syntheses of the burial and particularly settlement archaeology from both the walled town of *Lundenburh* (e.g. Dyson & Schofield 1981; Schofield 1981; Horsman *et al.* 1988; Schofield *et al.* 1990; Vince 1991), and the earlier *emporium* of *Lundenwic* (e.g. Cowie 1988; Cowie & Whytehead 1988; Malcolm & Bowsher 2003; Leary 2004), and the London region (Cowie & Blackmore 2008). A synthesis of the *Lundenwic* excavations is forthcoming (Cowie & Blackmore *forthcoming*).

These publications have focussed on London itself. What no recent work has attempted is to place London within its true setting of the kingdom of Essex,

albeit under later Mercian and West Saxon hegemony. The digital records of bodies such as the Portable Antiquities Scheme, the Greater London SMR, the Fitzwilliam Museum, and the Museum of London have resulted in a growing corpus of accessible archaeological information pertaining to London and rural settlement in its immediate hinterland. This doctoral project has combined this material within a wider regional study, whilst also revealing new information about the development of London. In particular, the stray find evidence from the River Thames points towards much greater activity in City of London between the 7th and mid-9th centuries than has previously been found, given scholarly reliance on excavated material.

This lack of investigation into Anglo-Saxon Essex (including London) means that we still have large gaps in our knowledge. Even issues that have been pursued in the past are now in need of revisiting in the light of new evidence and with a fresh methodology. Indeed, there has been no large-scale study of the archaeology of Anglo-Saxon Essex in the last twenty years. Further, only two studies have looked seriously at the archaeology of Essex as a whole beyond AD 700 (Challis 1992; Rippon 1996), and only Rippon's short summary ventures beyond AD 800. This thesis is the first to look in depth at the archaeology of later Saxon Essex as part of a thematic approach which will also revisit major themes of the period in the light of new evidence.

Crucially, no previous study has analysed in depth the relationship between Essex and the major European trading centre of *Lundenwic*/*Lundenburh* which lies on the doorstep of Essex, and which lay within the East Saxon kingdom

for part of the Anglo-Saxon period; and was the East Saxon diocesan centre throughout. This thesis examines this issue as the major part of an overall analysis of the dynamics of trading centres and exchange networks in the region.

The present thesis is an important first attempt at a comprehensive archaeological study of Anglo-Saxon Essex. No previous work has attempted to look at the archaeology in its totality. Rather, previous analytical syntheses have focussed almost entirely on excavated cemetery and settlement evidence, or on landscape development, ignoring what can be gained from an appropriate incorporation of stray finds. As this thesis will demonstrate, these finds can prove to be valuable correctives to conclusions that draw only on data from excavations and landscape morphology.

In summary, this thesis is a response to the need for an up-to-date archaeological synthesis of Anglo-Saxon Essex. This study, for the first time, is one that goes beyond the traditional tripartite division of the Anglo-Saxon period to examine the long-term continuity and transitions that are often masked and de-contextualised by intra-period divisions defined over the past 200 years. The combination of both the contemporary corpus of settlement and cemetery sites with stray finds is central to this thesis' methodology, as it allows conclusions to be drawn from a more representative dataset.

1.3. Specific aims and objectives

The broad aim of this thesis is to examine the archaeological reflections of the way identity was expressed and society functioned through the Anglo-Saxon period. The aim is also to establish the nature of the networks in which identities and communities were created and maintained. In particular, this research is concerned with how and why identity and society changed over the course of the early medieval period in Essex.

Within this broad aim themes pursued in this thesis include the nature of settlement and lifestyles, group identity, social networks in the rural world, and the origins and development of central places. These themes touch upon many of the biggest issues in Anglo-Saxon archaeology.

The main themes to be explored are primarily the dynamics of the expression of group identity, and the impact of trade, exchange and networks between *c.*400 and 1066. Expressions of social complexity in Essex will also be explored as far as these relate to the two primary themes. The archaeological analysis of this thesis is split between four material-specific chapters, and two thematic discussion chapters. The material-specific chapters focus on pottery, coinage, and dress accessories (pre- and post-*c.*650) respectively. These material-specific chapters are structured chronologically and present the results of a series of distributional analyses on particular artefact types. These individual studies bring out the major distributional trends, which are of significance regarding the natures and transformations of identities, social structure, and networks. The discussion chapters (Chapters 9 and 10) set these

trends within the broader archaeological context. Chapter 9 further explores the archaeological reflections of group identity; while Chapter 10 focusses on the nature of socio-economic networks. Within the three main themes of enquiry specific aims will be pursued:

Group identity

- Explore the development of 'Anglo-Saxon' dress styles in Essex.
- Investigate the relationship between Essex's regional fashions and 'East Saxon' identity.
- Evaluate the level to which an 'English' identity was adopted in Essex from the 7th century onwards.
- Explore the impact of Scandinavian settlement on expressions of group identity in Essex.

Trade, exchange, and networks

- Establish the chronology of trade networks in the Essex region
- Explore both major and minor hubs of trade and exchange.
- Analyse rural access to trade.
- Map patterns of supply and consumption against local productive activity.

- Look at the relationship between ‘town’ and country in terms of mutual provisioning, with particular reference to London and its Essex hinterland.

Social complexity

- Explore the relationship between elite ideologies and the formation of group identities.
- Assess the impact of the emergence of high status settlement on landscape development.
- Explore changing expressions of social status through time.
- Identify elite networks of interaction and exchange.

Chapter 2

Historical context of the development of early medieval society in Essex, c.400-1066

2.1. *Introduction*

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the historical background of the region of Essex derived from textual sources. This is not meant as an exhaustive history, but as a critical summary of the documentary material relevant to the social transformations examined in this thesis. This background is important as it allows the archaeological evidence to be placed within its wider historical context, and explains some of the past approaches to Anglo-Saxon archaeology.

2.2. *Anglo-Saxon Essex: the historical context*

2.2.1. 5th and 6th centuries

The textual sources for the earliest centuries of the Anglo-Saxon period are sparse and difficult to interpret. Yorke (1993: 49) has described the sources as *"factional"*, and thus laded with the biases and underlying objectives of the

writers. The earliest account was written between *c.*540 and *c.*550 by the Welsh monk Gildas. The document – *De Excidio Britanniae* ('On the Ruin of Britain') – is a polemical sermon recounting the events surrounding the coming of 'Saxons' to Britain, and their violent conquest of much of the island. The document was written to admonish British rulers for their wrong-doings. Gildas' message to them was that devastation wrought by the invaders was the reckoning for their sins.

The narrative relays how, after the withdrawal of the Romans, the British overlord Vortigern hired 'Saxons' to aid the British resistance against Pictish and Scottic raiders. Sometime after this, these mercenaries invited more Saxons over to Britain. This larger force eventually turned on its British employers, ostensibly over inadequate food supplies. Gildas writes that the Saxons then conquered large tracts of land; in the process killing, enslaving, or driving off the British. Only a decisive victory for the British, led by an individual named Ambrosius Aurelianus, halted the Saxon advance and restricted them to eastern Britain.

This account should not be read too literally. The tone of the document is extreme and excited, written to express a point to the contemporary British elite. However, later histories drew heavily on Gildas' story (Yorke 1993: 45).

Gildas' influence is particularly clear in the account given by the Northumbrian monk, Bede, about 150 years later (*ibid.*). Bede included and expanded upon Gildas' narrative in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English*

People (731). Bede, populariser of the *Anno Domini* system, added that the first 'English' people arrived in Britain between 450 and 455, and were led by Hengest and Horsa. Bede's most well-rehearsed passage regarding this migration is that *"they came from three very powerful Germanic tribes, the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes"* (I. 15). Later in the same paragraph he states that *"From the Saxon country, that is, the district now known as Old Saxony, came the East Saxons, the South Saxons, and the West Saxons"* (I. 15). Further, he claims the people of Kent to be of Jutlandic descent, while the people of Mercia, East Anglia, and his native Northumbria are said to be of Anglian descent, that is, from Schleswig-Holstein. Bede's allusion to 'Angles, Saxons, and Jutes' has passed into English national folklore and has been a central consideration for many interpreting the archaeology of the 5th and 6th centuries (e.g. Leeds 1945; Myres 1969; Welch 1992; Scull 1993; 1995; Higham 1992; Lucy 2000; Hills 2003). However, what is often surprisingly ignored is Bede's later statement, which ascribes a more diverse ancestral heritage to 'the English'. In reference to Anglo-Saxon missionaries on the Continent, Bede notes the *"very many peoples in Germany from whom the Angles and Saxons, who now live in Britain, derive their origin; hence even to this day they are by corruption called Garmani by their neighbours the Britons"*. These 'very many peoples' are listed as *"Frisians, Rugians, Danes, Huns, Old Saxons, and Bructieri"* (V. 9).

There are two great problems with Bede's account. The first is that he relies heavily on Gildas' narrative, which indicates that, even in the early 8th century,

histories had to rely on little more evidence than we have today. The second significant difficulty with Bede as a source is how far he was from the events he was describing. Yorke (1993: 45) notes, in the absence of textual material, Bede would have needed the testimonies of old men regarding events in the early life of their grandfathers.

The relevant aspects of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* would have been completed by *c.*891, though they may have been written using 7th-century records (Yorke 1993: 47). The narrative here largely repeats Bede's account, fitting events into a chronological framework in relation to the birth of Christ. In addition, there are various continental sources which add little to this picture.

The other major source traditionally used by scholars of this period is the mid-9th-century Welsh monastic production, the *Historia Brittonum*. The narrative is much the same as that of Bede and Gildas, though it is significantly embellished. One such embellishment refers to Essex. We read that, having been captured by the Saxons, Vortigern, in return for his life, delivers *"up the three provinces of East, South, and Middle Sex, beside other districts"* to Hengest, who was already in possession of Kent (III. 46).

2.2.2. 7th century

From here the documented history of Essex skips to the late 6th century, and the appearance of the first East Saxon king, Sledd (587-c.600), in Bede's

Ecclesiastical History. Indeed, what historians have been able to construct of Essex's 7th-century history, they owe almost entirely to Bede's narrative (e.g. Yorke 1985; 1990: 45). The East Saxon regnal list is preserved in a post-Conquest source and names Sledd's descendants and indeed ancestors all the way back to the Saxon god Saxnot (who may be equated with Tiw) (Sykes 2002: 169). It may be that the kingdom of Kent played a large role in the foundation of the East Saxon kingdom. This is suggested by the name of Sledd's father, *Æ*scwine/Erkenwine, and Sledd's marriage to Ricula, the sister of King *Æ*thelberht of Kent (Yorke 1985: 16; 1990: 46; Challis 1992: 19-20). Bede records that in AD 604 Essex followed Kent in accepting the proselytising mission of Augustine. King Sæberht (c.600-616), one of the sons of Sledd and Ricula, was converted by Mellitus and founded the Bishop's See at St Paul's in the Roman walled city of London, which Bede describes as the *"chief city"* of the East Saxons, and *"an emporium for many nations who come to it by land and sea"* (II. 3).

However, despite receiving Christianity earlier than almost all the other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, the religious history of 7th-century Essex is marked by repeated elite and popular apostasy. Indeed, Sæberht's sons, who ruled alongside each other – a common practice in Essex – rejected their father's faith and expelled Mellitus from his Bishop's seat in London. However, in the mid-7th century, missions by the monks Cedd and Jaruman did manage to finally convert the population of Essex. Cedd's mission founded at least two minster churches (though they may well have been monasteries): one at

Tilbury, and the other at Bradwell-on-Sea (on the site of the Roman 'Saxon Shore' fort of *Othona*), where the 7th-century chapel of St Peter still stands. Following this success minster churches were founded on or near royal estates from the 7th and 8th centuries, such as at Waltham.

Another example is Barking nunnery, which was founded sometime in the 660s for Æthelburga, the sister of the (Kentish or East Saxon) Bishop of London, Eorcenwald (see Bailey 1989; Yorke 1990). Despite Barking's position in modern-day 'Metropolitan Essex', and the fact that the land for the nunnery was granted by King Swithfrith of Essex, it was patronised by Mercia and Wessex, as well as Essex. In the 680s, Caedwalla of Wessex granted land in Battersea to the nunnery. Though the land around Barking certainly belonged to Essex, Barking monastery shows that the London area was a region upon which vested interests converged, and it is in the later 7th century when disputes over the lordship of London truly begin.

However, Challis (1992: 26) argues that the influence of Eorcenwald may have helped to decrease conflict at this time. He argues that the Bishop of London played a key role in mediating between the kingdoms which surrounded London, and that the numerous grants of land made around London to the Church may have been a deliberate attempt to neutralise the area. Indeed, the council at Brentford in AD 704, which resolved a dispute between Essex and Wessex, indicates that the Bishop of London was an important mediator between the various competing kingdoms. However, the history of Anglo-Saxon England in the 8th century is marked by the dominance of Mercia (see

Kirby 2000: 139). For the East Saxon kingdom this meant a gradual slipping away of its control on London and its own autonomy.

2.2.3. 8th century

The Tribal Hidage of around AD 690 does not list the 'Middle Saxons' which may suggest that that at this time they were thought to be a part of the East Saxon kingdom (Bailey 1989: 112). The boundaries of the Bishopric of London also support this assertion (Williams 1996: 92). If Middlesex was indeed a part of the East Saxon kingdom in the late 7th century, by the early 8th century the political situation had become more complex. Land grants show the increasing authority of Mercia over Essex in the 8th century (see Yorke 1985; 1990; Challis 1992). By the end of the 8th century, Essex's hereditary rulers had had their title demoted from '*rex*' to '*dux*' or '*subregulus*'.

2.2.4. 9th century

Control of the region transferred to Wessex in 825 after the Battle of *Ellendun*. As a result of this, members of the East Saxon dynasty seem to have fled to Mercia, while *dux* Sigered may have been actively expelled by Ecgberht of Wessex (Williams 1996: 92). At some time between 827 and 839, Sigeric, a member of the East Saxon dynasty, was granted land in Hertfordshire by the Bishop of London. In the surviving document he is described as a theyn ('*Minister*') of Wiglaf of Mercia, while in the witness list he is titled '*rex*

Orientalium Saxonum'. Though Essex was never to regain its autonomy, the idea of Essex as a separate entity with its own identity did not die in AD 825.

From 825 to 860, Essex, together with Kent and Sussex, was ruled as a subkingdom of Wessex by successive junior members of the West Saxon dynasty. When Halfdan's Viking 'Great Army' invaded England in 866, Essex was, politically speaking, simply another region of the West Saxon kingdom (Challis 1992: 27; Williams 1996: 92). For the most part the history of Essex in the Viking Age can only be reconstructed within the framework of national events recorded in the West Saxon *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. In 871 Halfdan's 'Great Army' was joined by the 'Great Summer Army' led by Guthrum. It is this latter force which, after the armies split in 875, concerned itself with the conquest of England south of the Humber, while Halfdan consolidated Viking control in York and the north. From 875 to 877 Guthrum conquered eastern Mercia, Cambridgeshire and East Anglia. It is uncertain whether Essex also fell to the Danes in this period, but it seems unlikely that Wessex could have effectively held such an isolated territory north of the Thames. The Viking advance was halted in 878 after Alfred's decisive victories at Edington and Chippenham. Guthrum's submission was sealed by his baptism at Wedmore in the same year. In 880 the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* relates that *"the raiding-army went from Cirencester* [where they had been settled for the winter] *into East Anglia, and settled that land, and divided it up"* (Swanton 2000: 76). Alfred seized London in 886 and, respecting Mercia's traditional control of the town, granted control of it to his Mercian subordinate, Ealdorman Æthelred.

Possibly shortly after this (cf. Dumville 1992; Crummy 1980: 79), Alfred and Guthrum signed a treaty to delineate the border between those lands subject to Alfred's law, and Guthrum's 'Danelaw' territory. The border is described thus, *"...along the Thames; and then along the Lea to its source; then in a straight line to Bedford, then up the Ouse to Watling Street"*. Guthrum's lands were to the east of this line, Alfred's to the west; meaning that Essex was a Danish territory, while London was ruled by the Mercian-West Saxon coalition.

The nature of Danish rule in Essex is unclear. It is certainly confusing that one of the victims of the plague of the mid-890s is an English ealdorman of Essex named Beorhtwulf (see Swanton 2000, *ASC*: AD 896). The textual sources suggest that southern and central Essex was a frontier region. If it was securely in Danish hands it is unclear why the Viking 'Fulham Army' together with the East Anglian Danes invaded the region in the 890s. The contemporary account of this campaign by Æthelweard the Chronicler certainly suggests that south Essex at least did not belong to the Vikings (Williams 1996: 94). The picture given by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* characterises southern Essex in particular as a battleground and a base from which the Vikings could launch further campaigns. In the light of this it we might consider that Essex was not securely held by the Danes, at least in the south. However, we should also acknowledge that the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* was a product of the West Saxon kingdom, which did not accept the legitimacy of Scandinavian rule in Essex, their former territory. Indeed, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* states that even in 904 there was a need for the people of Essex to 'submit' to Æthelwold (a West Saxon allied

with the Northumbrian Danes), before his joint attack on Mercia with the East Anglian Danes. We are not given further information regarding whether this was all of Essex, or just a certain part, which was required to ally with Æthelwold. Nevertheless, some historians have even gone as far as to argue that Essex was not a part of the Danelaw at all (Dumville 1992; Williams 1996). This, however, is based on a rather radical re-reading of the *Treaty of Alfred and Guthrum*, which has not proved altogether popular (e.g. Keynes 1998: 32-3). Swanton (2000: 90) has suggested that it is possible that Essex was taken back with London in 886, and that, if this was not the case, an ealdorman of the East Saxons would still have been necessary for those parts of English Hertfordshire that were considered to be 'East Saxon'.

2.2.5. 10th century

Whatever the situation was at the end of the 9th century, when Edward the Elder began his conquest of England in the second decade of the 10th century it is clear that Essex was a region, which needed to be wrestled back off the Danes. In 912, Edward built a double-*burh* at Hertford spanning the river Lea. From here he moved into Essex, basing himself first at Maldon while he had another *burh* built at Witham. At this time the *Chronicle* records that *"a good part of the people who were earlier under the control of Danish men submitted to him"* (Swanton 2000). Edward tightened his grip on Essex by fortifying Maldon in 916. In 917, Edward fortified Newport and successfully besieged Danish-held Colchester with a force that included Essexmen. In retaliation, the

East Anglian Danes laid siege to the new Maldon *burh*, but could not break it before relief forces came to drive them off. Edward then made the already substantially fortified Colchester into a *burh*. The *Chronicle* states that the result of this was that *"a great tribe, both in East Anglia and in Essex, that was earlier under the control of the Danes, turned to him; and all the raiding-army in East Anglia swore union with him"* (Swanton 2000). With this submission of the East Anglian Danes in the autumn of 917, the Danelaw period in Essex came to a close.

As well as generally increasing the number of mints, for a while the late Saxon English state further decentralised the production of coins partially for security purposes (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 275). It was this process, which resulted in short-lived mints existing at Horndon-on-the-Hill and possibly Newport. The oldest mint established in Essex was at Maldon, which sporadically produced coins from the reign of Æthelstan (924-39) onwards. A major mint was also established at Colchester by Æthelred the Unready in the late 10th century. Indeed, the Domesday Book suggests that, besides London, Maldon and Colchester were the only other urban sites in this study area (Darby 1986).

The Vikings returned during several campaigns in the late 10th century. Once again, Essex became a battlefield. In AD 991, as the poem *The Battle of Maldon* relates, the Norwegian Olaf Tryggvason led a force to a famous victory against the *"East Saxons"* (Verse 65) at Maldon, led by Ealdorman Byrhtnoth. In terms of identity, this poem is particularly significant, as, despite

a century's worth of the English state and its promotion of the idea of an English people (Wormald 1994: 11, 14-15; Foot 1996: 26-38; Keynes 1998: 25), nowhere in the poem are the 'English' combatants described as English, but rather, as noted above, as 'East Saxons'. Unfortunately, the author is unknown and so it is impossible to know whether it shows us the way the people of Essex thought about themselves, or the way they were viewed by outsiders. It is, however, an interesting example of the persistence of an ethnic identity long after it ceased to relate to any political administration.

2.2.4. 11th century

The year 1016 saw the culmination of the successful campaign of the Danish nobleman, Cnut. The decisive battle was in Essex at *Assandun*. Some scholars equate *Assandun* with Ashingdon (e.g. Swanton 2000: 152), though most argue the case for Ashdon (e.g. Rippon 1996: 123). Cnut then set about securing his control of England which was sealed with the foundation of a minster church at *Assandun* in 1020. Part of the consolidation of Cnut's kingship involved removing the old Anglo-Saxon aristocracy and replacing them with his Anglo-Scandinavian supporters. The ambitious Godwine family were among those who benefitted. In Essex, Cnut rewarded his standard bearer Tovi with a hunting lodge at Waltham.

2.3. Topographical background

The region studied in this thesis consists of the present-day 'Ceremonial County' of Essex as well as a further 7 London boroughs and the City of London. Essex is generally defined as the area between the River Thames in the south and the River Stour in the north; bordered to the west by the River Lea, and to the east by the North Sea. Besides these major boundaries, Essex also has a land border to the north-west with southern Cambridgeshire and small extensions to this bordering Suffolk and Hertfordshire. The Ceremonial County thus corresponds with the traditional (pre-1965) county boundaries, which include the modern county of Essex, plus the London boroughs of Havering, Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge, Waltham Forest, and Newham.

The other areas of London examined within this study consist of the City of London and the boroughs of Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Islington, Camden, the City of Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, and Hammersmith and Fulham.

Together, Essex and London make up a low-lying coastal region. Hemmed-in between the North Sea and the Chiltern Hills, the land rises from sea level in the east, to around 147 metres (482 feet) near the Cambridgeshire border in the extreme north-west.

The most outstanding feature of Essex, when compared with neighbouring regions to the north and south, is its heavily indented coastline, consisting mostly of marshland. There are three large estuaries: the Stour; the Blackwater in central-east Essex; and the Thames. And two smaller estuaries: the Colne in the north, and the Crouch/Roach estuary in the south. The underlying geology

of inland Essex is extensively cut by the alluvial terraces of the many tributaries which lead to these estuaries. However, it is possible that only the Thames, Stour, and upper Colne and Lea rivers would have been easily navigable (Sherratt 1996) (Map 1).

The geology of Essex can be separated into three zones: London and southern and coastal Essex, central Essex, and north-west Essex. In the south and along the east coast is a broad ribbon of Lower Eocenian London Clay, which in the south is peppered with the sand and clay Bagshot beds of the Upper Eocene. The vast majority of the interior of Essex is made up of Glacial Period Boulder Clay, making the generally acidic soil often heavy and poorly drained. The best agricultural land is found in the small area of chalk land in the north-west of the county, and in the river valleys that cut through north and central Essex.

Chapter 3

Conceptual Influences and Approaches of the thesis

3.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the major conceptual influences on this thesis. This will illustrate how particular archaeological theories are linked to the specific aims and objectives of this thesis and how these sometimes abstract theories will be applied to the data to answer the research questions outlined above.

3.2. Group Identities

3.2.1. Ethnic affiliation

This thesis examines the complexities of how ethnic affiliation may or may not have been expressed through material culture; especially from dress, coinage, and pottery. This section reviews the theoretical discourse regarding the problems with 'reading' cultural patterns. A central point of contention has been the underlying question of what relationship we perceive there to have been between material culture and ethnic identities.

For most of the 20th century, archaeological interpretation adhered to the so-called 'culture-history' school of thought. The German prehistorian Gustav Kossinna can largely be credited with originating this approach in the later 19th and early 20th centuries. Kossinna (e.g. 1896; 1902; 1911) stated that there was a direct link between material culture and 'race'; and indeed 'race'/common ancestry and ethnic identity. For Kossinna, the tribal identities named in Classical sources were based upon biological realities. He argued that it was these genetic differences between groups that were responsible for the differences in material culture, which we observe in archaeology. This notion of a direct link between material culture and groups with common ancestry has been hugely influential. The benefit of this approach to archaeology was in the simple link it proposed between 'peoples' and material culture, which enabled the spread of a particular material culture could be simply explained as the spread of a particular 'people'. Thus, material change in a region resulted from an influx of new people, to whom that culture belonged. In Anglo-Saxon archaeology, two of the foremost 'culture-historians' were E.T. Leeds and J.N.L. Myres. E.T. Leeds (e.g. 1945) in particular observed regional differences in 'Anglo-Saxon' material culture in England and attributed these to the ethnic regional differences described by Bede. Assuming a direct link between material culture and ancestry, both Myres and Leeds saw Germanic material culture as a sure sign of the presence of immigrants, and used this material culture to plot the advance of their settlements in England (e.g. Leeds 1912; 1933; 1945; Myres 1969). Although this technique has been rightly criticised, and alternative paradigms of cultural change proposed (see below),

even today, the link between cultures and historically attested 'peoples' remains intact. This is particularly the case in the nomenclature of artefact classification.

The 1960s and 70s saw the development of Processual archaeology, or 'New Archaeology', most notably with the work of David Clarke (e.g. 1968) and Lewis Binford (e.g. 1972; 1981; 1983). This approach to material culture saw it as a passive response by societies to their environment. This theory sees material culture as the product of a complex system of interacting anthropogenic subsystems (e.g. social, ideological, and economic), set within and interacting with the external environment. Put simply, processualism saw culture as the product of humans adapting to their situation. It was an optimistic approach that thought that by understanding this relationship, archaeologists could begin to move beyond simply describing the technology and economies of past societies, and on to better explaining cultural change. In Anglo-Saxon archaeology, the processual approach was at its most influential in the 1980s. For instance, Richard Hodges explained 5th-century cultural change in eastern England as a response "to different social and economic resources as the legacy of the Empire diminished" (1989: 28). On the whole, however, it has failed to make much of an impact in early medieval archaeology, at least relative to prehistoric archaeology. It may be that Anglo-Saxon archaeology's use of a historical framework for its research has made it less accepting of processualism. On a more fundamental level, Julian Richards (1995: 54-5) has also noted that while many 'New Archaeologists' agreed on

the basic tenets of this approach few could agree on how the grand system actually worked, what it was composed of, or explain how change could occur without an external stimulus.

The biggest criticism of New Archaeology was from Post-Processualists, who objected to the notion that material culture was simply a passive response to stimuli. Instead, post-processualism argues that material culture is 'actively created'. This is to say post-processualists see material culture as a form of conscious, non-verbal communication, giving physical expression to abstract ideas. Further, this approach states that material culture is also used to gain control and make of sense of the world by codifying ideas in the physical world, which can then be manipulated. Richards (1995: 55) provides a good example in contemporary society where white and black are used as symbolic, physical expressions of the abstract ideas of good and evil. What this example also demonstrates is that symbols have no intrinsic meaning. It could well be the case that another culture symbolises 'good' with the colour black, or green, or purple, or something else entirely. To derive the meaning from symbols they must be understood to be products of their cultural context and thus any interpretation must be sensitive to this fact. Post-processualism thus sees material culture as culturally dependent and actively created symbolism. Julian Richards (e.g. 1992; 1995) has advocated the use of the post-processual approach in Anglo-Saxon archaeology – particularly early cemeteries – as burials are actively constructed to symbolise particular ideologies and communicate these. This post-processual view of material culture as

symbolism, and people as 'language-users', had a great influence on theorists in the 1990s, and it is a conception which remains influential in archaeological interpretation today.

Modern approaches to the archaeology of ethnicity are rooted in an understanding of the symbolic nature of material culture. They respect the truism that distinct material culture regions do not equate to distinct biological groups inhabiting these regions; that ethnicity and ancestry are different things. Ancestry is natural and objective, whilst ethnicity is socially constructed and subjective. Banks states that *"ethnicity operates in a mythologised area of feelings and beliefs"* (1996: 3). While Siân Jones has stressed that ethnic identity is a *"self-conscious identification with a particular group of people"* (1996: 71; 1997: 123).

Today most archaeologists would accept that material culture change, which may be a reflection of changing ethnicity, can occur without any great movement of people. Rather, ethnicity is seen as a cultural phenomenon, which arises from interaction between groups. Material culture is simply a method by which communities can codify their sense of togetherness and give physical expression to their perceived separateness from other groups. This objectification of cultural difference can be based on all manner of things, such as shared ideologies and practices, not just common ancestry (Jones 1997: 123; Jenkins 1997: 165). While for Kossinna culture was a product of ethnicity (which could be equated with ancestry), today archaeologists recognise that ethnicity may be born out of culture (Shennan 1989: 16). Modern theorists also

stress that ethnicity may be symbolised in different ways and in different media from region to region; or ethnic symbols may change over time in one region (e.g. Shennan 1989: 21; Jones 1996: 72). Indeed, importantly, the creation of an ethnic identity among a group of people is not a certainty. Thus, we cannot posit a consistent relationship between material culture and ethnic identity. The anthropological 'instrumentalist' paradigm proposes that the notion of ethnic unity provides a means by which a group of individuals may be united and mobilised to meet particular political, economic, and social aims (e.g. Richards 1992: 136; Banks 1996: 3; Lucy 2000: 181). Acculturation models of cultural change can make use of this concept of ethnic identity as a fluid, self-conscious, and socially-dependent phenomenon. They posit that the material trappings of an existing ethnic identity may be adopted by others outside the 'original' ethnic group in response to unequal power relationships. Shennan (1989: 21) states that this is a rather Darwinian model of culture change. In recent years acculturation has been a popular alternative model of cultural change in Anglo-Saxon England to theories based on folk movement (e.g. Higham 1992, Lucy 2000, Moreland 2000, Ward-Perkins 2000).

3.2.2. Social complexity

The dynamics between different levels of society play an important role in shaping and transforming those communities. The socio-economic changes visible in the archaeological record have often been explained with reference to social complexity. Debates over social stratification have been principally

concerned with aspects of settlement and burial archaeology. Particularly since the 1990s, the extent to which archaeologists can 'read off' an individual's social status from their burial (e.g. from grave assemblages or construction) has been debated. Additionally, what constitutes a settlement of high status has also been brought into question after the flurry of 'high status' sites excavated in the 1990s. Nevertheless, with care, social stratification is visible at different times in both burial and settlement in the Anglo-Saxon period.

In terms of the funerary record, the normative past approach to social status has been to attribute high rank to individuals buried with wealthy grave-goods. This interpretation was continued by 'New Archaeologists' who conceived of the archaeological record as a passively constructed reflection of ancient realities. Different levels of grave wealth were taken to indicate different classes. The 7th-century decline in grave-goods would be taken to infer increased social stratification linked with a decline in resources (e.g. Shephard 1979; Arnold 1980). However, this theoretical approach has also proven too simplistic in Anglo-Saxon archaeology. While processual interpretations of grave assemblages have some merit, they can appear simplistic when married to the evidence of textual sources. Geake (1997: 127) has noted that processualist thinking cannot adequately explain why the differences in grave wealth disappeared at a time when Anglo-Saxon society was more socially stratified and unequal than ever.

In the last few decades, post-processualists have rejected the processualist notion that there is a direct correlation between social complexity/access to

wealth and burial practice. In line with this thinking, Geake (*ibid.*) has proposed that, at least in the Middle Saxon period, the grave assemblage wealth was not a reflection of that individual or their family's wealth but rather burial practice was far more symbolic. For Geake, the decline in grave-goods was a reflection of a change in ideology. A post-processual approach to burial practice allows for the symbolism behind particular assemblages to change through time. Though he finds the processualist approach a good starting point to the analysis of social complexity, Heinrich Härke has tracked the changing symbolism of Anglo-Saxon weapon burial as an actively constituted archaeological event (1990; 1992; 1997: 144-5). He argues that in the 7th century weapon burials symbolise only wealth and status, having previously had far more complex associations (1992: 164). When furnished burial ended in the 8th century a post-processualist approach argues that wealth and status were symbolised in other ways (e.g. Härke 1992: 165; Geake 1997: 128). In particular, expression of authority through ownership of the landscape, rather than objects, has been emphasized by numerous scholars (e.g. Hinton 1990: 37; Scull 1993)

However, post-processualism has itself been criticised – even from those who agree with its tenets – for not having engaged with the issue of archaeological representations of social status to the extent to which the processualist movement did, which created a more usable theoretical paradigm for research (e.g. Härke 1997: 144-5; Babić 2005).

Settlement hierarchies in the Anglo-Saxon period have traditionally been examined by comparing excavated artefact assemblages between sites. Only very few sites, such as Yeavering in Northumberland (Hope-Taylor 1977), have impressive architectural evidence suggestive of elite status (Hamerow 2002: 93-9), so there has been much recent discussion regarding the relationship between conspicuous consumption and elite lifestyles (e.g. see Loveluck & Tys 2006; Loveluck 2007; 2009; 2011; 2012). The validity of this approach is bound up in the theory related to the functioning of early medieval socio-economic exchange networks around the North Sea.

There is also a link here between the creation of group identities based on social or functional roles. The association of a group of individuals by an aspect of their lifestyle – such as ecclesiastics, secular aristocrats, merchants, artisans, *etc.* – has the potential to create role-specific patterns of consumption and use (Loveluck & Tys 2006). The ways in which groups engaged with the North Sea exchange route, both socially and economically, have a bearing on how we interpret patterns in the deposition of contemporary artefacts.

3.3. Exchange and social networks

This study pursues the development of socio-economic networks in the Essex and London region throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. This involves an examination of the archaeological evidence of regional trading places, the extent of Essex's engagement with long-distance trade, the structuring of the

exchange networks, and the relationship between rural Essex and the central place of London.

The key theoretical debate within this theme relates to the development of the North Sea-centred exchange network, especially from the 7th century, and its manifestation in coastal landing places, large '*emporia*', and later towns.

During the period of East Saxon hegemony, the major *emporium* of *Lundenwic* developed. Since the 1980s, the development of the *emporia* and their associated trade networks has been one of the major areas of theoretical debate in early medieval studies. The discussion has particularly centred on the question of why *emporia* developed at all, and, more recently, how they relate to the increasing number of diverse smaller landing places.

Today's theories are often set against Richard Hodges' thesis published first in *Dark Age Economics* (1982). Hodges' model of early medieval trade was made possible by the greater archaeological investigation of early medieval urban sites in the later 20th century. However, his research focussed on urban sites, with little regional dimension.

For Hodges, the growth of a trade network centred on the North Sea was causally related to the emergence of a stable elite class. He has argued that *"the motive for the long-distance trade systems was the acquisition of prestige-goods, scarcities and on occasions, slave labour…Kings and chiefs…were instrumental in the trading-systems, which appear to have developed to a formal level from the direction trade between courts"* (1989: 53-4). Hodges

noted that the *emporia* had regular street plans, which he took to suggest their development was centrally controlled. His argument is also partially based on historical texts, particularly from Wessex, which show that kings were taking an interest in trade from the late 7th century. Taken together with the incidence and distribution of coinage and mint marks (which, he argued, demonstrate centralisation), Hodges argued that *"It was…*[royal] *authority that was unquestionably the motor for the long-distance trade"* (1989: 55). Thus the argument is that, desiring to make themselves richer and secure their status, kings had a purposeful and direct hand in fostering trade.

Hodges (1982: 50-2) also distinguishes between Type A and Type B *emporia*. Hodges defines Type A *emporia* as seasonal markets and fairs which, as a result of elite opportunism, in many places developed into structured and tightly controlled trading areas (Type B *emporia*) through the elites' aspiration to control trade and access to/distribution of, in particular, prestige goods. Hodges had one further classification – Type C *emporia* – for sites which developed particularly from the late 9th/10th century onwards, which had even greater administrative and economic functions (1982: 50-2). In sum, for Hodges, the *emporia* were *"an expression of imperial needs"* (1989: 65).

Hodges' theory can be situated within the Substantivist tradition, following Polanyi's work (e.g. 1957; 1963; 1968) in particular. The substantivist position posits that modern economic theories cannot be used to examine 'primitive economies'. From a substantivist view, exchange in 'primitive' societies is seen as socially-embedded. Thus exchange in early medieval north-west

Europe is largely seen as consisting of non-commercial transactions, such as gift-exchange or tribute. For example, Hodges (e.g. 1982: 148-9) argued that the movement of goods in the early medieval period was driven by kin-based networks mediated by regional institutions.

Beyond the fundamental system behind early medieval economies, substantivists such Grierson (e.g. 1959; 1961; 1963; 1967; 1970; 1975) – supported later by Hodges (1982) – have also theorized on the emergence of coinage in north-western Europe in the 6th and 7th centuries. Grierson (e.g. 1961; 1970) argued that early gold and silver coins were only used by certain groups for specific socially-embedded practices, such as gift-exchange, fines, or taxes. Meanwhile trade was probably conducted largely without the use of coinage. The *social* role of early gold and silver coins was thus emphasised, rejecting any commonplace economic function.

In contrast to this substantivist view is the formalist position, which maintains that it is possible to use modern economic forces, such as supply and demand, to examine past economies. Formalists further argue that coinage was minted in sufficient quantities from the later 7th century as to merit the conclusion that it was being used in commercial exchanges. This position has become increasingly credible as more and more *sceattas* (late 7th/8th-century silver coins) have been recorded across eastern Britain and elsewhere, partially as a result of more frequent field surveys, but more particularly resulting from amateur metal-detecting and improved find recording.

The formalist position has been put forward most notably by Metcalf (e.g. 1965; 1974; 1977; 1988; 1989; Hill & Metcalf 1984). Metcalf (1988; Hill & Metcalf 1984) argued that much of England was fully engaged in monetary exchange by the mid-8th century, and that, prior to this, later 7th- and early 8th-century *sceattas* reflected commercial exchange and the expansion of coin usage throughout much of north-western Europe. It is Metcalf's formalist view that has been most influential in modern interpretations of later 6th/7th century coinage distributions and concentrations, which are now largely taken as reflective of an at least partially monetized exchange network (e.g. Blackburn 2011).

Much recent scholarship emphasises the heterogeneity in coin usage, rather than solely social or monetary functions. Williams (2010), for example, has argued that 5th- and 6th-century gold coinage – both imported and Anglo-Saxon – probably functioned as currency in many cases, rather than solely as social symbols or jewellery. Again this view emerges from the greater number of gold coins found unmodified (e.g. no suspension loops fitted) and outside of funerary contexts (see Naylor 2012: 246-8).

Verhulst (2002: 87-8) has argued for mixed modes of coin usage within single territories. Likewise, Davies (2010: 97-8) posits that early medieval coinage use may have changed over time – broadly speaking, from primarily performing a social role, to functioning within a full or mixed monetary economy – but that it may always have been linked with the socially-embedded exchange of taxation.

The classic substantivist position of Grierson (e.g. 1961; 1970) and Hodges (1982) was expounded within the context of limited coin finds. The lack of evidence for widespread coin usage was taken as evidence of a lack of widespread coin usage. However, the substantivist argument has been remodelled recently, most notably by Skre (2008; 2011), who terms his new approach 'post-substantivism' (e.g. 2011: 327). Skre's propositions attempt to respond to many of the formalist criticisms of substantivism; especially of the notion that pre-industrial economies were socially embedded. Skre (2008: 327-8, 333) argues that the economies of both pre-industrial *and* industrial societies are socially embedded, but that the market mechanism is not. Thus, we can posit market forces/economic agency in pre-industrial societies. However, as other scholars have noted (e.g. Bourdieu 1990: 114-5; Lie 1991: 230; Swedberg & Granovetter 1992: 9), these forces are constricted by the differing social limitations on the economic agency of individuals in different societies.

Hodges' theory largely ignored the economic agency of hinterlands. For Hodges (e.g. 1982: 148-9; Hodges & Whitehouse 1983: 105-6), the same level of control posited for towns applied to the countryside, with rural secular and ecclesiastical elites playing a central role in the consumption and distribution of rural produce. Hodges' later modified theory (1989) particularly underlined the Church's influence in the development of urban markets, by promoting wealth based on domination of the landscape, and by engineering a self-serving settlement structure, as well as controlling the flow of exotic objects (*ibid.*: 56-8).

This theory drew some measured support from scholars such as Hinton (1990: 37; 1996: 100), who argued that landed power supplanted access prestige goods as the basis for authority from the 7th-century, though noting that this was probably as much to do with capitalizing on trade as facilitating it.

Ecclesiastical centres were central places for numerous networks operating at a number of levels. They thus provided an ideal site for trade. Their role in England and on the Continent as facilitators of exchange has been emphasized by numerous scholars (e.g. Blair 1988; Kelly 1992; Astill 1994; Lebecq 2000; Ulmschneider 2000a). However, while ecclesiastical centres were heavily involved in trade networks, it is clear from sites in England and on the Continent that ecclesiastical communities were not necessary for trade to happen and for centres of trade to be established (e.g. Loveluck 1998: 158-9; Tulp 2003).

Since the publication of *Dark Age Economics*, various excavations have caused many scholars to cast doubt upon its primary inference that *emporia* were created and controlled by elites, and exercised an intentioned monopoly over trade. The most notable early critique of Hodges' thesis was formulated by Carver (e.g. 1987; 1993a; 1993b) whose alternative model emphasised a North Sea trade network characterized by a widespread, dispersed access to, and engagement with long-distance trade. Carver distinguished *emporia* from other centres of trade on the basis of their greater intensity of exchange, denying they had a monopoly over it.

Excavations have shown intensive craftworking in early medieval *emporia*, suggesting that they were productive centres too, rather than solely sites of importation and exchange. In light of this, Hodges (2000: 83) extended his previously trade-focussed argument to posit that concentrations of exchange in *emporia* reflect an elite desire to control and ensure the continuance of craftworking.

However, contemporary scholarship mostly envisages royal involvement in trade and exchange as largely restricted to a desire to tax it, rather than limit or control it (e.g. Tatton-Brown 1988; Lebecq 1990; Kelly 1992; Carver 1993b: 57; Scull 1997: 285; Verhaeghe 2005: 284; Skre 2008: 339). Commenting on excavations at Dorestad (the Netherlands) (van Es 1990: 172), Ribe (Denmark) (Bencard and Jorgensen 1990; Feveile 2006; 2012), Kaupang (Norway) (Skre 2007; 2012), and *Hamwic*/Southampton (Hunter & Heyworth 1998), Anderton (1999: 2) perceived trade to be localized to these *emporia*, which he noted would have facilitated taxation, but suggested that they did not function as redistributive centres for prestige goods.

Recent academic opinion has mostly supported Carver's model, moving away from Hodges' elites-focussed theory towards dispersed and bottom-up models of trade. Lebecq (1997: 75) has argued that most *emporia* originated from *"the initiative of maritime communities"* and that Quentovic (France) and *Haithabu*/Hedeby (Germany) were probably even founded by Anglo-Saxon traders. Most importantly, it is argued that, for all the dynamism of the contemporary trading community, the *emporia*, and their successful legacy,

only became possible as a result of 7th-century societal stability, peace, agricultural productivity, and crucially, the introduction of practical silver coinage (*ibid.*: 75-8).

It has also been shown that the earliest phases of *emporia*, such as *Lundenwic* (e.g. Malcolm & Bowsher 2003), do not have planned layouts. Verhaeghe (2005: 270) has also questioned whether the *emporia*'s regular street plans were so complex that they required elite central planning. He also states (*ibid.*) that some 'Type B' *emporia* may have developed directly from 'Type A' *emporia*, before elites even took an active interest, and that the phenomenon may have more complex origins in the general changes in settlement at this time. In his paper on the Scandinavian *emporia*, Søren Sindbæk (2007) agrees that political initiative was not the originator of the urban revival.

Bruno Latour's 'Actor-Network Theory' (2005) has also influenced theories concerning the development of early medieval urban worlds and their networks. Latour's theory in part stresses the multi-layered nature of networks. In this conception, no network relationship (e.g. between sites) can be reduced to a single structural component (e.g. power or economics). Sindbæk (2007: 121) refers to sites regularly engaged in long-distance trade as 'nodal points'. He notes that certain 'luxury items' do not appear to have been much distributed beyond the Scandinavian *emporia*/nodal points. In England, a similar apparent lack of redistribution has been noted by other scholars (e.g. Anderton 1999: 2; Blinkhorn 1999: 10; Brown 2003: 23) – though this may be a result of an excavation bias towards high status sites (Newman 1999: 34).

However, although luxury goods *are* common in *emporia*, their apparently limited distribution inland perhaps indicates that the acquisition and redistribution of 'prestige goods' were not primary functions (Anderton 1999: 2; Blinkhorn 1999: 10). Additionally, the looting of major *emporia*, such as London, in the 9th century shows that, even at this stage, kings did not exercise enough power to protect these sites. Fundamentally, it does not follow that large-scale long-distance trade implies a political authority pulling the strings (Sindbæk 2007: 128). Sindbæk's argument characterized emporia as multi-faceted nodes of numerous different networks, rather than primarily political or economic structures. This multi-functionality was argued (*ibid.*: 126) to have emerged naturally as *emporia* increasingly provided traders, artisans, and other groups a central place which connected them to a grand socio-economic network, which had access to raw materials and other goods from a wide area. The multifaceted productive role of *emporia* has also been stressed (e.g. Verhaeghe 2005: 270) in opposition to Hodges' focus on the management of the flow of prestige goods. Nevertheless, excavated faunal assemblages in towns are a reminder of the vital, semi-dependent (see Scull 1997: 284) relationship between 'urban' or 'proto-urban' communities as consumers (as well as merchants) and their productive rural neighbours.

For some (e.g. West 1989: 167 on *Lundenwic*), the implications of the widespread urban discard of rural produce, such as meat and fish, indicates consumption levels indicative of many wealthy individuals. Others (e.g. Astill 1991; Blinkhorn 1999) stress the role of *emporia* as the terminal market for

rural surplus. Nevertheless, the rural specialization apparent from the 7th century onwards may suggest a desire by rural producers to profit from urban demand (e.g. Naylor 2004: 11, 120). However, many still see urban discard patterns as indicative of provisioning rather than market forces (e.g. Saunders 2001).

The study of *emporia* and their regional hinterlands has been subject to greater study over the last 15 years. Blinkhorn (1999: 10-11) argues that, aside from ecclesiastical sites, luxury goods played little part in the relationship between the *emporia* and settlements in their hinterlands. Instead, rural settlements provisioned *emporia* with raw materials and basic necessities which they could not provide for themselves (*ibid*: 11-7). In return, low status rural settlements may have received archaeologically invisible items (e.g. salt, honey, dyes, etc.), some foreign goods (e.g. Mayen lava querns and pottery), and, of course, money. Much of this internal trade probably took place at ecclesiastical sites directly linked to *emporia* (*ibid.*: 18). Newman (1999: 45) notes that identifying the hinterland of a particular *emporium* is complicated by various factors that affect the distribution of traded artefacts: the operation of concurrent 'Type A' *emporia*; invisible economic, social, and political forces; and present day excavation bias. Naylor (2004: 121; 2012: 249-50) has argued that the most profound zone of influence of particular markets extended *c.*15km out (though dependent on terrain) – the reasonable limit for a day's journey by foot to the centre.

Some of the most interesting recent scholarship is now moving beyond simple *emporia*-hinterland relationships to discuss the increasing number of smaller sites that were active participants in long-distance exchange. In Lincolnshire, the settlement excavations at Flixborough (e.g. Loveluck 2007; 2009) and the widespread use of coinage (Blackburn 1993; Naylor 2004; 2012) have demonstrated significant engagement with long-distance trade in the absence of a regional *emporium*.

Furthermore, amateur metal-detecting continues to highlight metalwork- and coin-rich sites in rural areas, termed 'productive sites', which indicate areas of concentrated monetized trade, often far from *emporia* (e.g. Metcalf 1984: 27, 41; 1988; Newman 1999, Davies 2010). These sites are incompatible with the strict evolutionary framework devised by Hodges. They demonstrate a more widespread engagement with long-distance monetized exchange networks across a variety of sites; from coastal landing places to rural central places (e.g. Ulmschneider 2000b: 62-3). Naylor (2012) has used stray coinage distributions to argue that the large *emporia* of the 8th century may have emerged from a collection of interconnected 7th-century exchange sites of similar size. These *emporia* then dominated their immediate surroundings, while co-existing with numerous smaller sites of exchange (evidenced primarily by metalwork clusters) along the coast, rivers, and major routeways.

Many scholars (e.g. Richards 1999a: 71-80; Naylor 2004: 14) have argued that the term 'productive site' is both too broad – being applied to a variety of coin assemblages – and misleadingly exclusive, discounting sites – usually

excavated – with rich assemblages, but few coins. There is also a growing recognition that the term 'productive site' may mask a variety of different local socio-economic contexts in which exchange took place (e.g. Skre 2008: 337; Davies 2010: 90-2, 117).

Skre (2008: 337-8) has attempted to fit these new sites within an evolutionary framework by supplementing Hodges' Type A, B, and C *emporia* with two additional classifications. The first additional class consists of seasonal 'central-place markets' (*c.*AD 500-*c.*1000), engaged in inter- and intra-regional trade initially linked to elite centres. The second new type consists of possibly independent, seasonal 'local markets' (*c.*AD 700+), engaged in intra-regional trade. Skre's post-substantivist position emphasises that royalty *was* important in the creation of trading centres. However, Skre (*ibid.*: 339) differs from Hodges in arguing that kings were heavily involved in the foundation and operation of many (but not all) exchange centres, but were not the sole originators and purpose behind them. Rather than assuming any general elite control, Skre instead emphasises the capacity of kings to create the conditions in which trade could flourish (e.g. by providing a legal basis for exchanges), alongside their desire to benefit from this trade (e.g. through taxation and tolls).

However, Loveluck has argued that, in many cases, coastal communities seem to have been territorially marginal enough to independently engage in the long-distance exchange of alienable goods, with some sites even free from taxation (Loveluck & Tys 2006: 142, 149-52; Loveluck 2012).

Loveluck and Tys' work highlighted the rich material culture of Frisian terp settlements set against their unostentatious architecture; perhaps suggestive of communities comprising *"wealthy 'free peasant traders' or 'marchands-paysans', rather than an aristocracy"* whose access to high status goods had not been aristocratically restricted (2006: 147). A similar model has also been suggested for 6th- and 7th-century Kent, based on widely distributed imported material (Fleming 2009).

Loveluck (2012) has also situated coastal central places of parts of eastern England and Scandinavia within their broader maritime network context. His study stresses the importance of smaller ports and landing places in 7th-late 9th-century trade. Significantly, these smaller sites existed concurrently with large *emporia*, and were also directly acquiring imports (*ibid.*: 131-46, 148-59). With imports readily available, it appears that status in coastal/marginal areas may have been articulated through activities such as hunting and feasting; both of which express domination/control of the landscape and its resources (*ibid.*: 140, 163).

However, from the later 9th century, imported material, elites, and much specialist craftworking appear to have been concentrated in emergent central-place towns. The smaller coastal exchange sites of the earlier centuries declined in status to regional nodes, with far less direct participation in long-distance exchange (*ibid.*: 146-8, 159-60). These findings should certainly be used to question the contemporary value we ascribe to imports between different communities, and at different times.

Following Loveluck, Wickham (2012) has stressed the great variety of coastal sites of exchange that existed in early medieval Europe. Significantly, these ports developed in different socio-economic contexts. Wickham's particular focus is on the development of the *emporia*-like centres in the western Mediterranean, such as Comacchio, *alongside* existing centres. Once again, these sites point to the direct participation of relatively free coastal communities in long-distance exchange. It is possible that north-western coastal Italy was home to many of the smaller coastal communities evident in Northern Europe (*ibid.*: 506-7). Furthermore, the development of sites in the western Mediterranean which were similar to those in Northern Europe shows that these sites developed even where there were existing ports of long-distance trade (*ibid.*: 503-4). Thus, the emergence of *emporia* need not fit into a narrative of an elite move to control new networks.

Further corroborative evidence for this model of exchange comes from the contrasting pattern of imported material in much of western Britain, which perhaps provides an archaeological model of elite-directed exchange. Although this region was active in very long-distance trade (particularly with the Mediterranean and western France), it seemingly acquired goods quite differently from contemporary regions around the North Sea (Lebecq 1997: 67; Anderton 1999: 3; Campbell 2007; Fleming 2009). Notably, in western Britain it appears that only a restricted range of goods was imported, and that these were only consumed on high status sites (Fleming 2009: 394-7). These imports must have been exchanged for local resources, such as tin, which probably

would have required a coordinating authority to make sure that sufficient quantities were ready for the arrival of traders from Byzantium or western France (*ibid.*). On this basis, it is reasonable to argue that the 5th-8th-century archaeology of western Britain is much more suggestive of elite direction and control than that of eastern England and continental north-western Europe.

In light of these recent studies, new research must be focussed on the relationship between the *emporia* and their coastal hinterlands, which themselves were directly engaged in long distance trade. This dynamic is critical to our understanding of the coastal region of Essex during the Anglo-Saxon period. This doctoral project represents a first response to this imperative. The archaeological data has been reviewed to produce a picture of dynamic exchange activity over the course of the period, with several sites put forward as possible sites of exchange and landing places between the *emporia* at Ipswich and London.

3.4. Social setting – impact of world view.

Phenomenological theory underlies ideas of subjective social value which were touched upon in the previous section with reference to rich urban assemblages. The difference in world view arising from social setting is an important theoretical consideration when interpreting archaeological reflections of identity at a number of levels. Phenomenology is a philosophical tradition which confines itself to strictly describing the direct experience of phenomena.

By implication the phenomena examine are only those which can be directly experienced. It is the content and structure on one's experience that is then examined. In Archaeology, the phenomenological approach sees the material world as the result of individual humans and groups experiencing their world, making sense of it, and shaping it to meet their symbolic and material needs. Though the methodology of this thesis is not phenomenological, following in particular Loveluck and Tys (2006), the phenomenological conception of the relationship between humans and materials is an important consideration in interpreting coastal discard patterns.

Christopher Tilley (1994) has famously applied phenomenology to prehistoric landscape construction. For the early medieval period, Christopher Loveluck and Dries Tys (2006) have looked at the way the active construction of the material world by coastal societies of the North Sea littoral – reflecting their world view – was a result of their interaction with and perception of their social setting. Active human construction within an environment which both limits and presents opportunities is central to their argument. They state that the location of coastal settlements made scarce certain resources which were plentiful inland (such as certain food stuffs), but at the same time offered coastal peoples the opportunity to engage in wide-ranging socio-economic networks, resulting in the apparent concentration of imported goods in many coastal and estuarine sites. These respective strengths and weaknesses encouraged specialist production in marginal agricultural areas and trade between inland and coastal sites. Loveluck and Tys argued that because

imported artefacts and social contact with 'foreign' individuals were rarer inland *"Certain artefacts and commodities…may have been imbued with a much greater social value"* or these artefacts may have been used in different social contexts to the same artefacts on the coast (*ibid.*: 142). The argument is that the value and meaning placed on particular materials by people inland and on the coast differed because of their differing social experiences, which are inextricably linked with their environmental setting. More explicitly they argue that *"Ease of communication by rivers, tidal creeks and seaways may also have created a perspective on the part of coastal dwellers, which looked seawards with regard to group affiliation and 'cultural ties'"*; an 'outlook' which may further have been fostered by textually-attested hostile attitudes of inlanders towards them (*ibid.*: 154).

There are two main implications of this view. Firstly, it is clear that the branding of certain imported artefacts as 'luxury' or 'prestige' goods has been overly simplistic. For such theory-laden labels to be used they must take account not just of the properties of the objects themselves, but also their location in the context of related world views. This is the logical point that the 'exotic', 'prestige', or even monetary value of objects varies between individuals and groups. Subjective valuations are directly related to a group's social setting-derived world view. In this way, an imported object in an inland English settlement might have greater social capital than the same object on an east coast site where it may be more readily available or even common as a result of cross-channel contact being a part of mainstream life experience.

Secondly, the everyday seaward focus of coastal sites may, in some circumstances, have resulted in maritime identities linking communities across the seaways. In the early medieval period we should not think of seas and rivers as necessarily barriers to social cohesion. For the population of a coastal settlement, the sea may have been the bridge between it and other communities with a common way of life. Hence, the sea could provide the basis for profound social networks. As a consequence, in these areas we might expect to find different patterns of cultural transmission and transformation, and different ways of expressing identity to those of inland sites.

3.5. Specific approaches to analysis and interpretation in this study:

3.5.1. Group identities

In the previous section conceptual influences on the study of ethnic affiliation were reviewed. This showed how archaeological interpretations have developed from viewing culture as natural in the 19th and most of the 20th century; to passive adaptation to change brought about by external stimuli in the 1970s and 80s; and ultimately to an understanding that culture is actively constructed. The theoretical stance taken by this study holds that when we observe discreet cultural regions, we are viewing expressions of negotiated ideology.

The issues surrounding group identity will mostly be addressed with reference to dress accessories. The selection of dress accessories to examine expressions of group affiliation is primarily a response to the theory of culture comprising acts of social display constructed from contemporary discourses. Dress accessories present a useful resource for examining active cultural affiliation at both a personal, communal, and regional level.

The active nature of cultural practice influences the approach of this study to different archaeological contexts. Burial assemblages, for example, are consciously selected as a form of communication. Most dress accessories from the 5th and 6th centuries have been found in burial contexts. As a result, the approach of this thesis from the start has been mindful of the nature of burials as constructed events, and not necessarily reflective of everyday realities. Specifically, there are theoretical obstacles to the use of dress as revealed purely by burials. We cannot say for certain that burial costume reflects what was worn by the living. The careful incorporation of stray finds begins to correct this picture. While some stray finds – especially when found close to other contemporary items characteristic of burial assemblages – may reflect dispersed burial assemblages or hoards, many isolated finds are likely to have been accidental losses. The proportion of accidental losses to intentionally deposited items provides a better measure of the representativeness of burial assemblages. Of course, this study is limited as the archaeological data available is mostly not the result of scientific survey, but rather the different biases which direct excavation and metal-detector activity. Nevertheless, stray

finds do provide a corrective to cultural patterns derived purely from the funerary record.

The interpretations of the archaeological record contained within this study are also influenced by contemporary theoretical discourse. In relation to ethnic affiliation, cultural patterns revealed by this research are interpreted as conscious expressions of association with a particular group. This study maintains that by studying dress accessories alone it is not possible to answer whether cultural change in Essex occurred through migration or assimilatory processes. Rather it is only appropriate to explore what ethnicity, if any, was being expressed. The combination of multiple strands of archaeological evidence in the Chapter 9 begins to enable us to suggest how ethnic identities may have been formed, but archaeological evidence from artefacts cannot directly answer questions related to ancestry.

The approach to the study of the archaeological evidence has also been influenced by the instrumentalist paradigm (e.g. Richards 1992: 136; Banks 1996: 3; Lucy 2000: 181), which holds that ethnic groups are created by communities to meet particular aims as a response to their socio-political circumstances. This approach necessarily places importance on social context in interpretations of the use particular material culture. It is partly for this reason that a brief historical background was provided in Chapter 2. The wider archaeological context of coinage, dress accessories, and pottery brought together in Chapters 9 and 10 also informs our understanding of the socio-economic conditions in which ethnic affiliations were expressed.

Theoretical debates reviewed above have also influenced the approach of this study to apparent intra-regional zonal identities, such as urban/rural, coastal/inland, northern/southern, and so forth. This study has identified several material culture zones, which are a function of their geographical and social setting. The interpretation of material culture assemblages takes account of research (e.g. Loveluck & Tys 2006; Loveluck 2009; 2011), which holds that archaeological interpretations of discard patterns should take account of the social setting of the actors who created those deposits. As a result this study treats social setting as a variable, not as a constant. Phenomenological theory informs interpretations by providing a basis upon which we can understand the circumstances under which new identities were formed.

3.5.2. Social complexity and role

Theoretical debates concerning social complexity are important in this study, as social stratification and power relations are strongly connected to debates regarding the creation of group identities, and the emergence and operation of trade networks.

The 7th century was perhaps the most transformative century of the Anglo-Saxon period. The most relevant changes to this study are the dramatic changes in dress, with the cessation of regional fashions; and also the expansion of the North Sea exchange network. These transformations cannot

be explored without reference to the emergence of a stable social elite, as well as the establishment of the Church.

The previous section reviewed the theoretical debates regarding the emergence and operation of emporia and the expansion of the North Sea exchange network. It illustrated how the role of 'high status' settlements and perceived elite strategies have been central in theories of how networks functioned and why they existed. In examining Essex's engagement with trade networks it is important to be able to identify sites of high social status and how they were involved in long-distance trade. This goes hand-in-hand with an understanding of the majority view that access to trade was widespread, and that geographical location, rather than social status may have been the prime factor in determining a settlement's engagement with long-distance exchange routes (e.g. Naylor 2004).

The theoretical debates concerning exchange networks have thus led to the formulation of the Essex-specific research question, which is, to what extent were imported goods restricted to elite centres in Essex? And to what extent was engagement with long-distance exchange widespread? This has implications for interpreting how long-distance networks functioned in the Essex region.

It is also important to note that networks are influenced by and reflect groups united by social role, such as artisans or ecclesiastics. This may also apply to settlements united by function. This is relevant to this study, as one of the

research aims is to examine how socio-economic networks were structured in Essex. The diversity of settlements and lifestyles in the Anglo-Saxon period, makes it likely that this relationship was complex, with interlocking role-based networks.

3.5.3. Trade, exchange, and networks

The primary materials used in this study to analyse exchange networks in Essex are pottery and coinage. The theoretical background reviewed above illustrated that those two materials have been used extensively in the study of emporia and their hinterlands (e.g. Blinkhorn 1999; Newman 1999; Naylor 2004; 2012), as well as in the identification of nodes of trade (e.g. Ulmschneider 2003).

While dress accessories also provide information on social and economic networks, fewer of them are useful in elucidating exchange relationships as they were often made by itinerant craftsmen, rather than in one place and exported (Hinton 2000; Coastworth & Pinder 2002: 214-5, 234). In addition, their use, find locations, and depositional contexts make them hazardous to use as indices of sites of trade.

The greatest influence on the interpretation of the patterns emergent from the distributional analyses are previous studies concerning the relationship between emporia and their hinterlands (e.g. Palmer 2003; Naylor 2004), and

those concerning the functioning of the North Sea exchange network (e.g. Hodges 1982; 1989; Lebecq 1997; Loveluck & Tys 2006; Loveluck 2012).

Recent studies have demonstrated that there was widespread access to long-distance trade, and that *emporia* should not necessarily be seen as redistributive centres (e.g. Naylor 2004; Loveluck & Tys 2006). Regional studies have demonstrated that this direct engagement with long-distance trade was influenced by the proximity of settlements to major routes (e.g. Newman 1999; Naylor 2004). Naylor's study of the *emporia*-hinterland relationship provides a good basis for interpreting the pattern of finds in Essex – what sites functioned as sites of long-distance trade, and what patterns better represent redistributive or internal exchange mechanisms.

Naylor's 2004 study also stressed that the majority of traded goods resulted from specific exchange relationships that are difficult to detect, such as the trade in organic consumables and salt. This must be a limitation on any conclusions drawn from the material examined in this study. While coinage and imported pottery are good indicators of trade, they were not the only items exchanged in the long-distance exchange network. For example, sites around the Blackwater estuary evidence salt panning and also specialist ironworking (Barford 1988; Wallis & Waughman 1998). However, it is not clear where these products ended up.

Historical sources for Essex give us some background on the natures of some of the archaeological sites that are prominent in the archaeological record.

However, the theoretical discourse on early medieval trade has urged interpretations here to be alive to the complex nature of settlement development. This includes viewing settlements in a multi-dimensional way, as nodes of different networks that were capable of functional transformations (e.g. Sindbæk 2007; Loveluck 2012).

Chapter 4

Data collection and analysis methodology

4.1. Introduction

An important methodological approach of this study is the combination of material specific chronological distribution analyses with thematic discussion chapters, setting material-specific trends within their wider archaeological context. Another key aspect is the rejection of the traditional tripartite division of the Anglo-Saxon period into three phases: early (*c.*400/50-650), middle (*c.*650-850), and late (*c.*850-1066). The author recognizes that these phases have developed to some extent from archaeological phenomena particular to these periods. However, these divisions hinder our ability to view long-term social transformations, such as understanding that developments in one phase had antecedents and consequences in another. The great weakness of the three-way division is that it can appear to portray the evolution of Anglo-Saxon society as a process involving dramatic period-to-period changes, rather than recognizing longer-term patterns.

4.2. Sources of evidence

To explore the themes outlined in the previous chapter, three forms of data are examined in detail. These are pottery, coinage, and dress accessories. This is followed by a thematic synthesis of archaeological data which addresses the wider aims of this thesis. The study of these data takes the form of chronological distribution analyses of all of the relevant artefact types. In most cases, these distributional studies were quantified, though this was not possible for all sites.

Prior to these focussed studies on coinage, dress accessories, and pottery, a comprehensive literature review of the full range of Anglo-Saxon archaeological evidence from Essex and the London boroughs was undertaken. Thus data collection was carried out against a comprehensive knowledge of all the excavated sites and their associated finds in the study region, including assessment of stray finds/PAS data. This was the first synthesis of its kind attempted for the region. Only once this had been achieved was it possible to examine the archaeological evidence as a whole in detail to establish the most significant patterns. This process resulted in the decision to concentrate on certain forms of evidence. It was decided that the most relevant new findings from outside these material classes would be brought out in later discussion chapters as part of a wider synthesis of the archaeological evidence geared towards the two broad themes of the study: group identity and socio-economic networks.

4.2.1. Dress accessories

Dress accessories have been selected for a number of reasons. Dress accessories in particular firstly fulfil practical necessities for this kind of study: they are relatively frequent finds, and they can be distinguished both typologically and chronologically. These are the simplest requirements for any diachronic distributional analysis. More importantly dress accessories often display characteristic artistic styles and forms reflective and constituent of regional cultural traditions. Some articles, such as girdlehangers, have no apparent physical function; others are simple clothes fasteners which have been significantly embellished. This is indicative of their symbolic value for contemporary communities. For these reasons, dress accessories have been used extensively in studies of early medieval ethnicity and broader cultural affiliation (e.g. Hines 1984; Thomas 2000; Owen Crocker 2004; 2011). The use of dress accessories is also uniquely both personal and communal. As items of dress they related to the identity of an individual. They were communal in the sense that the styles and forms are not anarchic, but rather reference communal fashions. Indeed, in the case of burial dress, the items are very likely to have been chosen by the family of the deceased. In this sense, they provide an interesting and potentially insightful resource in studies of group identity.

There are, however, limitations with the use of dress accessories. The first concerns who wore them. The key point is that, in the Anglo-Saxon period, we are not looking at an inclusive sample of the population. Almost all of the

dress accessories under consideration are made of metal. Metal dress items appear to have been worn by a minority of the population. It is likely that many or even most early medieval dress accessories were not made of metal. In addition, the flamboyant dress accessories of the 5th and 6th centuries almost all belong to female costume. Later, from the 7th century, strap ends from male dress are most conspicuous, with far fewer elaborate female accessories made from durable materials. It is thus very often the case that we are examining gendered items, not styles worn by the population as a whole.

A further problem is the lack of evidence from the early-to-mid-7th century onwards. Before this time dress accessories were commonly deposited in burials, and so we have a relatively large corpus with which to work. Conversely, shroud burial took over in the 7th century, meaning that dress accessories were rarely intentionally deposited. We are thus far more reliant on stray finds in this period. The body of evidence is nevertheless diminished as a whole by the near-cessation of deliberate deposition of this artefact type. If dress accessories were not deposited in this way or lost, they would have been melted down to make the next generation of metal artefacts.

Dress accessories are also of limited value in elucidating exchange networks. Certainly many would have been traded. However, the modes of transit, exchange, and deposition of dress items are complex. Some would have arrived by migration and were then either lost, buried, or handed on. Others would have been brought by traders. Many items may have been made by itinerant metalworkers, rather than exported from a central workshop (e.g.

Hinton 2000; Coatsworth & Pinder 2002: 214-5, 234). The adoption/exchange of particular dress accessories was a loaded social exchange; perhaps more so than most other articles of exchange. For example, salt (or likewise other consumables) would have been heavily traded, but the extent to which this was a socially-embedded phenomenon resides in the relationships between producers, merchants, and consumers. Salt, whether from Droitwich, the Blackwater Estuary, or anywhere else, is salt. Dress accessories were not acquired in this way and it was the acceptance of their use, not contact with their region of manufacture, which dictated the level to which they were traded. They are thus an imperfect class of evidence for charting trade networks, though they can nevertheless inform the discussion, and indeed have much to say about exchange in the socio-political sphere.

4.2.2. Pottery

Pottery distributions have already been used extensively to examine regional patterns of exchange in areas of early medieval eastern England (e.g. Blackburn 1999; Naylor 2004). The pottery record presents a useful resource for a number of reasons. The use of pottery as storage vessels means that they can be used to indicate the transports of goods across a region (e.g. Whyman & Perring 2002). Critically, pot sherds are one of the most common archaeological finds, resulting in a greater degree of significance for distribution-based studies. Pottery is also useful as there are multiple types which can be distinguished chronologically and by region of origin.

Local Essex pottery from this period is difficult to use alone to examine movement in networks. The handmade pottery current in Essex during the Anglo-Saxon period fits very much within the wider Anglo-Saxon traditions. The predominance of grass-tempered pottery between the 5th and 9th centuries is a classic example of this. This pottery varies very little either temporally or spatially. Though it has been assumed to have been a produced by households for their own use (Naylor 2004: 19), the fact that this pottery was more-or-less the same everywhere means we cannot rule out internal trade (*ibid.*: 19). There is also the problem of periods of time in which communities in Essex may have been aceramic. It is not clear whether or not this was the case, but a period of aceramicism has been incorporated into some archaeological narratives for the county (e.g. Rodwell & Rodwell 1985: 121). What it means for distribution patterns is that, if we accept some level of aceramicism at some point, we have a bias towards those sites which used pottery, which may have been wealthier to some degree (e.g. Hodges 1981: 53-4; Naylor 2004: 19).

The most useful pottery types for this study are those, which we know to have been acquired through exchange. In the case of Essex, where no specialist pottery industry is known to have existed until the medieval period, this pottery is synonymous with imported wares. Imported pottery is found in a range of distinctive types and with relative frequency in the archaeological record. This presents us with a potentially useful body of evidence for a material-based case study of exchange networks and patterns of consumption (e.g. Whyman & Perring 2002: 103; Naylor 2004: 19).

This distinction between exchange networks and consumption is important when considering imported pottery. Arnold (1988) has noted that pottery finds can represent the site of consumption rather than the site of trade/importation. In the present study, the impact of this limitation is reduced by the additional use of coinage data. This synthesis is in line with the recommendations made by Whyman and Perring (2002: 47) in their review of the methodological potential and constraints of distribution studies of urban-rural relationships.

4.2.3. Coinage

As highlighted in Chapter 3, coinage distribution studies have been used extensively in studies of trade networks (e.g. Naylor 2007; 2012). Richards and Naylor (2009) have also recently explored the great potential for using the substantial corpus of metal-detectorist data for regional studies concerning social and economic development in eastern England. However, sites identified through metal-detecting do place major limitations on interpretation. The most obvious problem is the non-archaeological method of recovery that provides limited contextual information, if any. Thus, interpretations of these sites are based on finds only, with no stratigraphic or structural data. Additionally this artefactual evidence is incomplete, as to a greater or lesser extent, detectorists choose not to recover or even look for certain material classes, such as ironwork or pottery. The latter of course would demand different surveying techniques, but the point is that the assemblages of sites identified through

stray finds are biased towards particular forms of evidence, which in turn influences archaeological interpretation.

Nevertheless, coins are one of few artefact classes, which we can safely say were intimately linked with the operation of trade, at least from the late 7th century, with the introduction of silver coinage (e.g. Metcalf 1984; Whyman & Perring 2002; cf. e.g. Williams 2005; 2010 on earlier gold coinage). Thus, sites which produce such finds are helpful in illustrating trade routes and their mechanics. The introduction of silver coinage (*sceattas*) in the later 7th and early 8th century was probably an effort to create a more practical standardized unit of alienable wealth (e.g. Lebecq 1997: 75-8). Exchange, in this sense, was the reason for their existence. As a result, we can use chronologically-sensitive, quantified coinage distributions as indices of the level and pattern of trade (e.g. Naylor 2004: 16). It is also important to note, as Naylor (*ibid.*: 18-9) does, that coinage data is contextually limited. That is to say the extent to which distributions map patterns of trade is limited to the use of particular contexts, namely accidental losses, to the exclusion of others, such as hoards, burial finds, and other deliberate depositions. We should be careful not to assume that all stray finds are stray losses. When multiple coins come from a single area it is important to examine the chronological and spatial distribution of the assemblage to distinguish whether the corpus results from a single deposit (perhaps a hoard) or the consistent deposition of coinage at a site over a longer period of time. Single, isolated finds are likely to have been lost.

However, most are found by metal-detectorists, using non-archaeological extractive methods, so we may be missing critical contextual information.

The lack of precise find-spots is one general limitation of individual elements of the data used in this study. This is a problem, which affects each of the three primary classes of evidence to some extent. These finds constitute a very small minority of the dataset. Where they are included within distributional studies, it is made clear from a dot off the map that a certain number were from undisclosed or unknown locations. So finds have been given general zonal locations, such as 'west Essex'. In these cases, these articles are represented on distribution maps by a dot beside a question mark placed in an approximate central location within this zone.

There are more general problems with coinage in that the assemblages from metal-detected finds are strongly affected by metal-detector bias. That is to say, metal-detectorists will often go where they anticipate the greatest return on their hours of searching, rather than simply searching in their immediate local area. An example of this is Tilbury (e.g. Bonser 1997: 44-5), a well-known 'productive' site where well over a hundred coins have been found datable to the Anglo-Saxon period. It is thus considered a significant coastal exchange site (e.g. Blackburn 2003). However, one can see simply from looking through the annual gazetteers contained within the *British Numismatic Journal* that Tilbury has produced a steady drip of coins from other periods, with finds dating to many hundreds of years before the first Anglo-Saxon silver coinage. When one adds this problem to the unsystematic way in which

coins are lost, the varying post-depositional processes over hundreds of years between sites, and the differing retrieval efforts, we end up with unavoidably unscientific data. As a result, it is not wise to compare too religiously the frequencies of coins found at different sites. Instead, concentrations of coinage should be seen as a general indicator of above-average monetized activity.

Another general limitation, though largely confined to the pottery data, is the presence of sites in which the amount of the particular artefact type has not been quantified. It must also be noted, however, that even if all of the site reports were quantified, comparing between assemblages would be hazardous with this type of regional study. The reason for this is the biases emanating from the different modes of excavation. London has been extensively and professionally excavated. The great extent of these excavations, admittedly of the largest settlement in the region, contrasts markedly from most settlement excavation, such as Barking (Webster 1972; Stone 1986; MacGowan 1987; Redknap 1991; 1992; Vince 1998; Hull 2002), for example, where only a small fragment of the original site has been excavated. The bias towards greater, more representative assemblages is even starker when compared with simple surface/topsoil-surveyed field-sites (often fieldwalked by amateurs), which constitute the majority of the sites on which pottery and coinage have been found. This problem is particularly acute for pottery, which is far harder to find stray than coinage, no less to identify as Anglo-Saxon, especially with undiagnostic and friable handmade wares. When comparing such sites with such divergent levels of excavation, the quantification of finds is unavoidably

of secondary importance to simple presence/absence information. Nevertheless, where significant contemporary assemblages have been found and quantified, they are of course compared in this study.

There were several major reasons why certain classes of evidence were ruled out of being the primary focus of the study. The first was a matter of frequency. Some artefact classes, such as glass vessels, were simply too rare to have a whole chapter devoted to them.

For other artefacts, rarity or poor quality of evidence discounted them from deeper study, as the results would simply not have been significant. Glass vessels are found on several sites, though they concentrate in London, the large excavation at Mucking, and several early cemeteries. The corpus of glass vessels has not benefitted significantly from stray finds recording, and thus almost all of the evidence has already been published. The context of glass vessel finds is interesting, however, and is included within the synthetic discussion of this thesis.

The collection of full environmental evidence was outside the scope of the research, which set out to explore the various questions from the perspective of man-made artefacts.

Weapon burials are of interest to this study as they have been argued to symbolize elevated social status between the 5th and early 7th centuries (e.g. Härke 1990; 1992; 1997). Though social status and the creation of a stable social hierarchy are relevant to patterns of exchange and consumption, due to

acid leaching, the demographic data does not exist in Essex to analyse the implications of weapon burial there.

Other aspects of the archaeological record in Essex, such as the overall distribution and development of settlement and burial, have been covered already in publications, and thus there was no need to retrace this ground.

4.3. The quality of the evidence and limits of inference from excavated and unstratified data

As noted above, previous regional or sub-regional arachaeological studies of Anglo-Saxon Essex have focussed on excavated material. Partially as a result of this, these studies have concentrated on the early Saxon period in particular, where excavated material is more readily available. The great advantage of this project is that, in drawing upon both stratified and unstratified data, it has been possible to address major research questions with a fuller archaeological corpus, and futher, to venture answers to otherwise unanswerable questions.

For example, the analysis of 5th-6th-century dress in Essex is conducted in this thesis with a more comprehensive dataset than ever used before. Indeed, this is true to say for any of the themes pursued in this thesis. The advantage of this is that the resulting quantitative distributions should more complete reflections of actual patterns of loss/deposition.

However, there are numerous complications that come with using unstratified data, which act as limitations on inference. The major drawback to unstratified

material is that there is very little contextual information regarding its loss/use. In this respect, for instance, we cannot assume stray finds of dress accessories to have been contemporary accidental losses. Some or many grave items may have been pulled into the plough and topsoil by post-depositional disturbance.

Indeed, our ability to interpret the usage of many artefacts that are now found commonly as stray finds is dependent to some extent on contextual information provided by excavations. Excavations allow us to observe contemporary social contexts in which artefacts were and were not used, helping to clarify their function(s) (e.g. buried dress accessories as tokens of identity and well as clothing fasteners). Excavations also aid archaeological constructions of chronological patterns of use.

However, though excavations have the potential to provide us with a detailed picture of a specific site, for the purposes of a regional study, they usually only represent islands of information in an otherwise empty landscape; especially when they are not accompanied by any landscape analysis. Indeed, there is a great deal of methodological variety between excavations. For example, some are large-scale open area operations, while others consist of only a small number of trenches. A minority are conducted as part of planned research programmes, while most are excavated in advance of potentially destructive development. As a result, excavation strategy biases the overall artefact corpus to areas which have been subject to larger, more comprehensive excavations.

Furthermore, excavations tend to recover particular items, such as discarded pottery, while other classes – notably coinage – are usually not found in great numbers in excavated assemblages, though there are exceptions (e.g. Flixborough – Loveluck 2007; Cottam – Richards 1999b). This arises from the small areas examined by excavations, and, in some cases the ploughing-out of surface refuse deposits (as at Cottam).

While unstratified finds can go some way to counteracting this imbalance, amateur survey – the main source of stray finds – is likewise biased in its recovery. This bias is overwhelmingly towards the recovery of metallic artefacts, due to the exclusive use of metal-detectors by most enthusiasts. As a result of this type of recovery, archaeologists and numismatists have been able to identify numerous concentrations of metalwork – notably coinage and dress accessories – and have classified these as 'productive sites'. However, as noted above, this term refers only to the success metal-detectorists have had in a particular area. This label may in fact cover a variety of site types (e.g. Richards 1999a: 71-80). However, with only limited classes of evidence provided by these sites, identifying functional/typological differences is extremely difficult.

This lack of information on the functional type(s) of site at which this metalwork is clustered means that we must rely heavily on our theoretical understanding of how coins were used in contemporary society. There is now a consensus of opinion that Anglo-Saxon coinage – from the *sceat* issues at least – can be taken as having been linked with commercial exchange (Naylor 2004:

16). Therefore, we may reasonably argue that areas with relatively large coin deposits were areas of monetized trade. However, this does not mean that some of these sites were not primarily engaged in socially-embedded exchange, such as tax collection, as estate centres or other centres of social units (e.g. Hutcheson 2006: 79-84).

In addition to these limitations, there is also the problem of recording. It is unfortunate, though nevertheless true, that not all artefacts which are found by metal-detectorists are reported to bodies such as the Portable Antiquities Scheme. Though this is probably the case for a range of different items, it is more likely that information on valuable finds is withheld, resulting in deficient distributions.

Ultimately, amateur metal-detectorists are driven by a different set of motivations to professional archaeologists. Metal-detectorists are essentially treasure-hunters, interested in particular artefacts they consider to be of value; financial or otherwise. Not only does this result in the discard of 'less valuable' finds, such as fragments of iron artefacts, but this also biases amateur survey to areas in which they might have the best chance of finding something. Well-known sites, such as Tilbury, have now produced a huge corpus of finds dating back to the Bronze Age because of its fame over the last few decades.

The resultant desire by metal-detectorists to prevent 'their patch' from being searched by others has a couple of negative consequences for the archaeological community. At worst, it exacerbates the problem of finds going

unrecorded. The compromise has been to allow finders to provide inexact locations – such as providing only four-figure grid references or parish area locations. However, in many cases inexact locations are intentionally published by bodies such as the Portable Antiquities Scheme with the legitimate aim of protecting suspected ancient monuments from looting. Nevertheless, this practice does set limitations to any archaeological study using these data; and in particular hampers smaller-scale analysis, which requires fine spatial resolution. Even with these limitations, it must be stressed that stray finds provide us with hugely valuable archaeological information from otherwise unexamined areas.

In the present study, the incorporation of unstratified finds has been able to substantiate the archaeological record of many aspects of the Anglo-Saxon period in Essex. For example, because of the ending of deliberate deposition in burial, a study of dress in Essex beyond *c.*AD 600 would be almost impossible without the contribution of stray finds.

The same may also be said of the archaeological study of the development of exchange networks, which is severely hampered without the regional distributions of material created by unstratified evidence. Many sites of exchange identified by this doctoral project, as well as by other studies, are only made visible with stray finds – most notably coinage.

To give another example, without stray finds, one could say very little indeed about the Danelaw period in Essex from an archaeological perspective. We

would be left simply with burials with Scandinavian affinities, at Saffron Waldon (Bassett 1982), Waltham Abbey (Huggins 1988), Benfleet (unconfirmed 19th-century report. e.g. see Challis 1992: 211; Essex HER 7167) and Leigh-on-Sea (19th-century finds. e.g. see Biddle 1987; Blackburn 1989; Rippon 1996: 123). Indeed, the latter two can hardly be classed as stratified evidence, as they were chanced upon during 19th-century building. However, by bringing together stray and excavated finds from different artefact classes, it has been possible to provide much more information about the impact of Danelaw period; such as the level of inclusion within internal East Anglian networks; changes to the nature of exchange at North Sea coastal sites; the extent of Scandinavian cultural affiliation; and political arrangements are all accessible once stray finds are appropriately included.

In summary, the imperfections of archaeological data, whether stratified of found stray, place limits on inference. Of course, generic problems arise from the pre- and post-depositional processes that destroy ancient material, leaving only a fraction for recovery and analysis. However, in this section I have concentrated on some of the more specific considerations regarding archaeological material retrieved from stratified and unstratified contexts. Although in some cases the strength of one goes someway towards mitigating the weakness of the other, we are nevertheless always unavoidably left with a deficient dataset. However, it is important that the standard methodology for regional studies should draw on both stray and excavated evidence to acheieve the greatest dataset possible. As outlined above, this enables new research

questions to be asked, thus opening the door to new information about past societies.

4.4. Research process

The data used in this thesis has been gathered from a range of sources to produce a comprehensive data set. Data collection involved compiling a complete list of archaeological sites – that is, burial sites, settlement sites, other sites of structural remains, as well as find locations. This information was gathered from published excavation reports and entries in monographs and journals, as well as from grey literature and digital archaeological databases. These digital resources, as well as some of the grey literature were kept by the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS); Essex County Council Historic Environment Record (HER); the Southend-on-Sea Sites and Monuments Record (SMR); the Colchester Urban Archaeological Database (UAD); the Greater London SMR; the Museum of London Archaeological Service; and the Fitzwilliam Museum.

The huge amount of information gathered was entered into a purpose-built Microsoft Access database (this has been provided on the included CD), creating data from *c.*1,900 sites. As no comprehensive synthesis such as this had ever been attempted for the county of Essex, let alone in combination with London, the aim was to include as much wider contextual information as possible to allow flexibility for new research avenues to augment the focus on

the dress metalwork, coinage, and pottery. The database was made to allow searches to be conducted by a great number of criteria, including artefact type, artefact class, monument type, specific/general date, or specific/general location. Specifically, the database consists effectively of a series of interconnected databases/windows ('forms'), linked by their database ID (which corresponds to either an entire site or a single phase at a site) (Figure 1)

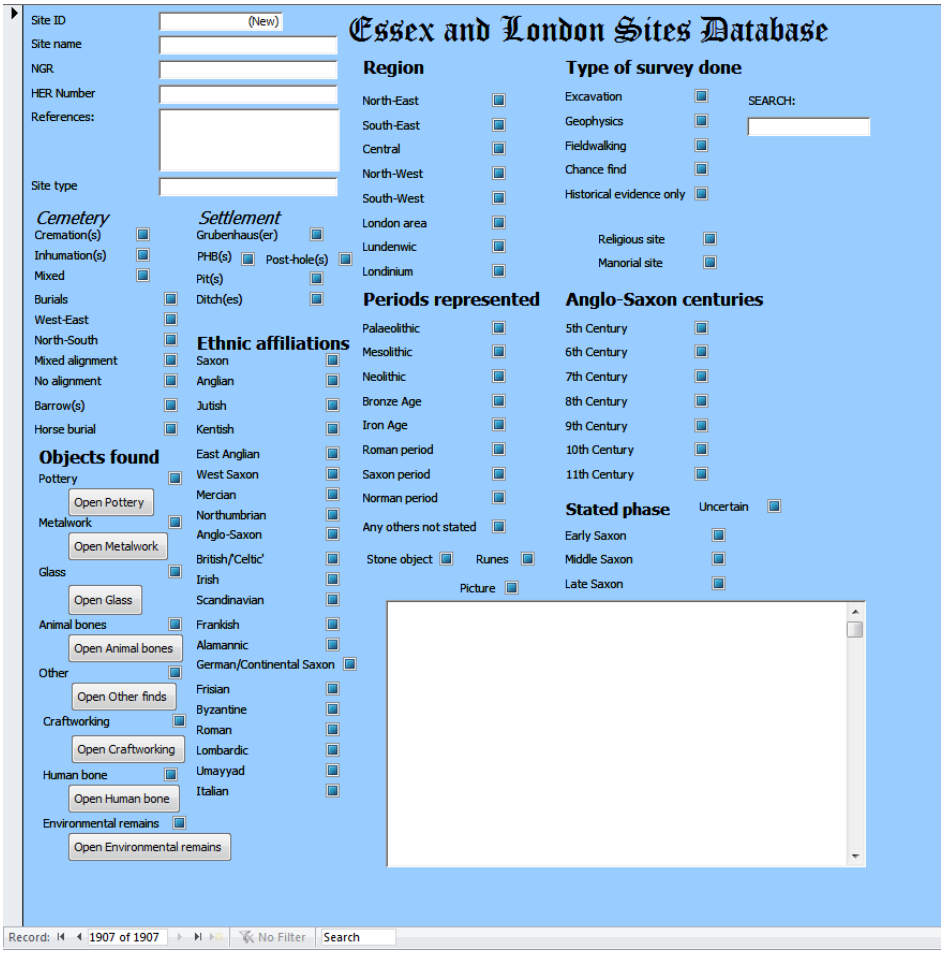


Figure 1: A screen shot of the main 'Sites' form of the 'Essex and London Sites Database' created for this study.

The ‘Sites’ form is the core of the database, including locational information (area name, National Grid Reference, intra-regional zone); dating (by century, and by traditional phases, such as ‘Early Saxon’, which were often the only dates given); monument type (i.e. settlement, cemetery, settlement/cemetery, findspot); information on burial practice; cultural affiliations of artefacts; a text box for comments and links to archaeological classes present on that sites. Further information on the archaeological classes is provided from linked additional forms concerning pottery, metalwork, glass, craftworking evidence, miscellaneous finds, environmental remains, animal bones, and human bone. Each of these forms contain tick boxes listing the presence/absence of particular artefacts, and, in some cases, small text boxes for quantification, as well as general comments boxes for any further information. The metalwork form is further subdivided into forms listing artefacts and information within the classes: weaponry, coinage, and brooches. (Figure 2).

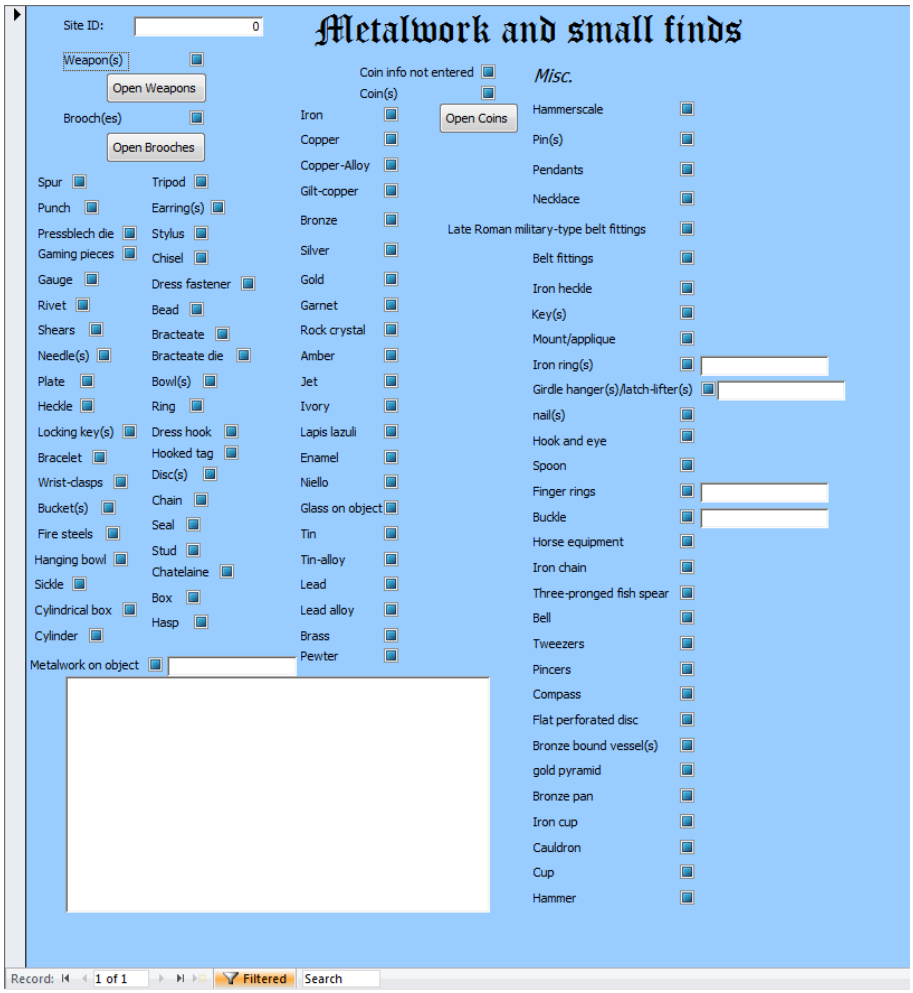


Figure 2: A screen shot of the 'Metalwork and small finds' form of the database, with buttons linking to further forms recording weapon, brooch, and coin evidence

The great value of this database is that it enabled an enormous amount of archaeological information, which had previously existed largely as prose text, to be combined in a common record, with tick and text boxes allowing searches directly by filtering of entries (possible by multiple criteria) and by

keyword searches. It is this functionality that allows data to be created from mere disordered information.

Data was created by examining the archaeology through query files to provide a list matching search criteria. This meant, for example, that lists with locational and contextual information could be made of all the sites on which a particular artefact class or type had been found. Searches were also conducted of more general aspects, including creating maps from generated lists of all of the settlement and cemetery sites found dating to each century of the Anglo-Saxon period. In all, these searches created the most comprehensive distribution maps of the archaeology of Anglo-Saxon Essex to date. It was these quantified distribution maps, which were then used as the basis for the analysis in this thesis.

4.5. Structure of analysis

The analysis presented in this thesis is separated into four material-specific chapters, focussing on dress accessories (pre- and post-*c.*650), pottery, and coinage; and two discussion chapters which draw together the archaeological evidence related to group identity and socio-economic networks. The thesis ends with a concluding chapter underlining the findings than have been made. The purpose of this section is to illustrate this structure of presentation and the reasons for it in greater detail.

Chapters 5 and 6: Dress accessories

Chapters 5 and 6 represent the first of the material specific analyses. These chapters explores the trends in dress accessories from the earliest items of apparel associated with the 'Anglo-Saxons' in the early 5th century, through to the use of dress in the early-to-mid-11th century. Chapter 5 deals with dress accessory use between *c.*400 and *c.*650, while Chapter 6 covers the period from *c.*650 to 1066. The study has been split in two this way for the ease of the reader, as a combined chapter would be extremely long. Both chapters are arranged chronologically, though patterns in contemporary fashion are viewed within the major thematic debates surrounding the use of these artefacts.

The first section of Chapter 5 examines how Anglo-Saxon dress styles were constituted in the earlier part of the 5th century. This highlights the many influences on dress current at this time, prior to the adoption of a more restricted set of cultural models later in the 5th century.

The following section explores the construction of regional fashions which emerge in the later 5th and earlier 6th centuries. These regional styles have been long been noted on a national level (e.g. Leeds 1945). The rough correspondence with later kingdoms, which were assigned the ethnic labels 'Angle', 'Saxon', or 'Jute', led to earlier regional styles being associated with these identities. The region of Essex presents an excellent case study for testing this enduring theory. Essex is an area of primary contact with the northern European mainland, it enters history as a kingdom in the late 6th century, and the ethnic identity of '(East) Saxon' is still preserved the name of

the county, as well as in textual sources. However, there has previously been no attempt to gather together the totality of the archaeological evidence to address the issues surrounding the formation of early group identities. This section of Chapter 5 groups dress accessories by region of origin, in the case of Frankish and Kentish accessories, and by the Insular identity with which they have been associated, in the case of 'Anglian' and 'Saxon' items. There is no overlap between the two. This structure is not an acceptance of these ethnic attributions, but rather a tool to illustrate how the dress styles used in Essex were hybridized; that so-called 'Anglian' items were often just as popular as 'Saxon' accessories. This section thus uses Essex as a case study to illustrate that the use of later macro-regional labels to describe 5th-/6th-century societies is inappropriate; and further, that contemporary attitudes to wearing these items may have been radically different from the traditional model. This section also includes sub-sections illustrating the concurrent use of Frankish and Kentish dress accessories.

The sub-section on the use of Kentish dress accessories in the 6th century leads on the next section on the construction and expression of early elite identities in the later 6th and early 7th centuries. This separate section shows how elite identity in Essex at the time of kingdom formation was expressed largely through contacts with Kent and the Continent, rather than by popular fashions.

Chapter 6 discusses dress from the mid-7th century onwards. This is done in two separate parts. The first examines the implications of the decline of regional dress styles, and explores what influences and affiliations were now

being signalled in dress. In particular this highlights the use of Carolingian culture – both directly imported, and absorbed into English craftsmanship – in Essex's dress display. It is suggested that this signals a maritime-focussed society influenced by its expanding cross-Channel network of contacts, and by the prestige of Carolingian Francia.

The second part engages specifically with the distribution and implications of the various Scandinavian items of dress highlighted by this research. This is evident in two phases: the first occurring between *c.*850 and 917; the second apparent in the later 10th and earlier 11th century. The nature of the use of Scandinavian culture is different in each period. In the first, it is found that Scandinavian fashions were adopted by a minority of individuals in northern Essex. It is argued that this represents affiliations with Viking East Anglia. In the second period, the use of Scandinavian culture and artistic techniques appear to have been concentrated in the area of known Danish powerbases.

Chapter 7: Coinage

Chapter 7 illustrates the patterns of coinage use through time in Essex and London. All of the coin finds from the region have been brought together by the research for this thesis. Again the analysis is conducted using quantified distribution maps. Trends from these are brought out, illustrating the primary areas of coin use, and establishing areas of heavy coin use.

The analysis in this chapter is arranged primarily by region of origin, and, where possible and appropriate, specific mint place. Many distribution studies of Anglo-Saxon coinage are conducted on a national basis. One of the key reasons for this is that conclusions can be made with a greater level of significance if they are drawn from trends within a large dataset. Unfortunately, in this respect, a regional study such as the present thesis is limited by having far fewer coins from which to establish significant trends. As a result, the emphasis on fine chronological resolution of assessing coin types by reign or phase has been reduced in some cases in favour of longer-term patterns. The analysis does, however, respect the major divisions between different phases of coinage. Thus early gold coinage, *sceattas*, broad flan pennies, and post-Reform coinage, are all recognized and dealt with separately, as the contexts within which these coins were produced and used can change dramatically.

An example of where fine chronological resolution has been diminished is *sceat* coinage. The use of regional grouping (i.e. where the coins originated) means that often all of the *sceattas* from, for example, Kent, have been grouped together in distributions (though their separate distributions are still illustrated) rather than looking at the distribution of each series. In the section on *sceatta* coinage London has also been treated as a separate region, as numerous kingdoms had their coins minted there (e.g. see Metcalf 1994: 310), so it does not make sense to separate these series, as they come from the same place. This analysis of early gold and silver coins identifies numerous centres

of monetized exchange along the Essex coast. Some of these are in the areas of early religious foundations, while others have no such associations, and indicate more secular rural exchange centres. The frequency and distribution of different regional coin types indicates strongly that the foremost East Saxon exchange relationships were with East Anglia, Kent, London, and Frisia.

The regional groupings are maintained for coinage from later phases of coinage as well. The hegemonies of the kingdoms of Mercia and Wessex mean that coinage was minted at sites outside of their respective 'home territories'. Often there are so few coins that distinguishing between mint places will not lead to significant findings. However, where it has been possible to get mint-place information on individual coins, and where it proves fruitful to use this information, it has been included to demonstrate potentially different patterns of provisioning and routes of trade. The period from the mid-8th century to the mid-11th century is split into four sections.

The first examines the earliest broad-flan pennies, from *c.*760-850. This illustrates the pattern of coinage use from the hegemony of Offa to the Danish incursions of the 9th century. The distributions show a trend towards exclusivity in the use of coins from the ruling dynasty.

The second section examines coinage use in Essex from *c.*850 to *c.*920, the period corresponding approximately with Danish dominance in Essex. The pattern of coin loss clearly shows the devastating impact of the Vikings on region monetized exchange, with the absence of English coins from stray

contexts, and a significant increase in hoarding. However, northern Essex was using coinage produced in Danish East Anglia, and there is evidence of continued exchange in the absence of English coinage at previously 'productive sites'.

The third and fourth sections discuss the patterns of coin loss in the periods before and after Edgar's reform of coinage in 973. The coinage record was strongly affected by the coinage reform, which regularized validity periods, and more effectively reminted foreign or out-of-date coins. For this reason, few foreign coins are found from this era. Thus, it is problematic to base charts of trade links and volumes of trade on finds of foreign coins. The distributions in these two sections suggest the increasing dominance of London on monetized trade in the region, and possibly the decline of traditional rural exchange centres along the coast, perhaps in favour of emergent urban markets, such as Maldon and Colchester.

Chapter 8: Pottery

Chapter 8 presents the analysis of the early medieval pottery record from the Essex and London region. As with the previous material-specific chapters it is structured primarily in a chronological fashion. The chapter is split into two large halves, examining the pottery before and after *c.*850 respectively. The selection of this date as a watershed comes from its significance in the archaeological record as the approximate time in which particular imported and handmade pottery types come to an end, and others begin. The mid-9th

century also marks a period of dramatic changes in the organization and operation of trade, as well as the socio-political context in which this occurred. For example, as well as new pottery types being established in the later 9th century, the old trading centre of *Lundenwic* was abandoned in favour of '*Lundenburh*', situated within the former Roman city. The manifold impact of Scandinavians on the trade route and centres of north-western Europe can be seen as a large part of the socio-political context in which network transformations occurred.

The first half of the chapter begins by discussing the nature of local pottery in Essex in terms of production techniques, cultural affiliations, fabric, form/usage, and chronological development. The distributions of local handmade pottery are used to track the broad areas of pottery usage between the 5th and 9th centuries.

The sections following the review of local pottery cover the various imported types found in Essex. These are arranged by region of origin: East Anglia, the Rhineland, and France. The earlier plot of local wares acts as an approximate backdrop to add context to the study of imported pottery distributions. The results demonstrate London's central position in the trade in commodities associated with imported pottery. Conspicuous consumption in the rural world is restricted to sites which can reasonably be assumed to have been of high status. However, some of the coastal exchange sites identified in Chapter 7 through coinage finds also demonstrate the importation of pottery at several points along the coast.

The second half of the chapter again begins by reviewing local pottery from the mid-9th century onwards. This is followed by an examination of the imported wares of this period. Again, this section is organised primarily by region of origin, beginning with the products of the pottery industries of East Anglia and the East Midlands before examining the distribution of Rhenish, French, and German wares. The distributions of this section suggest that London had a strong regional dominance in access to imported pottery from the Continent, while the English imports from the north and east were much more widely consumed.

Chapter 9: Changing expressions of group identity through dress and items of apparel and functional role, between c.AD 400 and 1066

The first synthetic discussion chapter (Chapter 9) examines identity-related material-specific trends within their broader archaeological context. In this chapter, the expressions of identity particularly as revealed in Chapter 5 are placed within their broader archaeological context. This context draws mainly on the excavated evidence from settlement and burials in the region, as well as the evidence of networks revealed in Chapters 6, 7, and 8. As with the previous chapters, Chapter 9 is structured chronologically.

The chapter begins by examining the emergence of 'Anglo-Saxon' fashions. This section studies the hybrid composition of 5th- and 6th- century dress, and identifies two core zones of fashion. The thesis presented rejects the validity of a link between historical ethnic labels and the fashions of the 6th century.

The section goes on to set the fashions of the 5th and 6th centuries within their archaeological and historical context, as one part of great social and cultural changes which almost entirely transformed the region. This context is used to address the question of how the range of cultural affiliations found in contemporary dress came to be used in the region of Essex. It is argued that, taking into account the totality of the evidence, one must argue that new cultural expressions at this time were created within societies including a significant number of migrants from north-western Europe.

The next section analyses the relationship between identity and Anglo-Saxon and Frankish dress accessories from the 8th century through into the earlier 11th century. This thesis rejects the notion that an English identity was expressed through dress at this time. Rather, contextual analysis reveals that many items of dress in this period were being used to signal a cosmopolitan culture; significantly influence by the Carolingian Continent. Further, this identity was apparently linked to status by the discriminating deployment of these styles on fine metalwork.

The final section examines Scandinavian cultural expressions in Essex. This section is divided between the Danelaw period (*c*.850-917), and the period of Scandinavian rule over the Kingdom of England (1016-42). The reason for this division is the differing context in which artefacts were deposited. In the earlier period, Scandinavian rule is marked by progressive conquest and, in some areas, settlement by warlords and their followers. By contrast, the later period

can be characterized as an elite takeover of the English state by Scandinavian or Anglo-Scandinavian elites.

In the Danelaw period, the Scandinavian affiliations identified from dress accessories are viewed together with other elements of Scandinavian cultural practice in Essex, as well as place-names and textual evidence of Danelaw Essex. The results indicate that northern Essex was pulled into a Danish East Anglian cultural orbit, while the southern portion of the region was a contested territory.

The second phase, in the 11th century, contrasts sharply with the Danelaw period. In this period, Scandinavian influence, in the form of Ringerike style, evidenced in the region in both monumental sculpture and metalwork, is concentrated in the London region. It is argued that this represents a more concentrated area of cultural affiliation in a key area of elite power. Importantly, these affiliations were concurrent with expressions of elite pan-European affiliations, illustrating the continuance of a cosmopolitan society with a maritime/Continental focus.

Chapter 10: Networks and the transformation of Essex, between c.AD 400 and 1066

The final discussion chapter (Chapter 10) continues the same methodology from Chapter 9. Again, the major trends from the material specific chapters are drawn together to examine how they combine to create an account of the

transformations in socio-economic networks from *c.*400 to 1066. This chapter examines three aspects of these networks.

Firstly, the coastal/sea-borne dimension of the network is studied. This charts the engagement of Essex's coastal communities with the long-distance network through time. This pursues the potential origins of the coastal centres identified in Essex, prior to the expansion of the North Sea trade network in the 7th and 8th centuries. An examination of the nature of coastal exchange in Essex follows, illustrating the importance of contacts in neighbouring English coastal regions, as well as in Frisia, indicating the primacy of maritime-oriented long-distance exchange.

This section then discusses the effect of the Vikings on the coastal network. Excavated and stray evidence indicate a complex impact in this respect, with the abandonment of certain centres, alongside evidence of barter-based exchange, and the engagement of coastal communities with a new long-distance exchange network involving Scandinavian trade routes to the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East.

The second section of this chapter studies the relationship between elites and exchange networks. This examines the nature of elite involvement with trade and exchange, in terms of elite access to trade, the social function of imported goods, and the role of elites in the creation and maintenance of the North Sea exchange network. This thesis argues for a multifaceted and shifting relationship between elites and trade. In the 5th and 6th centuries imports are

associated with status display, particularly in burials. However, with the expansion of long-distance networks from the later 7th century, this relationship becomes more complex and context dependent.

This section also examines the role of elites in the emergence of centres of exchange. It is argued that the distribution of finds associated with trade indicates a generalized engagement with long-distance networks by coastal communities. Additionally, the development of hubs of trade along the North Sea coast stands against Hodges' (1982; 1989) theory that *emporia*, such a *Lundenwic* were being used to restrict access to imports. Moreover, most of these coastal sites cannot be associated with elite direction.

The final part of this section discusses the role of elites in the emergence of towns. The evidence from Essex suggests that towns emerged as central places for exchange (and other functions) in the later 9th and 10th centuries, concurrent with a decline in activity at older coastal sites. Historical and archaeological evidence from the region support recent work (e.g. Loveluck 2012) which indicates that the elite class was more intimately involved in the development of these sites.

The final part of this chapter explores urbanization in Essex and the relationship between town and country, with special reference to London and its Essex hinterlands. Initially this section examines the legacy of Roman towns in Essex, and finds little or no functional continuity. The relationship between Essex and the *emporium* at *Lundenwic* is then examined. This thesis

proposes that the strong coastal network functioned in Essex on the basis of the exchange of bulk goods, with good archaeological evidence for the production of salt, stock grazing, and the exploitation of estuarine resources. *Lundenwic* must have been a major market for this rural produce, with coastal communities taking the opportunity to exchange with the wider world.

The final sections of Chapter 10 explore the impact of the Vikings on urbanization, and the transformation of town and country relations in the wake of the emergence of fortified urban or proto-urban centres. It is argued that the last two centuries of the Anglo-Saxon period saw the decline in generalized coastal trading, concurrent with the focussing of long-distance trade on particular centres, creating a greater functional distinction between urban and rural areas.

Chapter 11: Conclusions

The thesis concludes with Chapter 11, which brings together the major findings from the thesis. This concluding chapter also highlights the interrelated nature of identity and socio-economic networks, illustrating how group affiliations related to the concurrent socio-economic connections.

Part II. Material-specific Analysis

Chapter 5

Dress accessories, c.AD 400-*c.*650

5.1. Introduction

Prior to *c.*625/50 a large proportion of dress accessories are found in burial contexts. The dress accessorie,s which survive from this period, are overwhelmingly from female dress. Male fashion, by contrast, was far less showy, and largely lacked the fine metal dress accessories that are so characteristic of this period. Furnished burials, together with stray finds, provide a very large corpus of dress items. Burial contexts also enable archaeologists to carefully reconstruct contemporary dress and view identity through the conscious adoption of particular styles for the display ritual of burial. The richness of the evidence from this period has resulted in a scholarly bias towards it, when discussing the implications of Anglo-Saxon dress (e.g. Owen-Crocker 2005; Walton Rogers 2007).

Studies of Anglo-Saxon dress have traditionally examined contemporary fashions primarily through the lens of the burial record (e.g. Owen Crocker 2011). This methodology comes with several pitfalls, not least regarding the question of authenticity. Over the last 30 years, archaeologists studying the Anglo-Saxon period have increasingly come to understand burial as an active

ritual (e.g. Lucy 2000). Individuals would have been dressed for interment. Consequently, the dress of the dead reflects choices made by those who buried them regarding what to express; in the same way that other grave accompaniments would have been chosen. If one simply examines burials, then one must accept that one cannot be certain that one is dealing with an accurate reflection of what the living wore.

The present study has tried to correct this methodology by including PAS and HER/SMR finds from stray contexts alongside excavated information. At least some of these unstratified finds can reasonably be said to be the result of artefact loss, rather than disturbed graves. This is an important step forward as it has made it possible to produce the most accurate picture of Anglo-Saxon dress. The study is able to map patterns in the dataset spatially and chronologically. The ultimate aim is to interpret how these transformations relate to changes in group identity and society.

The following section shows how new dress styles were created in the early 5th century. It is argued that contemporary fashion was more heterogeneous at this time than at any other in the Anglo-Saxon period. The two clearest cultural influences are from Romano-British and 'Germanic' custom.

Later in the 5th century there is far less evidence of British influence on contemporary dress. However, a general female clothing type developed which incorporated dress accessories directly from, or influenced by different areas of north-western Continental Europe, such as Lower-Saxony and Schleswig-

Holstein. This fashion clearly indicates an affiliation with groups across the North Sea. However, this thesis contends that the fashions of Essex are too hybridised to posit the creation of any distinct unifying regional identity from this evidence. This thesis is particularly at odds with the notion that regional styles are manifestations of identities as specific as 'East Saxon'. These historical labels are also anachronistic. The dress accessories of Essex suggest that it was a region caught between two cores of different customs; East Anglia and the Thames Valley.

5.2. Dress and identity in the early 5th-century

5.2.1. Late Roman military belt fittings

The earliest dress accessories associated with the Anglo-Saxon period in Essex are late Roman 'military' belt sets. Though they are often chip-carved and of Roman manufacture, and not strictly of the Anglo-Saxon period, they are traditionally associated with Germanic elements of the Late Roman army. They are commonly found in graves in Lower Saxony and other areas of north-western Europe. Sticking close to Gildas' narrative, these belt sets have been used by numerous scholars in the past as evidence for the use of the hired soldiers, known as *laeti* or *foederati*, by the Romans in eastern Britannia (e.g. Evison 1965; Myres 1969). It is possible that these men remained after the Roman administration had left (Myres 1969: 78). Alternatively, it has been

suggested that they were simply associated with late Roman female dress (Hawkes 1974: 393).

Late Roman military belt fittings have been found at a few locations down the east coast of Essex (Map 2). The locations of these finds – all being near or on the *litus Saxonicum* – are plausible as areas in which *foederati* would have operated. Certainly the *colonia* of Colchester and the Roman fort at Bradwell would have had Roman soldiers present. The other known provenances, at North Shoebury and especially at Mucking, are strategic locations on the Thames. At Colchester, Springfield Lyons, Bradwell, and Mucking some of the belt fittings were found in later burials – usually female – which might indicate the descendants of *foederati* rather than the original families (Crummy 1981: 10; Hamerow 1993: 93; Tyler & Major 2005). However, the bronze buckle from the small 5th-century mixed cemetery at North Shoebury has been used as evidence for the theory that this was the burial ground of a small community of *laeti* (Wymer & Brown 1995).

There is just one site that does not conform to the coastal distribution. That is Gestingthorpe (Draper 1985) in the north, near the Suffolk border, where an unfinished 5th-century bronze buckle of Hawkes and Dunning's type IB was found. The site had 2 or more possible huts and evidence of bronze working, which led to the suggestion that the brooch may have been made here (Challis 1992). However, the Anglo-Saxon settlement is located on the site of a former Roman villa, which might hint at a more conventional explanation. This would fit with the evidence from Rivenhall, where two later Roman military belt

fittings were found within the context of a 5th-century Roman villa (Rodwell & Rodwell 1973: 57, 123, 136).

5.2.2. 5th-century Continental imported brooches

There are three brooch types found in Essex which were introduced from Continental north-western Europe in the 5th century, but which were not later manufactured in England. These types are S-shaped, equal-arm, and supporting-arm brooches. Equal-arm brooches are rare finds in Essex, with just 5 finds from the Mucking settlement (Hamerow 1993) and cemetery (Hirst & Clark 2009) (one settlement find, and three inhumations). Supporting-arm brooches are much more widely spread, but only in modest numbers (Map 3). Both equal- and supporting-arm brooches originate from north-western Continental Europe. Unlike most other early Anglo-Saxon brooches, there does not appear to have been any insular development of these types, indicating that they were imported by migration or trade from Lower Saxony (Hirst & Clark 2009: 487, 489). Just one S-shaped brooch was found in a 5th-century burial context at Bradwell (Medlycott 1992). This brooch was probably manufactured in Francia (see Briscoe 1968). It is interesting that all of these types were eventually rejected in the creation of folk costumes in the later 5th and early 6th centuries.

5.2.3. Dress accessories with Quoit-Brooch Style decoration

The first insular art style associated with Anglo-Saxon England is the short-lived Quoit-Brooch Style. It is named after the distinctive annular quoit brooches on which it was often – though not always – used. The style is particularly associated with Kent, where it probably originated. Quoit brooches are unknown in Essex outside of the Mucking cemetery. A bracelet and belt fittings decorated with Quoit-Brooch Style ornament were also found at Mucking (Hamerow 1993: 63; Hirst & Clark 2009: 530, 538, 662-8). Quoit-Brooch Style belt fittings were also found at Great Chesterford (Evison 1994: 19, 20).

Quoit-Brooch Style ornament is particularly significant as it appears to have been influenced by Germanic art and either British or Gallo-Roman art (Ager 1985a; Welch 1993). It has been speculated that the marriage of Romano-British and Continental traditions present in the Quoit-brooch Style, may have been tailored towards *foederati* present in Britain in the early 5th century (Hamerow 1993: 93-4; Welch 1993: 273; Suzuki 2000: 108-9; Ager cited in Hirst & Clark 2009: 666). Quoit brooches would thus only appear in female graves later, as heirlooms (Welch 1993: 273).

It is probably wise to remain cautious about attributing such a neat historical narrative to the late Roman belt sets and the Quoit-Brooch Style. However, their presence in early Anglo-Saxon contexts does offer a glimpse at the mixed cultural heritage that existed within the population of Essex in the early 5th century.

5.2.4. Roman fashion

There is very little evidence of any great continuity of dress styles from the Roman period into the Anglo-Saxon period. However, there are some dress accessories which suggest perhaps some Romano-British influence on the fashions of early Saxon Essex.

Finger rings and bracelets, for example, are very rare in Essex. This scarcity conforms to the overall national picture. Most 5th- and 6th-century finger rings are rather plain and unremarkable. However, there are some that are notably Roman in form. This fact, taken together with the apparent decrease in popularity of finger rings after the 5th century (i.e. as if they were a style going out of fashion), has led to the suggestion that they are evidence of Roman influence in early Anglo-Saxon England (Dickinson cited in Hirst & Clark 2009: 497).

Bracelets are extremely rare in Anglo-Saxon graves, especially in comparison with their frequency in late Romano-British burials. So much is this the case that Mucking graves 875 – which also contains a finger ring and a penannular brooch – and 631, with 4 bracelets, have both been suggested as the burials of Romano-Britons (Hirst & Clark 2009: 495). Several of the bracelets here do indeed have late Roman affinities (*ibid.*: 495-6). There is one more notable brooch from Mucking which is probably in the Quoit-brooch style (*ibid.*). At both Great Chesterford and Rivenhall 4th-century Roman strip bracelets were reused in 5th-century burials.

Swift (2012) has recently discussed the reuse of Roman bracelets as rings in Anglo-Saxon graves. She argues (*ibid.*: 205) that this reuse represents not the preservation of an aspect of Roman culture, but a dislocation in the use and meaning of Roman bracelets during the mid-to-late 5th century.

One element of native fashion, which did continue into the Anglo-Saxon period, was the penannular brooch (Plate 1). Penannular brooches had been worn in Britain since the Iron Age, and they were worn by the Anglo-Saxons from the earliest centuries onwards. While some styles of Anglo-Saxon penannular brooch may be Continental, others seem to have been developments of 4th-century British models (Walton Rogers 2007: 117). Additionally, unlike most Anglo-Saxon brooches, they do not appear to have been made for wearing in pairs on a *peplos* gown (*ibid.*). They are also among the very few Anglo-Saxon brooches to have been sometimes worn by men, presumably as cloak fasteners (*ibid.*).

Plate 1: A type F penannular brooch with missing pin from Fingringhoe (PAS: ESS-225183)

Fifteen of the 19-22 finds from Essex come from Mucking (Map 4), though this includes two or more Roman penannular brooches from Anglo-Saxon contexts. Twelve of the Mucking finds come from the cemeteries, from ten graves. Eight or nine are type C penannular brooches, which are either late Roman- or Anglo-Saxon-made, but ultimately of late Iron Age style (Fowler cited in Hirst & Clark 2009: 486). One of the 3 penannular brooches from the Mucking settlement is also type C, the other two are Roman (Hamerow 1993: 61). Another type C Roman or Anglo-Saxon penannular brooch was found from the fill of an Anglo-Saxon grave at the small cemetery at Great Chesterford (Tyler in HER: 13857). Of the remainder from Mucking cemetery II, two are possibly 6th-century type G brooches, which may be of contemporary British manufacture (Dickinson 1982: 42; Hirst & Clark 2009: 486-7). The brooch from cemetery I is a type E (Hirst & Clark 2009: 655). Three more came from two graves at the large, well-known cemetery at Great Chesterford. Here two were unusually worn paired at the shoulders in grave 29 (Evison 1994: 7).

Two 5th/6th-century type D brooches have been found at ?Colchester (provenance unknown, in the Colchester Museum collection with two others, below) and at the cemetery at 'Barrow Fields', Kelvedon. A type E and a type H also come from the Colchester Museum collection. Finally, a type F penannular brooch was found at Fingringhoe. This final brooch was found near the site of a supporting-arm brooch, with which it may have been

contemporary. This shows the proximity of use of British- and German-made dress accessories in the early 5th century.

An Anglo-Saxon annular brooch – effectively a penannular brooch with a completed circle (see below) – was found in Grave 598 at Mucking worn singly at the collar, perhaps signifying late Roman dress (Hirst & Clark 2009: 486). No other grave-goods were found.

It is clear that late Roman styles did have some impact – albeit limited – on the Anglo-Saxon dress in Essex in the 5th century and beyond. The Mucking cemetery and settlement in particular bears witness to a subtle and complex mix of cultures. The picture from early 5th-century 'Anglo-Saxon' sites is of some measure of cultural exchange. Some of the earliest expressions of non-Roman Continental culture should be seen as manifesting themselves within a late Roman or sub-Roman British context. These aspects of the archaeological record are all vitally important in understanding the stages in the development of Anglo-Saxon culture.

5.3. Patterns of dress and fashion, c.450-600

From the mid-5th century through to the turn of the 7th century it is female dress which is most prominent archaeologically. In contrast with the earlier 5th century, from the 6th century onwards it becomes very difficult to see clear influences of Roman-British custom on the dress of the region. The overall

picture from dress accessories is very much of the dominance of styles harking back to the traditions of Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein.

5.3.1. Beads

The most common female dress accessories in the 5th and 6th centuries are bead strings. Most early Saxon female graves contain beads. Beads are also known from some male burials, where they are usually used singly, sometimes as an amulet adorning a weapon. Thousands have been found across Essex, with no particular intra-regional concentrations. They have been found at 26 sites distributed along the east coast and north-west, which maps the general areas of settlement in 5th- and 6th-century Essex as highlighted by pottery scatters, and excavated settlements and cemeteries. Ultimately, the wearing of bead strings of the type found in early Anglo-Saxon England comes from fashions of the Germanic Iron Age onwards into the 'Migration period' in Denmark, north-western Germany, and the Low Countries (Hirst & Clark 2009: 516-8).

Most of the beads worn by the Anglo-Saxons were not made in England (Guido & Welch 2000: 115-6; Brugmann 2004: 31-3, 37-41). The use of glass and amber beads therefore attests to continual contact between Essex and the European mainland in the 5th and 6th centuries.

The beads worn by the Anglo-Saxons in Essex were mostly made from either glass – usually blue – or amber. Typically, it is incorrect to think of bead strings as necklaces, as they were generally not worn around the neck, though

they could be. In most graves containing bead strings at Great Chesterford, Springfield Lyons, and Mucking the bead strings were strung between the two shoulder brooches of the *peplos*-type gown (see metal dress accessories, below) (Evison 1994: 16; Tyler & Major 2005; Hirst & Clark 2009: 525). In the Great Chesterford area, this seems to have been almost the only way of wearing bead strings, as there is no burial with beads, which doesn't also have a pair of brooches (Evison 1994: 16). At Mucking a change in fashions is witnessed, with a festoon of beads strung between two brooches or rings more common in earlier graves. Other strings were found worn at the girdle and at the neck. In later graves, beads were worn without brooches (Hirst & Clark 2009: 525). At Rayleigh it is not possible to reconstruct how the bead necklaces were worn as almost all of the bead finds were cremation accessories (Ennis 2008: 14-5).

5.3.2. Metal dress accessories

In the 5th and 6th centuries, a pair of like brooches is often found at the shoulders of buried women. This arrangement is probably suggestive of a *peplos*-type gown (e.g. Owen Crocker 2011: 98). This style was ultimately Greek in origin, and consisted of a tube of material, which fitted over the body whilst being fixed/held-up at the shoulders. This gown was seemingly often gathered in at the waist by a girdle.

The brooches used to hold up the *peplos*-type dress have been used extensively to study identity, and ethnic identity in particular. Brooches are often the only surviving record of dress in early Anglo-Saxon female graves. As such, they have been central to the pervasive study of the professed cultural affiliations and possibly ancestral heritage of early Anglo-Saxon society.

For more than 60 years, the range of fashions apparent in the 6th century has primarily been viewed as indicative of the emergence and expression of regional identities within England.

It was E.T. Leeds (1945) who first recognized a correspondence between particular dress accessories and historically-attested regional ethnic groups. The general picture he established was a preference for long brooches in 'Anglian' areas (such as East *Anglia*), and a preference for round brooches in 'Saxon' areas (such as Es*sex*). A hybrid of notably Scandinavian and Frankish dress fashions has been identified in Kent (e.g. Evison 1987; Brugmann 1999).

The theoretical foundation for Leeds' interpretation was culture-historical. The jump from perceiving a correspondence between the distribution of a style of dress and an historical ethnic label, to interpreting the two as linked is potentially problematic in itself. This culture-historical approach is rightfully attacked by many scholars of the period today (e.g. Hills 1999: 184). However, the link between 7th-century ethnic labels and 6th-century fashions is still widely accepted. What is usually debated is *how* the population of Essex came to identify themselves as '(East) Saxons' through their dress in the 6th century

(e.g. Yorke 2006: 80; Geake 1992: 92). This thesis questions whether they were doing anything quite so specific.

This section will, for the first time, fully examine the spatial distribution of later 5th- and 6th-century dress accessories in Essex. For clarity, dress accessories will be grouped together by the traditional ethnic labels. This to say, those articles which have traditionally been considered indicative of an early 'Saxon' consciousness will be considered together, and likewise for so-called 'Anglian' and 'Kentish' items.

'Saxon' dress among the 'East Saxons'

The items which have most been associated with 'Saxon' areas, and thus 'Saxon' cultural identity are saucer, disc, and button brooches (e.g. Welch 1983: 163; Dickinson 1999: 258; Lucy 2000: 30-8). Saucer brooches are the most common of these in Essex (Map 5).

Saucer brooches were round brooches with an angled rim, making a roughly saucer-like appearance. There are two types, which are differentiated by their differing methods of manufacture. Cast saucer brooches were just one piece of cast metal, usually gilded copper alloy. The other saucer type is the 'applied' brooch, which consists of a gilt repoussé foil frontplate applied to a copper alloy backplate, on which is found the pin.

The applied brooch was first made in north-western continental Europe in the 3rd century (Walton Rogers 2007: 114). Both were styles were current in the 5th

and 6th centuries, though cast saucer brooches continued to be worn by some in the 7th century (*ibid.*). This brooch form and much of the traditional ornamentation, such as the spiral design (Plate 2), were newly imported to England in the 5th century. They are found concentrated in southern England and in the Upper Thames valley (Dickinson 1976; 1993; Owen Crocker 2004: 42). However, it has been noted that the applied brooch is also common in the midlands (Hines 1994: 53; Walton Rogers 2007: 114).

Plate 2: A 5th/6th-century cast saucer brooch from Arkesden (above) and North-west Essex (below) (PAS: ESS-097060; ESS-870033)

There are pretty even numbers of both saucer brooch types in Essex. Numbering 40, just over half of the saucer brooches in Essex are applied brooches. Both the applied and cast saucer brooches have the same distribution, with the majority in the south-east along the Thames and Thames Estuary. This represents a significant national concentration (Owen Crocker

2004: 42; Hirst & Clark 2009: 481). However, a significant number were also found at Great Chesterford, near the Cambridgeshire border. In burial contexts, these brooches are mostly found in pairs at the shoulders. Many of the saucer brooches found across the county are characteristically early types, with designs such as the stars and spirals. Others are decorated with Style I animal ornament or stylized human faces.

The human face design was also used extensively on button brooches. These were another round brooch which were cast from some point in the 5th century, until the mid-6th century (Hirst & Clark 2009: 483). In form, they resemble miniature cast saucer brooches, with which they were contemporaneous. However, button brooches do not have the variety of decoration, being typically cast with a stylized male face (Plate 3).

Outside of Mucking, button brooches are quite rare in Essex (Map 7). All of the finds are distributed along the Thames and north-sea coast of south and east Essex. 11 of the 14 found at Mucking were found in seven burials. The brooch from Barling Magna was found with other brooches in what may be the remains of a disturbed cemetery (Ken Crowe in Essex HER: 13816). Another group of early brooches containing one button brooch was found at Little Wakering (Southend SMR: TQ98NW102). Another was found nearby at Great Wakering not far from where early Saxon weapon burials had previously been found (Essex HER: 1115 & 11126). The most northerly example comes from a short way up the coast, at Tillingham (Plate 3).

Plate 3: The button brooch from Tillingham, with the characteristic stylized human face decoration (PAS: ESS-830F62)

Though button brooches are traditionally associated with 'Saxon' regions, they have also been found on the Isle of Wight (Arnold 1982) and in Kent (e.g. Brugmann 1999; Evison 1987). The manufacture of some of the Mucking brooches is thought to be Kentish (Hamerow 1993: 61; Hirst & Clark 2009: 483). This is on the basis of their distribution south of the Thames. However, button brooches are still rare in Kent despite a great deal of archaeological excavation having been carried out. Thus, it may be the case that brooches in Kent had in fact come in from south Essex.

The final round brooch type is the disc brooch (Map 6). These consist simply of a disc of copper alloy, often coated, which was stamped or incised for decoration. As such it may be that disc brooches were developed from applied

brooch backplates (Walton Rogers 2007: 115). They may even have been a cheap alternative to the saucer brooch (Hirst & Clark 2009: 484). In their early Saxon form they appear to have gone out of fashion sometime in the mid-6th century (Dickinson 1979: 42).

Although there are similarities to late 5th-century Rhenish brooches, unlike saucer brooches, disc brooches do not have a direct Continental antecedent, but instead were an insular late 5th-century development (Dickinson 1979: 42; Evison 1994: 67; Hirst & Clark 2009: 484). Hamerow classified them as a symbol – perhaps of Romano-British inspiration – of the Saxon identity of the Thames valley (1979). However, it has also been argued that they were manufactured in Cambridgeshire (Evison 1994: 7), which would more readily explain the Great Chesterford finds.

Plate 4: Disc brooches with ring-and-dot decoration from Thaxted (top left), an undisclosed location (top right), and Maldon (bottom) (PAS: ESS-858328, ESS-A18FE3, & ESS-410BB7)

The disc brooches from Essex are mostly decorated with simple ring-and-dot ornament (Plate 4), which is a characteristic Anglo-Saxon motif found on various artefacts. This motif, as well as that of a bird, was found on a later antler disc brooch mould from *Lundenwic* (Blackmore 2002: 289, 291, fig.13)

(Plate 5). This might suggest that the *emporium* was a location for the manufacture of earlier disc brooches.

Plate 5: A mid-8th-century antler disc brooch mould from Long Acre, Lundenwic (Blackmore 2002: 291, fig.13)

Applied disc brooches were found in the cemetery at Kelvedon (Rodwell & Rodwell 1975; Eddy 1979). This type was probably produced in Kent, as a result of Frankish cultural influence or even settlement (e.g. Owen Crocker 2004: 42). The Kelvedon cemetery also contained a 7th-century Kentish garnet inlaid gilt buckle (Challis 1992).

Another form of disc brooch is an openwork brooch. These are disc-shaped brooches which are decorated with cut-out shapes. Often the cut-out sections leave the shape of a swastika (a common Continental motif, found incidentally on a contemporary pendant from Great Totham (Essex HER: 19578)). However, the unusual solitary example in Essex, from Kelvedon, has cut-outs of circles and a cross (Plate 6). This brooch is a rare example outside of the midlands (Walton Rogers 2007: 117).

Plate 6: The openwork disc brooch from Kelvedon (PAS: SF-2C7C15)

As the above review has shown, as the study of dress accessories has progressed, and, as more specimens have been found, we have discovered that no one brooch type is geographically restricted to just 'Saxon' areas. All three brooches have sub-types attributed to craftsmen of 'Jutish' Kent. Saucer and

disc brooches may have been manufactured in the 'Anglian' midlands and Cambridgeshire, as well as the Thames Valley.

In Essex, use of the button brooch appears to have been restricted to south Essex. If these brooches were used to express 'Saxon' identity; and if Essex as we know it was a self-professed 'Saxon' region in the 6th century, we might reasonably expect to have found these brooches across the county, or at least at Springfield Lyons or Great Chesterford.

However, saucer and disc brooch finds are spread thickly enough to assume that they were used across the region. Their southerly concentration should be also be noted, but with caution, as the size and richness of the Mucking cemetery has the potential to unduly bias the distribution.

'Anglian' dress

The construction of so-called Insular 'Anglian' identity has been associated in the past with long brooches, such as cruciform, 'small-long', and great square-headed brooches, as well as other dress accessories, such as annular brooches, 'girdlehangers', and wrist-clasps (e.g. Arnold 1997: 191; Dickinson 1999: 258; Lucy 2000: 30-8; Hirst & Clark 2009: 490).

One of the most striking findings of the research for this thesis is the frequency of small-long brooches in Essex (Map 8). Around 100 small-long brooches have been found across Essex, making them the most commonly found brooch of this period in the region. It is also important to note the slight bias towards

central and north-western Essex in this distribution. However, around a third came from the south-east as a result of the large concentration of in the Mucking cemetery, which accounts for a quarter of the total for Essex.

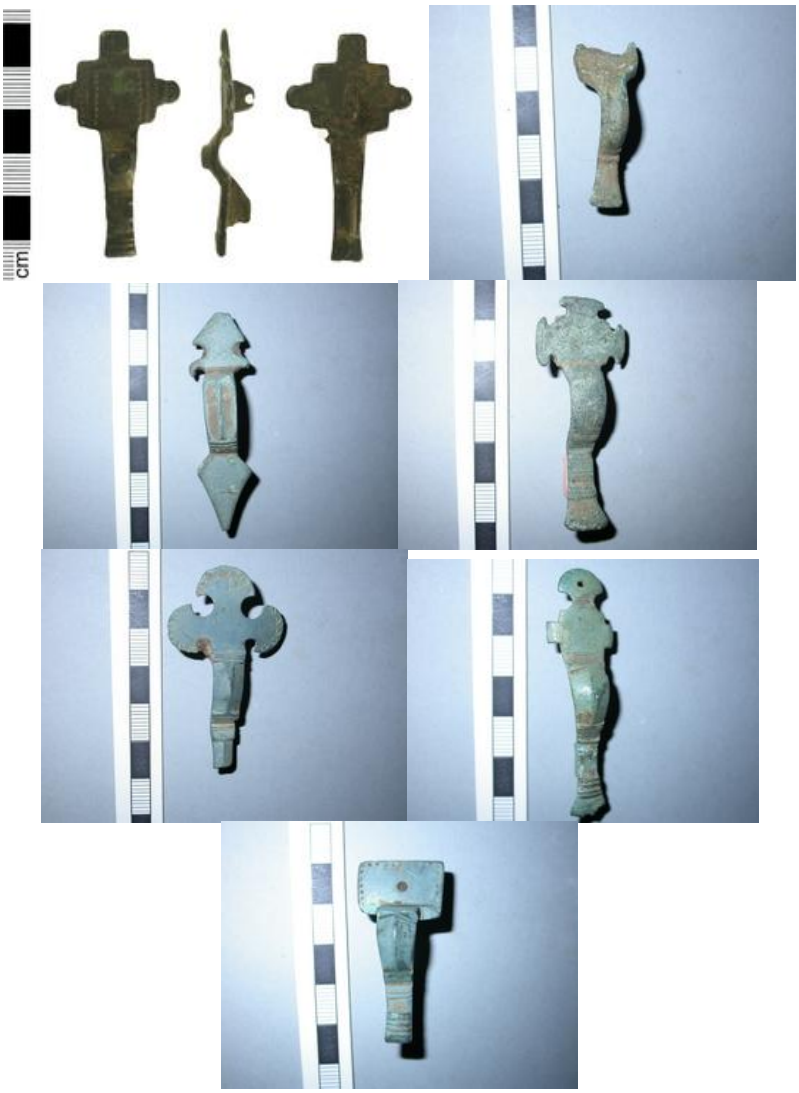


Plate 7: A variety of small-long brooch forms from Essex. Berden (top left) and 'north-west Essex' (PAS: BH-6AB7A6; ESS-55A361; ESS-C42B32; ESS-C3E5B6; ESS-87ED91; ESS-875500)

With a great number of forms (Plate 7), the small-long brooch is the most varied category of early Saxon brooch. These forms relate them to both cruciform and square-headed brooches (Vierck 1972a in Hirst & Clark 2009: 491). However, they probably arrived in Britain from Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony as a separate form (Hines 1984: 11-13; Böhme 1986: 554-8). It is largely associated with Anglian regions of England in the later 5th and early 6th centuries (e.g. Tyler 1998: 273; Hirst & Clark 2009: 490).

Cruciform brooches are one of the earliest brooches with insular development in England. They date from the early 5th century to the mid-6th century. The cross shape is usually formed with three knobs radiating from the 'head', and a long animal head at the 'foot'; though a 'florid' form was also quite popular in the 6th century (Plate 8). These were not symbolic of Christian faith and, as with square-headed brooches (below), the 'head' and 'foot' do not necessarily correspond with the ends pointing up and down (Walton Rogers 2007: 118).

Plate 8: A florid cruciform brooch with a missing foot from Roxwell (PAS: ESS-11C830)

Though they have been traditionally associated with 'Anglian' areas and thus identity (e.g. Hirst & Clark 2009: 489; Owen Crocker 2004: 42), they might be better thought of as an east coast brooch, as they are relatively common in Essex – with around 40 examples from 19 sites (Map 9) – and Kent. Like small-long brooches, there is a regional concentration at Mucking, though the general bias is towards mid- and north Essex.

By contrast, great square-headed brooches are relatively rare finds in Essex, with just seven specimens. All but two of these are located in northern Essex. Square-headed brooches in general have been associated with insular 'Anglian' and 'Jutish' identity (e.g. Dickinson 1999: 258; Lucy 2000: 30-8). The form originated in Scandinavia. In England, the style split between smaller Kentish square-headed brooches and the larger and more elaborate *great* square-headed brooches. Great square-headed brooches are associated initially with 6th-century East Anglia, though they were later used over a much larger area, from the midlands to the south coast. It is possible that great square-headed brooches were made individually for clients by itinerant metalworkers, as no two are the same (Hines 1997b: 212, 221-2). Hines (1997b) tracked the usage of these brooches from a wider distribution across the midlands and south coast, to a more restricted area in the north and east, from East Anglia to Yorkshire.

Though almost all of the Essex examples are fragmentary, it would appear that most of the Essex brooches are of later 'Anglian' type. A brooch mould was also found on the Essex shore of the Thames estuary (e.g. Hirst & Clark 2009:

613). This may well support Hines' theory of itinerant craftsmen; in this case, perhaps casting great square-headed brooches for clients in Essex. A Kentish/small square-headed brooch mould was also found at the Mucking settlement.

As long brooches largely went out of fashion in the mid-6th century, annular brooches gained in popularity in the areas in which long brooches had been most common (Owen Crocker 2004: 42). Annular brooches find their prototypes in Scandinavia, and were made in England from the mid-to-late 5th century to the 7th century (Ager 1985a).

In Essex, the corpus of annular brooches largely derived from the three major cemeteries, particularly Mucking (Map 10) also been found on the settlements at Mucking and Rivenhall. Another was found stray in 'Essex', despite its misleading PAS code (PAS: KENT-CD7B48).

Alongside these brooches, girdle-hangers and wrist-clasps have also been associated with insular 'Anglian' identity.

Wrist- or sleeve-clasps and associated gusset plates are found commonly in 'Anglian' regions in England, especially in East Anglia. Like the 'Anglian' brooch forms, their style is Scandinavian in origin. However, wrist-clasps are specifically from south-western Norway, rather than Denmark. They appear as part of Anglo-Saxon dress from the later 5th century. Initially they are found around the Wash, before spreading out (Hines 1984: 205). In Scandinavia, 'wrist'-clasps were worn by women at the wrists and chest, and by men at the

wrists and ankles. In England, however, they only appear to have been worn by women, and only at the wrists.

Around 40 have been found in Essex (Map 11), this amounts to 15-20 pairs from the large cemetery at Great Chesterford, and just a handful of others from 'north-west Essex', Waltham Abbey, and the Springfield Lyons cemetery. One should really consider the Great Chesterford cemetery to be a part of the Cambridgeshire cluster of cemeteries – the cemeteries it is nearest to. Without Great Chesterford, it would seem that dress with wrist-clasps was very rare in Essex, and certainly not a common component of the regional costume.

Girdle-hangers were latch-lifter-like objects that were suspended from the waist (Plate 9). Their shape may have been derived in Scandinavia from Roman keys (Owen Crocker 2004: 67). Their flimsiness possibly precludes functionality in any physical sense, and it has been argued that they may have symbolized a woman's control over house and husband (Meaney 1981: 179-81). It is possible that they simply symbolized keys (Hirst 1985: 87-8). They have even been seen as religious amulets invoking the Norse goddess Freya (Steuer 1982: 205, 225). Though they are primarily thought of a Scandinavian introduction, parallels for some of the Essex examples are found in northern Germany and the Netherlands (Hirst & Clark 2009: 546).

Plate 9: A girdle-hanger from 'north-west Essex' (PAS: ESS-5494C4)

In Essex, the distribution of girdle-hangers is thin, but much more spread than that of wrist-clasps (Map 12). The Springfield Lyons cemetery possesses the largest concentration in the county. Of the *c.*14 found, 9 are known to have come from burials.

Finally, scutiform pendants have also been associated with 'Anglian' areas (e.g. Owen Crocker 2004: 88). In Essex, they are found at both Great Chesterford (Evison 1994) and Mucking (Hirst & Clark 2009).

Other influences on regional fashion

Francia

The dress accessory data also provided early evidence of cross-Channel contact with the Merovingian Rhineland region. The most common single example of this relationship comes from radiate-headed brooches (Map 13).

Plate 10: A 6th-century Merovingian radiate-headed brooch from 'north-west Essex' (PAS: ESS-C487B5)

Radiate-headed brooches are long brooches that take their name from the knobs, which radiate out from the head of the brooch (Plate 10). In England, they are mostly found in Kent – the region with by far most extensive relationship with Merovingian Francia – and in the Thames Valley. In Kent, they were frequently worn in the Frankish four-brooch style costume, while elsewhere in England they were incorporated in the local dress. In Essex, these

brooches appear to have been worn as typical shoulder brooches, rather than in the Frankish/Kentish custom. This observation, together with their rarity, makes it more likely that they were brought with trade than settlers. The latter, however, should not be discounted.

Several items have been found in Essex which have links with Francia. These include 5th-century belt fittings (Hirst & Clark 2009: 530-2, 668-9) and a Frankish/Alamannic silver ring from Mucking (*ibid.*: 498-9). Two of the small-long brooches from the Springfield Lyons cemetery have semi-circular 'heads', possibly inspired by Frankish models (Tyler & Major 2005).

It has long been suggested that Kent had a near monopoly on Frankish trade with England (e.g. Huggett 1988; Brookes 2007). However, if Frankish items moved through Kent first, it is surprising that no radiate-headed brooches have been found in south Essex, where Kentish items are most strongly concentrated. Of the seven found, all are in the extreme north of Essex, near the Suffolk and Cambridgeshire borders. Three were found in two graves at Great Chesterford. The remaining four are stray and settlement finds. The Colchester (Crummy 1981: 15) and Dovercourt finds contribute to a growing body of archaeological evidence that suggests that these areas were engaged in small-scale long-distance trade in the 6th century, prior to the explosion in trade in the following century.

Further evidence of coastal trade comes from the fabric from which costume beads were made. Beads made from monochrome blue glass are the most

common type at all of the major cemeteries. Though it has been argued that pink, decorated annular, and decorated polychrome beads were manufactured in England (Guido & Welch 2000: 116, 118), there is no evidence that the majority of the beads found in Essex were manufactured locally or even within England.

The closest direct evidence of glass bead manufacture comes from a few sites in the Netherlands and Scandinavia (Guido & Welch 2000: 115; Brugmann 2004: 31-3, 37-41). By contrast, in England, no workshop debris or waste from glass bead-making has been found. Thus the majority of the beads in Anglo-Saxon England have traditionally been thought of as imports. If this is true, it is very significant, as it suggests that the most popular dress accessories worn in the later 5th and 6th centuries were imported.

This dependence resulted in the pattern of bead wearing in Essex and elsewhere often reflecting the changing fashions in the Low Countries, Rhineland, and Northern France, where most of the beads were made (Siegmann 1997: 137).

Beads were also made out of amber, especially in the 6th century. Again, the majority, if not all, of this amber would have been imported, mostly from the Baltic (Guido & Welch 2000: 115). The general impression is that amber took over from blue glass as the most common bead fabric in the 6th century (Walton Rogers 2007: 128). However, in Essex this does not appear, on current evidence, to have been the case. This supports findings made by

Huggett's 1988 study (see p.64 and Plate.1). Amber beads are hugely outnumbered by glass beads at the Mucking, Rayleigh, and Springfield Lyons. Only at Great Chesterford are they in the majority, number just 10 more than the total for glass beads. The solitary amber bead from Beauchamps Farm, Wickford, is the only specimen to have been found outside of a burial context. The coastal distribution is further evidence of the operation of long-distance trade in commodities along the Essex coast in the 6th century.

Kent

Besides dress accessories traditionally associated with the so-called 'Anglian' and 'Saxon' cultural affiliation, other items of dress show extensive contact with other areas. In particular, Kentish dress accessories show how southerly fashions were also a part of local costume.

This is particularly the case for small square-headed brooches, which are as common in Essex as cast saucer brooches. They are distributed across the county, though they are concentrated in the Thames region, particularly at Mucking, where there is extensive evidence of contact with Kent (Hirst & Clark 2009). It has been suggested that these brooches were all made in the same workshop in Kent (Leigh 1980: Ch. 3 & 6). However, a brooch mould was found at the Mucking settlement, suggesting that this may not be the case. Many of the Essex finds are incomplete examples, though a handful are relatively intact (Plate 11).

Plate 11: Square-headed brooches from 'north-west Essex', two with part of the foot missing (PAS: ESS-557281; ESS-53C815; ESS-86AB87)

Gold 'bracteates' – especially of type D – are another dress accessory type strongly associated with Kent (Høilund Nielsen 2009: fig.23; Behr 2010). Bracteates are gold coin-like pendants, ultimately derived from Roman coins, but later decorated with Germanic motifs. They were originally a Scandinavian fashion, which was brought to England and further developed. They are found particularly in East Anglia and Kent, where it is believed they were manufactured, and have been used to argue respectively for Anglian and Jutish

identities or connections in those regions. Given this, it is unsurprising that a few have also been found in Essex.

The provenances of five are spread up the east coast from London, with the remaining bracteate in the north-west at Littlebury. They are all of 6th-century English manufacture, though the C-type bracteate from Jaywick Sands, Clacton has Danish and south Swedish parallels (Challis 1992). Kentish contacts may be glimpsed from the probable D-type gold bracteate from near Kelvedon, and in the two unusual and ornate bracteates from the elite cemetery at Prittlewell, one of which is inset with garnets (Tyler 1996: 114). Another interesting find is of a D-type bracteate die, with an as yet unique design. However, the provenance has not been disclosed (PAS: ESS-13B5E6) (Plate 12).

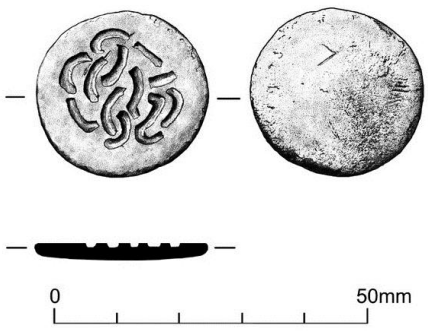


Plate 12: A drawing of the bracteate die from 'Essex' (PAS: ESS-13B5E6)

This bracteate die (PAS: ESS-13B5E6) and the three brooch moulds found in the region – two at the Royal Opera House (Malcolm & Bowsher 2003), including one for a disc brooch and another possibly for a penannular brooch, and along the Essex coast at Mucking (square-headed) (Hamerow 1993: 61-2) – suggest that itinerant metalworkers may well have been passing up and down the coast. The concentrations of square-headed brooches and bracteates outside of Essex count against the interpretation that Essex was a centre of manufacture. However, it is important to remember that fine metalwork may often have been produced by itinerant smiths in the service of dispersed aristocratic patrons (Hinton 2000; Coatsworth & Pinder 2002: 214-5, 234).

5.4. Kentish affiliation and the 'Final Phase', c.600-50

In the late 6th and early 7th centuries there was a brief period in Anglo-Saxon burial known sometimes as the 'Final Phase' (Geake 1997) of furnished burial, before the practice fell out of favour. It is to this period that the richest graves from Anglo-Saxon England belong. In Essex, elite cemeteries emerge which display significant Kentish affinities in their dress. Contemporary Kentish elite dress is known for its elaborate disc brooches, and other jewellery gold and silver with garnet, glass, and filigree decoration.

At Broomfield, the 'prince' uncovered in the 19th century was buried with gold and garnet artefacts, including a gold and cloisonné garnet buckle plate (Challis 1992). The Prittlewell garnet saucer brooches and bracteates, noted

above, are archaeological reflections of these elite links. At Rainham the small-long brooches and square-headed brooches display characteristic of elements of Kentish costume (Evison 1955: 193). Further east, at Forest Gate, the gold head from a pin with cloisonné garnet and lapis has been found (Jones 1980). The female dress accessories from Rainham and Prittlewell, are in fact distinctly not 'Saxon'. The closest affinities at both sites are with Kent (*ibid.*; Tyler 1988).

The cemetery excavated in the 19th century at Barrow Fields, Kelvedon (Challis 1992), was probably another elite cemetery. Both 6th-century bronze Kentish disc brooches and a 7th-century Kentish garnet inlaid gilt buckle were found here. Nearby, an elaborate early 7th-century triangular buckle plate fragment was found by a metal-detectorist. It is made of gold and is decorated with filigree interlace (PAS: PAS-276915) (Plate 13). It is a Continental style, but is most closely paralleled at Faversham in Kent (*ibid.*).

Plate 13: Gold buckle plate from Kelvedon (PAS: PAS-276915)

At two separate cemeteries in Colchester silver and gold rings were found, attesting to some wealth here in the later 6th of early 7th century. The gold ring was had a rib- and bead-patterned body set with 2 small purplish cabochon garnets (PAS: *PAS-D63214*). This ring probably came from Kent, and one of several examples of trade-related activity at Colchester in the 6th century. This adds to the Merovingian pottery (Crummy 1980; 1981) (see Chapter 8), glass stemmed beaker (Powell 1963), and radiate-headed brooch (Crummy 1980; 1981) found elsewhere around Colchester. There is also a cast saucer brooch from Colchester that imitates finer Kentish garnet-inlaid brooches (Crummy 1981). Further connections with the Continent are shown from a 7th-century Byzantine copper alloy buckle found near Colchester (untitled article in Essex HER grey literature). The archaeology from Colchester is fragmentary and enigmatic. However, the excavated and stray evidence brought together by this study suggests that we may have underestimated the importance of the area of Colchester in the immediate post-Roman period. Lebecq (1997: 73) argued that the provision of Mediterranean goods to north-western Europe in the post-Roman period resulted from secondary trade routes, perhaps kept open by eastern traders or those familiar with older routes.

The elaborate Kentish dress accessories of this period are also seen at Mucking, where a garnet-headed pin from the cemetery (Hirst & Clark 2009: 493-5), and a 7th-century pendant from the Mucking settlement was copper alloy with a turquoise glass setting, and a drop-shaped glass-inlaid ornament –

possibly a pendant – from the North Enclosure were found (Hamerow 1993: 63).

Finally, an elaborate mid-to-late 7th-century Kentish disc brooch from Long Acre in *Lundenwic* (Blackmore 2002: 280) (Plate 14) is perhaps a reflection of textually-attested Kentish elite authority in the 'East Saxon' *emporium*.

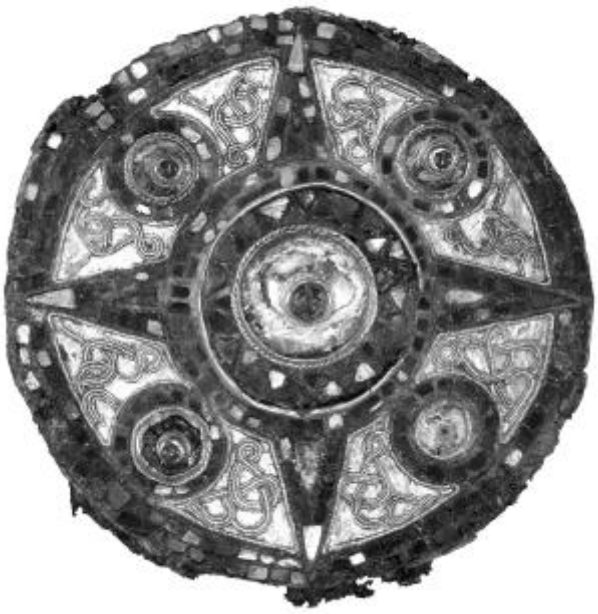


Plate 14: Mid-to-late 7th century Kentish disc brooch from Long Acre, City of Westminster (Blackmore 2002: 280)

The archaeology of elites in Essex thus appears to support the historical narrative, which indicates a close relationship between the rulers of the early

kingdoms of Kent and Essex (e.g. see Yorke 1985; 1990: 46-57). It seems that particularly in the early 7th century, many of the ruling families of Essex were associating themselves with the ascendant kingdom to the south.

5.5. Summary

In summary, the period between *c.*400 and *c.*650 was witness to huge transformations in dress in Essex. In the early 5th century, the archaeological evidence shows a mixing of Romano-British and Germanic customs, perhaps as early migrants from north-western Europe were settling into the sub-Roman British landscape. This was though a period of socio-political flux, with a documented history marked by violence. It may thus be appropriate to interpret the mixed fashions as a reflection of uncertain allegiances.

From *c.*450, however, the dress styles confidently proclaim cultural affiliations with various related cultures in Continental north-western Europe. The most notable similarities are with the areas of Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein. There are also artefacts, which show that this cross-channel network also extended to Merovingian Francia. At this time regional dress customs emerge in England, which have been taken as expressions of specific group identities (e.g. 'Angles' in 'East Anglia') (e.g. Leeds 1945). In Essex, however, the dress accessories reference a mixture of cultures and regional styles. There appears to have been a free mixing of different dress accessories concentrated

in East Anglia and the Thames Valley. As such, no distinct 'East Saxon' style develops. This hybrid pattern is also reflected in burial rite (see Chapter 9).

Thus, Essex is marked by the hybridization of different forms and decoration which hark back primarily to the traditions of Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein. However, these fashions are not simply evidence of the imposition of a costume from one area onto another area. Fashions were actively constructed by contemporary communities. Significant elements of popular Continental dress were left out. Other items, such as supporting-arm brooches, were worn in Essex in the early 5th century, but were later rejected. Conversely, dress items which went out of fashion on the Continent continued to be worn in England. Additionally, items such as wrist-clasps and radiate-headed brooches were worn in a different way in Essex.

In the late 6th and early 7th centuries there is a brief period of exceptionally richly furnished burial, often referred to as the 'Final Phase' (Geake 1997). Social stratification is manifest in the creation of elite cemeteries, such as Rainham and Prittlewell. These sites primarily display cultural affiliations with Kent. It is surely noteworthy that the highest levels of society in the early East Saxon kingdom did not dress their dead in the attire traditionally associated with 'Saxon' identity. The Kentish material connections seem to support the historically-documented close relationship between the two kingdoms.

5.6. Conclusions

In conclusion, the archaeology of Essex from dress accessories offers a window onto the range of group identities and networks extant in Essex between *c.*400 and 1066.

The dress of the earlier 5th century reflects a mixing of different cultures. British influence can be seen in the use of particular motifs in the Quoit-Brooch Style (Ager 1985; Welch 1993), and in the continuance of Insular types of penannular brooches, rings, and bracelets. The introduction of Germanic motifs and forms appears initially to have been within a sub-Roman British context.

However, the archaeology of the 5th century is marked by the rapid adoption of Continental styles, particularly derived from Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein. A great variety of new brooches and other dress accessories – most notably glass beads – were introduced in the 5th century. These accompanied a new female dress type, akin to the classical *peplos* gown. Some of the new brooch forms which were introduced in the 5th century, such as the supporting- and equal-arm brooches, do not appear to have been reproduced in Britain. These brooches were apparently not traded, and thus went out of fashion. While many brooches from the Continent were introduced, there were notable omissions. In particular, tutulus brooches are characteristic of 5th-century burial assemblages in Lower Saxony (Høilund Nielsen 2003: 193-7), and yet none has been found in Essex.

In those brooches which did make the cut we are witnessing the active creation of a new costume in Essex. Despite omissions, the dominant dress styles of the 5th and 6th centuries declare a strong affiliation with the culture of Continental north-western Europe, particularly as it was in the later 4th and 5th centuries. It is patterns in the use of these new dress accessories which have preoccupied scholars for almost 70 years.

It has long been recognized that particular dress accessories, or more importantly, particular *combinations* of dress accessories, were concentrated in particular areas (e.g. Leeds 1945). Further, it has been argued (*ibid.*), these costumes correspond to the areas of 7th-century kingdoms, for which we are given ethnic labels by Bede (*HE* I.15). The argument then follows that these regional styles of dress were expressions of ethnic affiliations, which were later given political expression.

The current thesis is at odds with this conclusion. The space here will be used for a critique on the basis of the dress accessories alone. In Chapter 9 this argument is reinforced with greater archaeological and historical context.

What the Essex evidence shows is not a region creating its own distinct folk costume, but rather a liminal zone between two cores of dress style. These cores appear to have been located in East Anglia and the Thames Valley (perhaps in south Essex itself).

In other words, Essex did not develop a single costume, but rather mixed style concentrated in different regions. Map 14 shows the distribution overlap in

Essex of dress items associated with insular ‘Anglian’ and ‘Saxon’ identity. The cores of fashion are shown by the slight tendency towards round brooches in the south, and long brooches and other ‘Anglian’ accessories in the north and west. While it is possible that south Essex formed the core region in England for round brooches, it is not possible to argue that this area constitutes a region expressing ‘Saxon’ identity. The old theory falls down as soon as there is no coalescence of a particular fashion and a later kingdom.

Instead of an early (East) Saxon identity, this thesis contends that the pattern of dress accessory usage displays a much more general cultural affiliation. The dominant dress accessories best reflect those in Lower Saxony. This is particularly emphasised by the use of saucer brooches and small-long brooches, both of which were commonly used items in the Elbe-Weser region. It should be noted that both small-long and cruciform brooches have come to be associated with Insular ‘Anglian’ identity despite their popularity in Lower Saxony (Siegmund 2003: 80; Høilund Nielsen 2003: 193; 206-22). Essex’s style does not follow that of Lower Saxony exactly, however. Its fashion was infused with other influences from northern Europe, while other Continental Saxon dress accessories were excluded.

The image presented is one of a heterogeneous population creating new styles, which reflected elements of their diverse cultural heritage. These styles were certainly used to associate individuals with north-western Continental European culture. However, it is doubtful whether a more specific group identity than this can be posited. As such, the use of terms ‘Anglian’ and

‘Saxon’ to describe the regions in which dress accessories were found should now be seen as inappropriate.

Beyond group identity, another key pattern to emerge in this period is the manifestation of intra-regional zones in material culture. The slight concentration of ‘Anglian’ material in the north-west begins a trend which holds throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. This trend sees the north-west of Essex as more connected to an Ouse-based socio-economic network, than to the rest of the county.

Likewise, imported material, notably radiate-headed brooches, are found at key coastal and riverine sites, such as Little Oakley (Harwich) and Colchester. This study has discovered that these areas were accessing imports for much of the Anglo-Saxon period.

In the later 6th and early 7th centuries burials have been found in Essex with deposited wealth far in excess of that of their contemporaries. The most notable sites are Rainham and Prittlewell. The dress accessories from these sites reflect Kentish and European elite links, through gold and garnet jewellery and other items (such as the Prittlewell Prince’s Alamannic crosses), more than the popular cultural affiliations of the 6th century. This fact suggests that elites in Essex were associating themselves with the dominant power at the time. This reflects less ethnic identity than it does the desire of an elevated social group to display its membership of an emergent European elite network.

Chapter 6

Dress accessories, c.AD 650-1066

6.1. Introduction

Following the 'Final Phase' of furnished burial, the practice gradually fades out through the 7th century. In fact the majority of burials are unfurnished from a relatively early date. This radically alters the nature of the archaeological evidence. From the mid-7th century onwards, stray finds make up a far larger percentage of the corpus of dress accessories than they did previously.

In addition, the 7th century also marks the end of the flamboyant dress brooches characteristic of the later 5th and 6th centuries, along with the *peplos*-style dress. The plain 7th-century safety pin brooch from Mucking (Hamerow 1993: 61) is a solitary example in Essex of a new sobriety in dress fasteners. Though a luxury silver pin has been found at Fingringhoe (Essex HER: 17633), in general, metal as a material for dress accessories was almost completely abandoned. A 7th-century bone pin from Canvey Island (PAS: ESS-974111) with characteristic northern European ring-and-dot dot ornament is a rare survival of these new dress accessories (Plate 15). All this shrinks the body of evidence and our knowledge of social expression through dress.

Plate 15: A 7th-century bone pin with ring-and-dot motif from Canvey Island (PAS: ESS-974111)

6.2. Dress and the reflection of maritime identities

The lack of regional difference, as evidenced most commonly by relatively uniform copper alloy pins and strap-ends, has been seen in itself as a significant expression of group identity (e.g. Geake 1997: 126). This theory is discussed fully in the first discussion chapter. It will suffice to say here that there is no clear evidence that the perceived uniformity in 7th-century dress was an expression of any 'English' national sentiment. It is difficult to argue archaeologically for a common identity from what is largely negative evidence. It may be that ethnic identity was now expressed through other media.

The move away from the *peplos*-style gown to a long dress which did not require brooches is one practical reason for the lack of brooches in this period. The common use of a new gown is no reason to posit a common identity, just

as no common identity was posited in the 6th century in the grounds of a common gown type.

In fact the Classicization of female dress in the 7th century was not restricted England, it was a general trend across north-western Europe, influenced by Christian Francia (Owen Crocker 2004: 128, also e.g. see Plate 16). Indeed, it is contacts with Francia, which are emphasised in dress at this time.

Plate 16: Christian symbolism, in this case a griffin on a decorative plate/appliqué from Braintree (PAS: ESS-7644A5; also see Gannon 2003: 89 for similar iconography on coinage)

Two ansate brooches – also known as caterpillar brooches (Plate 17) – from Helions Bumpstead and Hatfield Broad Oak is one manifestation of cultural exchange between Essex and the Carolingian world. These brooches are increasingly found in England, though they are concentrated on the Continent, where they were made. These brooches date between the 8th and 10th centuries

and were probably used as a multi-purpose dress fastener for lighter fabrics (Hattatt 1987: item 1329). It is difficult to make many further conclusions from this dispersed distribution of two brooches. A mid-7th-century Merovingian type belt fitting has also been found at Long Acre (Westminster) (Cowie 1988).

Plate 17: An ansate/caterpillar brooch from Hatfield Broad Oak (PAS: ESS-182017)

In Essex, very few distinctive dress accessories have been found dating to between the mid-7th century and the 10th century. However, in the 9th century disc brooches became popular again.

Late Saxon disc brooches are less elaborately jewelled than their late 6th-early 7th-century counterparts, though they stand out significantly from contemporary dress. They were commonly made of gold or silver, with contrasting niello, and decorated with late Saxon ornament. None of this

calibre has been found in Essex, however. The earliest disc brooches in Essex from this phase date to the late 10th century, at the earliest. A few pewter examples were found as part of a craftsman's collection at Cheapside (Hornsby *et al.* 1989: cat. no. 8; Greater London SMR: MLO16252), and others have been found been found on the Thames foreshore in London (Thomas 2002: 12). Five of these have been found in Essex. Four are discussed below within the context of Scandinavian cultural affinities. The remainder is a lead disc brooch found at Rayne (PAS: ESS-4A5987) (Plate 18).

Plate 18: a late 10th-century disc brooch from Rayne (PAS: ESS-4A5987)

A notable contemporary variation on the disc brooch was the animal brooch. They are named after their animal ornament, rather than their form. These are a late Saxon regional brooch type of East Anglia. Four have been found in Essex, which represents quite a large number for one brooch type in this period. All of the finds came from north Essex. They are an example of how northern Essex's close relationship with East Anglia, as evidenced first by

earlier dress accessories, was continued through the period. This trend is even more pronounced when dress accessories with Scandinavian cultural affiliations are considered.

Male dress becomes more prominent from the 7th century due to the greater adoption of metal belt fittings. The introduction of strap-ends in particular provides us with rare examples of contemporary art styles manifested in dress.

Strap-ends become much more popular in the later centuries of the Anglo-Saxon period than they were at the beginning. For example, though *c.*140 buckles were found in the Mucking cemeteries, only 4 strap-ends were found (Hirst & Clark 2009: 536, 615).

The most impressive mid to late Saxon class A strap-end is a near-complete stray find from High Easter (PAS: ESS-DC8882) (Plate 19). It dates to the 9th century and is cast in silver with gold and niello inlay incorporated into the Trewhiddle-style ornament. The terminal is in the shape of a stylized animal head, which probably once had glass beads in its eye sockets (*ibid.*). The strap-end is of national importance, as the gold inlay is only matched in the Strickland brooch, which is kept in the British Museum (Mr M Cuddeford (Finder) in *ibid.*). The design of the High Easter strap-end, featuring a stylized animal head terminal and a split attachment end, is characteristic of strap-ends from the 8th and earlier 9th century (Wilson 1964: 62). A large number of the strap-ends found in Essex feature this zoomorphic design. Another

Trewhiddle-style strap-end has been found on the Thames foreshore at the City of London (Thomas 2002: 12).

Plate 19: A Trewhiddle-style strap-end from High Easter (PAS: ESS-DC8882)

There is also evidence that the imitations of the Trewhiddle style were also worn in Essex from a silver-plated copper alloy strap-end from the Colchester area (PAS: ESS-D7DA64) (Plate 20).

Plate 20: A silver-plated strap-end with imitation Trewhiddle ornament, found east of Colchester (PAS: ESS-D7DA64)

This style of strap-end was succeeded by tongue-shaped forms with openwork, relief, and cast decoration, which show the great influence of Carolingian design on English craftsmanship at this time (Thomas 2000: 242). Carolingian influence is also revealed notably by the contemporary Winchester-style with its acanthus motif. It is now recognized that the Winchester style was worn and probably produced in the Danelaw, as well as in southern England (Thomas 2000: 241; 2001: 42; Kershaw 2008). Carolingian-inspired tongue-shaped strap-ends were also current in Scandinavia (Thomas 2000: 244). It should thus be no surprise to see these styles reproduced in the archaeological record of Danelaw regions.

Nearby, at Little Laver and on Canvey Island 9th-/10th-century open-work strap-ends have been found of a type popular at the time in Carolingian Francia and Scandinavia (PAS: ESS-8CA327; ESS-D29E25) (Plate 21). Another brooch similar to Carolingian fashion was found north of Colchester. It may be

an Insular or Frisian copy of a Carolingian belt fitting (Gabor Thomas in PAS: ESS-D80727).

Plate 21: Carolingian-style strap-ends from Little Laver (top left), Canvey Island (top right), and Colchester (bottom) (PAS: ESS-8CA327, ESS-D29E25 & ESS-D80727)

There are several more strap-ends which date to the 10th and 11th centuries. These including a class E copper alloy openwork strap-end with a human-like design from Bures (PAS: ESS-D83A75) (Plate 22).

Plate 22: A 10th/11th-century openwork strap-end from Bures (PAS: ESS-D83A75)

From the later 9th century, the dress of eastern England is marked by an openness towards diverse Continental art styles (e.g. Thomas 2000). The absorption of Continental styles from the 7th century onwards may reflect the expansive network of the Channel and North Sea coastline of England. What may thus have emerged is more of a maritime identity, which incorporated the styles with which it came into contact (see Loveluck & Tys 2006). The archaeological evidence from Essex, which has been presented here for the first time, fits within this broader pattern. As in southern England, Carolingian fashions and motifs were adopted into northern and eastern craftsmanship. However, unlike southern England, this region – for some time ruled by Danes – is also known for using dress to express Scandinavian cultural affiliation (see section 6.3 below).

The cosmopolitan acceptance of European styles is particularly evident later, in the 11th century gilded copper alloy lobed disc brooches with cloisonné and

enamel glass decoration. Four have been found in Essex (PAS: ESS-B36912; LON-08B190; PAS: ESS-6C30D8; ESS-644852) (Plate 23). In Britain, these items are usually viewed within very much an Insular context (e.g. Wilson 1975: 204-5; Biddle 1990: 636). Further the technology displayed in the brooches has been seen (e.g. Buckton 1986) as a demonstration of the absorption of Scandinavian techniques into eastern English craftsmanship at the end of the 10th century. Indeed, their distribution is concentrated in the former Danelaw areas of the East Midlands and East Anglia (*ibid.*). They were all made in England in the later 10th and 11th centuries. However, on the Continent scholars (e.g. Bourgeois & Biron 2009: 125-30) note the these brooches are actually found much more widely in Europe, with finds the areas of Mainz, Angoulême (western France), Venice, Lake Geneva, and Slovenia. They have thus been seen as associated with the 11th-century Ottonian Empire (*ibid.*: 129-30). In Essex, we may perhaps see these items as fitting within the context of longer-term trend of expressions of broad European affiliations amongst the social elite.

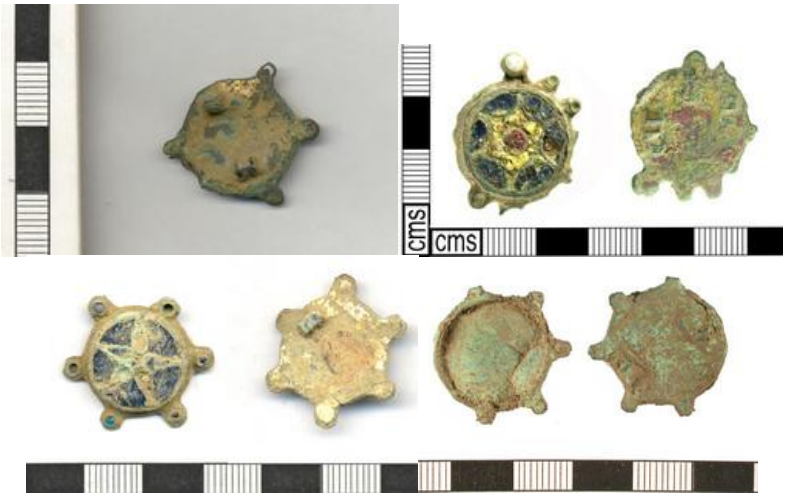


Plate 23: A late 10th- or 11th-century disc brooch from Marks Tey (top left), Abbess Beauchamp (top right), Roydon (bottom left), and High Ongar (bottom right) (PAS: ESS-644852, LON-08B190, ESS-B36912, ESS-6C30D8)

6.3. Scandinavian cultural affiliations

It is difficult to gauge the extent of Danish control over Essex in the later 9th and early 10th centuries from the historical narrative. We can be fairly certain that at least some portion of Essex had been wrestled from the West Saxons in the late 870s. The delineation of a border between the West Saxons and the Danes established in the *Treaty of Alfred and Guthrum* (*c.*878-90) (Whitelock 1955) indicates that all of the present county of Essex was officially under Danish rule, with London ruled by the West Saxons. However, modern scholarship has argued against anachronistic conceptualizations of such a rigid border (e.g. Kershaw 2000: 45-6).

The archaeology of this period in Essex certainly suggests that the River Lea did not represent a stable frontier. Artefacts displaying Scandinavian cultural affiliations are concentrated strongly in the northern half of Essex, nearer to the borders with Suffolk and Cambridgeshire.

The early mixing of cultures in the later 9th and 10th centuries is even evidenced in the London area by an Anglo-Saxon hooked tag decorated with later 9th-mid 10th-century Borre-style knotwork (PAS: LON-321E34) (Plate 24). This matches the hybridization which Kershaw (2008: 263) noted in York, where a trefoil brooch decorated with Winchester style ornament has been found.

Plate 24: A hooked-tag from Fulham decorated in Scandinavian Borre-style ornament (PAS: LON-321E34)

It has been argued that the areas of England ruled by the Danes in the 9th and 10th centuries developed a strong Anglo-Scandinavian regional identity, which

endured beyond the end of the Anglo-Saxon period (Innes 2000). This is certainly apparent from the dress accessories of the region.

Traditionally, Essex has been largely ignored in discussions of Danelaw identities. One reason for this may be the dominance of linguistic and place-name studies in the analysis of the nature of Scandinavian settlement (see Trafford 2000: 20). It is certainly true that Essex contributes very few place-names to the corpus of Scandinavian place-names in Britain. There have also been a number of studies on the metalwork of eastern counties; most notably Norfolk (Margeson 1996; 1997). However, until now, there has been no study of Scandinavian decorative metalwork and other artefacts in Essex.

The dress accessory evidence suggests that Anglo-Scandinavian modes of dress were used in Essex in the 9th and 10th centuries. These styles appear to have been concentrated in northern Essex, supporting the notion of a fluid border. This evidence also suggests that, as in the later 5th and 6th centuries, northern Essex was peripheral to a concentration of fashions centred in East Anglia.

East Anglia has been identified as an important region in the development of Anglo-Scandinavian styles from the later 9th century, with use of the Borre style in particular on strap-ends and disc brooches (e.g. Thomas 2001a: 43). A Borre-style disc brooch from Ashdon (PAS: ESS-4D7A85), and Anglo-Scandinavian disc brooch 'Essex' (PAS: KENT-DF8F18) (Plate 25), show how Essex was within the sphere of this East Anglian experimentation.

Plate 25: an 'Anglo-Scandinavian disc brooch from 'Essex' (left), and a Viking Borre-style disc brooch (right) (PAS: KENT-DF8F18; ESS-4D7A85)

Borre-style disc brooches are some of the more common dress accessories found in the Danelaw that were made in Scandinavia, at sites such as Birka (Sweden) and Hedeby (Germany) (Thomas 2000: 241). Others include lozenge brooches and trefoil brooches. None of the former has been found in Essex, but a 9th-century Swedish trefoil brooch was found near the Suffolk border, at Bures Hamlet (Jane Kershaw in PAS: SF-EB5262) (Plate 26).

Plate 26: The trefoil brooch from Bures Hamlet (PAS: SF-EB5262)

Thomas (2000: 252) has noted that the particular selection of these dress accessories – whether they display Scandinavian or mixed cultural affiliations – is in itself an act of assimilating two cultures. The use of dress accessories such as disc brooches and strap-ends would have fit quite comfortably with insular custom. By contrast, tortoise brooches, which were worn paired at the shoulder in the *peplos*-style, was not in-keeping with the contemporary long dress worn in England. As such these brooches were not as popular in England (*ibid.*).

The most notable context in which Viking cultural affiliations have been found is a female grave at Saffron Walden (Bassett 1982). The woman was buried wearing a necklace including a Swedish Borre-style pendant (see Wilson 1984: 43, fig.173), alongside bronze and silver pendants, and glass, carnelian, and rock crystal beads. She was also buried with a Scandinavian strap tag and bronze anklets. This individual was clearly wealthy; or was presented as such. She would have stood out significantly from her interred contemporaries, all of whom were buried without grave-goods.

Three Viking finger rings have also been found in north Essex at Dovercourt/Harwich, Thaxted, and West Bergholt (Roach 1993: 117; Essex HER: 3373).

The use of all of the above Scandinavian dress accessories can be taken as an indication that there were individuals in Essex who chose to culturally identify themselves with the ruling elite, or even express their membership of this

group. The regional pattern of isolated finds, mainly located in northern Essex, supports Thomas' notion that the expression of Scandinavian culture was *"both localized and dispersed"* (*ibid.*: 241; cf. Williamson 1993: 107). The finds in Essex are all the more significant as it is clear from the different modes of cultural expression witnessed at Saffron Walden, and the presence of Carolingian-, Winchester-, and Borre-style artefacts, that dress at this time was negotiated in a heterogeneous cultural milieu. In this environment, Scandinavian dress accessories were not dominant in local apparel. As such, for those who wore them, we can see that a real choice was being made to acquire and wear these items in particular.

Several artefacts with Ringerike decoration have been found in the Essex and London region. These include the famous St Paul's gravestone, a sculptural fragment from 'the City of London', a wheel cross from All Hallows Church, Barking, and a carving in St Mary's Church, Great Canfield. An Insular variant of Ringerike was found on an ornamental buckle recovered from the Thames Exchange site in the City of London (Thomas 2001b) (Plate 27). This brooch is similar to another found at High Easter (*ibid.*); though the latter may be dated beyond the Conquest (Cuddeford 1996: no.6). The London buckle finds another stylistic parallel in the design on a copper alloy disc fragment from St Martin le Grand, in London (Thomas 2001b: 229). London in fact represents the regional concentration of Ringerike-style artefacts, and it is clear from Insular variations, as seen at the Thames Exchange and St Martin le Grand, as well as monumental sculptures from three locations, and a possible trial piece

from St Martin le Grand, that this Scandinavian style was be reproduced here during the period of Danish rule in the 11th century. Other Ringerike items from London include two weapons, two copper alloy mounts from Smithfield, another from Great Tower Street/Mark Lane (attached to a piece of cloth), and two bone pins from Leadenhall Street (*ibid.*). Ringerike ornament was developed in Scandinavia in the later 10th century, and continued to be used until the mid-to-late 11th century (see Fuglesang 1980). However, its designs are influenced by Anglo-Saxon styles, such as the Winchester style (Wilson 1984: 209-10).

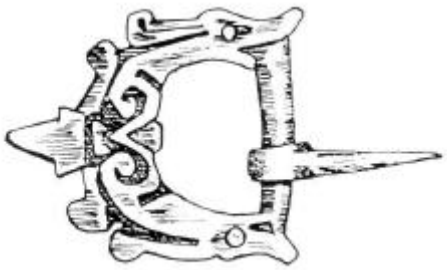


Plate 27: A Ringerike-style buckle from the Thames Exchange site, City of London. Scale 1:1 (Thomas 2001b: 228)

A turf-walled 'Viking-style' hall at Waltham Abbey has been found about 140 metres from a grave in which a copper alloy plate decorated with Ringerike ornament was found (Huggins 1988). This evidence fits with the documentary

evidence of Cnut granting the estate at Waltham Abbey to Tovi, one of his Scandinavian nobles.

In this period, expressions of Scandinavian cultural affiliation were clearly not restricted to northern Essex, as was largely the case in the later 9th and early 10th century. This surely reflects the change in the nature of Danish rule over Essex in the 11th century. In the later 9th and early 10th century, Essex had been a contested territory, on a front line between two warring factions. However, these cultural affiliations existed alongside the use of Carolingian or pan-European styles, such as tongue-shaped strap-ends and later enamel disc brooches. In the early 11th century Danes ruled over the whole of England, as the West Saxons had done before. Thus estates, like Tovi's at Waltham Abbey, all over the country could be granted to Scandinavian nobles. The monumental nature of some of the Scandinavian archaeology of this period in Essex might reflect the more centralized nature of Danish rule at this time. The 11th-century Scandinavian take-over of England is not associated with any significant movement of settlers. As such, sculptural expressions of Scandinavian culture may have been a way of establishing elite ideologies across the country. However, the use of enamel disc brooches suggests the continuance of a cosmopolitan European culture, at least at the highest levels of society.

6.4. Summary

Between *c.*650 and 1066 Essex underwent great socio-political and economic changes. New cosmopolitan identities were forged through exposure to expansive cross-sea networks. Carolingian influence is particularly visible from the 9th century, with the introduction of Continental motifs and forms. From the later 9th century, Scandinavian art and metal-working techniques were being deployed by Anglo-Saxon craftsmen. These products, along with 'pure' Scandinavian items, were then worn as a visible statement of distinction by individuals.

6.5. Conclusions

From the 7th century, there is a much-restricted body of evidence from dress. Metal dress accessories were no long as commonly used for dress accessories. The most common metal dress accessories at this time belong to male costume. In the 7th and 8th centuries cultural affiliations are harder to see from dress accessories of Essex. Most which have survived are corroded or otherwise unremarkable strap ends and pins.

In the 9th century, Carolingian designs (especially evident in Essex on strap-ends) show the openness of Anglo-Saxon craftsmen to new ideas. Later the Scandinavian settlement resulted in Scandinavian art and artefacts being incorporated into local dress. Overall, this shows a cosmopolitan culture engaged with cross-sea networks, and receptive to different Continental styles.

In the later 9th and early 10th centuries, Scandinavian dress accessories are almost completely restricted to northern Essex. This strongly suggests that southern Essex was a contested territory. Conversely, in the north of Essex there were clearly women who affiliated themselves with Scandinavian culture. The relative scarcity of Scandinavian material emphasises the active reproduction of *elements* of Scandinavian dress in local fashion.

In the later 10th and 11th centuries, Scandinavian cultural influence continued in Essex as it did in other parts of the Danelaw. This is witnessed by Anglo-Scandinavian disc brooches and dress accessories displaying Ringerike ornament. Both styles contain influences from both cultures (Wilson 1984: 209-10; Buckton 1986). The London finds of Ringerike artefacts represent a national concentration. Their distribution of these artefacts may reflect expressions of group affiliation by a new Anglo-Scandinavian elite, based at London and at rural estate centres, such as Waltham Abbey.

Chapter 7

Coinage

7.1. Introduction

This chapter tracks coinage production and use through the Anglo-Saxon period in Essex and London. The chapter is arranged into five major sections.

The first sections examine the earliest coinage found in Essex. This corpus amounts to a significant national concentration. These consisted of early coins – mostly gold – from Francia, Kent, Essex, and Byzantium. The distribution shows that their arrival was linked with 6th-century sea-borne exchange routes along the North Sea coastline. The usage of many of these coins shows that they were treasured as attractive artefacts, in much the same way as Roman coins.

The third section is a distributional study of *sceattas* found in Essex. This is organised by region of origin. Sometimes this means that coinage is not presented in the chronological order of its date of striking. This method of grouping is continued in the following discussion of broad flan pennies between *c.*760 and 973. This section includes the Danelaw period, in which the region was divided between West Saxon and Danish rulers.

The final section reviews the distributions of English and foreign coinage in Essex following Edgar's coinage reform in 973.

Together this study highlights previously unknown or underestimated centres of exchange. Many of these are apparent from at least the 6th century and endure into the 11th century. These sites were located in east Essex near the coast and navigable rivers, showing the importance of the North Sea route in the acquisition of imported goods. One is recorded for north-west Essex at the headwaters of a Fenland river tributary, ultimately also flowing into the North Sea (Bonser & Carter 2008).

7.2. Byzantine coins

Research for this study has identified a significant national concentration of 5th-7th-century Byzantine coinage in Essex (Map 14) away from the recognized south-western distribution (Loveluck 1994a: 227-9; 1994b: fig.8.6, 113). The High Roothing coin of Anastasius (491-518) is the only one known in Britain (PAS: ESS-7CA830).

In total 8 Byzantine coins datable to between the 5th and early 7th centuries have been found in Essex. Most date to the 6th century. Their distribution indicates the operation of long-distance coastal networks in the 6th century. Two coins of Justinian I (527-65) have been found at Fingringhoe (Essex HER: 12594) and Colchester (EMC: 1975.7001). This research has found that Fingringhoe, at the mouth of the Colne, was a regular site of exchange from an

early stage in the Anglo-Saxon period (see below, Chapter 10). These items were probably carried to the Colne area on the same infrequent but ancient route, which brought the copper alloy buckle (above, Chapter 5).

The use of some of these coins is interesting and parallels the usage of old Roman coins. Curation is evidenced by two coins, dating to the later 6th and early 7th centuries respectively, which were found with other Anglo-Saxon material at the probable settlement site at Canewdon (Essex HER: 9874; 11267). In a couple of cases these coins are used very much in the way salvaged or kept Roman coins were – as jewellery or grave-goods.

The earliest is a coin of Theodosius II (408-50) found in Camden (Greater London SMR: MLO18046). The dating is borderline, but suggests a sub-Roman context for deposition. This coin had been used as the setting for a ring. At Rainham (Evison 1955) a gold coin of Maurice (Mauricius Tiberius) (582-602) was found in a female grave. A suspension loop of braided wires had been added (possibly in East Anglia) for it to be worn as a pendant (*ibid.*). The use of this coin is reminiscent of the Byzantine artefacts in the other high status cemetery in south Essex, at Prittlewell (Tyler 1988). These artefacts might suggest that the emergent aristocracy of the East Saxon kingdom wanted to signal their membership of a European elite network involving gift exchange.

7.3. Reuse of Roman coins

The use of contemporary Byzantine coins was akin to the way in which old Roman coins were used in Essex. Roman coins were also worn as pendants. The practice of wearing pierced Roman coins is evidenced at Springfield Lyons (2 coins) (Tyler & Major 2005) and Colchester (Crummy 1981). Others were included as grave-goods, as in a further burial near the main Great Chesterford excavation (Essex HER: 4951), Mucking (8) (Hirst & Clark 2009: 526, 671), and much later at the monastic cemetery at Nazeing (Huggins 1978; 1997). While others were simply kept, as at Mucking (13) (Hamerow 1993:71-73), Chadwell St Mary (Lavender 1998), Hammersmith Embankment (5) (Greater London SMR: MLO76864 & MLO76869), and at several sites across Covent Garden (5) (though some may be residual) (Cowie 1988; Cowie & Whytehead 1988:124; Blackmore *et al.* 1998; Bowsher & Malcolm 1999; Malcolm & Bowsher 2003).

7.4. Coinage in Essex, c.500-c.675

7.4.1. Tremisses and solidi

In the 6th century, the Merovingians initiated a series of gold coins, which we know as *tremisses* and *solidi*, with *tremisses* being most common. These coins initially copied Imperial *solidi* and *tremisses* – sometimes from Ostrogothic imitations – but included the names of Byzantine emperors (Plate 28; Grierson

& Blackburn 1986: 111; North 1994: 19). These early Merovingian gold coins were minted from the beginning of the 6th century until approximately the last quarter of the same century. Only one is known from the Essex region, its provenance has simply been given as being in the west of the county (Plate 28).

Plate 28: Frankish tremissis from 'west Essex', in the name of the Byzantine emperor Justin II (565-578) (EMC: 1998.0006)

Following these was the so-called 'national' coinage of the Merovingians, which was struck for the next hundred years up until the later 7th century (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 117). About 15 examples have been found in the Essex region (Map 15). The 'national' coins were usually gold *tremisses*, though *solidi* are also known. A cross is usually the preferred design on the reverse of these coins. The variety of cross styles is shown from a selection of the Essex examples alone (Plate 29).

Plate 29: Top left: 'near Southend-on-Sea'; bottom left: Essex/Herts. Border; centre: Little Bromley; top right: Great Bromley; bottom right: 'Essex' (EMC: 2007.0085, 2005.0041, 2004.0030, 2007.0069, 2008.0034)

The coins usually contain legends displaying the moneyer and the mint-place. However, from *c.*580 to 613 some of the coins were minted again in the name of contemporary Byzantine emperors (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 117-8, 129). An example of this from Essex is a *tremissis* found near Chelmsford and struck in the name of Emperor Maurice (582-602). *Solidi* were minted in smaller numbers and usually replaced the moneyer and mint with the king's name (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 117). An interesting example from the Essex-Suffolk border is the sole specimen from the region. Like the Byzantine coin at Rainham, it has a loop attached, indicating it was clearly intended to be worn (Plate 30). These loop attachments were common in East Anglia (Evison 1955), and this represents a spill over into north Essex. Coins bearing the name

of contemporary Frankish kings were rare, and were only minted from the second decade of the 7th century to the late 670s (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 128). It is this kind of evidence of 'secondary' usage (i.e. as pendants and/or as grave-goods), as well as the scarcity of these coins which has lent some support to the substantivist theory of early medieval gold coinage (e.g. Grierson 1961; 1970), which stresses its social rather than monetary function.

Plate 30: Solidus with suspension loop found in north Essex, near the Suffolk border (EMC: 2000.0110)

Currently (September 2012), the Fitzwilliam Museum's Corpus of early medieval coinage contains well over 150 single finds of 6th- and 7th-century *solidi* and *tremisses*. This is a relatively large number of coins, and certainly represents a substantial increase in the corpus – particularly of stray finds – since the substantivist position on early medieval gold coinage was first articulated. As a result, some recent scholarship (e.g. Williams 2010: 59) has posited at least some monetary function for these coins, alongside social uses.

The Fitzwilliam Museum's national distribution is overwhelmingly concentrated in the south-eastern counties of England; especially in Kent, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Lincolnshire. This surely indicates the operation of North Sea exchange networks at this time and links with Continental centres, such as Dorestad and Quentovic (Williams 2010: 60).

Both phases of Merovingian coinage are represented in Essex. The greatest number is – as one might expect – in the coastal/riverine zone of Essex. It is likely that these coins reached Essex as a result of a number of exchange processes, both social and monetary. Whatever the mechanism of exchange, the coastal distribution certainly suggests that these coins were transported on the North Sea trade route.

The intrinsic value of gold coins would have meant they could still have been exchanged for other commodities in a region largely unused to coinage. However, their numbers in Essex are so small, and their intrinsic value so high, that this would not necessarily have been especially common. However, land acquisition and other high value purchases may well have involved an exchange of gold coinage. Additionally, gold coins would have been useful sources of gold, and been exchanged and used effectively as ingots and melted down for use in fine metal-working.

Gift exchange may well be one of the major social processes by which some of these coins came to be in Essex. It appears from hoards that their value in neighbouring regions of England in many cases seems to have been as

ornaments or simply precious belongings. In Kent, several were found in the 19th century with mounts attached at Canterbury, in or near the churchyard of St Martin's church. Presumably these were used as grave-goods. Six more mounted *tremisses* were found in a grave in the cemetery at Faversham, Kent. While no less than 37 were found in the great ship burial at Sutton Hoo (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 122-5). The *solidi* from the Essex-Suffolk border (EMC: 2000.0110) adds to this list (Plate 30).

Two *tremisses* were also found as grave-goods in the Prittlewell 'Princely' burial, placed on the body (Hirst 2004: 27-8). It was argued that the Merovingian items found with the 'prince' may represent only indirect links with the Continent, and that they were perhaps gifts from better-connected Kentish rulers (Hirst 2004: 39-40). This interpretation is supported by the Kentish flavour of late 6th- and early 7th-century elite burial assemblages in Essex, particularly at Rainham (Evison 1955) and Prittlewell (Tyler 1988). Of all the early Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, Kent certainly seems to have had the most extensive socio-economic and cultural links with Merovingian Francia (e.g. Huggett 1988; Brugmann 1999; Brookes 2007). Further, Merovingian gifts from Kentish elites to their East Saxon counterparts could potentially be supported by historically attested dynastic links between the two south-eastern kingdoms (e.g. Yorke 1985; 1990). Two other *tremisses* have been found in the area of Southend-on-Sea (Essex HER: 9682; EMC: 2007.0085).

Four of the Essex finds come from the area of the City of London (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 117; EMC: 1991.0200, 1989.0060, 1991.0201). This is

interesting for the reason that the post-Roman history of this area is somewhat enigmatic. The layer of 'dark earth' covering the latest phases of *Londinium* suggest that there was no significant continuing occupation within the walls of the Roman city. However, the foundation of St Paul's in AD 604 suggests that this site may have had some contemporary political importance; though this may have been purely symbolic. There was a precedent in Kent and on the Continent for founding new minster churches in former Roman centres, such as at Canterbury. It is tempting to associate the concentration of *tremisses* here with the see at St Paul's.

The research conducted for this thesis has highlighted a concentration of finds at various sites in north-eastern Essex, suggesting that this area was engaged in long-distance exchange from perhaps as early as the 6th century. The area of Great and Little Bromley has yielded quite a number of coin finds dating from the 6th and early 7th century. The earliest of these are two *tremisses* from Great Bromley (PAS: ESS-F90475) and Little Bromley (EMC: 2004.0030). A contemporary Anglo-Saxon gold shilling of the mid-7th century has also been found in this area (EMC: 2007.0302).

7.4.2. Shillings

Besides a small number of ornamental *solidi*, which are not found in Essex, the first true coins struck by the Anglo-Saxons were gold coins – known as '*thrymsas*' or shillings – inspired by the Merovingian *tremisses*, and are very

often extremely similar to their continental relatives (Metcalf 1993a: 32; Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 157). They date from the early-to-mid-7th century.

One distinguishing feature of Anglo-Saxon gold coinage is runic inscription found on many of the English coins, including on most of the Essex and London examples. These new coins are often described by scholars as *thrymsas*, though they are perhaps better described simply as shillings, derived from the Old English *scilling* (Blackburn 2011: 382; Metcalf 1993a: 29). Most appear to have been struck from the 7th century at Kentish mints. One of these 'Kentish' mints seems in fact to have been London, judging by various forms of the name London or *Londinium* which are found on a number of gold coins (Metcalf 1993a: 38-41; Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 160-2). One of these London shillings was struck in the name of Eadbald of Kent (616-40), showing a period of Kentish authority in London a century before Bede proclaimed it to be the *"emporium of the East Saxons"* (Bede *HE* II.3; Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 160). This also reveals further information regarding the relationship between the early kingdoms of Kent and Essex. The historical evidence of intermarriage of Kentish aristocracy into the East Saxon royal dynasty, and Athelberht of Kent's role in the conversion of the East Saxon king Saebert both point to Essex's position as being very much that of the junior partner. The fact that the East Saxon see was founded in London at around the same time that London was perhaps minting coins for the kings of Kent, supports the notion that the relationship was not one of equals.

Anglo-Saxon shillings (Plate 31) are very rare finds in England, with the Fitzwilliam Museum's coin corpus and PAS listing *c.*100 single examples. They are distributed quite widely across eastern England, though the largest concentration is in East Anglia, where they are dispersed across Norfolk and Suffolk. Five shillings have been found in the Essex and London region, representing a significant percentage of the national total, given their general rarity. None of these five are London-inscribed coins. The Little Oakley coin (PAS: ESS-CCE906; Wise 2002) is a so-called 'Oath-taking' type *thrymsa* – a type possibly minted in Peterborough (Metcalf 1993a: 47-9).

As at the nearby Bromley area, the Harwich region also appears to have been engaged in long-distance trade with the near Continent from at least the 6th century. It is likely that this region was probably home to at least one landing place for traders passing up and down the North Sea coast. The Harwich area seems an obvious candidate, but the evidence here is still relatively sparse.

Plate 31: Gold shillings from (left to right) Great Bromley, 'Essex', and the Thames at the City of London (EMC: 2007.0302, 1998.1005, 1948.0062)

The limited number of these coins makes it a matter for tentative debate as to what function they served for 7th-century Anglo-Saxon societies. Metcalf (1993a: 37) argued that their monetary purpose was probably quite limited, given their high value and the fact that most contemporary Anglo-Saxon trade was conducted without coinage. He suggested that they may have been used rather by elites to pay for long-distance luxury goods or in a one-way payment (*ibid.*). Shillings may also have been prestige items in themselves, given as gifts to other nobles.

7.4.3. Merovingian deniers

From *c.*670 the minting of gold coinage was replaced by intrinsically lower-value silver coinage; first in France, then in England. These coins, known as *deniers* in France, were struck until the mid-8th century (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 138). There may have been a number reasons for the change to silver coinage. Traditionally scholars have posited limited access to gold as being the major reason. However, more recently the emphasis has been placed on the fact that silver coins of lower value would have been more useful in the marketplace where lower value transactions were the norm (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 95-6). These coins are quite rare in Britain, with the Fitzwilliam coin corpus listing less than 40 single specimens at the time of writing. They seem to be concentrated in the area of East Anglia, Cambridgeshire, and Bedfordshire. Just three examples of these Merovingian pennies are known from Essex and their provenances in northern and west-

central Essex suggests they are extensions of the East Anglian concentration (Map 16) (Plate 32).

Plate 32: The three Merovingian deniers. Provenances from left to right: 'north Essex', 'near Saffron Walden', Good Easter (EMC: 2005.0150, 2003.0167, 2004.0200)

7.4.4. English pale gold coinage

In England, the gold content of the early shillings progressively became debased, and around 670 two new series replaced the old shillings with pale gold issues containing initially *c.*30% gold. The first of the two pale gold *thrymsa* issues is the so-called '*Pada*' coinage, which date between *c.*655 and *c.*680 (Metcalf 1993a: 73). It takes its name from the runic inscription '*Pada*' – thought to be the name of a moneyer – which appears on almost all of the coins (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 163). There is a consensus among numismatists that the *Pada* series was minted in Kent, possibly in the east of the county (e.g. Metcalf 1993a: 44, 66-7; Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 164, 174). Seven have been found in Essex, representing a rare concentration north of the Thames.

However, their distribution is limited to just three sites in the centre and north of the county, with two at Little Oakley (PAS: ESS-CD0653; Wise 2002), four at Hatfield Peverel (Essex HER: 13764), and one in West Hanningfield (EMC: 2001.0941). This distribution is quite a regular drop off in frequency with distance between the Kentish concentration and a few specimens found in Suffolk (Metcalf 1993a: 73). One of the Little Oakley coins is unusual in that it has been pierced, presumably for suspension, showing that there was still no distinction between money and other traded valuables.

A very rare type of pale gold coinage, named the *'two emperors' type*, may have preceded *Pada* coins the mint in east Kent. They are sparsely distributed across the east coast of England as far north as Lincolnshire. One has been found at Abridge in Essex (Metcalf 1993a: 44), and another – just outside the region under study – on the south bank of the Thames in London (*ibid.*).

The second pale gold *thrymsa* series consists of the '*Vanimundus*' coins. Vanimund was the name of a Merovingian moneyer from Metz that was simply copied – often badly – for this coin (Metcalf 1993a: 84). The image of a bust and sceptre is argued as most similar to Roman Imperial iconography (Gannon 2003: 75-6). Metcalf argues that their style is influenced initially by later *Pada* coins and thus they must begin at a slightly later date (1993a: 80). These coins are argued to have originated in Essex (Metcalf 1993a: 81; 1976: 12-3; Rigold 1960-1).

The reasoning for its East Saxon attribution is entirely on stylistic grounds. The legend and its style are broadly similar to that found on later silver coins – certain Series B *sceattas* – as possibly is the cross on types BX and *VAB*, which are concentrated in Essex (Metcalf 1993a: 80-1; Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 164).

The frequency and distribution of *Vanimundus* coins does nothing to support an Essex origin. These coins are almost entirely found on the Continent (Rigold 1960). Just two have been found in Essex: one at Colchester (Crummy 1981; Essex HER: 13759), and another with no exact provenance (EMC: 1999.0039). Thus, since the argument for its East Saxon attribution was first made more than fifty years ago, we still have very few coins to work with. However, the fact that the fineness of these coins progresses gradually from pale gold to silver suggests that these are from England rather than France, as this trend is an insular one. Additionally, they are influenced stylistically by the English *Pada* coins (Metcalf 1993a: 80).

In addition, the attribution of Series B to Essex is bolstered by new find evidence from the region (see below). Though Metcalf argues that Kentish *Pada* coins exerted some stylistic influence on the *Vanimundus* series (Metcalf 1993a: 80), he notes that the latter's absence from Kent might, albeit on *"flimsy"* evidence, suggest that continental links between Essex and France was the backdrop against which East Saxon minting began (*ibid.*: 81).

7.4.5. Summary

The early archaeological evidence from coinage shows that between *c.*500 and *c.*675 Essex was involved in a long-distance exchange network. Coins were coming into the region which originated in Kent, Francia, and even Byzantium.

It was in this period that minting resumed in Francia and south-eastern England, after a post-Roman hiatus. The earliest coins were mostly gold issues minted in small quantities. The numbers of finds in Essex show that, alongside Kent and East Anglia, it was one of the main users of contemporary coinage in England. Gold shillings were minted in London in the name of Kentish kings in the early decades of the 7th century, and the *Vanimundus* series may even have been minted in Essex in the later 7th century.

The contexts of many of these early coins – like old Roman coins: buried in graves, and used as dress accessories – indicate that many, if not most of these coins would not have been used in a 'conventional' monetary sense.

This period also highlights the importance of a number of sites in the north-east of Essex as centres of exchange. In particular, Fingringhoe, Great Bromley (and perhaps the Colne area more generally) stand out from the coinage evidence of this period. This study has revealed that they continued to do so for centuries to come.

7.5. Coinage in Essex, c.675-c.760

7.5.1. Primary and intermediate phase sceattas (c.675-c.710)

As in France, in England in the late 7th century, between 675 and 680, series of silver coinage replaced the preceding gold issues. The new silver coins are usually referred to today as '*sceattas*' (sing. *sceat*), but they might more properly be called pennies (Blackburn 2011: 382; Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 157). The orthodox categorization of this new Anglo-Saxon silver coinage is the work of Rigold (1977). He categorized *sceattas* into several series – which were each ascribed a letter – divided into three chronological phases: primary (*c.*675-*c.*710), intermediate (*c.*700-*c.*720), and secondary (*c.*710-*c.*750).

In southern England, the primary phase consists of Series A, B, and, a bit later, Series C, F, W, and the smaller groups BZ, Z, BII, BIIIA, VERNVS, and Saroaldo. In northern England a small series was minted under the name of King Aldfrith of Northumbria (685-704). Series A and B appear to have followed on from the *Pada* and *Vanimundus* coinages in Kent and London/Essex respectively (e.g. Metcalf 1993a: 85, 104; 2001: 35; Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 164). Though the minting of pennies appears to have begun in Kent (with Series A and C) and London/Essex, this reform of coinage should be seen in the context of cross-channel networks, with 'intermediate' Frisian *sceattas* minted soon afterwards (North 1994: 20). Later in the primary phase and in the secondary phase, *sceattas* were struck further afield in England in greater numbers, and on the Continent.

7.5.2. Secondary phase sceattas (c.710-c.760)

The deposition of the early *sceattas* that make up the Aston Rowant hoard, Oxfordshire, in *c.*710-5, marks the beginning of the secondary phase of *sceat* coinage. This phase lasted for about 50 years (Metcalf 1994: 308). It is marked by a decline in the silver fineness, and by the continued expansion of minting and coinage circulation away from the south-east (1994: 297). These developments are particularly noticeable at Southampton, York, and in East Anglia (1994: 297). In the secondary series there are hints in some areas of political influence over minting and coin circulation, however, any royal involvement seems to have been limited in most cases, with minting existing as an independent activity (1994: 308). In terms of circulation, Series S has a distribution, which is remarkably restricted to Essex, which might indicate some higher control over its use (1994: 308). As far as minting is concerned, the striking of Series L, Type 12 'DE LVNDONIA' coinage in London may have been at the behest of Æthelbald, following his seizure of London for Mercia before 732 (Rigold 1960-1: 24).

This section will discuss *sceattas* from the three phases together, but grouped by region of origin (e.g. Essex, London, Kent, and so forth). Whilst ideally one would maintain the chronological division, in such a small regional study the resultant distributions often prove too sparse for meaningful analysis. Thus, this section aims to illustrate the longer trends in the flow of coinage into Essex over the period of *c.*70 years.

7.5.3. Coinage from Essex

Series B

The most useful place to start such a review is with Essex's own coinage. As a large enough series exists, this starting point establishes a default distribution, illustrating the maximum diffusion of coinage in Essex. The series in question is Series B (Map 17).

At first, Series B was thought to be Kentish, as in the 1960s Series B and A were roughly as common as each other in Kent (Rigold 1960-1; 1966). However, the consensus now is that at least the majority of the B series was minted somewhere within the East Saxon kingdom (e.g. Metcalf 1976a: 12-13; 1984: 28; 1993a: 104; 2001: 41, 47; Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 175). There are three types which may not be from Essex: BII was possibly minted somewhere in west Norfolk (Metcalf 2004: 10); BZ may also be East Anglian (Metcalf 1993: 139); and BIIIA cannot be securely attributed to any area (Metcalf 2004: 16).

Series B was made of very fine silver, which was maintained throughout the series (*c.*90-97%) (Metcalf 1993a: 101; Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 175). Many different types have been identified within the B Series. However, the four main types are BX, BIA, and B, and BII; with BX being the earliest (Plate 33). Plenty of specimens amounting to many different types have been found. It is clear that a lot of Series B coins were struck, and that they were made

carefully and in batches (Metcalf 1993a: 104). This would imply a major mint-place, such as London (Metcalf 1993a: 104; 2001: 40-1).

Plate 33: Series B coins from Essex. From left to right: Great Dunmow (BX), Langford (BIA), Good Easter (BIB), and 'north Essex' (BII) (after PAS and Fitzwilliam Museum corpus of early medieval coins)

On all types of Series B, on the obverse is a diademed bust, and on the reverse a bird above a cross, flanked by annulets; the whole scene is encircled by a snake chasing its tail (Plate 33). This has been described as a coming together of Classical, Coptic and Germanic motifs (Gannon 2003: 107-8, 112, 136).

Series B coins also continue to use the Merovingian *Vanimundus* legend, though it is blundered to the extent where this is barely perceptible. It is important to note that the fact that Series B takes its design from the later *Vanimundus* coins is not necessarily a reason to think Series B is East Saxon, as the rationale for positing *Vanimundus* coins being East Saxon may depend on Series B being from Essex (Metcalf 1993a: 81, 104; 2001: 35).

The argument for Series B being East Saxon is still open to question. Rigold's Kentish attribution has been discounted on the basis that – unlike Series A's distribution – the vast majority of the finds are now north of the Thames (Metcalf 1993a: 95, 102).

At more than 45 known specimens, Series B is the most common *sceat* type to be found in Essex, if the Woodham Walter hoard, with its 33 Series E's is discounted. They are found right across the county from north to south, and east to west; and also in London. However, though they are common in Essex, they are also common across East Anglia, and are found widely across England, especially in the south and east, but through the midlands to the west as well. This East Anglian concentration is the reason for the doubt cast on an Essex origin for some or even all this series (Metcalf 1993a: 94; 2004: 10). Metcalf (1993a: 104) argues that the nature of its careful, prolific production points to one major mint-place for the series. One could look then at perhaps London or Ipswich. However, Metcalf settles tentatively for a mint-place somewhere in Essex – probably London – on the basis that its design is so radically different from that of Series R, which is thought to be East Anglian (*ibid.*).

If it is true that most of Series B was minted in Essex then it is clear that there were extensive trade contacts with East Anglia. East Anglia's wealth and power in the 7th century are both historically and archaeologically attested. This prosperity would have encouraged trade, drawing coinage from other regions. This might account for the concentration in East Anglia.

In Essex, Series B has been found at Little Oakley (Wise 2002; EMC: 1994.0114) and most of the main centres of exchange proposed by the current study: at Tilbury (1 and 2 imitations) (Bonser 1997: 44; EMC: 2008.0442, 1993.9157), Bromley (EMC: 2007.0087), Great Bromley (EMC: 2005.0208), Bradwell (2) (PAS: ESS-B5EB76), and the City of London (2) (EMC: 1987.0044, 1991.0202; Greater London SMR: MLO99336).

Additionally, Series B coins are also found in relatively large numbers at Domburg in Frisia, when compared with the Kentish primary series, A and C (Metcalf 1993a: 104). This supports the other archaeological evidence reviewed in this thesis concerning the emergence of extensive North Sea trade.

Series B was subject to a lot of contemporary counterfeiting. There are numerous examples of this in Essex. Fakes have been found at Tilbury (Bonser 1997: 44), Southminster (Metcalf 1993a: 105), Good Easter (EMC: 2002.0233), and Goldhanger (PAS: ESS-E24917). Metcalf (1993a: 105) also questions whether two of the three found at Mucking are not counterfeits too. This, added to an imitation found in London, but outside the study region, amounts to quite a number of imitations – more than 10% of the total number of Series B's found in Essex. These counterfeits show that Series B coinage was sought after and worth copying. The concentration of counterfeits in south Essex might be taken to suggest that this is where the series was being copied. Metcalf (*ibid.*) suggested that it was likely to have been in an area in which legitimate Series B coins were common.

Series S

Though Essex was clearly a main coin using region in the primary phase, only Series S has been attributed to the kingdom in the secondary phase (Metcalf 1976a: 11-13; 1994: 537-44). However, some of the earlier secondary London series may have been struck under East Saxon rule, if the chronology from textual sources is to be believed.

The series gets its 'S' letter from the 'sphinx' – now thought to be a centaur – that appears on its obverse side (Morehart 1985: 3ff). More than 30 have been found in the region under study (Map 18). Two-thirds of these are from Tilbury alone. The rest come almost entirely from the Thames and the North Sea coast. Five have been found in the London boroughs included in this study, with several more from a hoard in Tower Hamlets. In Essex they are dotted up the east coast at Tilbury (Bonser 1997: 44; EMC: 1989.5015, 1993.9438, 1993.9440, 2006.0325), the Thames shore (EMC: 1986.0421), Southminster (EMC: 1986.0207), Bradwell (EMC: 1986.0418), and near Maldon (EMC: 1984.0105). A further two were found in 'north Essex' (EMC: 1986.0416, 1986.0417).

It is not certain where these coins were minted. As late secondary *sceattas*, they probably date to after Essex had lost control of London, though the political control of London was often complex, and their distribution is similar to that of contemporary London coins (see below). Metcalf has suggested rather that Series S might have been struck in east Essex (1994: 298).

In Essex, Tilbury stands out as the most obvious place at which Series S might have been minted. Tilbury had been the site of an early monastic community founded by the missionary Cedd in the later 7th century. This monastery may have been the catalyst for the exchange amply evidenced by coinage from Series B onwards. The great concentration of Series S at Tilbury and largely southerly coastal distribution also supports this theory, as does a double obverse lead impression of a Series S found in Tilbury (Metcalf 1994: 537).

The circumstance under which early English silver coinage was minted is still a matter for debate. Grierson & Blackburn (1986: 158) suggested the earliest minting was unregulated, though responsive to the practical need for common standards of fineness. Conversely, Metcalf (1993a: 10-25) has argued in favour of royal control. Most recently, Gannon (2003: 188-91) has argued that *sceat* production was based at minsters.

On first viewing the concentration of Series S *sceattas* at Tilbury might lend some support to Gannon's theory. The finds at Bradwell and Southminster could also be noted. The latter has been suggested as dependent community of Bradwell (Blair 2005: 212). The concentration of coin finds at Tilbury has been confidently associated with Cedd's monastery there (Palmer 2003: 54). However, the historical basis for this is problematic, if it is true that the Bradwell and Tilbury minsters began and ended within the later 7th century (Barford unpublished). If this is the case then we cannot posit a monastic context for the minting of Series S. Indeed, almost all of the coins from the 'productive' site at Tilbury date after 700. However, it is far from clear what

the fate of Cedd's Essex communities was. Barford (*ibid.*) argues plausibly that it is that the minster at Bradwell is likely to have come to an end soon after the exodus of monks in *c.*664 (see Bede *HE* III.25). However, the history of the Tilbury monastery is almost completely unknown. This study has highlighted continuing activity at both Bradwell and Tilbury into the 8th century and beyond. However, it is still unclear how much of this time was spent in association with monastic communities. It should also be acknowledged that is quite possible for the nature of settlement at Tilbury to have changed from ecclesiastical to secular around the turn of the 8th century. One might suggest that the ecclesiastical foundation transformed the area into a 'nodal point' which provided the basis for an effective secular exchange centre.

Another notable coin is that at Bradwell. This was also the site of a monastery established by St Cedd. Both monasteries were rather short-lived. It may be that neither continued into the 8th century (Barford unpublished). However, the finds from both areas suggest that these areas continued to take part in the long-distance exchange network. It was certainly not only monasteries who were attractive to trade, but the coincidence of finds and monastic heritage in these locations is does suggest the two were related.

The Fitzwilliam Museum's plot of its corpus of single finds of Series S shows most lying on the periphery of Essex, though there are a small number of others distributed near the coast and major rivers of eastern and southern England. Several are found just outside Essex in the Hertfordshire and

Cambridgeshire areas near the north-west Essex border. Metcalf has commented on this cluster, arguing that the fact that these coins did not make it far outside of Essex was a result of Mercian political opposition to coins of an independent East Saxon king, perhaps Swæfberht (d. 738) or Selered (d. 746) (1994: 537-8).

It has been suggested that the design on the coin (a centaur holding palm branches) was probably inspired by a coin of the British Iron Age king Cunobelin, founder of Colchester (Metcalf 1976a: 8-13). Gannon (2003: 152-4) adds that the classical style of Cunobelin's coins would have appealed to the Anglo-Saxons, though the image of the centaur was taken from Christian mythology.

7.5.4. Coinage from Kent

Series A

Kent appears to have struck two primary series *sceattas*: Series A and later C. Though found widely, Series A is concentrated in Kent. Its design develops motifs from *Pada* coins and other *thrymsas* (North 1994: 21; Metcalf 1993a: 85; 2001: 35; Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 165, 174). Its distribution and the stylistic link with *Pada* coinage are the major reasons why A has been attributed to Kent (e.g. Metcalf 1993a: 85-6).

There are 18 examples of Series A from Essex (Map 19). Half of these were found in a burial at Thorpe Hall, near Southend (Challis 1992). The distribution demonstrates that coinage was not solely used in coastal regions in the later 7th and early 8th centuries. However, the coins which have been found most widely in Essex do seem to reflect those coins which had a longer period of circulation, showing that coastal regions did have greater access to coinage. There are three imitations: at Chelmsford (Challis 1992), Colchester (Metcalf 2004: 18), and Tilbury (Metcalf 1993a: 92).

Metcalf (1993a: 90-1; 2004: 18) ties Series A to King Hlothere (673-85). His suggestion is that the instability following his death in 685 probably brought the first Kentish *sceat* series to an end too.

Series C

Though Series C *sceattas* have previously been consider the earliest East Anglian series (e.g. Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 175; Metcalf 2000: 10), it is currently thought to have followed on from Series A at the Kentish mint around the turn of the 8th century (Metcalf 2001: 35) (Plate 34). The series was also commonly counterfeited (Plate 35).

Plate 34: Series C from Great Waltham (EMC: 2002.0241)

Plate 35: Counterfeit Series C from Tilbury (EMC: 2008.0317)

Great Bromley, Tilbury and London are strongly represented in the Series C distribution (Map 20), demonstrating the northwards movement of 8th-century trade from Kent along the North Sea coast towards Ipswich and beyond.

Kentish secondary phase sceattas

In the secondary phase, Kent produced many series of *sceattas*. Though minting spread to different areas of England at this time, Kent was still one of the major coin producers (Metcalf 1994: 300).

The coins minted in Kent in this phase are Series V, M, O, K, U/23d, and the 'K/N-related eclectic group' and Triquetras issues (Plate 36) (Metcalf 1994: 384, 444, 458, 468, 571; Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 180. These coins are concentrated in south Essex, especially in London (11) and Tilbury (*c.*40), with 3 more at Barking (Metcalf 1993a: 567, 571; EMC: 1991.0212). The distribution shows how the dynamic commercial region of south Essex and London drew Kentish trade in the 8th century. Another interesting point to note about this distribution is that 9 of the 11 London coins come from within the walled area of the City of London. 6 of these have come from the Thames foreshore. This is really too many to be purely accidental. It attests to the importance of activity within the walls of the former Roman city prior to the creation of *Lundenburh*.

Plate 36: A Triquetras eclectic group sceat from Tilbury (Fitzwilliam Museum Early Medieval Coin Corpus)

The coins in the City, at Barking, and at Tilbury all show the point to ecclesiastical involvement in structuring early exchange networks in south Essex. In the case of Tilbury, the monastic legacy – if exchange here was a monastic legacy – appears to have extended well beyond the lifetime of the monastery.

As previously noted, the 7th-century political history of London is complicated. Indeed, London was a contested region up until the 10th century. Historically, it can be considered as a part of Essex. The Bishop's seat for Essex was at St Paul's throughout the period. Bede described London as the 'emporium of the East Saxons' in the 730s, when both Essex and London were subject to Mercia (e.g. Yorke 1985; 1990). Around the time that Bede was writing, Kent may have minted some of its coins in London.

7.5.5. Coinage from London

In the secondary phase London appears to have minted a large proportion of the *sceattas* in circulation (Metcalf 1994: 300). Several issues have been assigned to London. As previously mentioned, there seems to have been some correspondence in minting between Kent and London in this period. There is some debate as to under whose authority coins were minted in London, and it was probably the case that more than one authority minted there.

Metcalf (1994: 298, 388-91, 401, 404, 468) has argued that several secondary types and subtypes (O40, K33, K32a, and K20/18) originally thought to be part

of the Kentish series were probably minted in London under different authorities. For example K33 may have been struck under the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury (*ibid.*: 388-91), and K32a may have been a Mercian imitation of a Kentish Series K (*ibid.*:401).

A clear majority of the Series K pennies from Essex and the London boroughs under study belong to the suspected London types. There are ten such coins from stray and excavated contexts, and just five Kentish Series K's. Six of these 'London' Series K's are type 32a, three are 20/18, and two are of type 33. All three stray Series K's found away from the Thames in Essex are from the proposed London mint.

There are three Series O/40 coins in Essex; from Tilbury (EMC: 1993.9380), Thurrock (EMC: 2005.0033), and Bonhunt (EMC: 2001.0703). One more was found in the Woodham Walter hoard. Ironically, not one has been found in London. The Bonhunt find adds to a Series BIIIc 27b penny found in the area (EMC: 1977.0103). Both testify to the continuing long-distance trade that was focussed on the nearby excavated settlement at Wicken Bonhunt (Wade 1980).

Series O/40 is most closely associated with Series N (Metcalf 1994: 468) – another type attributed to London (*ibid.*: 465). The two series have the same distribution in Essex, where they are largely distributed along the Thames and North Sea coast (Map 21). In England, these are widely distributed across southern and eastern England, from Southampton to York (*ibid.*: 468).

Notably these coins have been found at Barking and Bradwell, again emphasising the role of ecclesiastical communities in early trade. Another, at Southminster (EMC: 1986.0206) may also relate to a religious community, perhaps a dependent of Bradwell (Blair 2005: 212).

Its earlier date of *c.*720 means that it might have been minted under the authority of an East Saxon king, though the political control of London was complex (*ibid.*: 465-6). Its design features two standing figures – either facing each other or outwards – which Metcalf suggests might represent the king and the bishop of London (*ibid.*: 466). However, Gannon (2003: 101-5) has interpreted the motif more generally as in-keeping with broader Christian iconography from across England.

The most obviously London-based coinage is Series L (named after London's initial). Series L is a late secondary series (*c.*730-60) of relatively poor silver (<20-50%) (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 178). There are two basic types: LVNDONIA+ and 'Hwiccan'. LVNDONIA+ L's are named after their legend, which is sometimes blundered. The 'Hwiccan' group takes its name from a previous attribution to that region, which is now thought to be incorrect (Metcalf 1976b; 1994: 406).

Metcalf posited that the distribution of Series L coins shows the flow of London coinage (1994: 370). That is to say where the money minted in London was going after it had left the *wic*. The Fitzwilliam Museum's map of single finds still shows the flow westwards up the Thames that Metcalf noted

in 1994. However, a large number have also been found in East Anglia, particularly around Cambridgeshire. In the study region Series L coins are concentrated in London, with five single finds. In Essex, Series L coins are mostly found in the north and west of the county, linked surely to the East and Middle Anglian scatters. This distribution perhaps supports the idea that the London mint at this time was providing coinage for the Mercian regions to the north and west. However, 2 at Canvey Island (Essex HER: 13821) and the concentration at Tilbury still shows the coastal route taken by many coins at this time. The East Anglian finds may also relate to the trade route from the Wash, down Roman roads, the Ouse, or Icknield Way (a prehistoric trackway linking the Wash with the Upper Thames region), around which features a great many coins have been found. These trade routes may also have brought commodities and coinage to the north-west of Essex and Bonhunt area. The lack of finds in north-central Essex may reflect the different routes of trade into Essex, with imports arriving in the east and centre of Essex from the North Sea coast of the county, and to the north-west traveling down the Rivers Ouse and Cam from the North Sea coast of Norfolk and Lincolnshire. This separation is also reflected in the dress and pottery (Chapter 8) types which were used in the north-west, which appears consistently to have related more to its north, than it south and east.

Metcalf also attributes the varied 'Celtic cross with rosettes' group to London, or at least close to (1994: 432). It is possible that some of the designs were minted elsewhere (1994: 427, 432). The distribution in the study region

conforms to the eastern exit route from London down the Thames see from other early 8th-century *sceattas*. Just one has been found in the London boroughs examined in this study, at St Peter's Hill in the City (EMC: 1991.0209). The others were found near the Thames, at Barking (EMC: 1991.0213) and Tilbury (2) (Metcalf 1994: 428; EMC: 1993.9345), reinforcing the importance of these locations in early trade in Essex.

7.5.6. East Anglian coinage

East Anglia was minting *sceattas* from at least the early 8th century, with Q and R type *sceattas*, and perhaps the early *VERNVS*, BII, BZ, Z, and *SAROALDO* type *sceattas* (Metcalf 1993a: 139-40, 147; 2004: 10, 16). The overall distribution of this coinage is very different from that of the London, Kentish, and even Series S Essex coins (Map 19). While these distributions were biased towards the south and Thames Valley, the East Anglian coins are far more numerous in the northern half of Essex.

Series R is absent from southern Essex, though there is one coin from the City. The Series as a whole is strongly concentrated in East Anglia (Metcalf 2000: 9), though types R1 and R2 may have been minted at an as-yet-unknown location (*ibid.* 2007). Metcalf has taken the failure of Series R to reach major sites of neighbouring areas, such as Tilbury in Essex, as evidence that political boundaries could influence where coinage was circulated (1994: 308). The relative frequency of Series R in northern Essex supports the conclusion from

other archaeological material, that there was no firm border between the two kingdoms, and that the north of Essex was a peripheral part of an East Anglian sphere of interaction.

7.5.7. Mercian coinage

Few *sceat* types have been attributed to the Mercian-ruled Midlands of England with any certainty. Lincolnshire has been proposed variously as a mint-place for Saltire-standard *sceattas* (Metcalf 1994: 536); Series J (Naylor 2006) (see below section 7.5.8); and Series F (Metcalf 1993a: 128, 131).

Saltire-standard coins are rare finds, though they were minted for a number of decades. Just two have been found in Essex; at Tilbury (EMC: 1993.9434) and Saffron Walden (EMC: 1996.0113).

Series F is widely found over eastern and southern England, though it is primarily found north of the Thames and with concentrations near to The Wash and River Ouse. For this reason Metcalf (Metcalf 1993a: 128, 131) originally suggested that they were minted in the area of the Wash, perhaps at Stamford. The Essex scatter (Map 23) also represents an interesting cluster of finds away from the earlier northerly concentrations (*ibid.* 2004: 14). Indeed, North (1994: 21) and Grierson & Blackburn (1986: 176) have argued for a West Saxon attribution. Metcalf's most recent suggestion (2004: 14-6) is that Series F may actually have been minted in the middle Thames region.

The wide national distribution of Series F *sceattas* shows that the circulation of this coin was not restricted – or at least not effectively restricted by its issuing authority.

The distribution of these coins stresses once again the importance, not just of Tilbury (1 saltire-standard – Bonser 1997: 44), but of the Bromley area (1 Series F – EMC: 2006.0335). The single Series F finds from Colchester (PAS: ESS-663D85) and Fingringhoe (Metcalf 2004: 18) are also interesting as they add to a growing body of evidence that suggests that the River Colne was a common path for long-distance trade throughout the period. Little Bromley and Great Bromley are set slightly further away from rivers and the coast than the other centres of monetized trade in Essex. However, the area would surely have utilized the nearby Roman roads which provide the locality with separate routes to Colchester, the River Stour and on towards Ipswich, and the Colne and Stour estuaries (Map 1).

Another coin connected with Mercia is Series T. This is a rare series found in significant numbers in the region under study. Six have been found at Tilbury (Bonser 1997: 44), and a further five come from excavated contexts in London (EMC: 1991.0227 , 1991.0229; Greater London SMR: ELO4110 & ELO4109, MLO63516, MLO23045, MLO63512, MLO66621; Cowie 1988; Whytehead & Cowie 1989). A small number were found in the Tower Hamlets hoard (Cass & Preston 2009). One type (12/5) in this series also has the legend '(D)E LVNDONIM' (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 180). Its origin, however, is unclear. Metcalf has argued that the design of Series T – legends linked with

Series L – is too different to fit next to the recognized series of Essex and London (1994: 548). Despite few finds in the area, but for lack of alternatives, Metcalf has suggested instead that Series T was struck at a mint-place in the East Midlands with close connections to London (Metcalf 1984: 39-40; 1994: 548-50). This would be supported by the restricted Essex distribution.

It is not clear where coins with the legend '*monitascorum*' were minted. The legend may come from '*moneta sanctorum*' (Metcalf 1994: 435). There were perhaps minted at different locations linked with the minting of T (East Midlands) and perhaps L (London) as they are stylistically similar to both (Plate 37) (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 180; cf. Metcalf (1994: 435-6) who groups them together). Their distribution in Essex is sparse and conventional, running along the coast and Thames (Map 24).

Plate 37: Monitascorum sceat from Woodham Mortimer, with the legends 'DE LVNDONIA' on the obverse (left), and 'ZCORVM' on the reverse (right). (EMC: 2004.0068)

Series U/23b is another series from the Mercian kingdom, possibly Abingdon-Dorchester area in the Upper Thames Valley (Metcalf 1994: 558). There are

just a few stray finds form Essex (Map 25). Notably one has been found at Bradwell (Challis 1992), and an imitation at Barking.

7.5.8. Northumbrian coinage

The earliest *sceattas* minted in Northumbria were struck during the primary phases and are the earliest *sceattas* to bear a royal name – that of King Aldfrith (685-704) (Metcalf 2006: 147). This attribution is a major reason for suspecting that other primary *sceattas* may have minted under royal authority. Very few *sceattas* of Aldfrith have been found in Essex, with just one at 'south Essex' (*ibid.*: 153, 156) and an imitation in the Rodings hoard (*ibid.*:155)

Around 10 years after the Aldfrith's reign, the earliest *sceattas* of Series J were struck, prossibly marking the beginning of large-scale minting in Northumbria. It is traditionally thought to have been minted in York on the basis of a large number excavated at Flaxengate (Metcalf 1994: 341; 2006: 154). It is widely distributed across eastern and southern England. Its total absence from the London area (though this may be a recovery bias), and its northerly distribution, count against Grierson and Blackburn's (1986: 179, 178) tentative London attribution. However, a concentration of Series J in northern Lincolnshire has led Naylor (2006) to argue for a location in this area as the likely mint-place of most of the series, with subtype J72 perhaps minted in Frisia. The plot of Series J single finds from the Fitzwilliam Museum's corpus is clearly northern and shows the coins to be clustered around major navigable

rivers and the east and southern coast. Both Naylor (2006: 163) and Metcalf (1994: 341; 2006: 154) attribute this distribution to the strong links between York and north Lincolnshire, perhaps fostered by Frisian traders.

Very few coins of this type have been found in Essex (Map 26). However, the east coast and north-west distribution is familiar. The coin at Audley End and 'north-west Essex' (Bonser & Carter 2008) coins are outliers of a Middle Anglian cluster of coins, to the south-east of the River Ouse (Rigold previously argued for a possible Middle Anglian for Series J, see 1966).

The Mersea Island coin (EMC: 2001.1171) is interesting. The archaeology and history of Mersea Island suggests that it was of some importance in the middle Saxon period, when the causeway linking the island with the mainland was built (Crummy *et al.* 1982). It is probable that there was a monastic community living on the island. As such, it is perhaps surprising that more coins have not been found here, especially when one considers the frequency of finds around Bradwell, Tilbury, Barking, and the City of London.

7.5.9. West Saxon coinage

The major trading centre of the south coast in the mid Saxon period was Southampton, often referred to as *Hamwic* (e.g. Holdsworth 1980; Hodges 1981; Morton 1992; Andrews 1997), which was probably founded shortly after 700. It was probably just before this time that the W series of *sceattas* began, copying Merovingian styles. Very few specimens are known, though the

number has more than doubled over the last 15 years (cf. Fitzwilliam corpus and Metcalf 1993a: 153). The Fitzwilliam's corpus of Series W single finds is clustered around the Southampton area (Hampshire basin), which supports Metcalf's theory (1993a: 156; 2004: 5; 2005) that they originated from somewhere in this area. There is just one in Essex, which comes from the 'productive' site of Tilbury (EMC: 2008.0357) (Plate 38).

Plate 38: The Series W sceat from Tilbury (EMC: 2008.0357)

7.5.10.Continental sceattas

Frisian

Shortly after the introduction of silver pennies in Kent and Essex, *sceattas* (Series D and E) were also minted in Frisia. The earliest of these series is probably Series D (*c.*690/700-*c.*710/5), also known as the 'continental runic' series (Metcalf 1993b: 184). Series E, known alternatively as 'porcupine'

sceattas, struck a little later, perhaps minted from *c.*695/700 until *c.*750/60 (Metcalf 1993b: 222-5, 245; Archibald 2009: 403). From their respective frequencies at major trading centres in the Rhine Delta region, Metcalf (1993b: 182, 192-3; 225) has argued that E was minted in Dorestad – though it may have been minted elsewhere later – while D was minted in Domburg and perhaps at another Frisian centre.

Series D is the most common in Frisia, where they are found proportionally more at Domburg than the other major centres which have been excavated (Metcalf 1993b: 184). By contrast, Series E is the most common series of *sceat* overall. The Fitzwilliam distribution of British finds shows both series to be densely and widely distributed along the east coast of England, with a concentration around Southampton.

In Essex these series are distributed very widely (Maps 27 and 28). There is a small concentration of Frisian *sceattas* at Fingringhoe, where a single Series D, and 4 Series E's (3 of which were stuck together) have been found through metal detecting (Colchester Museums Accessions 1999.54.1-3 & 1999.55.1-3). A 'Frisian gold *sceat*' has also been reported from Fingringhoe (Essex HER: 17585). Though no picture of this find is available, one wonders whether what was found was in fact an imitation *tremissis* or *solidus* of Louis the Pious (814-40) (cf. Story 2003: 248). The Essex and national distributions reflect not only that these coins were minted in great number, but also the prolific activity of Frisian traders along the North Sea coast of Essex and England generally. With

55 specimens known from excavations and stray-finds, Series E are the most common series of *sceat* found in Essex.

In amongst the dense distribution there are several notable findspots, which were probably consistent foci for monetary trade in the later 7th and early 8th centuries. In the north-east Series D has been found at Great Oakley (EMC: 1994.0127), Great Bromley (EMC: 2006.0338), and Colchester (EMC: 1977.0019). Series E has also been found in the area of Colchester (EMC: 1986.0087), but also in the City of London (EMC: 1991.0206, 1991.0204, 1991.0205), and at Barking (EMC: 1991.0207), Bradwell (EMC: 1977.0003), and West Mersea (EMC: 2001.1172). Bonser and Carter (2008: 94) list 1 from their 'productive site' in north-west Essex.

Danish

Series X, or the 'Woden/monster' type *sceat*, was a continental penny of the late intermediate and early secondary phases (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 180). It takes its name from the bust of a bearded Odin/Woden-like man on the obverse, and a beast turning to bite its own tail on the reverse (Plate 39). Series X finds are concentrated in Denmark, especially at Ribe, where 85% of the coin assemblage was made up of 'Woden/monster' *sceattas* (Feveile 2006: 280; fig. 2). Though they are also common in Frisia, the great concentration in Ribe suggests that they were probably struck there too (Metcalf 1993b: 276). Like the Frisian series, it is found across England.

In Essex, the distribution is again coastal, with 4 examples in the north-west. There are 3 coins and a copy at Tilbury (Bonser 1997: 44), and Bonser & Carter (2008: 94) list 1 from the north-western 'productive' site. Another was found at *Lundenwic* (Blackmore 2002: 286, fig.8). However, the most notable coin comes from Canvey Island (Essex HER: 13819). This is the earliest appearance of contemporary coinage here in the Anglo-Saxon period. The site has been identified as yet another landing place for North Sea trade along the coast of Essex. It is possible that this site emerged later – in the 8th century – than the other sites already identified in this chapter, which may have their origins in the 7th century, or perhaps, for sites such as Fingringhoe, even earlier.

Plate 39: Series X sceattas from Hatfield Broad Oak and Saffron Walden (EMC: 2004.0068, 2001.0572)

?French (Quentovic)

Series G is a *sceat* issue of unknown origin. It seems to have been struck for just a short period from the early secondary phase, sometime around 710-20 (Metcalf 1993b: 173, 266). In England, these coins are distributed across England, with no particular concentration, though they are curiously absent away from the Wash in East Anglia. This lack of an English concentration, led to Metcalf to argue a continental origin for the series (1993b: 266). He suggested Series G might have been minted in Quentovic, given their rarity in the Low Countries and Rhineland region. There are just 4 stray finds in Essex, and 1 from *Lundenwic* (Blackmore 2002: 286, fig.8) (Map 29).

7.5.11. Summary

The two phases of *sceatta* coinage contribute the largest body of evidence to the corpus of Essex coins. Essex and Kent were probably the first kingdoms to mint this new coinage in the later 7th century. The earliest East Saxon coinage is Series B, which is heavily distributed across the county. The secondary series, S, is more restricted to the Thames Estuary region and coast.

The frequencies of each type show that the most intensive areas with which Essex traded were Kent, Frisia, and East Anglia. There are far fewer coins from York or Southampton.

This distribution study also clearly illustrates the existence of many centres of exchange up and down the eastern coastal and riverine region. The sites which

stand out most clearly are Little/Great Bromley, Fingringhoe, Bradwell, Tilbury, Barking, and the City of London.

The last four on this list are known to have had monasteries in the later 7th century. In the case of Barking and St Paul's (City of London), these continued through the 8th century as well. It is surely no surprise that significant amounts of coinage have been found here. The conclusion to be drawn is that the establishment and endowment of religious communities, and the societal centres that these represented, were a magnet for traders. This supports the established notion that these sites played a prominent role in structuring exchange networks (e.g. see Blair 1988; Kelly 1992; Astill 1991; 1994; Lebecq 2000; Ulmschneider 2000a).

The remaining sites – all located in north-east Essex – show the importance of this area in the later 7th and early 8th centuries. The evidence supports the argument (e.g. see Loveluck & Tys 2006: 147, 149-52; Loveluck 2012) that there was widespread participation in long-distance trade in coastal areas, with trade certainly not funnelled through *emporia*, such as London or Ipswich (cf. Hodges 1982; 1989).

7.6. Coinage in Essex, c.760-c.850

7.6.1. Northumbrian stycas

In Northumbria, *sceat*-like coins were minted up until the mid-to-late 9th century. Northumbria's pennies became so debased that ultimately they were struck in copper rather than silver. The Northumbrian base metal '*sceattas*' of the 9th century are referred to as '*stycas*' by numismatists.

Only seven or eight Northumbrian *stycas* have been found in stray or excavated contexts in Essex (Map 30). There are thus really too few finds to make much comment on these.

7.6.2. English broad flan pennies

The so-called *sceat* coinage came to an end in southern England by the middle of the 8th century (*c.*760). This happened at different times in different kingdoms, where respective series had different chronologies, with some series ending sooner than others.

These new silver pennies were produced from good silver on a broader flan than before. Hence these new pennies are referred to simply as 'broad flan pennies'. Other than their width and fineness, another notable feature on new pennies was the inclusion of the names of kings, and – for the first time – archbishops, and even sometimes sub-kings; kings' names had been written on

only a very limited number of coins before (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 158-9). Moneyer and – to a lesser extent – mint names also became more common (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 271). Mostly, the mint-place is not stated on the coin, and numismatists have often assumed the mint location from the ruler (e.g. Blunt *et al.* 1963: 30-6).

In the south-east, the main mints were London, Canterbury, and Rochester. Minting at these sites became increasingly co-ordinated in the middle and late Anglo-Saxon period, with kings and bishops from Mercia, Wessex, and Kent all minting at these sites. Away from this area, the main mints of the middle Saxon period were unlocated mints in East Anglia – possibly Ipswich – and Wessex (North 1994: 24; Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 273).

London, together with Rochester and Canterbury, was one of the three major mints of southern England in the late 8th and earlier 9th centuries (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 273). However, picking out those coins minted in London from the body of coins minted under a particular ruler – especially in the case of Offa – can be difficult (1986: 273-5).

This section continues to be structured according to kingdoms. However, the picture become more complicated in the later 8th century as mints for Mercia and Wessex were sometimes located outside of their home territories. As a result of Mercian hegemony, from the mid-8th century we can really only talk about four independent southumbrian kingdoms: Mercia, Wessex, and intermittently, East Anglia and Kent.

7.6.3. Mercian coinage

Offa

The 8th and early 9th centuries are marked politically by Mercian dominance (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 268, 276-7). Though Beonna of East Anglia attempted to revive *sceat* coinage in the late 750s and early 760s, it is King Offa (ruled 757-96) who is often credited with the lasting and more radical mid-8th-century reform of Anglo-Saxon coinage (e.g. North 1994: 26).

Offa was the first Mercian king to be named on a coin. His reign spanned the transition from *sceattas* to broad flan pennies, over the course of three phases outlined by Blunt as a *sceat* phase (up to *c.*760), followed a medium-weight/lighter broad flan phase, followed by heavier broad flan pennies *c.*790/2 (1961). His introduction of broader, thinner pennies *c.*760 may have been influenced by the same development in Pepin's Francia (North 1994: 26; Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 277-8). Offa's later, heavier coins (post-*c.*790-2) parallel Charlemagne's *novus denarius* (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 277).

A great and varied body of coinage was minted under Offa. He also minted coins with Archbishop Jænberht, though the two were not on good terms. The small number of coins of Bishop Eadberht of London – the only bishop of London allowed this privilege – may have come at the expense of Jænberht's minting rights (Plate 40) (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 279). Unusually, his wife, Cynethryth, also minted coins (Plate 41). His long reign also contributed to Offan coinage being relatively common, simply in terms of numbers. There

are more than thirty examples from Essex alone, though this corresponds to less than one per year of Offa's new coinage. Offa minted in East Anglia, possibly at Ipswich, London, and in Canterbury (North 1994: 26; Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 273).

Plate 40: Left: A coin of Jænberht, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Offa, King of Mercia, from near Saffron Walden. Right: A coin of Eadberht, Bishop of London, from near Tolleshunt Major (EMC: 1970.0798; PAS: YORYM-0AF1A5)

Most of the coins of Offa found in Essex were minted either in London or in Canterbury. There is no significant difference in the distribution of coins from the three mints, or from the three phases (Map 31). This distribution map highlights many of the areas of monetary exchange visible from the *sceat* distributions. Finds at Tilbury (7) (Bonser 1997: 45; EMC: 2001.0638), the City of London (2) (EMC: 1986.9128, 1991.0235), Canvey Island (4 + 1 Cynethryth) (Essex HER: 13821; EMC: 1988.0148, 1988.0147), Harwich (2) (PAS: ESS-62EF03; EMC: 2006.0121), Horsley Cross (1, near Great/Little Bromley) (EMC: 2006.0181), Fingringhoe (1) (Essex HER: 18665), and

Colchester area (2) (EMC: 1998.0108, 2005.0229) all build on earlier distributions, outlining the significance of these sites as centres of trade and/or consumption.

Plate 41: Two pennies of Queen Cynthryth of Mercia. The coin on the left is from Kelvedon. The portrait coin on the right was found in Thames spoil near Billingsgate (EMC: 1998.0024 , 1991.0236)

Post-Offa Mercian coinage, 796-c.850

There are very few coins in Essex from most of the Mercian reigns following Offa. Whilst it is true that most Mercian rulers in the 9th century did not hold their throne for very long, the lack of coinage in Essex is perhaps significant. It is possible that disruption caused by early Viking raiders also diminished the supply of, and perhaps demand for coinage.

This was a period of instability and decline for Mercia following the death of Offa. In 825, Beornwulf, King of Mercia, lost a major battle with the West Saxon king, Egbert, at Ellandun (Wroughton, Wiltshire). The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* states that, in the wake of this defeat, Mercia lost control of Sussex, Surrey, Kent, and Essex, which were all transferred to West Saxon control.

It has been argued that there was only limited reminting of coins in the early 9th century, and that the coins of all the southern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms enjoyed unrestricted circulation (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 286). However, the Battle of Ellandun coincides chronologically with a sharp change in Essex's currency. Though the number is small, this might suggest that this event did have some impact on coinage circulation in Essex. There are *c.*26 Mercian coins in Essex datable between 796 and 825. From 825 onwards, there is a maximum of 6. By contrast, the only 9th-century West Saxon coins from Essex date after 825. However, a further complication is that we cannot be sure that the Mercian coinage was all deposited prior to 825. It may be the case that it stayed in circulation for a time during the period of West Saxon hegemony.

These Mercian coins are distributed throughout Essex. Though notably there are finds at Tilbury (Bonser 1997: 45; 1998), Bradwell (Bonser 1998), and Canvey Island (*ibid.*), indicating the continued operation of these sites into the 9th century. Coins of Kentish client kings and Archbishop Wulfred almost all come from the Thames Valley. Again several pennies have been found in the area of, *Lundenwic* (Blackmore 2002: 286, fig.8), the City of London and at Barking. There is also another single find at Colchester. At Canvey Island, two

lead discs of Coenwulf (796-821) have been found. These were interpreted as 'customs tokens' or 'tickets' (Marian Archibald in Essex HER: 13820).

7.6.4. West Saxon coinage, c.800-50

As previously noted, the earliest West Saxon coinage in Essex dates after the Battle of Ellandun. Coins of Egbert (825-8) and Æthelwulf (839-56) have been found in north-west Essex and on the North Sea coast, with coins at Bradwell (Challis 1992: no.32), Barking (Bonser 1998; EMC: 1991.0244), and in the City of London (Rodwell 2007; EMC: 1991.0243, 2001.0966, 1991.0242; Greater London SMR: MLO22975, MLO7897, MLO78142) (Map 32).

The five coins of Egbert is not an insignificant number. These coins are very rare nationally (North 1994: 24). The Essex and London finds amount to *c.*5-10% of the national total. Egbert was only the second West Saxon ruler – after his predecessor Beorhtric – to have his name on coins from the kingdom. Egbert's new dominance in Kent is shown in the Essex sample, as most of the specimens were minted either at Canterbury or Rochester. The beginning of Egbert's coinage may only have come after Kent was secured (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 289).

An Archiepiscopal coin of Ceolnoth (833-50) has also been found on Canvey Island (Essex HER: 13821; EMC: 1988.0141).

7.6.5. Summary

The comprehensive distribution of Offa's coinage of the later 8th century is reminiscent of those of earlier Series B and E *sceattas*. This is surely a function not just of his long reign, but also of the demand for coinage in Essex. Only for Offa's coinage is a mint comparison appropriate, given the large numbers. The comparison shows no bias towards any particular mint.

After Offa, in the first half of the 9th century, far fewer coins were deposited, with few if any for most rulers. This may be a reflection of Viking activity, which had a devastating effect on trade in the 9th century (Metcalf 1998b: 174).

Though there are few coins from which to draw firm conclusions, the absence of West Saxon coins from Mercian-ruled Essex, and the absence of Mercian coins from West Saxon-ruled Essex may be indicative of successful exclusion policies towards rival coinages.

Finally, the coinage evidence from this period also witnesses continuing activity at many of the coastal exchange centres identified by *sceatta* coinage, with Canvey Island much better represented in this period, than it was previously.

7.7. Coinage in Essex, c.850-973

7.7.1. West Saxon and Danelaw coinage, c.850-c.920

The coinage of Æthelberht's successor, Æthelred I (865-71), is only known in the study region from later 9th-century hoards at Waterloo Bridge and Bucklersbury in London (outside the study region, there is another at Croydon, *c.*871, see Vince 1991). Hoards often correlate with periods of social unrest, in which people feel their wealth is threatened. The mid-to-late 9th century was certainly such a period, with numerous Viking raids across England, before a series of devastating invasions completely redrew the political map of Anglo-Saxon England. It is thus no surprise to find that hoards from *c.*850 to *c.*950 account for almost 50% of those from the entire period in Essex and London.

The Viking threat has been accepted by many as the context for the concentration of hoards in the 9th and 10th centuries (e.g. Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 289). The repeated attacks on London led to the abandonment of the settlement in the City of Westminster around the Strand and Covent Garden, and to a disruption of minting in London, which minted few coins until the 860s (*ibid.*: 286). Before this, London's minting in the earlier 9th century had been sporadic in output, and its coin designs were sometimes taken from those of the two Kentish mints (*ibid.*: 284-6).

Beyond the insecurity that is manifest in the many hoards of the region, it is clear that Viking raiding and conquest in Essex had a huge impact on coinage

circulation. Aside from hoard finds, a maximum of three 'English' coins have been found in Essex (east of the River Lea) dateble to the Danelaw period. These are a penny of Archbishop Plegmund (890-5) found just east of the Lea in Beckton, Newham; and two London-minted coins of Berhtwulf (840-52) from Tilbury (Bonser 1997: 45; 1998). A lead die strike of Burgred (852-74) has been found at Tilbury (*ibid.*)

The coins of Alfred are only known in Essex from 1 found in the Home Wood (Ashdon) hoard of *c.*65 coins, near the Suffolk border (Blackburn 1989; Essex HER: 4877), and a 19th-century hoard from Leigh-on-Sea associated with possible Viking 'warrior' burials (Biddle 1987; Blackburn 1989; Rippon 1996: 123). It is almost certain that the former can be said to be a Viking deposit. It also included 34 Viking imitations of Alfredian coinage; 5 coins of Æthelstan II (Guthrum) of East Anglia; 2 coins of Charles the Bald (840-77); and 1 of Guthfrith, Viking king of York (*c.*833-95).

In contrast, thirteen coins of Alfred have been found in London in excavated or stray contexts, with many more contributing to the Waterloo Bridge (Cowie 1988) and Bucklersbury (Greater London SMR: MLO9809) hoards. Most of the stray and excavated finds are Alfred 'London Monogram' type pennies, which is the latest, most common, and indeed most copied Alfredian coin type (North 1994: 34).

The lack of earlier 9th-century Continental coins in Essex is in line with the national trend (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 286). Continental coins may have

been excluded because of their different weight (*ibid.*). However, there four stray coins of Charles the Bald from Canvey Island (EMC: 1996.0149), Chigwell (EMC: 1989.0073), and London (EMC: 1994.0172, 1994.0173). There are also the 2 from the Home Wood (Ashdon) hoard (Blackburn 1989; Essex HER: 4877).

While Alfred's coinage is absent from Danish Essex, save for in one hoard, contemporary Danish East Anglian coinage is found. The late 9th-/early 10th-century Scandinavian memorial pennies for the old East Anglian king Edmund – who they had killed – is found in the northern half of Essex (Map 33). Though there are just four coins, this is a larger corpus than that for many later Saxon coin types in Essex. The Fitzwilliam Museum's corpus of nearly 100 single examples shows that St Edmund memorial pennies are strongly concentrated in East Anglia, with just a few making it out into the Danish East Midlands. The Essex finds are simply part of the outer periphery of the East Anglian concentration. Given their almost total absence from Anglo-Saxon-ruled regions of England, it is a reminder of what side of the political border Essex lay on.

Interestingly, one coin from Viking York has been found at Cornhill in the City of London (Bonser 1998). The coin of Guthfrith in the Home Wood (Ashdon) hoard is so far the only coin from Viking York known from Essex. However, several finds indicate that traditional trade routes and centres were serviced by Scandinavian traders, linking them in to extremely wide-ranging networks. A 10th-century Kashmiri coin from Canvey Island (Essex HER:

7170), an Umayyad *dirham* (dated later 730s, but plausibly deposited much later) from Fingringhoe (PAS: ESS-205772; Essex HER: 2004.0156), and two Byzantine coins, from Benfleet Creek (see Andrews *et al.* 2005) and Layer Breton (Essex HER: 12602) respectively, are all plausible examples of Scandinavian traders. The possible ring-money from St Peter's Flat, Bradwell (Essex HER: 2009) may reflect a bullion economy linked with Scandinavian activity along the North Sea coast.

A coin brooch from Bull Wharf (Greater London SMR: MLO67890; MLO67891; MLO67892; MLO67893; MLO53336) in London with pseudo-Arabic script on it is another notable item indicating links – however small or indirect – with the Islamic world. It may be that this coin was a result of Scandinavian trading and was lost in the 9th or 10th century.

These finds from Essex fit very well with the mixed bullion/coin exchange system that Blackburn (2005: 35; 2006: 221) has recently described in the Danelaw.

There are just five coins of the independent East Anglian kingdom. Three of these are distributed along the coast including at Canvey Island (Essex HER: 13820), and at Tilbury (2) (Bonser 1997: 45; EMC: 1987.1001). Two are of Eadwald (796-8) (Essex HER: 13820; EMC: 1987.1001), two more of Athelstan (827-45) (Bonser 1997: 45; EMC: 2000.0006), and one of Edmund (855-69) (EMC: 2007.0311).

7.7.2. Coinage in Essex, c.920-73

In the 9th century the history of the London mint is again quite sketchy. Earlier in the decade its output was quite small and intermittent, and seems to have ceased altogether in the 830s and early 840s (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 275). In the mid-9th century there is again sometimes a problem with identifying the coins of London, as they were sometimes in the Rochester-style, and even minted by Rochester moneyers (*ibid.*). The output of London only picked up from its mid-9th-century slump in the 860s. The increase in activity was dramatic, its output possibly exceeding that of Canterbury, depending on how many of its moneyers were minting contemporaneously (*ibid.*). In the 10th century, London became the largest mint in England.

In the late 9th century Alfred instituted a reformation in minting which established many new mints in the south of England (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 275). The Danelaw prosperity that came from Anglo-Scandinavian urban dynamism and Viking plundering of raw materials resulted in a great deal of minting in the north of England. This meant that, after the Viking period, the distribution of mints was much more balanced between the south and north of England (*ibid.*).

Edward the Elder succeeded his father, Alfred, in 899. After a long campaign, Essex, together with the rest of the East Anglian peninsula was taken from Danish control in 917 by the West Saxon and Mercian alliance. Only one stray find of Edward's coinage has been found in Essex, at Mountnessing (EMC: 1999.0186). Another comes from the Cornhill hoard in London (Greater

London SMR: MLO21685). The increased minting in London under Edward noted by some scholars (e.g. Blunt *et al.* 1989: 265) is not visible from the number of finds from the Essex region.

Athelstan succeeded Edward in 924/5 and conquered all of what is now England by 927. Thus, for the first time, during Athelstan's reign we can talk of an English coinage. Some of his post-927 coins even include the legends 'King of all England' and 'King of the whole of Britain'. Laws from Athelstan's reign show that he was intent on controlling coinage. One law from Greteley in Hampshire stated that only Athelstan's coinage was permitted in his realm; that minting could only take place in a port town; and outlined the gruesome punishment that would be in store for a moneyer convicted of minting bad money (North 1994: 35-6). There are very few coins of Athelstan found outside of hoards in the study region. Only four have been found – all from the excavation at St Peter's Hill (3) (EMC: 2005.0211, 1992.7773, 1991.0252) and Tilbury (Bonser 1997: 45). Others were found in the small hoard at Threadneedle Street (Bonser 1998; Greater London SMR: MLO24636).

Coinage from the reign of Athelstan's successor, Edmund I (939-46), to King Edgar's reformation of around 973 can be viewed as essentially one series continued under different rulers (North 1994: 36; Blunt *et al.* 1989: 10). This was also a period in which control of the north of England, centred on York, was again fought over between English and Norse kings. In Essex, there are 16 coins of this period from three reigns: Edmund, Eadred, and Edgar. There are

no coins of Eadwig. With exactly half of the finds, the concentration is strongly in London. Three of the remaining eight were found at sites along the Thames. The others are distributed in no particular pattern. The penny of Eadred near Manningtree (EMC: 2007.0166) may be from activity around the Stour and Orwell estuaries connected with Harwich and Ipswich.

It was during Athelstan's reign that Maldon became a minor mint (Blunt *et al.* 1989: 268). Thus there were two active mints in the Essex region, with Hertford, another, just outside. However, few coins of the late Saxon period have been found in the area.

7.7.3. Summary

Between the mid-9th century and Edgar's reform of coinage in 973 (below) Essex was on the frontline of major societal transformations that occurred in the wake of the Danish raids and then settlement in England. The coinage evidence from Essex strongly points to major upset in Essex, with a dramatic increase in hoarding and the near total absence of West Saxon coinage east of the River Lea.

Less violent Danish activity is probably also behind continuing finds at Canvey Island, Bradwell, and Fingringhoe. The finds here are testament to the involvement of Scandinavian traders with exceptionally long-distance trade networks stretching from the far west of Europe to the Middle East and Asia.

The northerly distribution of St Edmund Memorial pennies indicates the continuing inclusion of northern Essex within the East Anglian sphere of interaction. The concentration also supports the thesis from other materials that southern Essex was a contested area, whose relationship to Danish East Anglia was enigmatic.

7.8. Coinage in Essex, c.973-1066

Around 973, Edgar instituted a reformation of English coinage. This was the most radical change in minting since the change to broad flan pennies in Offa's reign. Edgar's reforms brought greater regularity, standardization, and fineness to Anglo-Saxon coins. From *c.*973 all coins had both the moneyer's and mint's name on them, and a bust of the king. In the post-Reform period there were usually between around 40 and 50 active mints, though the majority of the output was concentrated in fewer than ten (Metcalf 1998a: 19; North 1994: 37-40).

Perhaps the key feature of post-Reform coinage is the regular validity periods of each issue. Every six years – and later every two years – an issue was reminted and replaced by a new one. The reform of coinage also ordered the reminting of all foreign coins entering England.

There are just five foreign coins found in Essex from the post-Reform period. An earlier 11th-century Belgian coin from London (Metcalf 1998a: 88); and four coins of the Holy Romans Emperors Otto III (983-1002) (1) and Conrad II

(1024-39) (2), and Henry III (1039-56) (1) (*ibid.*). There is also a Byzantine coin of Emperor Constantine X (1059-1067) (EMC: 2000.0112) which may have been deposited before the Norman Conquest.

Foreign coins make up just 5% of the coins from the post-Reform period. That there are 40 times more English coins than foreign coins is testament to how effectively this policy of reminting was carried out. This percentage, however, is quite high compared with the national average (see Metcalf 1998a: 89). This probably reflects Essex's greater contact with the Continent. Likewise, it appears as though fewer English coins were being used in foreign trade after *c.*1030/40 (Naismith 2012: 219).

It is possible that what is now the county of Essex had – cumulatively rather than contemporaneously – four mints during this last phase of Anglo-Saxon coinage. Colchester was the largest, though its output share fell (Metcalf 1998a: 220). Then there were minor mints of Maldon, Horndon-on-the-Hill, and possibly Newport. Conversely, the latter may instead be Newport Pagnell in Buckinghamshire (*ibid.*).

From *c.*973 to 1066 the number of coin stray finds from Essex and London increases dramatically. This is usually taken as a sign that more coins were being minted at this time, though usage levels were still lower than during the *sceatta* period (Naismith 2012: 204, 219). There are almost 120 stray and excavated coins known from this 93-year period. This compares with just over 30 coins found from the previous hundred years. At this time London had

become the largest mint in England, producing almost a quarter of its coinage (Metcalf 1998a: 18-9). This dominance is reflected in a national coin loss pattern which suggests that most regions – particularly in the south – had the same proportion of their coinage supplied by the London mint (Naismith 2012: 219).

In the county of Essex, there is no particular pattern to the coinage distribution (Map 34). However, what is remarkable throughout this later period is the concentration of coins in London. The majority of the coins come from the reigns of Æthelred II and Cnut.

This concentration on coinage in London is in stark contrast to the lack of coinage from the numerous coastal exchange centres identified in earlier centuries. These sites are almost completely absent from later 10th-mid-11th-century coinage distributions. The only sites with coins are Colchester (EMC: 1987.0132), Fingringhoe (EMC: 1987.0132), and Mersea Island (EMC: 1986.0133), with one each.

7.9. Conclusion

The period between *c.*400 and 1066 was witness to huge socio-economic transformations. The archaeology of coinage in Essex reveals the profound and active engagement of the region with long-distance and national exchange networks.

The earliest evidence shows that the first coins used by 5th-century 'Anglo-Saxon' communities in Essex were Byzantine and old Roman coins. Later, in the 6th century, these were joined by gold coins from Merovingian Francia; and in the early 7th century by English gold coins.

The contexts of these finds show that these items were valued as items in their own right. There is evidence from across the county of their inclusion within graves and their use as pendants. Many thus functioned as contemporary gold bracteates did. The development of the bracteates in Scandinavia may have been linked to the popularity of wearing Roman coins as pendants (Axboe 1999: 139). The use of these items as dress accessories would have signalled the wearer's inclusion within long-distance networks.

The relatively large number of 5th- and 6th-century coins indicates that Essex, alongside Kent and East Anglia, constituted the major coin-using area of England at this time. This doubtless reflects their geographical advantage in accessing cross-Channel exchange networks.

This study has identified key exchange sites in the eastern coastal and riverine zone which were heavily involved in this monetary exchange. These include sites which have not previously been recognized, as well as some which have, such as Tilbury and Canvey Island. The earliest sites to emerge from the coinage evidence are Colchester/Fingringhoe, Great Bromley, and perhaps the Harwich area. Colchester may even have been the mint-place for the pale gold *Vanimundus* series (Metcalf 1993a: 81; 1976: 12-3; Rigold 1960).

These centres continue to be well represented in distributions of silver '*sceattas*' in the late 7th and early 8th centuries. This period sees concentrations of coinage in the area of extant or possibly former monasteries and minsters (most of which were founded in the latter half of the 7th century). The strongest concentrations are around the City of London, Bradwell, Tilbury, and Barking. However, there are other finds at West Mersea and Southminster which may also relate to monetary exchange at ecclesiastical sites. This finding supports the notion that these sites acted as nodes of trade in the North Sea network.

The grouping of *sceattas* by origin has shown, perhaps unsurprisingly, that the bulk of monetary trade was conducted with East Anglia, Kent, London, and Frisia. The *emporia* at York and Southampton appear to have been much more peripheral in this network.

A major finding is that monetary trade was dispersed, especially along the North Sea coast, rather than concentrated in *emporia*, such as London. Many of the sites at which this trade occurred have no known associations with the secular or ecclesiastical elite. This supports the theory that trade was not funnelled through *emporia* by elites (trade was badly controlled if this was the intention), as suggested by Hodges (1982), but rather was dispersed with many free agents in this activity (see Loveluck and Tys 2006).

This dispersed trend continued in the later 8th and early 9th centuries, with the same coastal centres represented in distributions of broad flan pennies.

The early 9th-century coinage distributions suggest that Essex's Mercian and then West Saxon overlords pursued a successful exclusion policy on coinage from the other kingdom. However, there are few coins from Essex dating to this period, so this can only be suggested cautiously.

The coinage evidence of the 9th and early 10th centuries is characterized by the disruption caused by Viking raiders and later settlers. 50% of the hoards from Essex and the included London boroughs date to this time, reflecting the danger for individuals of losing their wealth.

During the first Viking phase in Essex (*c.*850-*c.*920), almost no coins of West Saxon rulers have been found east of the River Lea outside of hoards. By contrast, at least some of the trading centres along the coast appear to have continued in operation, interacting with new trade networks of exceptional geographical extent. These networks would have been opened up by the presence of Scandinavian traders. They are evidenced at Canvey Island, Bradwell, Fingringhoe, and other locations, particularly through items brought from the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East.

In the early 10th century, the northerly distribution of Danish-East Anglian coinage shows how northern Essex was pulled into the Insular Danelaw network. By contrast, southern Essex's place in the Danelaw is enigmatic. It is probably accurate to think of it as a much-contested frontier region. The administrative arrangements here are still unclear, but were surely quite complex.

The next major trends in the data occur after Edgar's coinage reform in 973. The 5 foreign coins lost over the period of almost a hundred years is testament to the successful reminting of incoming coinage; particularly so when mapped against the profusion of coins dating to the reigns of Æthelred II and Cnut.

The distributions from this phase also show a huge concentration of monetary transactions in London. Though there was more widespread coin loss during the reigns of Æthelred II and Cnut, the other coastal centres of exchange visible between the 5th/6th and earlier 10th centuries all but disappear from the record.

Chapter 8

Pottery

8.1. Introduction

This chapter utilizes spatial and chronological distributions of pottery to illustrate the dynamic patterns of consumption found in the region. These patterns are viewed as the manifestation of elements of social change. In particular, these patterns help to chart the emergence of extensive trade networks, and the part communities in Essex played in these. They also inform our notions of the expression of status through conspicuous consumption.

In this analysis, the most revealing wares are those which are imported. The primary reason for this is that imported wares are the only pottery types we can be sure were traded. The use of handmade local pottery was widespread, but it is unclear to what extent this represents anything more than domestic subsistence production. Furthermore, access to imported pottery is discriminatory. Certain areas, such as those on the coast and navigable rivers, would clearly have been more accessible to traders than others. Certain settlements would have had preferential access to trade through their greater disposable and/or exchangeable wealth. Thus, imported pottery is of prime importance in realizing the aims of this thesis.

However, it is also important to characterize pottery usage as a whole in Essex. This acts to give context to the imported wares addressed further on in the chapter. Most of the pottery used by the vast majority of settlements was not imported. Rather, it was almost always homemade, by hand, using local clay. Though much of the local clay naturally contained sand, the most common artificial temper was manure, with its own organic inclusions. This pottery has come to be known variously as 'grass-', 'organic-', 'vegetable-', or 'chaff-tempered' pottery.

This chapter is split into two large sections, reviewing the pottery evidence before and after 850 respectively. The rationale for this was given in Chapter 4, where it was stated that the mid-9th century represents something of an archaeological watershed. It is hoped that a presentation which is sensitive to this will give the reader a clearer conceptualization of the nature of the archaeological data, and how this changes over time.

Within these large sections, the results of several distribution studies of individual wares are presented. The data from Essex and London demonstrate imported pottery was consumed by communities in Essex before the expansion of North Sea trade during the course of the 7th century. The contexts of the earliest imported pottery indicate that it was used as a marker of status. The conspicuous consumption of imported pottery is evident on a grander scale from the 7th and 8th century onwards, with high status secular and ecclesiastical rural estate centres using imported pottery rather than making their own. However, the distributions also show that there were numerous entry-points for

imported wares, especially prior to the late 10th century, and that imported goods were not being funnelled through *Lundenwic*. Conversely, in the 10th and early 11th centuries, *Lundenburh* appears to have been far more dominant in the trade in imported pottery from the Continent. At the same time rural communities and emergent urban centres in Essex were continuing to access imported pottery coming down from East Anglia and the East Midlands. The primary routes of trade appear to have been along the North Sea coast, and down the Ouse and Cam from the Wash.

The areas of imported pottery consumption highlighted in this chapter correspond to a large extent with the dominant trading zones illustrated by the coinage data. This is an important correspondence, as distributions of pottery may not in themselves represent areas in which pottery was traded, but rather where it was consumed. This is true for both imported and local wares. However, it is also important to reiterate that coinage is far easier to find in stray contexts than pottery. As a result the differences in volume between extensively excavated areas, such as London, and rural field sites should be treated with even more caution, as the difference in frequency may be severely exaggerated.

The quantification in this chapter is mostly given in terms of sherd count, where possible. While this gives a fairly accurate reflection of the frequency of particular fabric, in using this method it is also accepted that the resulting proportions are biased towards more friable wares, which fragment into more

sherds per pot. To balance this, where the primary recording has made it possible to do so, fabric weight will also be given.

Arguably the least biased method of quantification is Estimated Vessel Equivalent (EVE) (Orton 1975). This involves adding the number of complete rims and bases for each fabric together, before dividing this figure by two. However, it is rarely used in the study of early Saxon ceramics due to the lack of uniformity in the subject matter making it difficult to assess how many complete rims and bases are present (e.g. Hamerow 1993: 23).

8.2. Pottery in Essex, c.400-c.850

8.2.1. Handmade local pottery

Fabric

The ubiquitous use of grass-tempered pottery in Essex (Map 35) is quite in-keeping with the national pattern. Its distribution serves to illustrate generally the areas of settlement in Essex between the 5th and the 9th or even 10th centuries; though it is particularly characteristic of the 7th century, after which its popularity declined. Its widespread use stems from its ease of production, as grass temper from dung would have been freely available. Conversely, other

tempers require a specific local geology and thus have a more restricted distribution in Britain, such as chalk-tempered pottery, which is rare in Essex.

Often on 5th- and 6th-century sites grass-temper is accompanied by other tempering inclusions. This was almost always sand, as found extensively at the Springfield Lyons cemetery (Tyler & Major 2005), and the settlements at Little Oakley (Barford 2002) and Orsett Cock (Toller 1980; Carter 1998). This means that there is frequently considerable overlap between fabric types, making it impossible to discuss one in isolation. Most commonly grass is found with quartz sand grains, though sand-temper was often thought sufficient on its own, and is the second-most frequent pottery type found.

It has been debated whether grass-tempered pottery was a 'Germanic' introduction, or an element of British domestic potting which survived the *Adventus Saxonum*. It has been found all over England on early Saxon sites regardless of any other evidence of continuity. However, as Hodges (1981) has noted, grass-tempered pottery has also been found in pre-Anglo-Saxon levels on some sites; such as Wroxeter (Hurst 1976: 294). The discovery of 'Anglo-Saxon'-style grass-tempered pottery in Flanders (see Hamerow *et al.* 1994) suggests that grass-tempered pottery may plausibly have been brought with new settlers to Britain in the 5th and 6th centuries. Indeed there is evidence that it was even produced in the Western Isles.

While the origins of the basic grass-tempered fabric are still subject to some debate, it is clear that methods and styles were brought from the Continent.

Funerary wares in particular display forms, such as the characteristic *Buckleurne*; and motifs, such as the swastika, which are well-known on the Continent. Surface treatments, such as comb-textured *Schlickung*-treated pottery, were new introductions, though most domestic pottery was not treated. The globular and particularly carinated forms of household wares were also imported from Continental north-western Europe. Carinated bowls have been found at several sites in Essex. In the absence of closely datable fabrics, this form enables us to identify Continental pottery traditions spreading into Britain in the early 5th century (Hurst 1976: 292). In Essex, carinated bowls have been identified on sites distributed along the eastern coastal and riverine region, from Little Oakley (Barford 2002) to Mucking (Hamerow 1993), mirroring the distribution of the earliest settlement evidence in Essex.

While grass-tempered pottery was at its most popular in the 7th century, sand-temper became much rarer. Very little has been found at the excavated middle Saxon settlements at Wicken Bonhunt (Wade 1980), Waltham Abbey (Huggins 1988), Bradwell (Medlycott 1992; 1994), Great Dunmow (Tyler in Essex HER: 13867). In London, sand-tempered sherds have been found at a number of sites, especially in 8th-century contexts, though no more than 40 sherds have been found on one site.

It is probably better to refer to sand-tempered *wares* as numerous sandy fabrics are sometimes differentiated on excavated sites. This variation comes from the fact that sand is often found naturally in the various local clay beds which would have been exploited. These natural inclusions would have varied in their

size and frequency. Furthermore, the potter may then have added yet more sand or indeed mixed clay from different sources, resulting in the variety of sandy fabrics which we observe in the archaeological record.

Grass-tempered pottery has been found at over 130 sites distributed across Essex (Map 35). This amounts to around 50 different settlements, around 50 individual findspots (though a large number of these are clustered very closely in north-west Essex), and less than 10 cemeteries. Concentrations have been found on excavated sites around the region – a distribution one would expect from a locally made ware.

By contrast, sand-tempered pottery is found at around 20 early Saxon settlement and cemetery sites (Map 36). Usually it is found as a significant minority fabric. There are a few exceptions to this, however, such as the cemetery at Great Chesterford (Evison 1994), and the settlement at Great Waltham (Tyler & Wickenden 1996).

The earliest concentration of grass-tempered pottery in Essex is found at the large excavated settlement and cemetery site at Mucking. Grass-tempered pottery appears to have been just as popular at the nearby settlements and cemeteries in the Thurrock area, notably at Orsett (Milton 1987), North Stifford (Wilkinson 1988), and Chadwell St Mary (Lavender 1998), where it appears to have been the most common fabric. 75% of the cremation urns at Rayleigh were also organic-tempered (Roy & Ennis 2005; Ennis 2008). At Mucking (Hamerow 1993), many thousand sherds were found at the Mucking

settlement – mostly from *Grubenhäuser* fills – where grass-tempered pottery made up the majority of the pottery. In many of the Mucking *Grubenhäuser* grass-tempered pottery made up between 86 and 100% of the pottery found in their fills (*ibid.*: figs. 15 and 16).

The great popularity of grass-tempered pottery is best reflected by the large assemblage found on the 7th- to 9th-century settlement at Clacton (Letch 2004; 2005). 655 sherds (26,514g) were found here, forming *c.*88% of the total pottery assemblage by weight. The rest of the pottery was also almost all handmade with organic, sand, and/or shell inclusions. There was just one sherd of the contemporary slow wheel-turned fabric from Ipswich. This imported ware is discussed below, but the frequency comparison serves to demonstrate the dominance of homemade pottery on typical rural settlements.

Conversely, inland, on the settlement excavated at Wicken Bonhunt (Wade 1980: 96-102), grass-tempered pottery made up less than 20% of the assemblage. Instead, Ipswich ware accounts for 70% of the pottery here, and Continental pottery accounts for around 10%. This conspicuous consumption contributes to the theory that this was a high status rural centre with extensive access to wider exchange networks.

Form

The nature of the finds on most sites precludes a full regional analysis of form, akin to that which has been undertaken for fabric. It is largely small body

sherds which are recovered, rather than diagnostic larger pieces, or rim sherds. However, one can be reasonably certain from excavations at settlement sites such as Mucking (Hamerow 1993), Orsett Cock (Tyler in Carter 1998: 102), Heybridge (Drury and Wickenden 1982: 12-15), Slough House Farm (Wallis & Waughman 1998), and Rook Hall (*ibid.*) that the vast majority of handmade local pottery were intended as utilitarian cooking pots and storage jars. This pottery also lacked the decoration, and often skilled manufacture of contemporary cremation urns. All of which leads to the conclusion that pottery production in Anglo-Saxon Essex was simply a necessary activity, and not a vehicle for social expression. It is important to note how this contrasts with the social statement made by the *consumption* of imported pottery.

8.2.2. Imported pottery

Ipswich ware

Ipswich ware was manufactured in the Buttermarket area of Ipswich, Suffolk, from the second quarter of the 8th century to the mid-9th century (Blinkhorn 1999: 8-9). It is most famous as the first mass-produced ware in England since the Roman period to have been made on a wheel. Ipswich ware was produced on a slow-wheel, which would have been turned by the potter's hand so that the surfaces of the pot could be progressively built and shaped. In East Anglia it is found in large numbers on sites at each level of the settlement hierarchy,

indicating an extensive internal exchange network closely tied to Ipswich (*ibid.*: 5).

The research undertaken for this thesis has been able to use stray data to add greater context to the Wicken Bonhunt assemblage. It has previously been thought (Rippon 1996: 117) that Ipswich ware was relatively common on rural sites in north-west Essex. However, the extraordinary proportions found at Wicken Bonhunt and the holistic picture from pottery stray finds suggests that this was not the case.

The fields to the west of Saffron Walden around the villages of Strethall, Littlebury, and Elmdon – less than 10km (*c.*6.2 miles) north of Wicken Bonhunt – have been particularly prolific. Around 75 sherds of grass-tempered pottery have been found from around 25 closely clustered locations (Williamson 1986). This contrasts with just 6 sherds of Ipswich ware from 5 findspots in this same area (*ibid.*). It has also been noted that no Ipswich ware has been found at nearby Hadstock (Williamson 1988: 160), where early, middle, and late Saxon remains have been found, particularly at the Church of St Botolph (Gilman in HER: 4809; 4810; 36058). Indeed, beyond the immediate area (10km radius) of Wicken Bonhunt there are no more truly inland Ipswich ware finds in Essex. The next nearest sherds are a small number from the possible later vill site at Waltham Abbey on the River Lea (Holder 1998; Essex HER: 41, 3668). These findings support the assertion of some scholars that the movement of Ipswich ware was restricted to 'special sites' (Hurst 1976: 301-3; Williamson 1988: 160).

The theory that Wicken Bonhunt was a royal site is strengthened further by a comparison between its pottery and the assemblage excavated at the later 7th- to early 8th-century settlement at the Treasury in Whitehall (Cowie 1988). This site appears to have functioned as a royal estate centre just outside *Lundenwic* (*ibid.*). Just 5% of the pottery here was grass-tempered – a smaller share than either Tating or Badorf ware, which came from Germany. As at Wicken Bonhunt, the pottery at the Treasury was dominated by Ipswich ware (>50%), with local pottery (shell-tempered) forming a sizable minority of the assemblage (40%).

By contrast, at the Royal Opera House, grass-tempered pottery was the majority type, before the proliferation of Ipswich ware later in the 8th century (e.g. Wheeler 1935: 139-41; Hurst 1959: 23; Haslam 1975: 221-2; Cowie 1988; Cowie & Whytehead 1989; Blackmore 1989: 105; Blackmore *et al.* 1998; Bowsher & Malcolm 1999; Farid 2000: 138; Malcolm & Bowsher 2003). This transformation in pottery consumption at *Lundenwic* serves as an indication of the outward focus of the settlement, whereby it acted both as a conduit for, and consumer of the commodities of long-distance trade. In the region at this time, no settlement but London progresses so clearly from making its own basic pottery to voraciously consuming imported pottery.

The Waltham Abbey (Huggins 1970; Challis 1992: no.41; Essex HER: 3668) sherds can be explained as an extension of the trade route that emerges from the rest of the Ipswich ware finds from the region; all of which lie on or near the North Sea coast and along the River Thames (Map 37). The thin scatter of

isolated sherds from ten sites along the coast from Dovercourt (Challis 1992), near the mouth of the Orwell, to Mucking (Hamerow 1993) on the Thames Estuary suggest trade movements from Ipswich to London.

The thin scatter becomes rather thicker north of the River Thames between the Estuary and the London *wic*. At the middle Saxon monastic site at Barking the majority of the pottery was, like London, Ipswich ware (Redknap 1991; 1992; Vince 1998; Hull 2002). Large amounts of Ipswich ware were also found in the same London borough at the Abbey Retail Park settlement excavation (Greater London SMR: MLO73905; MLO77764). Barking, like Wicken Bonhunt, would have had status and wealth such that it would have been more than just a lucky recipient of passing trade. The finds from Waltham Abbey are surely a result of this trade up the River Lea and other Thames tributaries.

The end of Ipswich ware production in the mid-9th century coincided with the abandonment of *Lundenwic* for the Roman walled area of *Londinium* to the east. This transition is clearly seen in the archaeology of Ipswich ware in London. Though many hundreds of sherds have been found from middle Saxon contexts in the City of Westminster (e.g. Malcolm & Bowsher 2003), barely a handful have been found from the Anglo-Saxon sites of the City of London (Cowie 1988; Greater London SMR: MLO78165; MLO99363; MLO78164).

Rhenish wares

London's dominance of the regional trade in imported commodities carried in pottery vessels is even more pronounced when one examines the discard patterns of Rhenish pottery.

The most common contemporary Rhenish ware is Badorf ware. This was a cream ware produced in the 8th and 9th centuries at a number of sites clustered south-west of Cologne (Vince 2009: 362-3).

London appears to have had a virtual monopoly on the trade in Rhenish pottery at this time. The only finds of Badorf ware in Essex are from Waltham Abbey (e.g. Huggins 1970; Essex HER: 3668), where it was found alongside Ipswich ware and middle Saxon local wares. The supply of Badorf ware to Waltham Abbey was probably highly contingent on the London trade route, which would have allowed secondary transit up the Lea to Waltham.

In London, Rhenish wares account for a limited though significant amount of the pottery, both in *Lundenwic* and *Lundenburh*. Badorf ware has been found at many sites in and around the Covent Garden area. Usually, however, no more than a handful of sherds have been found. The largest collection of Badorf ware was found in the Royal Opera House excavations, though it accounts for only a very small percentage of the recovered pottery (Malcolm & Bowsher 2003). At the royal settlement excavated in Whitehall (Cowie 1988), Badorf ware account for more than 5% of an assemblage otherwise dominated by Ipswich and shell-tempered ware. It seems that Badorf fine tablewares, and commodities contained within other Badorf ware vessels may only have been

traded in London for a short period around the turn of the 8th century (Blackmore 2003a: 240-1).

The Whitehall site also stands out as having the strongest concentration of Tating ware, which accounted for 5% of the excavated assemblage (Cowie 1988). Tating ware was distinctively tinfoil-covered. It was produced at sites in the same Cologne Vorgebirge region as Badorf ware between the mid-to-late 8th and early 9th century. Unlike other imported wares, Tating ware may have been traded in its own right as a sought-after luxury vessel, rather than as container of a traded good (Hodges 1981: 68).

In Essex it has only been found at the high status estate centre at Wicken Bonhunt, where just one probable Tating ware sherd was found, though it lacks the characteristic tinfoil (Wade 1980). As noted above, Wicken Bonhunt seems to have been an important site, which was a specific destination for trade and exchange, with a pottery signature quite different from the surrounding area. The presence of Tating ware at Wicken Bonhunt thus supports the theory (Hodges 1981: 67) that Tating ware was used in gift-exchange.

Besides these high status estate centres, Tating ware has only been found in very small numbers at a few other sites in *Lundenwic*.

French wares

The most common French pottery group in Essex are grey and black burnished wares. Black wares were produced from the 6th century across northern France,

while grey ware had a lineage extending back to the Roman period (Hodges 1981: 70).

Frankish black wares are the earliest imported pottery to have been found in Essex. Their coastal distribution (Map 38) is testament to the operation of a 6th-century North Sea trade route along the Essex coast prior to the emergence of *Lundenwic*.

The burnished ware finds in rich burial grounds at Prittlewell (Pollitt 1930: fig.2) and Rainham (Evison 1955) show the importance of displaying one's access to imported pottery at this time. This would have made much the same statement as the conspicuous consumption of imported pottery of later centuries at Wicken Bonhunt and elsewhere.

Indeed, black and grey wares continued to be imported into the region in the 7th and 8th centuries. Grey ware has been found at *Lundenwic* (e.g. Malcolm & Bowsher 2003), Whitehall (Cowie 1998), and Wicken Bonhunt (Wade 1980).

Later northern French and Belgian wares have been found at a number of sites in *Lundenwic*. Conversely, they are extremely rare in Essex. The only sites on which they have been found are the monastery at Barking (Redknap 1991; 1992; Vince 1998; Hull 2002) and the high status settlement at Wicken Bonhunt (Wade 1980), along with French red burnished pottery. Both of which were settlements which apparently consumed more pottery than they produced.

Distinctive pottery types were produced over a long period from the 6th century in the Seine Valley and Mayen region. However, this pottery is extremely rare

in the study region and England more generally. In London Seine Valley ware has only been found in very small numbers. The most from one excavation site was 10 sherds, weighing 97g, from Jubilee Hall, *Lundenwic* (Cowie & Whytehead 1988). Mayen ware is represented by two sherds at the Royal Opera House (Malcolm & Bowsher 2003).

Beauvaisis ware was one of the first red-painted wares to be produced in north-western Europe in the early Middle Ages. It was probably made from the later 8th or early 9th century at several settlements in the area of Beauvais, in northern France (Hodges 1981: 84). In the 10th century the Beauvaisis and Badorf-Pingsdorf areas were the primary producers of red-painted pottery, producing pottery of very similar decoration and fabric (*ibid.*: 63). Other red-painted wares were produced elsewhere, at sites such as Rouen.

The regional distribution shows that it was relatively rare in England. It has only been found in very small numbers at Wicken Bonhunt and even fewer at Bedfordbury (1 sherd / 4g), the Royal Opera House (1 sherd), and Jubilee Hall (2 sherds / 13g).

8.2.3. Summary

The 5th century witnessed the introduction of new pottery traditions into Essex. The forms of these pots, such as carinated and globular bowls, as well as bossed cremation urns, are often derived from north-western Continental Europe.

Between the 5th and the 9th century, the vast majority of communities were manufacturing their own pots, which seem to have been largely storage jars. The predominant fabrics were grass- and sand-tempered pottery. Though some have suggested that during this time there was a period of aceramicism (e.g. Rodwell & Rodwell 1985: 121), the poor chronological resolution of this pottery mires such conclusions in uncertainty.

The distribution local handmade pottery covers the vast majority of Essex. It indicates that settlement between the 5th and 9th centuries was dispersed in eastern and north-western Essex, and that these areas shared a basic pottery tradition.

The distribution of local handmade pottery constitutes a reasonable contrast for imported pottery distributions. The clear trend is that, while pottery was clearly used everywhere, only a few settlements appear to have had access to imported pottery (or, more properly, the goods which came in these vessels).

The earliest imports are wheel-thrown black ware pots from Francia. These have been found in 6th or early 7th-century contexts at several sites on the east coast of Essex, including in burials at North Shoebury (Wymer & Brown 1995), Rainham (Evison 1955), Broomfield (Challis 1992), and Prittlewell (Tyler 1988), as well as in and around Colchester, at Lion Walk (Crummy 1980; 1981) and Old Heath (Crummy 1981).

Ipswich ware is strongly concentrated at the high status settlements at Wicken Bonhunt (Wade 1980), Whitehall (Cowie 1988), and Barking (Redknap 1991;

1992; Vince 1998), and at the *emporia* of *Lundenwic* (e.g. Wheeler 1935: 139-41; Hurst 1959: 23; Haslam 1975: 221-2; Cowie 1988; Cowie & Whytehead 1989; Blackmore 1989: 105; Blackmore *et al.* 1998; Bowsher & Malcolm 1999; Farid 2000: 138; Malcolm & Bowsher 2003). At all of these sites it constitutes the majority of the 8th-century pottery assemblages.

Outside of these concentrations the distribution shows a thin spread down the east coast, with sites a few sherds in the areas associated with exchange during the Anglo-Saxon period, such as Bradwell, Colchester and Maldon. The finds at the latter two are interesting as they are not known as major sites of exchange until the early 10th century. Ipswich ware here may relate to consumption at the royal centres at Maldon and Colchester (see e.g. Rippon 1996: 120) which possibly pre-dated the construction of the *burhs*, or perhaps pre-existing markets.

Rhenish wares, and, from the mid-7th century, northern French wares, were both even more concentrated in London. It has been suggest that Rhenish pottery was only traded in London for a short time (Malcolm & Bowsher 2003). This may be the reason that it was so rare elsewhere. If *Lundenwic* was not receiving this pottery, then it is extremely unlikely that it was being by-passed for smaller rural settlements. Imports make up a small proportion of the finds at Wicken Bonhunt and Whitehall, but are almost unknown otherwise.

8.3. Pottery in Essex, c.850-c.1050

8.3.1. Local pottery

From the mid-9th-century handmade shell-tempered pottery superseded grass-temper in Essex. It has been found across the county, though the distribution is strongly biased towards the southern half of the region (Map 39).

One of the earliest shell-tempered sherds from Essex is a handmade copy of Ipswich ware in local south Essex shelly clay (Hull 2002). The shelly fabric used for this, and much of Essex's shelly pottery would probably have come from the nearby Woolwich Beds, near Romford, which have been identified as a possible source for some of the shell-tempered pottery from *Lundenwic* (Malcolm & Bowsher 2003). The shelly fabrics found in *Lundenwic* are varied and probably come from numerous clay beds north and south of the river (*ibid.*).

Shelly ware became more popular in the later Saxon period. This popularity is well attested at Springfield Lyons (Tyler & Major 2005) and nearby Boreham (Essex HER grey literature), where the majority of the 10th-11th-century pottery was shell-tempered. About 5 miles away, at Chignall St James, 33 sherds – quite a large assemblage for late shelly ware in Essex – were found at a partially excavated Saxo-Norman settlement (Brooks 1992). However, few rural sites have yielded much pottery of this date.

A few later Saxon local sandy sherds have been found on the settlements at Springfield Lyons (Tyler and Major 2005), Colchester (Crummy 1980; 1981), Upminster (Essex HER: 17280; Greater London SMR: ELO4777, MLO63020), Chignall St James (Brooks 1992), St Mary and All Saints Church at Rivenhall (Rodwell & Rodwell 1985; 1993; Letch 2001; Clarke 2004), and at St Lawrence's Church in Asheldham (Andrews & Smoothy 1990).

By contrast, extensive excavations in the City of London have shown the great popularity of local shelly wares, which were the main pottery type in use here from the 10th century to the end of the Anglo-Saxon period (Vince 1985: 38; Unattributed 2007: 1).

In the 10th century, there was a resurgence in the popularity of local sandy fabrics, especially in the Thames Valley. In the London region, local Early Medieval Sandy (EMS) ware (*c.*950/70-1100) became common in *Lundenburh* assemblages, though these are characterized by great diversity (e.g. Vince 1984: 438; 1985; Unattributed 2007; Schofield *et al.* 1990; Schofield 1981; Dyson & Schofield 1981; Lyon 2004). The distribution of EMS is largely confined to the City of London, though it has also been found in extremely small quantities at nearby Barking Abbey (Redknap 1991; 1992; Hull 2002) and Chingford (Bishop 2003).

The late Saxon monastery at Barking appears to have more commonly used local South Essex Shelly ware. This assemblage in general is quite different to those found on London sites, which are characterized by their extensive use of

imported Continental pottery (Hull 2002: 171). This is surprising when one considers that the 8th-century Ipswich ware concentrations at *Lundenwic* and Barking suggest a more linked economy in earlier times. Though little pottery was found from this time, it appears that from the 10th century, Barking's pottery was largely local (Hull 2002: 172).

As with other local wares, there is no clear link which might suggest that Essex was providing London with pottery. While some of the shelly clay may have come from the Romford area, it appears that London was naturally drawing on numerous sources to supply it with goods up and down the river, and from elsewhere. The petrology and riverine distribution of much of the shelly ware from *Lundenburh* supports the conclusion that perhaps the majority of late Saxon shell-tempered pottery in London came from Oxford (e.g. Vince 1984: 435-8; 1985: 31). Indeed, just as *Lundenwic*'s relationship with Ipswich is overwhelmingly clear in the 8th century, *Lundenburh*'s relationship to the west, with Oxford in the 10th century, is clearest in the pottery evidence (*ibid.*: 25). The end of shell-temper's dominance in London may have been a result of the Viking sack of Oxford in 1010 (*ibid.*: 42).

8.3.2. Imported pottery

Thetford ware

The East Anglian ware which replaced Ipswich ware in the mid-9th century was Thetford ware. Whereas Ipswich ware production was focussed on the eponymous trading centre, Thetford ware is thought to have been produced at several sites in East Anglia, not just at Thetford (Hurst 1976: 285). Like Ipswich ware, Thetford ware was wheel-turned, but now on a fast wheel (*ibid.*: 299-304). The difference in distribution between the two wares in Essex is significant.

Ipswich and Thetford wares are found all over East Anglia, not just at sites of higher status (Blinkhorn 1999). The distribution of Thetford ware in Essex can be seen very much as an extension of this general East Anglian sphere (Map 40). 17 of the 18 sites on which Thetford ware has been found are located in central or northern Essex. The only site in south Essex on which Thetford ware has been found is Barking Abbey (Redknap 1991; 1992). However, at none of these sites is Thetford ware found in great numbers.

Thetford ware was not only produced during the Viking period of the later 9th and early 10th centuries, however. It continued to be produced past the mid-11th century (Hurst 1976). Little Oakley again stands out as a recipient of imported pottery at this time. Thetford ware also represented a significant minority of the varied London assemblage (e.g. Vince 1985: 38). However, the dramatic

decline in pottery provision through coastal trade is still one of the most striking differences between *Lundenwic* and *Lundenburh*.

St Neots ware

St Neots ware pottery was broadly contemporary with Thetford ware. This was a wheel-thrown shell-tempered ware from the Cambridgeshire region, initiated slightly later than Thetford ware in the mid-to-late 9th century. The shell inclusions in St Neots ware probably come from the naturally shelly Oxford Clay, which is present in Cambridgeshire and much of southern England.

As with Thetford ware, the distribution of St Neots pottery is biased towards its source. Thus, there is a strong north-westerly concentration (Map 41). At most sites only a few sherds have been found, but at Abbey Lane in Saffron Walden (Bassett 1982), the pottery assemblage found on the site was dominated by St Neots ware. This contrasts with the distribution of local shelly wares, which were concentrated in south Essex.

The sherds at Little Oakley (Barford 2002) are further evidence of coastal trade to this area in the 11th century. While the finds from Springfield Lyons show that St Neots ware was still available to rural settlements, at a time when coinage (see Chapter 7) and imported Continental pottery were increasingly concentrated in London.

Stamford ware

From the later 9th century a fine wheel-thrown ware, known as Stamford ware was produced in the East Midlands in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire. Stamford ware was long-lived and was produced well beyond the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, though it evolved into a glazed ware.

Stamford ware is not a common find from Essex, and it tends to be found on coastal sites on which also had access to Thetford, Ipswich, or St Neots ware. Suggesting that that is was brought by the same North Sea coastal trade route.

Thetford ware at Colchester (Essex HER: 12328; 12329; 12299; 12296; 12277; 13770); and Thetford, St Neots, and Stamford wares at Maldon Eddy 1979; Bedwin 1992; Essex HER: 7722, 7725) are among the earliest signs of possible trade into these emergent centres.

The distributions of both St Neots ware and Stamford ware in Essex suggest that the Blackwater estuary had become an important entry route for trade in the late Saxon period. This was surely related to the emergence of the market and *burh* at Maldon, which had probably been a royal estate (Rippon 1996: 120).

North of Maldon, it has been found, together with Thetford ware and local fabric at the late Saxon church and cemetery site at St Mary and All Saints Church, in Rivenhall (Rodwell & Rodwell 1985; 1993; Letch 2001; Clarke 2004). This access to trade might support the notion (Rippon 1996: 120) that this was a royal estate centre in the later Saxon period.

In London, like Thetford ware it has been found in the City at Watling Court (Dyson & Schofield 1981; Schofield 1981; Schofield *et al.* 1990), Milk Street, and Aldersgate Street (Butler 2001) in a variety of forms, such as pitchers and crucibles. One sherd was found in the National Gallery extension excavations. More were found to the west in the excavation of the late Saxon settlement at Earls Terrace (Douglas 2001), in the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Rhenish pottery

Pingsdorf red-painted ware succeeded Badorf ware in the later 9th century. It continued to be produced in the middle Rhine region into the early 12th century.

The distribution of Pingsdorf ware in Essex (Map 42) contrasts with those of insular imports (above), in that it is more strongly concentrated in London and south Essex.

In London, as with other imports of the 10th and 11th centuries, Rhenish red-painted ware forms a significant minority of the diverse pottery assemblage at several sites across the City of London (e.g. Vince 1985: 38).

As has been noted previously, most of the mid-to-late Saxon sites in Essex in which imported pottery is found have wares from more than one region, suggesting that these sites had genuine access to long-distance trade.

This is particularly true at Asheldham, where limited remains of a mid-to-late Saxon settlement and possible early church have been found (Andrews & Smoothy 1990; Challis 1992). It has been suggested that this settlement was another high status estate centre (Rippon 1996: 123-4). It is certainly true that it had unusually ready access to goods for a rural settlement. A small amount of Pingsdorf ware has been found here alongside Thetford ware and local wares, suggesting some access to long-distance trade in at least the later 9th century, around the time that buildings on the site are thought to have been burnt down (Challis 1992).

A small number of Rhenish sherds, including what was thought to be Pingsdorf ware was also found in 11th-century contexts at the multi-period site at Hunts Hill Farm, Upminster (Essex HER: 17280; Greater London SMR: ELO4777; MLO63020).

It is also at this time that German blue-grey ware (*c.*AD 1000-1200) begins to be traded in London. This is a pottery type which is rare in Anglo-Saxon England, but which would become much more common later.

Wares from Flanders/Belgium

From the 11th century, a yellow-glazed white pottery type from its centres of production in Belgium and the Meuse valley, known as Andenne ware (1000-1200), was being imported into the City of London. It is one of the most common imports to have been found from Saxo-Norman levels (Unattributed

2007: 2-3). However, it is difficult to tell how much of this pottery dates specifically to the Anglo-Saxon period, rather than the Norman period, which left relatively little trace in the archaeology. White glazed pottery was fairly common in the Low Countries and northern France from the 9th century onwards (Verhaeghe 1995: 237). Together with red-painted wares, it is another example of London's participation in the 11th-century trade network which spanned the North Sea.

8.3.3. Summary

The later 9th century represents something of a watershed in the pottery record. At this time various imported wares, such as Ipswich, Badorf, and Tating ware, ceased production. The primary wheel-thrown English wares found in Essex were Thetford, St Neots, and Stamford ware. Rhenish Pingdorf pottery and, later, north French/Belgian pottery became the primary imported Continental wares.

The distribution of imported English wares contrasts sharply with that of later Continental wares. Continental pottery appears to have been strongly concentrated in *Lundenburh*. This pottery is almost entirely absent from rural Essex. Notably it does feature in the assemblages from Asheldham (Andrews & Smoothy 1990). This site has been interpreted as a later Saxon hall and church site (Rippon 1996: 123-4), around which many later settlements grew

up. Conversely, the distributions of imported pottery from East Anglia, Cambridgeshire, and the East Midlands are much more widely spread.

Thetford ware is found across north Essex. This is an extension of the widely scattered finds map of East Anglia. Little Oakley and Colchester are again represented in the distribution. Besides London, the only site in the south of the study region at which Thetford ware has been found is Barking (Redknap 1991; 1992). The long period of production makes interpreting this distribution too specifically difficult. It is certainly clear that Thetford ware imports were not only directed at the elite. The lack of finds from south Essex may reflect the close affinities between north Essex and East Anglia in the Danelaw period. Thetford ware pottery was produced long after the end of the Danelaw in East Anglia, so the distribution may more generally reflect the enduring inclusion of north Essex within the East Anglian network.

The distribution of St Neots reflects the close relationship between Cambridgeshire and north-west Essex, with a scatter of finds, including a concentration at Saffron Walden (Bassett 1982). St Neots and Stamford ware were also imported to eastern coastal/riverine sites such as Little Oakley, Bradwell, and Maldon; as well as London. The finds at Chignall St James and Springfield Lyons suggest that this St Neots ware may have been more generally available than the distribution shows. The lack of excavated rural settlements in this period means that we are over reliant on chance finds.

8.4. Conclusions

This chapter has reviewed the pottery record of Essex and London during the Anglo-Saxon period, drawing out the major themes from a quantified distribution analysis.

No evidence has been found for any significant specialist pottery industry at any point in Anglo-Saxon Essex. The picture is of rural settlements largely using locally made pottery, the vast majority of which was made of grass and/or sand temper. This would have been produced by individual settlements mostly for their own domestic needs. The major fabric was grass-tempered clay, the cultural affinities of which have been debated (e.g. see Hodges 1981). However, the forms of this pottery were primarily derived from Continental north-western Europe. Though care was clearly taken in the designs of cremation urns, domestic pottery does not appear to have been used to express social identity. Imported wheel-thrown pottery was more likely to have been included among grave assemblages (e.g. see Evison 1979; Huggett 1988: 74-6, fig.8).

While handmade pottery has been found over the majority of the county, imported pottery is much rarer. Early Frankish wheel-thrown pottery has been found in several graves, especially those on elite cemeteries. The practice in Essex is rarer than it is in Kent (Huggett 1988: fig.8), and demonstrates an intention on the part of those at the top of the emergent social hierarchy to display their access to Continental exchange networks. Notably this pottery is

also found in non-burial contexts at Colchester and Mucking; both all of which have demonstrated their involvement in 6th-century long-distance exchange.

Between the mid-7th and mid-9th centuries, the distributions indicate that trade involving imported pottery was concentrated in high status centres. *Lundenwic*, Whitehall, Barking, and Wicken Bonhunt have all produced large amounts of Ipswich ware, and almost monopolize the distribution of imported pottery from the Rhineland and northern France. The pottery at Bradwell may also relate to its ecclesiastical status. However, there is also a thin scatter of Ipswich ware down the eastern coastal and riverine zone, consisting of 8 sites besides Bradwell. These include both Colchester and Harwich (Dovercourt). The overall distribution indicates that Ipswich ware was accessible to rural communities, but that the trade in it was dominated, and probably structured by major centres of wealth.

The distribution of Ipswich ware is certainly more restricted than that for later East and Middle Anglian pottery. Both Thetford and St Neots ware are more widely dispersed than their predecessor. The distributions have a bias towards northern Essex. Both types have been found in London, so this may not be significant. However, this phenomenon observed in Thetford ware might suggest that the Viking period had disrupted the supply of imported commodities into southern Essex, while the north was more fully engaged with Danelaw East Anglia. The north-west continues its close correspondence with Cambridgeshire with its concentration of St Neots ware, especially at the poly-focal centre of Saffron Walden (Bassett 1982).

In the later 9th/10th-century, the pottery record may also testify to the emergence of a trading centre at Maldon. Thetford ware is one of the earliest imported wares found here in the Anglo-Saxon period. Imported pottery found at later Saxon sites in central Essex may relate to the development of the market at Maldon. The town would have attracted trade up the Blackwater Estuary, and probably facilitated great onward movement on radiating inland routeways – perhaps Roman roads emanating from Roman settlement in the Maldon area.

As far as the relationship between Essex and London, the picture is enigmatic. As far as local pottery is concerned, London's closest relationship appears to have been with Oxfordshire (Vince 1984: 435-8; 1985: 25, 31).

In terms of imported pottery, the sheer quantity of evidence from the well-excavated Covent Garden and City areas understandably dwarfs Essex's rural assemblages. Often the distribution of finds in Essex is constituted significantly by stray finds. At first sight this tends to paint a picture of Essex's eastern communities as opportunists trading sporadically with traders headed between London and Ipswich.

However, on closer inspection one finds areas which are consistently accessing North Sea trade. The most notable example is the Harwich area, which has produced a range of imported materials from stray and excavated contexts. Another site is Colchester, where small numbers of imported items are found throughout the period. These sites suggest that, while the bulk of the regional

trade in imports was conducted in London, other centres linked by the same network emerged on the North Sea coast of Essex. These sites were not necessarily opportunistic. The Little Oakley area was receiving imported goods before the emergence of *Lundenwic* (see Chapter 10, below). These coastal sites did, however, benefit from the huge increase in the volume of trade delivered by the emergence of *emporia* around the North Sea littoral.

Part III: Synthesis, thematic discussion and conclusions

Chapter 9

Changing expressions of group identity through dress and items of apparel and functional role, between c.AD 400 and 1066

9.1. Introduction

The purpose of this first discussion chapter is to contextualize the group identities revealed in previous chapters, particularly in Chapters 5 and 6, on dress accessories. In this chapter that data is taken and studied within the context of broader archaeological reflections of cultural change in Anglo-Saxon Essex. Through this we are able to study the social, political, and economic circumstances in which these identities were created. We may even be able to get at some of the strategies or mechanisms that lay behind the creation of these expressions.

9.2. The construction of early Anglo-Saxon group identities, c.400-600

9.2.1. Dress and identity in Essex c.400-600

Chapter 5 illustrated how in the later 5th and 6th centuries a hybrid dress style emerged in Essex in which the overriding cultural influences came from Continental north-western Europe. The distributions of individual dress accessories demonstrated that communities in Essex were combining the dominant artefacts of two regional styles, one based in East Anglia, and the other in the Thames Valley.

The emergence of regional dress styles was first highlighted almost 70 years ago by E.T. Leeds (1945) and have remained in discussion ever since (e.g. Owen Crocker 2011). Importantly, the distribution of particular dress styles and burial practices correlate to some extent with documented 7th-century polities. Further, it has been suggested that there are significant similarities between kingdoms with the same ethnic identification ('Saxon', 'Anglian', 'Jutish'/Kentish), leading to the suggestion that 6th-century dress accessories were being used to express historically-documented ethnicities. This approach to the material culture is founded the culture-historical school. Though it is often criticised (e.g. Hills 1999: 184), new paradigms still often attribute significance to differences in regional dress, and posit, as Leeds did (1945: 78-9), a link between historical labels as *socially-constructed* group identities and

6th-century dress accessories (e.g. Hills 1979, 316-7; Hines 1984: 275; Geake 1992: 92; Yorke 2006: 80).

There are several major difficulties with this pervasive interpretation. The first problem is that these regional dress styles have been linked to later kingdoms which relate to specific ethnic labels; let us use 'Saxon' as an example. It has followed from here that they have been used markers of broader ethnic identities. However, this means that 'Saxon' dress in England has only been identified as such due to its correspondence with the areas of later 'Saxon' kingdoms, rather than because of its similarity to the material culture of possible ancestor communities in Lower Saxony. For example, wrist-clasps have been strongly associated with 'Anglian' identity in England, though in fact the style emanates from southern Norway, rather than Schleswig-Holstein.

Additionally, we cannot be sure of the exact boundaries of these 7th-century kingdoms. Current shire boundaries can provide only rough guides to 7th-century realities. Indeed, historical evidence shows that the East Saxon territory changed over time (e.g. Challis 1992). Even if we could accurately establish the borders of 7th-century kingdoms, the nature of these borders would often have been fluid. This has resulted in studies of early Anglo-Saxon 'Essex' including hugely different areas under this label. Territories used to study Essex's early Anglo-Saxon archaeology range from the traditional county of Essex (e.g. Challis 1992; Tyler 1996), to Essex and Middlesex (Baker 2006), and on up to including Essex, Middlesex, Surrey, and eastern Hertfordshire (O'Brien 1999: 118-26).

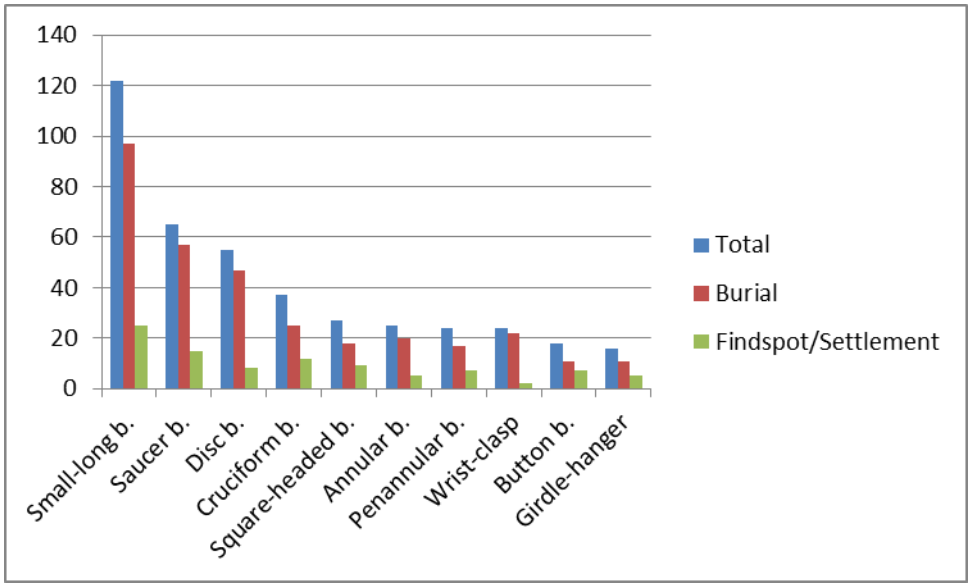
Indeed, the very idea that these fluid kingdoms formed as a result of a common ethnic identity being held by numerous communities in a relatively large region, such as Essex, is surely fanciful. It almost suggests kingdom formation as a quasi-democratic process, based on ethnic lines, with willing participants in the politicization of some ethnic community, to which they had already been expressing their allegiance.

More problems emerge when one critically examines the archaeological record. The first problem is related to chronology. Regional dress only appears to have existed before the creation of the kingdoms to which they have been linked. When the East, West, and South Saxon kingdoms emerge at the turn of the 7th-century, regional dress quickly disappears, which seems counterintuitive. Though some argue that this indicates the development of a common identity (e.g. Geake 1997: 126, 135), it is highly unlikely that these regional identities would have ended just as the polities which they have been associated with began. While there probably was a contemporary sense of cultural similarity between Anglo-Saxon communities – especially when compared with other cultures in Britain – we cannot go as far as to say an 'English' identity had been created. Communities in Essex – especially those on the coast – may have felt as much a sense of commonality with Frisians as with people in East Anglia or Kent. Instead, it is possible that regional identities, if they had been actively expressed through dress accessories, were now displayed in some other way.

9.2.2. Results from the study of early dress in Essex

Chapter 5 reviewed the use of items of dress in Essex between *c.*400 and 1066, as revealed by both stray and excavated finds. This was the first such study which has been undertaken, and produced the most accurate picture available to us of dress in the region.

The pattern that has emerged from the study of early fashions is very mixed. That is, Essex does not conform to what has been traditionally described as insular 'Saxon' or 'Anglian' dress. Instead, a hybrid dress is apparent, with dress accessories from both so-called 'Anglian' and 'Saxon' traditions used across Essex. Importantly, the relative frequencies of different dress accessories do not change significantly when stray or settlement finds and burial data are taken in isolation (Graph 1). This suggests that burial costume is probably an accurate reflection of the dress of the living, albeit in its most durable manifestation.



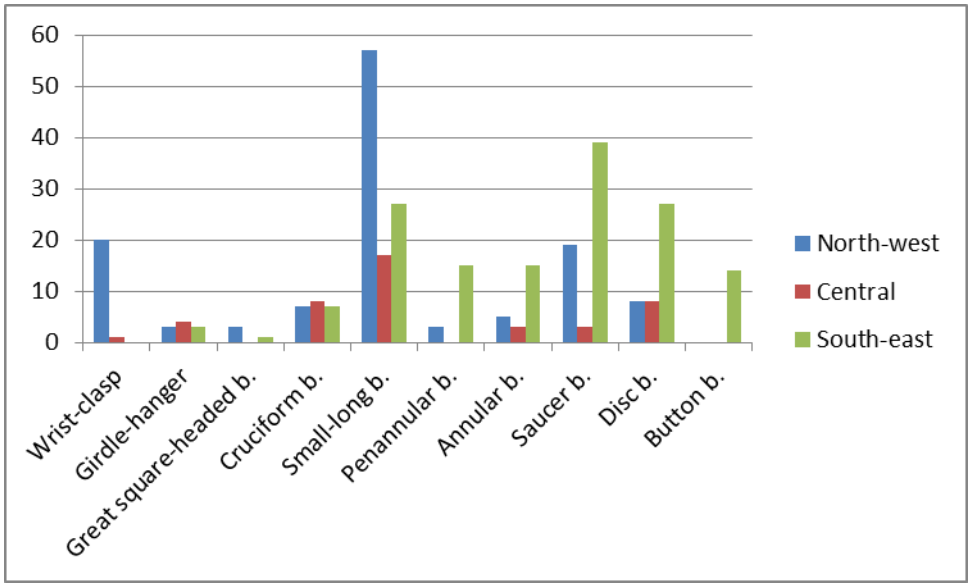
Graph 1: Dress accessories by frequency and context (minimum 10 finds)

The most common dress accessories are small-long brooches, which are found right across Essex. These have previously been considered by British scholars as typical brooches of the so-called 'Anglian' regions of eastern England (Leeds 1945; Hines 1984). The same has been said of cruciform brooches, and yet these are also relatively common in Essex.

Dress accessories previously associated with insular 'Saxon' identity are also found in Essex. Saucer brooches are the most common of these, followed by disc brooches. These round brooches do appear to have been more common items of dress in south Essex, near the Thames, than elsewhere. This is especially the case for button brooches, which are entirely restricted to the Thames region.

To best illustrate the costume of 5th- and 6th-century Essex, one can take a transect line from the south-east to the north-west, sectioning the county into three sectors – south-east, central, and north-west Essex (Map 43). Each sector contains a major Anglo-Saxon inhumation cemetery, as well as stray finds, resulting in a fairer reflection of contemporary dress than would be possible with any other intra-regional sample.

What is important is of course not the number of dress accessories in each sector, but how the relative frequencies compare between them. The result of this transect sample is illustrated in Graph 2. If the whole area conformed to traditional models of insular 'Saxon' costume, we should see a bias towards these dress accessories in each sector. On the graph, this would result in greater relative frequencies for dress accessories towards the right hand side of the graph, which are those items traditionally thought of as a part of insular 'Saxon' dress.



Graph 2: The frequencies of dress accessories in north-western, central, and south-eastern Essex. Dress accessories are listed from those of insular 'Anglian' dress on the left, through to insular 'Saxon' dress accessories on the right, with borderline artefacts closer to the centre.

What the graph actually shows is that what used to be termed Insular 'Saxon' dress is really only apparent in south-eastern Essex. Though even here, small-long brooches are tied with disc brooches behind only saucer brooches, and there is a small admixture of 'Anglian' accessories. In the rest of Essex the picture is much more mixed, with no strong preference for either 'Saxon' or 'Anglian' dress. Small-long brooches were clearly the predominant metal dress fastener.

In north-western Essex there are roughly equal frequencies of 'Anglian' and 'Saxon' dress accessories. In particular, both saucer brooches – some of which

we now realise were even made in the Midlands – and wrist-clasps were relatively common items of dress. It should also be pointed out that the number of wrist clasps represents *c.*20 *pairs*, rather than 20 items.

A similar trend can be seen in central Essex, where disc brooches – which were probably manufactured both in the Thames Valley and Cambridgeshire – and small-long brooches are relatively common; with other dress accessories found in similar numbers. Beads were also worn in the 'Anglian' style between shoulder brooches at Springfield Lyons (Tyler & Majors 2005). However, with fewer finds in central Essex, it is more difficult to make secure judgements.

One might note that the slight tendency for round brooches to be found in the south of Essex conforms to the known concentration of Insular 'Saxon' dress accessories in the Thames valley. Following the traditional theory, this would imply that only those living in south Essex expressed a 'Saxon' affiliation. However, the congruence of insular fashions with the territories of later kingdoms is the basis upon which dress has been ascribed ethnic labels. Unless the early East Saxon kingdom consisted of only the southern portion of Essex, no particular fashion appears to correspond with it.

Interestingly, these costume zones appear to correspond with the zones of interaction identified in the distributions of coinage and imported pottery, illustrated in Chapters 6 and 7 respectively. The results there indicated that throughout the period the north-west of Essex had a predominantly northerly (East Anglian/East Midlands) socio-economic outlook, while the south-east of

Essex was a part of North Sea coastal network. These patterns were surely derived from the geographical situation of the settlements, with the Icknield Way and Ouse and Cam rivers providing the easiest routeways into north-western Essex, contrasting this region with the coastal/eastern zone. There is of course no suggestion that the patterns here reflect any underlying ethnic bias. It seems sensible to propose that 6th-century dress was similarly influenced by these zones of interaction, which provided a context in which individual or familial choices regarding dress were made.

In summary, the distribution of dress accessories depicts a region caught between two cores of differing dress styles – one in East Anglia, and one in the Thames Valley. Essex's fashion used aspects of both styles. The south does appear to have been more influenced by that of the Thames Valley, and probably formed a part of this core zone. If a specific ethnic identity was being displayed by this mixture, it is difficult to read today.

It seems more likely that different regions with heterogeneous populations were creating new dress styles using their combined cultural heritage. These different fashions were influenced to varying extents by different dress styles from north-western Europe. This conclusion fits with Lucy's general analysis (2000: 133-5) of burial costume, which posited unspecific ethnic identification based on fluidity in dress.

Indeed, scholars increasingly recognize that round brooch types were manufactured in the regions of later 'Anglian' kingdoms too (e.g. Hines 1994:

53; Walton Rogers 2007: 114). Moreover, there is confusion over whether certain costumes should be considered 'Anglian' or 'Saxon'. The fashion for wearing a central brooch with two shoulder brooches has been described as characteristically 'Anglian' (Owen Crocker 2011: 100) and 'Saxon' (Welch 1992: 62).

9.2.3. The wider context of the formation of 'Anglo-Saxon' costume in Essex

Place names and textual evidence suggest that ethnic identity was an important aspect of Anglo-Saxon societies (e.g. Härke 1997: 152; Baker 2006: 164-70). However, in areas such as Essex, with its internal differences and hybrid dress, it is not exactly clear what was being expressed. What one can see clearly is simply that the dress accessories that were worn predominantly harked back to the styles of north-western Continental Europe.

The remaining question is why these methods of cultural expression came to be adopted and adapted in Essex in the 5th and 6th centuries. As most of the dress accessories worn at this time were manufactured in England we have two potential processes which could have brought about such a transformation – namely, acculturation and migration. Historically, the formative socio-cultural transformations apparent in the 5th and 6th centuries have been seen as a result of large numbers of settlers migrating to eastern England and imposing a new material culture and language on the region and Romano-British inhabitants

who had not fled westwards (e.g. Myres 1969). This interpretation has been criticized in the light of developments in our theoretical understanding of material culture, and in response to a larger body of archaeological evidence which points towards greater complexity. Modern theories regarding the formation of Anglo-Saxon societies emphasize the active creation of identities driven by strategies necessitated by a given social context (e.g. Richards 1992: 136; Lucy 2000: 181). This conceptualization of cultural changes has influenced the emergence of arguments in favour of a majority British population changing their identity to advantage themselves in a society ruled over by a small warrior elite of Continental origin (e.g. Hodges 1989; Higham 1992: 225; Lucy 2000; Moreland 2000: 48; Ward-Perkins 2000). The thesis proposed here plots a course between these two extremes. It is clearly true that Anglo-Saxon identities in Essex were socially constructed and subject to continual modification. However, the scale of the overall cultural orientation towards Continental north-western Europe suggests that an elite-takeover model is an inadequate context for the formation of these identities.

The traditional mass-migration hypothesis, aside from being based on weak theoretical grounds, simply does not fit with the archaeological evidence, which is far more complex and nuanced. The biggest problem is that it relies on a rather inflexible notion of culture, which is poor at explaining the formation of hybrid cultures. The material culture from Essex is not a straightforward importation of Continental cultures. Fashions, as we have seen,

demonstrate that cultural legacies were valued resources, which were subject to considered modification.

When we examine the contemporary dress, burial practice, and settlement archaeology of Lower Saxony we find great commonality, but also significant differences.

Unlike old models of insular 'Saxon' affiliation, it is clear that small-long brooches were popular in Lower Saxony (Siegmund 2003: 80; Høilund Nielsen 2003: 192: 206-22). There are also many parallels in Lower Saxony for the saucer brooches found across Essex; particularly those with the popular spiral design (e.g. Leeds 1936: plate XI; Høilund Nielsen 2003: 199). However, tutulus brooches are common in Lower Saxony, and have not been found anywhere in Essex. Equal-arm brooches are also relatively common in Lower Saxony (e.g. Høilund Nielsen 2003: 193-7), but they have only been identified in Essex at Mucking. Conversely, there are dress accessories in Essex which are rare or unknown in Lower Saxony, such as wrist-clasps, bracteates, and annular brooches, which are associated with Scandinavian and insular 'Anglian' and 'Kentish' dress.

The burial evidence from Essex also reflects the hybridized cultural expression witnessed in the dress accessory record. Cremation, often in decorated bossed urns known as *Buckelurnen*, appears to have been the dominant burial rite in 5th-century Lower Saxony, with furnished inhumations – often oriented north-south – accounting for a significant minority of the burials (Siegmund 2003:

81). This contrasts sharply with the usual later 4th-/early 5th-century Romano-British practice of west-east oriented unfurnished inhumations.

Excavations of numerous early cemeteries in Essex have demonstrated that its 5th- and 6th-century burial practices have much more in common with those of Lower Saxony (Böhme 1974) than with those observed in the preceding Romano-British burials, which are often found in the same cemetery or locality.

Both north-south oriented furnished inhumations and cremations are common in Essex. Unlike other 'Saxon' areas of England, in Essex, cremation seems to have been marginally the most common burial practice during the 5th and 6th centuries. This is a significant modification of the traditional characterization (e.g. O'Brien 1999: 124, 126, whose study also included Middlesex, Surrey, and Hertfordshire within the classification of 'East Saxon burial', pp.118-126). However, the burial record in Essex is not as dominated by cremations as it is in Lower Saxony. Overall, cremations account for 55% of all burials found at the four substantial 5th- and 6th-century cemeteries in Essex. However, while Mucking (57%) and Springfield Lyons (*c.*56%) hold to the average, 55% hides a large discrepancy between Rayleigh (99% cremations), which, with just one inhumation, is effectively a cremation cemetery, and Great Chesterford (*c.*17%), which is significantly below the average (overall, cremations account for 52% of the burials from these two cemeteries). It should also be noted that neither Great Chesterford nor Cemetery I at Mucking were fully excavated due to earlier unrecorded grave-digging and gravel extraction respectively. It is

possible that only around two thirds of the burials were excavated. However, it is interesting that cremation may have been more popular in southern Essex. This major finding corrects the longstanding notion that the typical 5th-/6th-century burial practice of Essex was furnished inhumation.

At each of the large Essex cemeteries the cremation urns, such as *Buckelurnen* and *Schalenurnen*, are consistent with Continental fashions found at excavated 'Saxon' sites such as Westerwanna and Liebenau. Just as for some of the dress accessories, it has been argued that a minority were probably manufactured on the Continent (e.g. Jones & Jones 1975: 172-3; Evison 1994: 20; Tyler & Major 2005: 120).

On the other hand, there are significant aspects of the archaeology of 5th- and 6th-century Essex which represent a great departure from the culture of north-western Continental Europe. Most notably this occurs in domestic architecture, where the Continental longhouse, which housed both family groups and their animals, are not found anywhere in Anglo-Saxon Essex. This is a phenomenon common to all of the areas associated with 'Anglo-Saxon' culture in England.

There are no exact functional parallels to the Anglo-Saxon house form on the Continent, where similar structures are interpreted as ancillary buildings, while longhouse with byres were the primary domestic buildings (see Dixon 1982: 276; James *et al.* 1984: 195). Anglo-Saxon halls have been noted as derivative of models from both the Continent (Hamerow 2002: 48) and Roman Britain (Dixon 1982: 277; James *et al.* 1984: 199-201; Tipper 2004: 183).

It has been concluded by some scholars that these buildings were hybrid structures, created through the mixing of ideas in post-Roman Britain (e.g. James *et al.* 1984; Hamerow 2002: 50-1). However, this conclusion is still unsatisfactory as one would not predict that communities across England would have developed an identical structure apparently instantaneously. One would imagine the same kind of regional variation that occurred in dress styles. Unfortunately, this is still one of the unresolved issues in Anglo-Saxon archaeology.

Conversely, other ubiquitous elements of settlement archaeology find exact parallels on the Continent. *Grubenhäuser* (see Tipper 2004) were certainly imported without modification from the Continent in the 5th century. Loomweights, the most common find associated with Anglo-Saxon settlement, were made in the same ring-doughnut shape as those on the Continent, contrasting with the Romano-British loomweight whose shape was more reminiscent of a cow-bell. As discussed in Chapter 8, Anglo-Saxon handmade pottery too may have been wholly or partially derived from Continental traditions.

Looking at all aspects of the archaeology is critical if we are to understand the mechanics behind the formation of early Anglo-Saxon group identities in Essex. Acculturation-based models of change all too often focus on one element of the archaeology, such as dress, whilst giving little heed to the totality of cultural transformation. One such example is Powlesland's (1997: 104) argument that changes in fashion may have resulted from the influence of

new trade contacts. This is surely incorrect. There is simply not enough evidence for the extensive and influential North Sea trade network that this would have required. Indeed, why should we isolate a mechanism for the importation of fashions? Should this mechanism also be applied to all of the changes seen in the archaeology? Not to mention the evidence of linguistic transformation (e.g. Hines 1990), and toponymic evidence of changes in nomenclature and religious belief. Scull (1995: 74) has noted that much of the new material culture was of such low quality, that it is unlikely to have been acquired through trade. Indeed, why did loomweights change? Higham (1992: 233) argued that Roman material culture was not suited to the post-Imperial way of life, while the material culture north of the Rhine was better suited, and thus was adopted. This argument does not make sense with pottery and loomweights, which were also a part of Romano-British settlement. The best interpretation is that the design of these everyday items was brought by way of custom to Britain by migrants in the 5th and 6th centuries. Indeed, Walton Rogers (2007: 229-30) highlights supportive evidence of imported textile techniques (ZZ and ZS twills) from Jutand, Frisia, and Lower Saxony at this time.

The scale of cultural change in England was so profound and happened so rapidly that a migration of a large number of people is the most logical and least extreme solution. Scholars who argue for a limited migration often point to contemporary elite takeovers as evidence that cultural change by this means was possible. Contemporary parallels have been proposed with the Scottic

takeover of western Scotland (Higham 1992: 190-1; Ward-Perkins 2000: 525-7); the Visigothic conquest of the Iberian peninsula (Higham 1992: 235); and Frankish takeover of Gaul (*ibid.*). However, in none of these cases was the cultural transformation that followed as all-encompassing as it was in England.

The archaeology of 5th- and 6th-century Essex demands a middle-way approach, such as that proposed by Scull (e.g. 1993). One which recognizes the active constitution of culture as a means of expression, but which also acknowledges that cultural change can come about through human migration. New material introductions were not limited to intrinsically showy aspects of culture, everyday forms and techniques were also imported. These are seen in the ubiquitous early handmade pottery and loomweights which dominate post-Roman settlement archaeology. In short, the cultural changes which occurred in the 5th and 6th centuries were so great, that migration must be seriously considered as a likely mechanism for cultural transformation. However, there is continuity of burial and settlement location from the Roman period in many places, and there are significant aspects of 'Anglo-Saxon' culture which represent a deviation from or modification of Continental custom. These include the new house-type, and the progressive development of a hybrid dress style. As such, we must see the creation of new group identities within the context of a tumultuous period, characterized historically by violence, in which different groups mixed and new cultural modes were negotiated.

9.3. Anglo-Saxon and Frankish dress accessories and their relationship to expressions of identity, AD 600-1066

9.3.1. Introduction – end of regional styles

Early in the 7th century the archaeological record across Anglo-Saxon England indicates that the regional styles characteristic of the previous century came to an end. The trend in Essex is no different. As discussed above, the regional fashions of the 5th and 6th centuries have traditionally been taken to signify regional identities which were precursors to the kingdoms which emerged in the later 6th and 7th centuries. On this basis, the end of regional dress in the 7th century has been taken as an indication that regional identities had been replaced by a common identity among the Anglo-Saxons (e.g. Geake 1997: 126).

The previous section discussed why the present thesis does not accept that regional fashions were linked to the identities of later kingdoms. Furthermore, following scholars such as Anderson (2006, e.g. see pp.6-7), I believe that the notion of a large group of tenuously connected people as constituting a single group – a nation – is a concept that is rarely, if ever democratically initiated, especially in pre-industrial societies. In contrast, it does often follow that a politically united group come to identify as one people, and an enduring and dynamic identity develops. However, national identities are almost always associated – initially and/or continuously – with elite ideologies borne of self-interest. From this point one should rather argue that the regional identities

associated with 7th-century kingdoms *began* in the 7th century. Likewise, it is unlikely that an 'English' identity would have been forged prior to the creation of an English polity.

In support of this, if we think of national identities as related to political elites, and if we were to hypothetically support the notion that 6th-century regional identities can be associated with 7th-century kingdoms, then we might reasonably expect that the iconography of these identities would have been adopted by these elites. However, what is striking about elite burials in Essex of the later 6th and early 7th centuries is how much the individuals do not appear to have been dressed in any of the fashions apparent amongst many of the general population. At Prittlewell (Tyler 1988) and Rainham (Evison 1955), the pair of saucer brooches, the small-long brooch, and the two square-headed brooches all reflect Kentish finds and traditions rather than local fashion. Indeed the material culture of these burials at a whole has more in common with Kent than Essex. Despite the small sample size here, this evidence is worth noting, as it further brings into question whether early fashion can be taken as reflecting identities related to the kingdoms which emerged at the turn of the 7th century. The elite material culture contemporary with the creation of the East Saxon kingdom seems remarkably Kentish.

However, it is clear from historical sources that there was some conception of an 'English people' prior to the forging of the English kingdom in the 9th and 10th centuries. This idea may have been initiated in part by the Church. It seems that Pope Gregory was under the impression that the Germanic-speakers

in Britain constituted one people – the *Angli* (Nelson 1993: 135). This terminology was then continued by Bede in the early 8th century with his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Bede conceived of '*Angli*' as the baptismal name of the Anglo-Saxons, and celebrated the union of the English churches under Roman authority after the Synod of Whitby in 664 (Wormald 2006: 120-1). The term was also used by the 8th century missionary Boniface and in the late 7th-century laws of King Ine of Wessex (*ibid.*: 119). Wormald (*ibid.*: 216) argued that the conception of the 'English' at this time was linked to the notion that the Anglo-Saxon people had a shared spiritual journey. Thus there was a concern for the health of the English Church, rather than a secular concept of an English nation. Any sense among the common people of a shared identity would probably have been based largely on an acknowledgment that they shared a language and culture (Foot 1996: 29). Indeed, the idea of an '*Angelcynn*' (English kin/people) still appears to have needed promotion by Alfred in the late 9th century (e.g. Wormald 1994: 11, 14-5; Foot 1996: 26-38; Keynes 1998: 25). Even in the late 10th century, the poem commemorating the Battle of Maldon (991) describes 'East Saxons' ('*Eastseaxena*', Verse 65) as fighting the Vikings ('*wicinga*', Verse 25). Indeed, nowhere in the text is anyone or any group of people described as 'English' or 'Anglo-Saxon'.

Not only is it difficult to speak of a common English identity in the 7th and 8th centuries in principle, it is also hard to support this archaeologically. In the 5th and 6th centuries, the basic female dress style was more or less the same across

the Anglo-Saxon regions, with some notable exceptions. It appears that most women appear to have worn the *peplos*-style gown secured by two shoulder brooches. Thus the notable difference at this time is in metal dress accessories, particularly brooches. However, from the 7th century, few women wore metal brooches (pins being preferred), and those that were worn were not regularly deliberately deposited, but rather melted down. Indeed, the common art styles, such as Trewhiddle and Winchester style need no more imply a sense of ethnic unity in the 9th century than Style I and II ornament did the 6th century. Regional identities may have been expressed through non-physical aspects of culture, or less durable aspects of portable material culture, such as textiles, or clothes fasteners made of bone/antler or wood. There is no doubt that dress did change, but it is uncertain whether this reflects a common identity, or even necessarily a common dress. It may be that ethnic identity was no longer expressed so strongly, rather than regional identities being replaced by a larger ethnic consciousness.

Dress styles from the 7th century might rather be taken as signifying the opening up of Anglo-Saxon societies to ideas from the Merovingian Continent. This is likely to have occurred as a result of greater contact and socio-economic exchange as a function of a strengthening North Sea trade network. The finds of 7th-century Merovingian coins and pottery in the Essex and elsewhere are a physical manifestation of this contact. The early 7th-century burial contexts in which it has been found, suggest that these contacts were also valued at this time.

The conversion to Christianity also resulted in greater cultural exchange with the Christian Continent, which in time resulted in the creation of new art styles incorporating Continental motifs (Webster 1991: 168). The new female fashions were also influenced by Frankish-Classical style (Owen-Crocker 2004: 128). In Essex, use of 8th-century Frankish ansate brooches is also attested (PAS: ESS-182017; Essex HER: 17012).

In the 7th and 8th centuries the North Sea trade network rapidly expanded. In the Essex region, as elsewhere, this was accompanied by the emergence of a series of coastal trading sites. The earliest East Saxon coinage was also minted at this time, and appears to have been greatly influenced by Merovingian monetary developments. This is particularly apparent in not only the very production of gold and silver coins, but in the copying of the Merovingian legend '*Vanimundus*' on pale gold *thrymsas* and some *sceattas* of Series B (e.g. Metcalf 1993a: 66, 80-1, 94).

9.3.2. 9th-/10th-century cosmopolitan culture

From the 9th century, the cultural affiliations of Essex are quite complex. Both the Trewhiddle and Winchester styles, traditionally associated with southern non-Danelaw England (e.g. Wilson 1984: 154-160, 200) have been found in Essex. These finds add to a growing number of West Saxon/'English' style in areas associated with the Danelaw (Thomas 2000: 241; 2001a: 42; Kershaw 2008). Kershaw (2008: 266) suggested that these finds indicate that the style

was being used by Danelaw craftsmen. The new finds from Essex fill in Kershaw's map of Danelaw finds, to lend further support this theory. The imitative Trewhiddle-strap end at Colchester, together with the 'pure' styles at Bradwell and High Easter, conforms to the mixed picture of 'pure' and imitation Winchester style artefacts highlighted by Kershaw (*ibid.*). The distribution of these finds shows that both southern English styles circulated in rural Essex, and was not confined to centres of trade. In Essex, both styles were found mostly on strap-ends, though Winchester ornament was found on a possible knife scabbard from Earles Colne (PAS: ESS-6DBA05). What is clear is that from the 9th century there was a mix of cultural motifs used in Essex, stemming from Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian influence.

Cultural similarity perhaps came from greater contact between different groups, rather than necessarily out of an expression of a perceived common ethnicity. In fact, new artistic styles – particularly the 'Winchester style' – were influenced significantly by Carolingian motifs (e.g. Kershaw 2008: 254). Carolingian forms were also adopted. The most visible manifestations of this in dress are openwork and tongue-shaped strap-ends (Thomas 2001a). The adoption of Carolingian, and later Scandinavian models shows the cosmopolitan climate of the time, which was eager to incorporate eclectic styles.

The adoption of Carolingian motifs must be seen within the contemporary context of Carolingian Francia's considerable political influence in Anglo-Saxon England (Story 2005b). Carolingian Francia was the major European

power, especially during the 8th century, when much of Western Europe was united under Charlemagne (see Story 2005a). Its influence extended over all of Anglo-Saxon England's major trading partners in the Low Countries and northern France. Its vision of Christendom was hugely influential in shaping the structure and development of the Church in England. During the 9th century, while Anglo-Saxon kingdoms either fell to the Vikings or bought their safety, the Carolingian kingdom was better able to withstand these attacks and invasions.

The impact of Scandinavian traders and settlers brought new influences to Anglo-Saxon England. Chapter 6 examined the use of Scandinavian dress styles within Essex, but the archaeological evidence as a whole testifies to wider expressions of Scandinavian culture.

9.4. c.850-1040: Scandinavian cultural affiliations and practice

9.4.1. Introduction

One of the aims of this study was to examine for the first time the archaeological reflections of periodic Scandinavian rule over Essex in the 9th, 10th, and 11th centuries. This period involves two phases. The first is during the later 9th and early 10th centuries. This was the period in which Essex was conquered by the Vikings and subsumed into the Danelaw kingdom of East Anglia, initially under the rule of Guthrum. The second phase takes place in

the early 11th century, when Essex, as a part of the English kingdom, was under the rule of Danish kings. The research undertaken in this thesis has found that, in both of these phases, the Danes left their mark, though the archaeology of each phase is significantly different.

9.4.2. Phase One: c.850-917

The archaeological evidence suggests that Essex under the Vikings was split into northern and southern zones of interaction. Though all of the county of Essex fell politically within the Danelaw limits at the time of the *Treaty of Alfred and Guthrum* (draw up sometime between 878 and 890), it appears as if only northern Essex was pulled into the cultural sphere of Danish East Anglia.

In the 9th and 10th centuries it is possible to see traces of Scandinavian identity and culture in Essex (Map 44). The best evidence for Scandinavian settlers in Essex comes from dress accessories. These are particularly significant because they stand out from contemporary local dress. Additionally, Scandinavian dress accessories were not extensively traded items at this time (if they were, they were not popularly worn). As a result, many of the Scandinavian brooches found in England may have been brought to Britain by settlers. There is evidence from other areas of England – particularly Yorkshire – that the wives of Scandinavian settlers, who may well have been Anglo-Saxon (e.g. Walton Rogers 1997: 1821-2; 2004: 84-7), often used Scandinavian fashions (Speed & Walton Rogers 2004). In Essex, this is paralleled at Saffron Walden, where a

9th/10th-century adult female burial wearing a Scandinavian-style strap tag and a necklace with Swedish pendants was excavated (Bassett 1982).

The provenances of the other contemporary Scandinavian dress accessories are all strongly concentrated in north Essex (Map 44). These include a gold bracelet from Brightlingsea (Challis 1992); single gold finger rings from Thaxted (Roach 1993: 117), West Bergholt (*ibid.*), and Dovercourt (Essex HER: 3373); and single trefoil and disc brooches from Bures Hamlet (PAS: SF-EB5262) and Ashdon (PAS: ESS-4D7A85) respectively, both of which display elements of the Borre style. 10th-century Jellinge ornament was found on an undiagnosed circular object from Birch, near Colchester. The outlier to this concentration is further away. It is a Borre-style hooked tag, inlaid with niello, from Fulham (Greater London SMR: LON-321E34).

The concentration of Scandinavian dress in north-eastern Essex is interesting. Three of the four St Edmund memorial pennies found in Essex come from the north-east. "Danish coins" were also reported as having been found at Kelvedon in 1873 (Powell 1963). This contrasts with the near absence of contemporary English coinage from Essex, despite being minted in greater numbers. Furthermore, a possible 'Norse bell' has been also been found at Great Tey (PAS: ESS-B7DE95), and a 'Viking' bone comb was found at St Osyth (Essex HER: 2914), though this may pre-date the Danelaw period in Essex. The evidence suggests that the north-east of Essex, particularly around Colchester and along the coast, may have been the area most affected by Scandinavian rule. It is this area that Essex's only certain Old Norse place-

names still extant are found: Kirby-le-Soken (from '*Kyrkebi*'/'*Kirkeby*', Old Scandinavian 'village with a church') and Thorpe-le-Soken (from '*thorp*', Old Scandinavian 'outlying farmstead or hamlet, dependent secondary settlement') (Mills 2003). Both are located in 'The Sokens' (a 'soke' being a district with a special jurisdiction) grouping of parishes, along with Walton-on-the-Naze (previously known as Walton-le-Soken), at the end of the Tendring peninsula of north-east Essex. It also appears that at one time at least three islands off the Essex coast seem to have included the Scandinavian element 'holm', indicative of an island (Round 1922). One of these was 'Holmes Island', now known as 'Skipper's Island', in the Naze area. Literally translated this would mean 'island island'; a tautology also found in the name 'Mersea Island', literally 'island of the pool island'. The others are '*Rucholm*' and '*Hardholm*', mentioned in a 12th-century grant, though these cannot be associated with specific islands (*ibid.*: 170).

By contrast, the evidence of Scandinavian activity from the south of Essex is quite different. The only aspects of the Scandinavian archaeological footprint in Essex that are found in both the north and the south are evidence of fighting and trade.

Votive deposits

One of the most striking archaeological traces of Scandinavian cultural expression across the region comes from Viking votive deposits of weaponry in rivers, which represents a national concentration of such finds. Five

Scandinavian-type axes, two spears, and two swords (one with a Jellinge-style pommel) have been found at seven different locations along the north bank of River Thames in London. A 9th-century pattern-welded sword – possibly of Norwegian manufacture – was found in the River Colne at Colchester (PAS: ESS-D45534). Another Viking sword was found in Lockwood Reservoir, Walthamstow (Greater London SMR: MLO13991). These finds could have been accidental losses. Elements of Scandinavian weaponry have been found in more conventional contexts. A possibly mid-9th-century mount with interlace serpent decoration, possibly for a scabbard, was found at Arkesden, near Saffron Walden (Essex HER: 17415). Another sword scabbard mount decorated in the Borre style was found in the area of Colchester, at Chappel, a village situated on the Colne. There also is plenty of historical evidence for fighting in both London and Colchester at this time, which could have resulted in weapon loss. However, riverine weapon finds from this period in Essex are overwhelmingly of Scandinavian type. This suggests that at least some may have been deliberate river deposits. This practice is known from Iron Age Denmark in particular, at sites such as Illerup Ådal and Nydam, and seems to have been related to pagan worship and sacrifice (Jørgensen *et al.* 2003). The implication of these finds is that the socio-political environment in southern Essex only gave room for certain kinds of cultural expression. These were largely related to war. The Scandinavian culture of northern Essex, however, might reasonably be placed within the context of a more stable, settled Danish East Anglian context involving – among other things – cultural affiliations

associated with women – a class of society conspicuously absent from the Scandinavian evidence from south Essex.

Viking camps

This picture of an effectively divided region is supported by the historical account of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* which suggests that south Essex was a contested frontier zone, used by the Danes as a location for forward bases, but not for permanent settlement. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records that in *AD* 894 [893] Danes created fortified raiding bases at South Benfleet, near Canvey Island, and at Shoebury, in mid Essex (Swanton 2000: 85-9). The former was later destroyed by the English and its wealth and population removed to London. It has been speculated (Essex HER: 7090) that human skeletons and the remains of burnt ships documented as unearthed during the construction of a railway bridge in *c.*1885 at the bottom of a steep slope overlooking Benfleet creek may be associated with the camp Hæsten built in 894. Furthermore, in 1892, the remains of further 'warrior' burials, a horse, and a small coin consisting solely of English coins of Alfred (871-99) and Archbishop Plegmund (890-914) were found during house building close to the churchyard at nearby Leigh-on-Sea (Biddle 1987; Blackburn 1989; Rippon 1996: 123). The following year Mersea Island was used as a base for an overwintering army. In this episode, the army tracks back from Wales across Northumbria and East Anglia for security, and again use a site in Essex as a base for later raiding. These passages show that neither side count be confident of their

position in southern Essex, and that London remained a natural target for marauding armies in search of wealth. At this time troops appear to have been mustered from Northumbria and East Anglia, but not from Essex, which is mentioned separately as the site of several forward camps.

Summary

The holistic methodology of this study, using stray finds as well as excavated data, has made it possible to examine the archaeology of Danelaw Essex in detail for the first time. The conclusion one must draw is that, although all of Essex was ceded to Guthrum's East Anglian kingdom, there is little to indicate more than fleeting Scandinavian activity in southern Essex. This area appears to have been a contested frontier zone, which the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* refers to being repeatedly harried by the English/West Saxons. This would have prevented the Danes from gaining a stronghold to dominate the North Sea entry route to London. By contrast, there is a far more substantial Viking footprint in north Essex than has often been assumed. The evidence suggests that Vikings may have even settled here and married into the local population. The Scandinavian influence was strong and stable enough here that Old Norse place-names were adopted, while some individuals chose to use aspects of Scandinavian modes of dress. Notably, Colchester, with its surviving Roman walls, was used as a stronghold by the Danes in 917, when they were attacked and defeated by Edward the Elder's army.

9.4.3. Phase Two: c.1000-1042

The second phase of Scandinavian rule was in the 11th century, when England was ruled by a succession of Danish kings, most notably King Cnut (1016-35). This phase begins with the campaigning of Sweyn and Cnut in 1013-16, culminating with the decisive battle at *Assandun* (thought to be either Ashdon or Ashingdon, in Essex). The second Scandinavian era ends with the return of the West Saxon dynasty with Edward the Confessor in 1042. There is a distinct difference in the character of the archaeological evidence between the two phases of Scandinavian rule in Essex. As a part of the Danelaw, Essex had become a part of a new 'East Anglian' kingdom. By contrast, in the 11th-century, Scandinavian nobles replaced their West Saxon counterparts to rule over the existing state, in which Essex was just a shire in this greater English kingdom.

As a result, the coinage of the new Scandinavian dynasty was really a continuation of English coinage. This tells us little about Scandinavian cultural identity in Essex. However, there are artefacts in Essex with contemporary Scandinavian Ringerike-type ornament, which demonstrate the use of Scandinavian cultural models by English artisans. The artefacts which survive to us are usually high status. Anglo-Scandinavian style is found relatively frequently on horse equipment. Anglo-Scandinavian riding gear has been recovered by metal-detectorists at 4 sites in the north and west of the county. Bridle cheek pieces decorated in the Scandinavian Ringerike style, have been found at Ashen and Margaret Roding (Cuddeford 1996).

Further evidence of the new Scandinavian elite comes from stonework. The most famous example is the St Paul's gravestone, dated to *c.*1030-5, which was carved in the Ringerike style and inscribed with runes (Greater London SMR: MLO46558; MLO24971). It was probably associated with a burial found to the north of the gravestone in the 19th century. Further east, the Church of All Hallow's, Barking, contains two pieces of an 11th-century wheeled cross with similar animal ornament to the St Paul's stone (Unattributed 1961). It is possible that the two stones came from the same workshop (*ibid.*: 222). The inscription is legible, though incomplete, and reads '*v*(*a*)*r had* (*this*) *standing stone set up*'. This formula is typical of inscriptions on stones in Scandinavia. A reused piece of masonry also carved in the Ringerike style can still be seen in the chancel arch in St Mary's Church, Great Canfield (Essex HER: 4301). A plaque decorated with an Anglo-Scandinavian serpent interlace pattern was found in the River Thames at Hammersmith (Greater London SMR: MLO26797). It is possible that this was a model for a grave stone. The concentration of Ringerike finds in London may reflect the town's importance of a centre of Scandinavian power over England (Thomas 2001b: 230).

Taken together, the Ringerike material largely reflects a new Anglo-Scandinavian elite identity. The nature of the relationship between the English and the Scandinavians at this time was more complex than during the Danelaw period and the years preceding it, when the dynamic was more adversarial. In the 11th-century, the relationship was more nuanced. A distinction could now

be drawn between the Scandinavian kings of England – often supported by the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy – and the Viking raiders, who still threatened the kingdom. By contrast, in the later 9th and early 10th centuries, Viking raids were often instigated or sponsored by Danelaw kings, who were no more than landed Vikings themselves. In the 11th century, Scandinavians were a part of the Establishment.

At Waltham Abbey, what was interpreted as a Norse-style turf-walled hall may be further evidence of the new Scandinavian aristocracy (Huggins 1976). The interpretation of this building may be supported by a burial excavated at Sun Street, Waltham Abbey, which contained a copper alloy plate, decorated with a Ringerike serpent design (Huggins 1988). It may be that these remains relate to the Waltham estate after it was granted to Tovi the Proud, one of Cnut's theyns (*c.*1020-30) (*ibid.*: 123). Tovi is mentioned in the *Waltham Chronicle* (*c.*1177) which documents Tovi's rebuilding of the church at Waltham to house a stone crucifix which had appeared miraculously on his Somerset estate (Watkiss & Chibnall 1994). From this time, Waltham became a pilgrimage site, and Harold Godwinson is thought by some to have been buried here.

It is also important to note, however, that at this time there appears to have been no universal badge of cultural affiliation. Scandinavian artefacts and motifs were used at the same time as Carolingian ideas and broader European styles, as evidenced by tongue-shaped and openwork strap-ends, the Winchester style, and cloisonné enamel disc brooches.

9.4.4. Summary and conclusion

In conclusion, the archaeology of Essex bears witness to the major socio-political changes that occurred in the period between *c.*400 and 1066. These developments clearly had a significant influence on the way in which individuals in the region chose to physically represent themselves.

In the 5th and 6th centuries, we can see the development of a material culture which substantially echoes the traditions of Lower Saxony, Frisia, and Schleswig-Holstein. The use of dress accessories in the 5th century and creation of new domestic architecture highlights that the creation of 'Anglo-Saxon' communities was subject to negotiation. The consolidated dress styles, which emerge from the later 5th century largely reflect a general affiliation with the areas of Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein. Moreover, the material culture appears to have created through a process which involved the active selection, rejection, and adaptation of cultural modes from Britain and Continental Europe. It is argued that this hybrid culture is the product of intra-regional zones of interaction, and should not be associated with the separate process of kingdom-formation or the term 'East Saxon'.

Overall, the impact of Continental north-western European cultural models is overwhelming. Documentary, linguistic, toponymic, and archaeological evidence testify to a change of language; new literary traditions; an almost wholesale rejection of Roman and British place- and personal-names; new religious beliefs; new administrative systems; new manufacturing techniques; new art styles; new burial practices; new identities; and an overhaul of almost

all aspects of material culture, ranging from jewellery to basic tools of manufacture and buildings in which these activities took place. It would be astonishing if these changes were brought about so rapidly through the influence of a small number of immigrant elites, as proposed by scholars such as Higham (1992) and Lucy (2000).

Whilst it is right to reject the notion that large-scale migration is the only cause of cultural change, this does not mean that it is never a cause. The transformations in 5th- and 6th-century Essex are so profound that one wonders what more evidence would be needed to propose large-scale migration as one of the mechanisms of change. This thesis proposes that it was within tumultuous contexts involving the mixing of individuals from Britain and the Continent that new identities were forged. This process appears far more anarchic than many theories posit, with zones of interaction producing new material culture sets.

Around the turn of the 7th century these regional styles are no longer visible, and dress styles appear to have been significantly influenced by Merovingian and then Carolingian fashions. This development was probably connected with the expansion of cross-Channel networks. These relate both to the establishment of the Christian Church in both regions, and the expansion of the secular North Sea exchange network. There are few dress accessories from these later centuries, but those which do survive suggest that the identities that were being expressed were effectively cosmopolitan ones, with individuals eager to display links with Continental Europe.

From the later 9th century, Scandinavian art contributed to this cosmopolitan milieu. In Essex, Scandinavian cultural affiliations were probably fostered by the imposition of the Danelaw. The evidence from Essex clearly indicates a cultural divide between northern and southern Essex, with only the north pulled into the Danish East Anglian sphere. Scandinavian cultural affiliations through female dress may have resulted from migration, or from native women identifying with the politically dominant group, perhaps following intermarriage.

Male and female dress accessories from the 11th century testify to renewed expressions of Scandinavian affiliation through dress. As in the Danelaw period, Scandinavian culture in the 11th century appears to have been largely local to sites of power, such as London and the rural estate centre at Waltham Abbey. There is a distinction here though between the dispersed cultural zone of the Danelaw period, and specific centres of Anglo-Scandinavian elite power in the 11th century.

This research is the first time that transformations in group identity have been tracked fully throughout the Anglo-Saxon period in Essex. The course of this research has strengthened the conclusion that stray finds present us with a rich resource for addressing some of the biggest issues in Anglo-Saxon archaeology. Indeed, stray finds allow us to begin to answer archaeological questions in the absence of stratified remains. To put this into perspective, without stray finds almost nothing could be said about the Danelaw period in Essex. There would be no local context for the Scandinavian place-names of

north-east Essex, and, when discussing group identity, we would have only a single burial in Saffron Walden as confirmed evidence that anyone affiliated with Scandinavian culture. It will be interesting to see how our image of group identity and its context changes as more finds emerge from Essex in the future.

Chapter 10

Networks and the transformation of Essex, between c.AD 400 and 1066

10.1. Introduction

This second discussion chapter examines in detail the socio-economic networks which lay behind much of the cultural dynamism explored in Chapter 9. The archaeological evidence brought together by this thesis allows the coastal society of Essex to be explored on a number of levels. In this final discussion, the vibrant exchange network revealed by coinage, pottery, and dress accessories is examined in detail, bringing together a range of material classes to study the nature of coastal exchange in Essex (including a closer examination of sites put forward as sites of exchange); the role of elites in this network; and the relationship between town and country.

10.2. Coastal networks

The distribution patterns of dress accessories, coinage, and pottery have illustrated the development of a series of coastal and riverine trading sites between Ipswich and London. The sites of Tilbury, Canvey Island, Barking,

and London have previously been recognized as important centres of exchange from the 7th/8th century onwards. However, this research has also highlighted how Colchester and the City of London were both engaged in long-distance trade/exchange from at least the 6th or 7th century, and that trade continued at Bradwell after the end of the monastic community. Perhaps even more significantly this doctoral prject has been able to draw together marchaeological material for the first time to identify previously unrecognized coastal centres of trade at Great Bromley and Fingringhoe, and revealed more about other landing places along the Essex coast. This section examines the chronology of this exchange network in Essex; presents the archaeological evidence from landing places and 'productive sites' away from the poly-focal *emporium* of London; discusses the emergence of coastal centres of trade; and reviews patterns in the level of trade, including the impact of the Vikings.

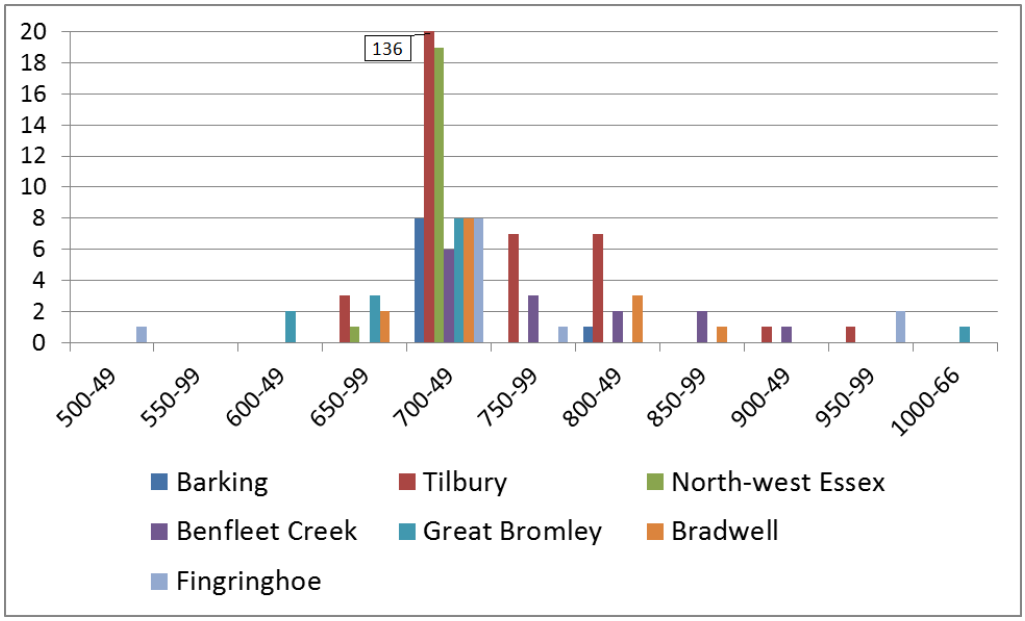
10.2.1.Archaeological evidence of landing places / sites of exchange, c.500-950: the nature of the evidence

One of the major results of this doctoral project has been the identification of a number of findspot concentrations along the coastal region of Essex. In a minority of cases, stray finds in these areas are joined by archaeological material recovered through excavation. It is argued here that the corpus of finds from most of these concentrations is suggestive of loci of exchange – the chronological and spatial distribution of the coin finds makes it unlikely that we are looking at hoard assemblages. The evidence from these sites

predominantly dates to the 7th and 8th centuries. However, in many cases there is evidence to suggest that these sites were sites of exchange into the 10th century. This section reviews the evidence from these sites in detail, with the remainder of the Chapter 10 discussing the broader transformations in Essex's exchange network, in which these sites played a significant role.

As well as identifying new sites, this thesis has presented and added to the archaeological evidence for already-suspected landing sites. The most famous 'productive site' from Essex is Tilbury (e.g. Bonser 1997; also see Pestell & Ulmschneider 2003). Rippon (1997: 130-3) has also suggested nearby Canvey Island as a regular landing place on the Essex coast. Finally, away from the coastal region, a 'productive site' has been published in recent years at an undisclosed location in north-west Essex (Bonser & Carter 2008).

The most numerous finds from these sites are coins. This is the primary reason for suspecting these locations as centres of exchange. The chart of the coin finds from each of the sites (Graph 3) reveals a clear concentration of coins in the later 7th and early 8th centuries. This period coincides with the introduction of silver *sceat* coinage, and the intensification of trade around the North Sea, manifest in particular by the great *emporia*.

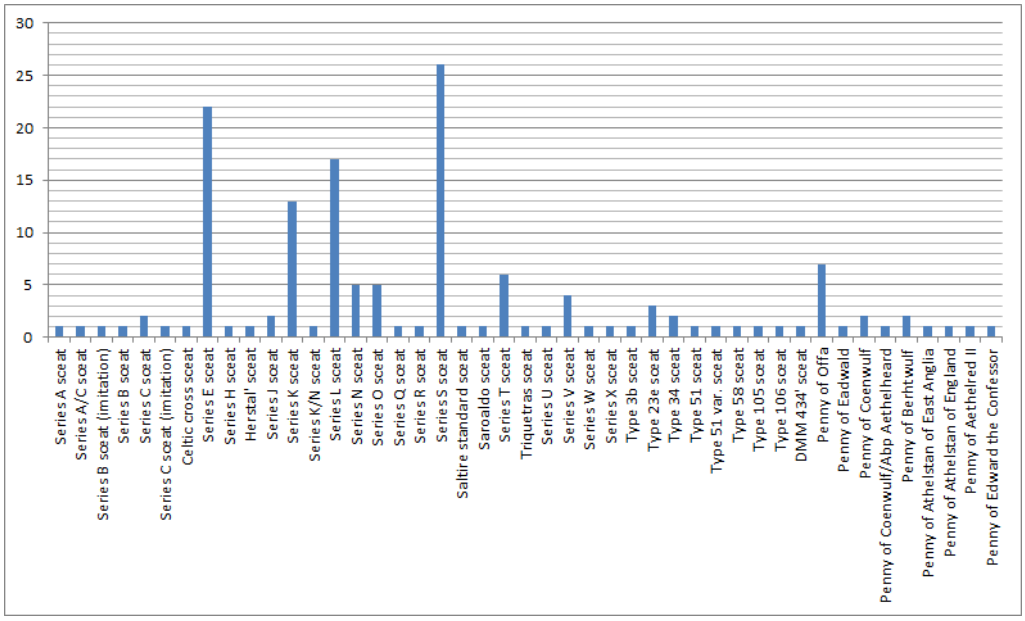


Graph 3: Comparative graph showing the chronological distribution of coinage from the proposed coastal-landing places and smaller sites of exchange in Essex.

However, it might be wise to be a little wary of stating too confidently that these sites were primarily 7th- and 8th-century sites of exchange as, whilst the concentration of finds from this period undoubtedly reflects the expansion of North Sea trade at this time, it may also be a function of a temporary increase in monetized exchange. Finds at many of these sites date to periods in which fewer coins were in circulation in Essex, such as the 6th century and the Danelaw period of the later 9th and early 10th centuries. We may thus be presented here with sites of exchange that were important over a long period, regardless of mint activity and monetary circulation. The great importance of the sites reviewed below is that they, together with major centres such as

Lundenwic/*Lundenburh*, allow us to examine more completely the operation of contemporary trade networks; particularly in the coastal and riverine zone.

Tilbury



Graph 4: Compositional graph of the coin finds from the 'productive site' at Tilbury.

The most prominent and certainly best known 'productive site' in Essex is Tilbury (e.g. Bonser 1995; Blackburn 2003). A huge amount of amateur metal-detecting has taken place here over the last few decades, producing an extremely large coin corpus stretching back to the Bronze Age. However, the

majority of finds here date to the Anglo-Saxon period; and the period *c.*675-*c.*850 in particular. The number of early 8th-century coin finds (136) from Tilbury dwarfs all of the other sites of exchange noted in this thesis (Graph 3). The specific typological distribution for Tilbury's coin finds is shown in Graph 4.

Tilbury differs from most of the other sites of exchange put forward in this thesis as the archaeological evidence here for trade comes almost entirely from its prolific coin assemblage. But for an early medieval bronze bowl from Tilbury marshes (Essex HER: 1650), there is no other archaeological evidence from stray finds of excavations which we can use to fill out the picture here.

Metcalf (1994: 537) has suggested that Tilbury may have been the mint-place for the S series of secondary *sceattas*. It may be that the trading site that emerged at Tilbury was a legacy of the earlier 7th-century monastery and its networks. However, we know very little about this monastery – even its specific location remains a mystery. As a result, any proposed link between the monastery and the 'productive site' is speculative.

Barking

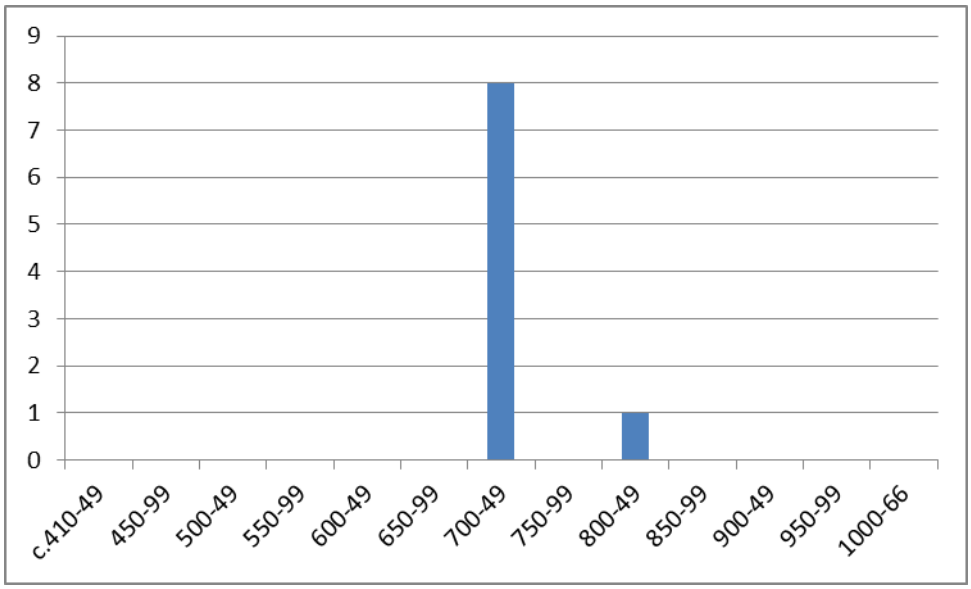
While a monastic origin for the exchange site at Tilbury is uncertain, we have better evidence for the monastery at Barking. This site is different from others reviewed in this section as we know from Bede (*HE* IV.6) that it functioned as a monastery from around the mid-7th century. In Barking we are not looking at

the sort of coastal settlement highlighted in particular by Loveluck (e.g. Loveluck & Tys 2006; 2011; 2012), and which are perhaps represented by other proposed sites further up the Essex coast. Thus, the decline of coastal landing place linked to urbanization is not a trajectory that need fit here. That is to say, Barking's prime function was as a monatery, not a as a site of exchange. However, the archaeological evidence here does demonstrate the participation of religious communities in long-distance exchange networks. Hull (2002: 164) suggested that Barking may have been a significant site of trade and production, as well as a religious community. It is quite possible that monastic sites helped to shape these networks, functioning as nodal points (cf. Cramp 1976: 204). This then has ramifications when we interpret the evidence of trade from Tilbury and Bradwell as potentially a legacy of monastic communities.

Another major difference between Barking and the other sites reviewed here is that the evidence here comes almost entirely from stratified assemblages. Excavations (see Webster 1972; Stone 1986; MacGowan 1987; Redknap 1991; 1992; Vince 1998; Hull 2002) here have been limited in extent, but have provided evidence of a materially rich monastic community. Four structures – probably relating to an outlying part of the monastery – have been found (Stone 1986; MacGowan 1987; Hull 2002), with evidence of white-painted plastered walls. The other major features were gullies, a leet for watermills, and wells. The material culture included 4 styli, polychrome glass, pins (including one of silver-gilt and gold), gold thread, and much evidence for

textile working. In 8th-century levels, the excavated pottery assemblage was dominated by Ipswich ware. Eight *sceattas* were also found.

The pottery evidence indicates an abrupt end in occupation here in the mid-9th century, and a resumption of activity in the 10th century. It has been suggested (e.g. Williams 1996: 93; Hull 2002: 164) that the abandonment here relates to Viking activity. The next phase in occupation, dating from the 10th century include some evidence of metal-working (found in the 1998 excavations – Hull 2002).



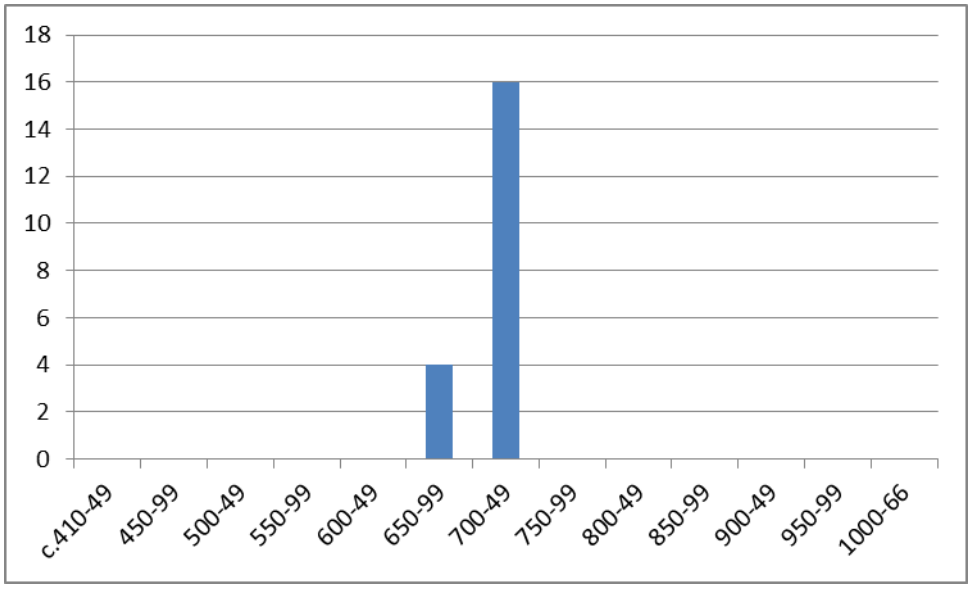
Graph 5: The chronological distribution of the coinage from Barking.

The coinage evidence from Barking includes 8 *sceattas* recovered from the excavation and a mid-9th-century penny of Æthelwulf of Wessex found nearby. An 18th-century document also refers to a coin of Burgred (852-74) and other unspecified types being found to the south-east of Barking (GLSMR: MLO3192). However, this may represent a hoard dating to around the time of Barking's abandonment. Given that this may be a hoard, and that the findspot is also neither exact nor detailed, the coin of Burgred has not been included on Graph 5.

It is clear from the excavated assemblage is that Barking had an extremely close relationship with London. Notably, 7 of the 8 *sceattas* are Thames Valley series (K, N, U, and Celtic Cross), with the other a Series E from Frisia. The predominance of Ipswich ware in 8th-century levels, and the use of Thames Valley Shelly ware in the 10th/11th century all mirror the consumption patterns of contemporary *Lundenwic*/*Lundenburh* (Vince 1998; Hull 2002).

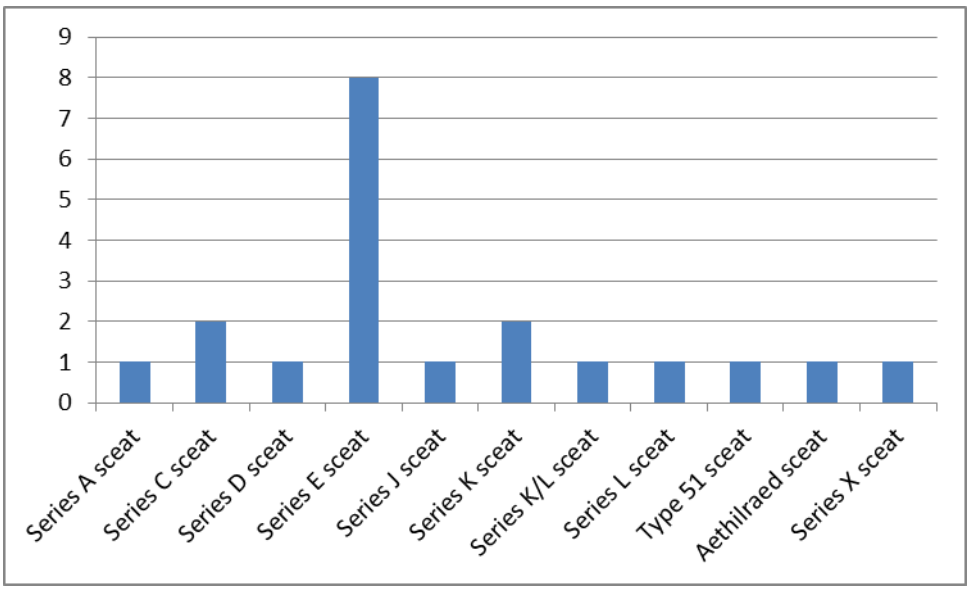
Although limited, the archaeology of Barking demonstrates that the monastery was involved in long-distance exchange. The evidence presents the community as a major consumer of imported goods in the London region. The coinage only adds to the impression that there was a close commercial relationship between the two sites. It is also possible that it benefitted from a hierarchical access to these commodities (see section 10.3 below), shaping the regional exchange network.

North-west Essex



Graph 6: The chronological distribution of the coinage found at 'north-west Essex'.

The other 'productive site' that has previously been identified is 'north-west Essex' (Bonser & Carter 2008). Without the exact location of the site, discussion of this site can only be limited. The breakdown of the published corpus (Graph 6) indicates that, unlike many of the other sites reviewed here, this site was not especially long-lived. The assemblage is really too small to read too much into the origins of its coins. Notably, half of the *sceattas* from the 'north-west Essex' site are Continental. The English coins are largely from London and Kent.

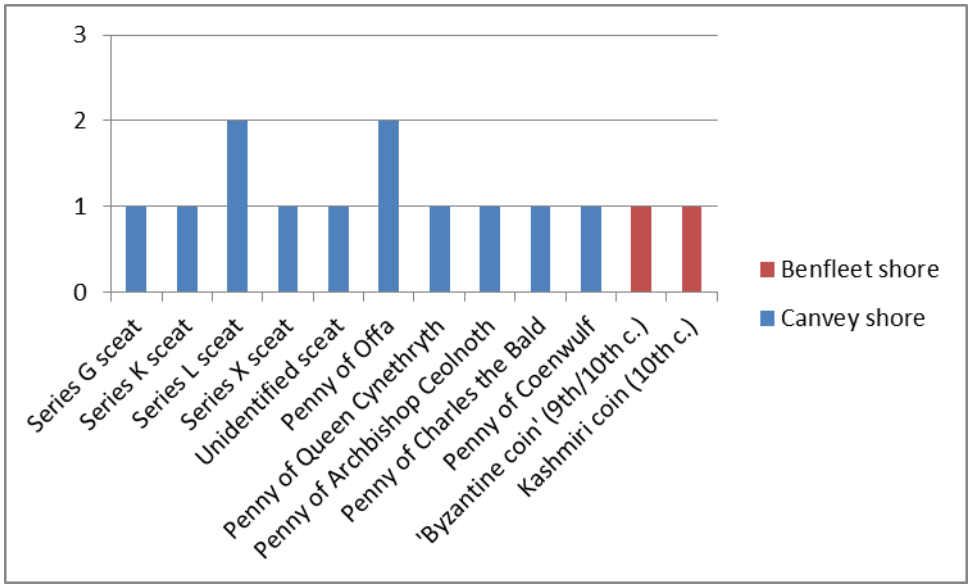


Graph 7: Compositional chart of the coinage from 'north-west Essex'.

Canvey Island/Benfleet Creek

The Canvey Island/Benfleet area has been suggested as a centre for salt making and a harbour in the Roman period (e.g. Wilkinson & Murphy 1995: 197; Yearsley 2000). Like Tilbury, Canvey Island has also previously been suggested as an early landing place in the Anglo-Saxon period (Rippon 1997: 130-3). However, prior to this thesis there had been no synthesis of the finds associated with the area. What has emerged is a confirmation that the area around Benfleet Creek, with Benfleet to the north and Canvey Island to the south, was a consistent landing place in the Anglo-Saxon period from at least the early 8th century. This area then appears to have been engaged in long-

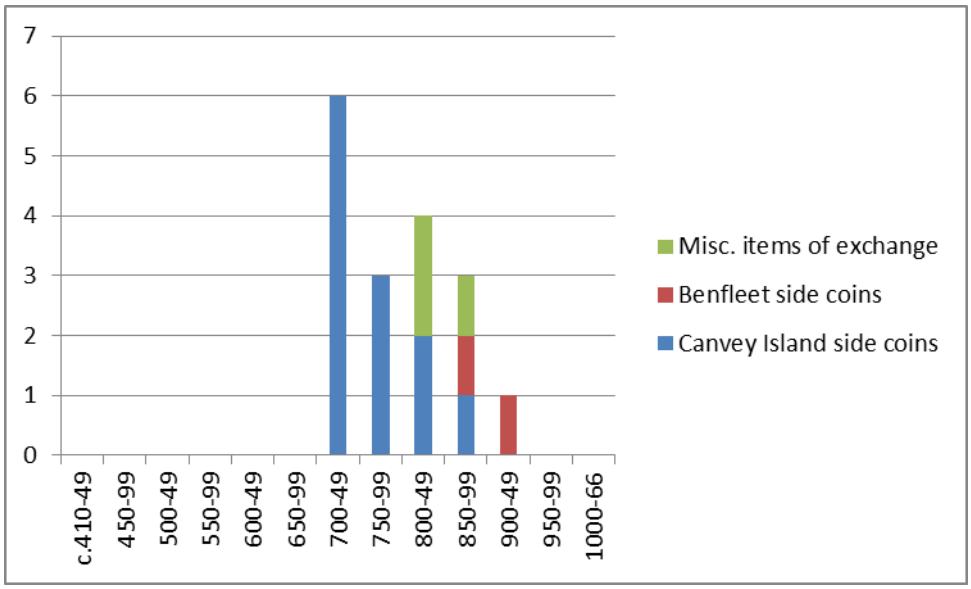
distance exchange into the early 10th century. The Domeday Book describes Canvey Island as essentially engaged in sheep farming (Darby 1986: 157-9). Therefore, any later trade at Canvey Island may have been increasingly dominated by the exchange of rural produce at a regional level (cf. Loveluck 2012).



Graph 8: Compositional chart of the coinage from Canvey Island and Benfleet Creek.

The archaeology from Canvey Island and Benfleet Creek suggests that it may have been the latest of the known landing places to develop. The earliest finds that can be associated with trade are the *sceattas* from the early 8th century.

From around the mid-8th century there are progressively fewer coin finds (Graph 9). This is may be a function of both a decrease in monetized trade, and, later, the decline of beach trading sites in the later Saxon period in favour of towns, such as London, Maldon and Colchester.



Graph 9: Chronological distribution chart of finds from Canvey Island/Benfleet Creek.

However, it should be stressed that the consistent deposition of trade-related artefacts in this area over a period of some 200 years, indicates the importance of Benfleet Creek as a node of exchange.

In common with Bradwell and Fingringhoe, there are interesting finds at Benfleet Creek from the Danelaw period in Essex, which are indicative of Scandinavian-style trade. This was a period in which coin use over the county decreased dramatically. However, the artefactual evidence suggests that traditional sites of exchange remained operative and were engaged in the mixed bullion/coin economy evidenced elsewhere in the Danelaw at sites such as Flixborough (e.g. see Loveluck 2007; also see Blackburn 2006). At Benfleet Creek finds dating to the turn of the 10th century include a set of lead weights (PAS: SF6536), and single coins from Byzantium (HER grey literature: report on 83 Hall Farm Road), the Carolingian kingdom (EMC: 1996.0149), and Kashmir (Essex HER: 7170).

Following Essex's re-conquest by the West Saxons, the finds end abruptly. The reorientation of Essex's coastal exchange network in the wake of the establishment of *burhs* at Maldon and Colchester during the 910s was probably one factor in the apparent demise of Benfleek Creek.

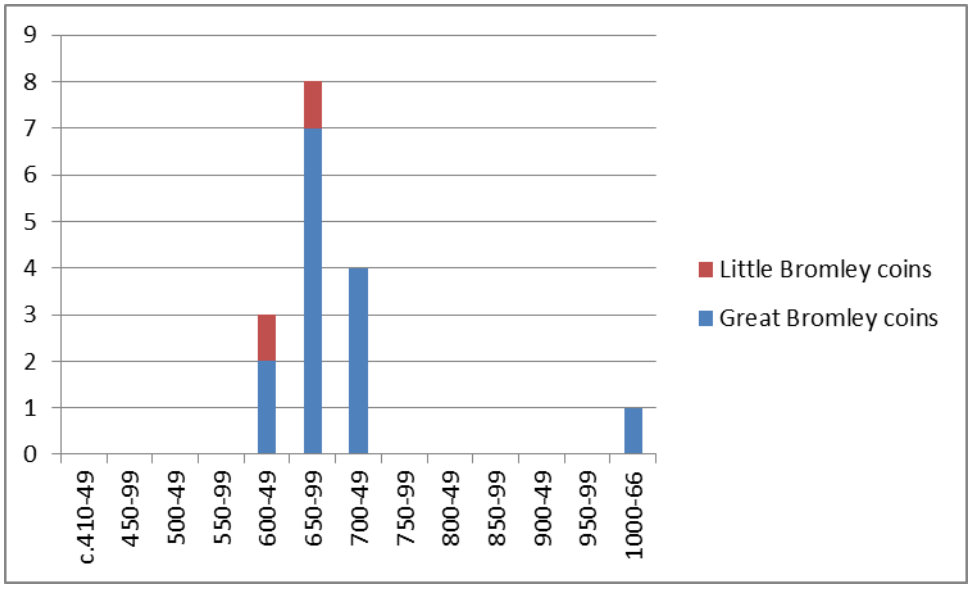
?Goldhanger Creek

Rippon (1997: 130-3) has also suggested Goldhanger Creek as an Anglo-Saxon trading place on the Essex coast. However, the archaeological evidence here is more difficult to read in this respect. The corpus of stray and unstratified finds includes just one coin – an imitation Series BIc *sceat* (PAS: ESS-E24917) – and "Saxon or Danish relics" found in 1903 (Wallis & Waughman 1998; Essex HER: 12110). In addition to these finds, excavations

at in the area have found an early Saxon settlement and cemetery (Essex HER: 7869), a series of middle Saxon fish weirs (Gilman 1993: 209; Wallis & Waughman 1998; Strachan 1998; Hall & Clarke 2000; Essex HER: 13663; 13815), and perhaps contemporary settlements at Chigborough Farm, Rook Hall, and Slough House Farm (Wallis & Waughman 1998). These settlements may have functioned together as part of a single estate, with Rook Hall engaged in specialist metalworking for external clients (*ibid.*: 227), while the other settlements seem typical of other rural hamlets, engaged in farming and small-scale and textile manufacture. Slough House Farm may have been a temporary site, used by pastoral farmers during seasonal grazing on the coastal marshes (*ibid.*: 53).

There is certainly much more evidence in the Goldhanger area of productive activity datable to the Anglo-Saxon period than in most other excavated rural areas of Essex. Indeed, specialized industry – as found at Rook Hall – seems to be a characteristic of coastal societies engaged in trade (Verhulst 2002: 73-83). However, this archaeological record here is not necessarily indicative of a trading place. One should like to have more finds that are more directly indicative of exchange – such as coinage or imported pottery – to draw such a conclusion.

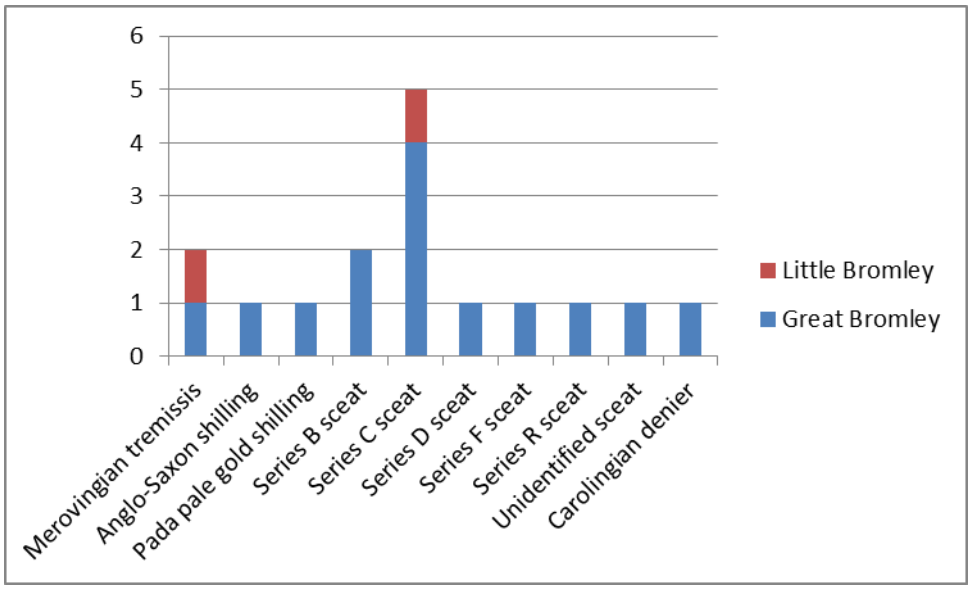
Great Bromley



Graph 10: Chronological distribution of the coinage from the Bromley area.

The research and analysis conducted for this thesis has highlighted a previously unnoticed concentration of Anglo-Saxon finds at Great Bromley. The assemblage here is almost entirely made up of 7th- and earlier 8th-century gold and silver coins (Graph 10). The chronological distribution (Graph 10) of finds here is similar to the apparently short-lived 'productive site' at 'north-west Essex' (above, and Bonser & Carter 2008). There is no evidence for continuity of exchange at Great Bromley between c. AD 730 and 1000. A 10th-century glass linen smoother (PAS: ESS-F61DD5) is the only find datable to the latter time period. A Merovinghian *tremissis* (EMC: 2004.0030) and a

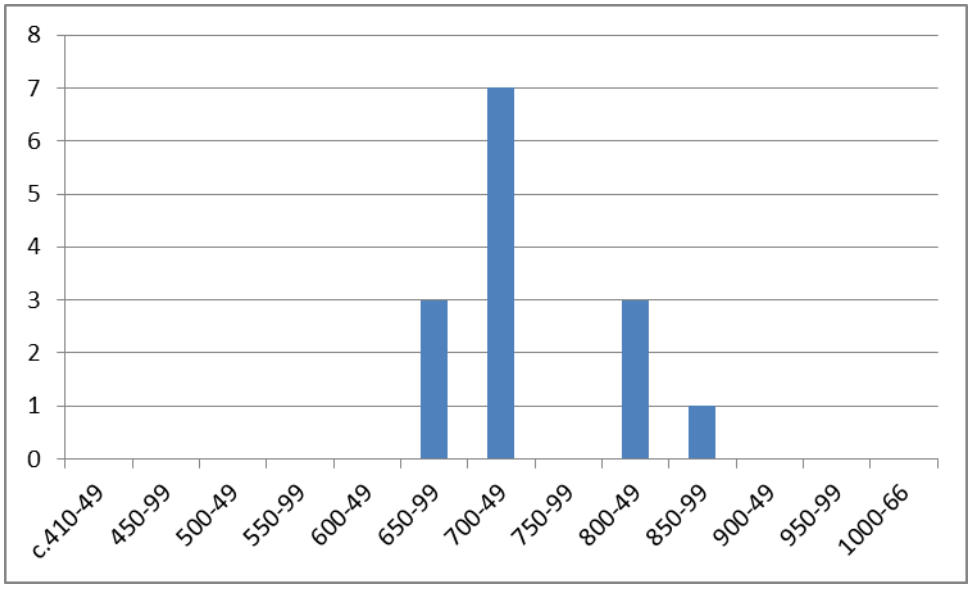
Series C *sceat* (EMC: 2006.0342) found at neighbouring Little Bromley are probably outliers of this concentrated zone of coin usage.



Graph 11: Compositional chart of the coinage from Great and Little Bromley.

The location of Great Bromley is atypical of the Essex exchange sites in that it is not directly accessed by the North Sea or a river. However, Great Bromley lies just *c.*2.5 km (*c.*1.55 miles) from the junction of several Roman roads in the area of what is now Elmstead Market. These roads would have led towards Colchester (west), Harwich (north-east), and St Osyth (south-east); as well as in the direction of the Colne river mouth (south) and towards – though possibly not joining up with – other roads leading to the Stour (north) (Map 1).

Bradwell



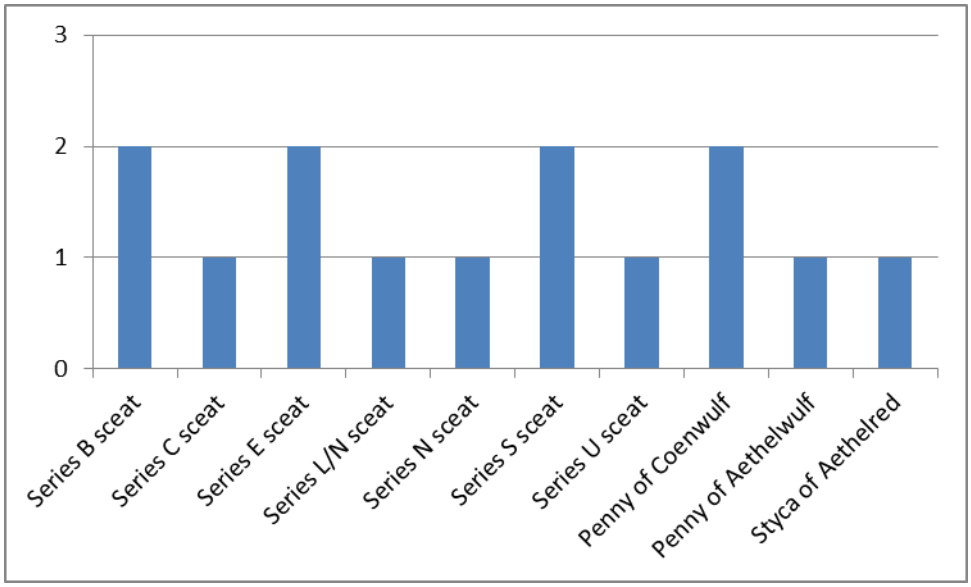
Graph 12: Chronological distribution of coins from Bradwell

The archaeological evidence from Bradwell suggests that this tip of the Dengie peninsula was a significant site for much of the Anglo-Saxon period. Bradwell is perhaps best known historically as the location of the Roman 'Saxon Shore' fort of *Othona*, and later of Cedd's monastery – standing remains of which exist in the form of the 7th-century chapel of St Peter's-on-the-Wall (see Barford unpublished). Nineteenth-century excavations (see Challis 1992: 212-5) here found a 5th-century cemetery, perhaps associated with *federates* and later colonists associated with the fort. These excavations have also found archaeological remains relating to the monastic phase at Bradwell in the late 7th

century (*ibid.*). Fragmentary evidence of Anglo-Saxon settlement in the form of pits, pottery, and structural daub have also been excavated at the nearby Othona Community site (Medlycott 1992; 1994). A series of fish weirs have also been found off the coast of Bradwell (Strachan 1998).

What is most interesting about the stray finds brought together by this thesis is that, as at Tilbury, exchange activity at Bradwell largely appears to post-date the monastic phase in the area. The new evidence presented here supports Barford's (unpublished) theory that there may have been a trading settlement in the area of the monastery. Indeed, aside from the ideal locations of Tilbury and Bradwell, it may be no coincidence that commercial hubs developed in areas which were previously dominated by monasteries, which would have acted as nodal points for socio-economic networks. The coins and imported pottery from the Barking excavations (see above) show that monastic sites in Essex could participate in long-distance exchange networks.

While two later 7th-century coins have been found at Bradwell, the largest proportion of the coin assemblage is made up of 8th-century *sceattas* (Graph 12). In addition to this, several sherds of Ipswich ware were also been found at Bradwell during limited excavations of the Roman forts western defences in 1947 (Rodwell 1976; Essex HER: 32, 35, 38600).



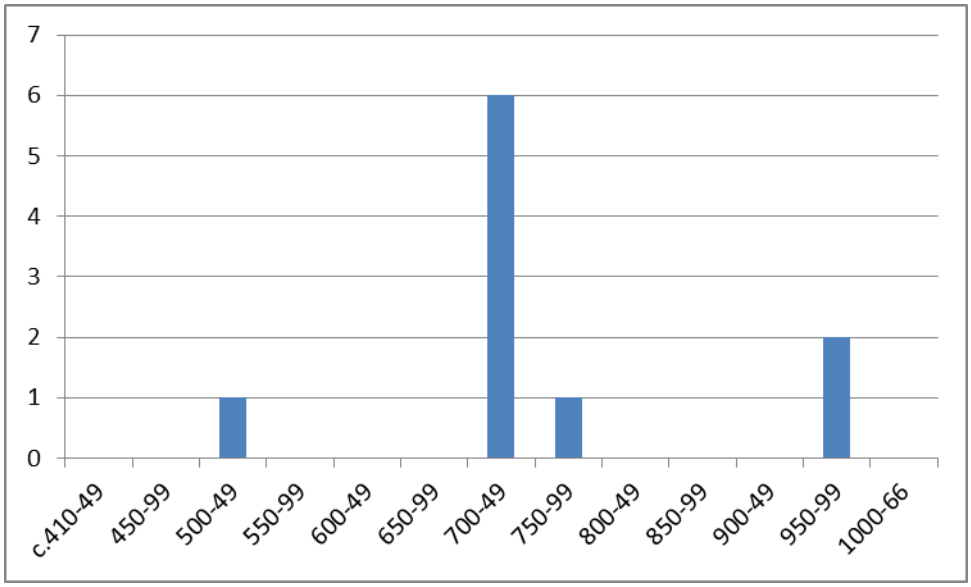
Graph 13: Compositional chart of coins found at Bradwell

The four 9th-century coins probably indicate continued monetary exchange at Bradwell up until the time of the Viking incursions. The find of ring money from St Peter's Flat (the mud flat beyond St Peter's Chapel) (Essex HER: 2009) might suggest that, as at Benfleet Creek, Bradwell continued to function as a landing place and site of exchange in the Danelaw mixed coin/bullion exchange system. Stamford ware has also been found at Bradwell (Essex HER: 35), which suggests some continuing access to traded commodities in the later Saxon period. However, the general chronology suggests that Bradwell's importance as a site of exchange significantly decline in the 10th century.

Further, with Bradwell we are in the unusual situation of having excavated evidence of productive activity on a relatively large scale from several fish

weirs (Strachan 1998). These were maintained over a long period, and it is possible that fish may have been caught – and probably salt produced (e.g. see e.g. Barford 1988; Fawn *et al.* 1990; Wilkinson & Murphy 1995: 157-65; Strachan 1996; Buckley 2000: 11-4; Rippon 2000) – for the London market and elsewhere.

Fingringhoe

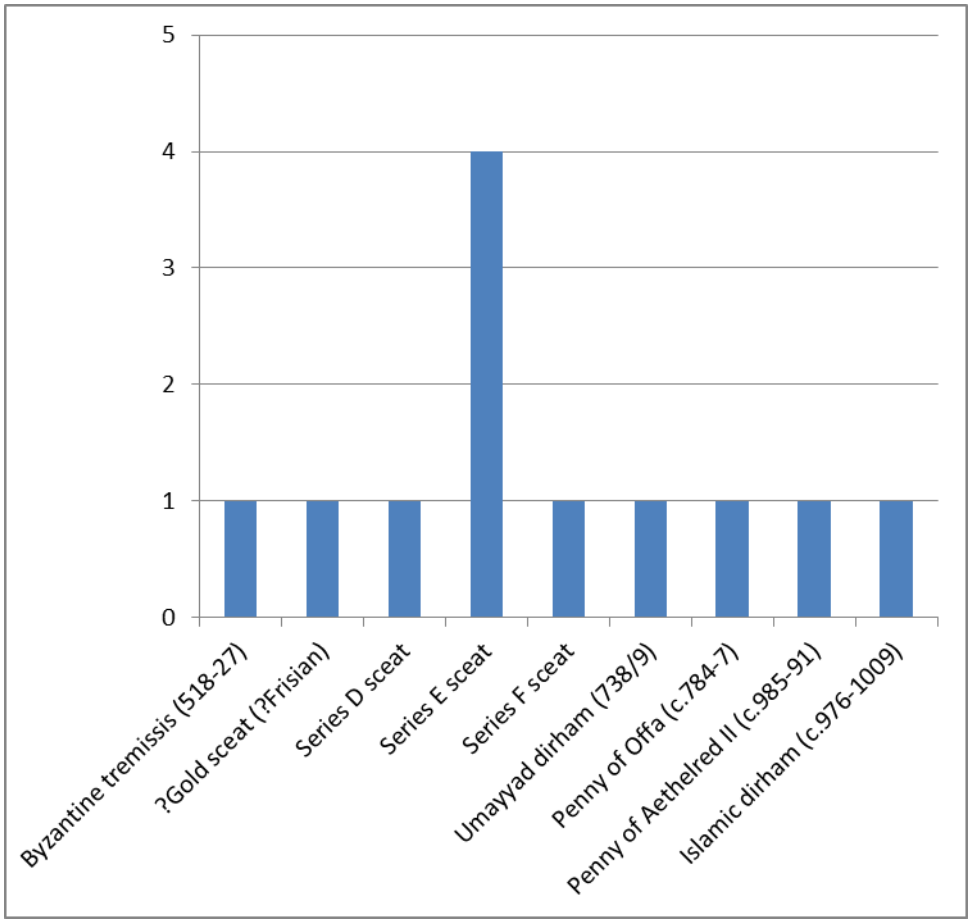


Graph 14: Chronological distribution chart of coinage from Fingringhoe

The final proposed landing place at which a concentration of coins has been found is Fingringhoe. The Fingringhoe area has generally been a relatively

productive location for metal-detectorists, with, for example, 9 dress accessories found in the Fingringhoe area dating from the earlier 5th century (e.g. a supporting arm brooch – Essex HER: 17640) into the later Saxon period (e.g. a silver pin – Essex HER: 17633 – buckles and belt fittings – Essex HER: 17638, 17639), when horse equipment is also found. These finds might suggest this area as a permanent site of occupation, rather than a seasonal trading place (e.g. see Davies 2010: 104). Strap-ends and pins are often found at market sites, perhaps related to bag fastenings (Ulmschneider 2000a: 32-3, 51, 60-2). An early Saxon settlement was also excavated at Frog Hall Farm (Brooks 2002). The archaeological evidence points towards activity in this area through much of the Anglo-Saxon period, with a notable deposition of coinage in the 8th century.

Furthermore, we know that Fingringhoe was used as a port during the Roman period from the latter half of the 1st century (Kemble 2001: 99). Fingringhoe's early strategic location is also demonstrated by 1st-century military buildings and a possible villa found at the nearby Nature Reserve (Drury & Rodwell 1980: 63-4).



Graph 15: Compositional chart of Fingringhoe coinage

The early medieval coins found at Fingringhoe range in date from the 6th century to the 10th century, though the corpus is strongly concentrated in the early 8th century (Graph 14). With only 12 coins, there can be no firm conclusions about the socio-economic context of their deposition. Additionally, 6 of these coins were found by the same metal-detectorist during the 1990s (Colchester Museums Accessions Numbers 1999.54.1-3 & 55.1.3);

and 3 were found stuck together (Colchester Museums Accessions Numbers 1999.54.1-3), representing a single deposition.

However, the nature of the coinage might reasonably be taken to suggest Fingringhoe as consistent landing place through the Anglo-Saxon period. At least 9 of the 12 early medieval coins reported from here are imports. The earliest is a 6th-century Byzantine coin of Justin I (518-27) (Essex HER: 12594). An enamelled mount from a possibly imported hanging bowl dating to the 6th century has also been found here (PAS: ESS-1E56A5). However, these bowls were also made by the Anglo-Saxons, and this example has a spiral design reminiscent of Anglo-Saxon and Continental saucer brooches. Eighth-century Frisian imports are represented by 5 silver *sceattas* (Colchester Museums Accessions Numbers 1999.54.1-3 & 55.1.3) and a coin recorded as a gold *sceat* (Essex HER: 17585). The latter coin – though no photo was available – might more realistically have been a imitation *tremissis* or *solidus* of Louis the Pious (814-40) (see Story 2003: 248). There is also an 8th-century Iraqi dirham, which was put forward by Blackburn (note in PAS find entry: ESS-205772) as a later 9th-/early 10th-century deposition within the context of Scandinavian-style exchange. It is certainly true that these coins were being used in Scandinavia (e.g. Skre 2011: 84-5).

The later 9th century coins found at Fingringhoe may reflect the site's location on the coastal/riverine route into and out of the central-place and later *burh* at Colchester. Two lead trial pieces found at Fingringhoe (Essex HER: 17668),

which were possibly used for manufacturing belt fittings, are interesting finds from this period.

Because of the small number of coins, it is difficult to assess the significance of Fingringhoe in the Anglo-Saxon period. Nevertheless, many of the finds from this area are interesting and show access to imports over a long period of time at a site known to have been a landing place during the Roman period. It is also interesting that these exchange-related finds extend back into the 6th century. There is no reason for us necessarily to posit that, in Fingringhoe, we are looking at the material traces of a high status location in the Anglo-Saxon period. Instead, perhaps Fingringhoe demonstrates the trade networks that existed between coastal communities, without the need for elites, as described by Fleming (2008). It is possible that early Fingringhoe served as an important link node between coastal networks and trade further up the Colne – perhaps to wealthy patrons in Colchester (see section 10.3.2. below).

Little Oakley, Great Oakley, and the Harwich area

Finally, in this thesis I have drawn attention to another concentration of imported material culture, at the very north-eastern end of the Tendring peninsula. The archaeology here is mostly concentrated at Little Oakley. This is partially a result of excavations here between 1951 and 1978 (Barford 2002); though the coins found here are a result of metal-detectorists' endeavours.

This area has not been included within the landing sites analysis above as the archaeology here is too sparse to suggest with confidence this area as the site or region of an early landing place. Additionally, the finds are spread too widely, with just 4 coins at Little Oakley, another at Great Oakley, and another at Dovercourt/Harwich. The chronological distribution of these finds is also atypical. At Little Oakley, no secondary *sceattas* have been recovered, but 3 *thrymsas* (Wise 2002; EMC: 2001.0641; PAS: ESS-CD0653; ESS-CCE906; SF4049) and a Series B *sceat* (Wise 2002; EMC 1994.0114) have been found. At nearby Great Oakley a further *sceat* has also been found, this time of the Frisian D series (EMC: 2006.0338). Without the benefit of a photographic record, the 2 'silver seals' of Series B and D from Little and Great Oakley respectively, reported by the Essex HER (17754; 18338), are assumed here to be the above *sceattas* listed in the Fitzwilliam Coin Corpus (1994.0114; 1994.0127).

The reason for noting Little Oakley is that this area seems to have been in receipt of imported goods for much of the Anglo-Saxon period. The excavations here (see Barford 2002) uncovered evidence of Anglo-Saxon settlement around Little Oakley from the 5th century onwards. The later Saxon population here was later using imported Thetford ware, and St Neot's ware (*ibid.*: 164-5). Ipswich ware has also been found at Dovercourt (Challis 1992: 243). Together with the coin finds, these artefacts suggest that this area was engaged at some level with long-distance networks, and was in touch with East Anglian networks and the nearby *emporium* of Ipswich.

The Little Oakley area, at the tip of the Tendring peninsula, is an interesting one that is thus worth noting. Given the location of this area – on the coast, near Ipswich, with a Roman road leading to Colchester – access to imported goods should come as no surprise. The finds here are included in this section, and highlighted more generally in this thesis, as they further our understanding of the operation of Harwich in the Anglo-Saxon period, which, as yet, we know all too little about.

Summary and conclusions

This section has presented the finds from each of these clusters in isolation. We should be cautious of assigning too great a significance to the relative frequencies of each, as recovery is always a result of the extent to which particular areas have been searched (Metcalf 2004: 2). In particular, Tilbury is well known to metal-detectorists, and has thus been a target for many years.

With any study using stray finds, one cannot completely rule out the chance that the clusters identifed in this project are the result of survey effort, rather than true reflections of historic artefact loss. Indeed, if these are representative clusters, then one might superficially ask why they need be indicative of centres of exchange. Hutcheson (2006: 79-84), for example, has argued that 'productive sites' in Norfolk represent centres of tax collection. However, there are several reasons to regard many of the Essex sites as functioning as centres of exchange (though social functions, such as tax collection, may well have taken place at these sites too).

Firstly, the near or actual coastal location of all of them is very suggestive. If these sites were just tax collection points, we might expect to find a greater number of inland clusters. However, the coin-dominated assemblages may well hide a range of different sites. The evidence certainly does not preclude socially-embedded exchange as a mechanism behind the clusters. In the case of Barking this will have acted as an estate centre, as well as a consumer of imports, and possibly as a producer.

A second reason for suspecting commercial functions are the finds directly related to such exchange. The assemblages from many of these sites include clear imports, and others finds – such as weights and bullion – which are arguably more suggestive of trade than taxation.

In some areas we may even have an indication of what these exchange points were providing – beyond a market – to traders in return. This is particularly the case around the Blackwater, where salt production and fishing are both well attested, and would have complemented each other as industries. Evidence elsewhere along the Essex coast of numerous 'Red Hills' (see e.g. Barford 1988; Fawn *et al.* 1990; Wilkinson & Murphy 1995), of many fish weirs (e.g. see Strachan 1998), and of a resistance to salt marsh draining (Rippon 2000), all suggest that coastal resources were of considerable value to Essex's economy. The marshland areas would also have been used for grazing stock, which, salted, were probably exchanged at coastal sites.

Furthermore, Fleming (2008: 410-1) has emphasised that East Anglia would have been an important source of wood, especially for Frisian coastal communities, who lacked this natural resource. Though the significant woodland area of Essex is today largely restricted to the Epping region in the south-west, in the Anglo-Saxon period Essex would have been a heavily wooded region (e.g. Wallis & Waughman 1998: 57, 227; Rippon 2008: fig. 5.14). It is possible that this raw material was also exchanged at coastal sites, as well as other commodities such as slaves, meat, fish, and cereals.

The overall trajectory of these sites also fits into a pattern that is now familiar to north-western Europe. Firstly, some of these sites have produced evidence of importation from an early date (cf. Loveluck 2009). It has been suggested (e.g. Fleming 2008: 420; Davies 2010: 117) that many rural exchange centres may have developed from earlier estate centres. For example, the monastery at Barking would certainly have functioned as an important estate centre. This may ultimately have been the case at Tilbury and Bradwell, where the monasteries there were probably founded on land granted from royal estates (Barford unpublished). Indeed, Rook Hall and Slough House Farm near Goldhanger Creek have been suggested as possibly constituting part of an Anglo-Saxon estate (Wallis & Waughman 1998: 227). However, the lack of in depth archaeological examination at almost all of these sites means it is difficult to decern much more of the social context of their creation. Further targeted research at these sites should attempt to answer questions regarding the forces behind their institution as centres of exchange.

In the later 7th and 8th centuries these sites are witness to an apparent upsurge in monetary exchange, and probably trade in general, concurrent with the emergence of *emporia*, such as nearby London and Ipswich. It is only during this period that all of the proposed sites are visible. This is probably a function of the expansion of coastal networks in this period and the great increase in monetization.

During the Viking period in Essex (*c.*860-*c.*920), monetized exchange is far less visible, and there is clear lack of English coins. However, finds of foreign coins, from Byzantium, Iraq, and Kashmir, as well as of weights and bullion, are all highly suggestive of continuing exchange during this period.

By the later 10th century, all of these sites are very difficult to see archaeologically. Significantly, these sites are not apparent in archaeology of the later 10th and early 11th century, when a great amount of coinage was circulating. This picture accords with recent research by Loveluck (2012) which indicates a decline in smaller coastal centres as a result of the increasing dominance of towns in long-distance exchange networks. In Essex, this is the period in which Maldon and Colchester were transformed into urban centres, with defences, markets, mints, and – in the case of Colchester at least – a planned street system (Crummy 1980; 1981). The archaeological evidence that has been reviewed in this thesis has also highlighted their receipt of imported pottery. However, there is still much for us to learn about the development of Maldon and Colchester. It is certainly apparent from the current archaeological record that London was an increasingly dominant force in long-distance

exchange. The contemporary archaeology of *Lundenburh* testifies to extensive urban development alongside massive regional concentrations of coinage and Continental pottery (see sections 7.3 and 8.3, above).

10.2.2. 5th-mid-7th-century coastal exchange

It is almost certainly the case that there was a good deal of back and forth from Continental Europe even in the immediate post-Roman period. The glass and amber beads, which are so common in 5th- and 6th-century burials, were mostly imports from Continental Europe. The movement of individuals to settle or to exchange goods/ideas is evidenced by 5th-century dress accessories, which were manufactured on the Continent. Indeed, as argued in Chapter 9, the presence of so much material culture of Continental inspiration indicates considerable movement across the North Sea. A Byzantine coin of Theodosius II (408-50) (Greater London SMR: MLO18046) may also represent the maintenance of trade routes with the Mediterranean at this time at a very low level. However, the emergence of centres of trade is really only apparent from the 6th and 7th centuries.

Historical and archaeological evidence indicate the existence of at least 9 significant centres of exchange in the coastal zone of Essex. These are Great Bromley, Colchester, Fingringhoe, Maldon, Bradwell, Canvey Island, Tilbury, Barking, and *Lundenwic*/*Lundenburh* (London). The area of Harwich is

enigmatic and may prove an interesting area for further study. The research for this project has established up-to-date chronologies for these sites.

Evidence of 5th- and 6th-century burials have been found at Little Oakley (Farrands 1958; Barford 2002) and Dovercourt (Challis 1992; Essex HER: 3405); Colchester (Crummy 1980; 1981); and Bradwell (Medlycott 1992); in the City of London (Marsden 1968-70; Cowie 1988; Greater London SMR: ELO984; MLO75309; MLO65131; MLO65132; ELO4385; ELO8841; MLO99443; MLO99330); and in the area of *Lundenwic* (Cowie 1988; Whytehead & Cowie 1989; Greater London SMR: ELO771; ELO7085; MLO98366; ELO650; MLO20728; MLO38072; MLO75938). But for the cemetery at Bradwell, which is restricted to the 5th century, these cemeteries are evidence of settled communities in the areas of 2 of the later trading centres. There is also direct evidence of settlement from the 6th century at Little Oakley (Farrands 1958; Barford 2002), Colchester (Crummy 1980; 1981); and probably *Lundenwic* (Blackmore *et al.* 2004). Settlement in the Maldon area dating from the 6th century has also been found at the Croxley Works site (Mark Atkinson, ECC Field Archaeology Unit Manager, pers. comm.). Some Ipswich ware has also been found here (Rippon 1996: 118). This might be taken to suggest that, in some cases at least, coastal sites developed out of small existing communities engaging in exchange with traders, before attracting a larger temporary or permanent population.

Though a great many 5th- and 6th-century sites have yielded imports, such as beads, glass, and dress accessories, their use often makes it hard to establish

whether we are witnessing a centre of exchange, or a centre of consumption, or both.

The coinage data presented and discussed in Chapter 7 illustrated that it is in the 6th century when we begin to see signs of an emerging exchange network. This is evidenced by particular coastal sites at which we find a consistent deposition of coinage and imported pottery during the course of the Anglo-Saxon period. In fact it is the later coin and pottery finds which allow us to cast back into the 6th century to find the origins of a more structured geographically coastal network. Byzantine coins from Colchester and Fingringhoe are perhaps the earliest finds which begin to help us to map the emergence of the coast network in the Essex region.

During the course of the 7th century traffic into Little Oakley, Great Bromley, and the City of London is apparent from early English gold and pale gold *thrymsas* (shillings) and Frankish gold *tremisses*. These coins testify to movement along the North Sea coast from Kent and northern France. One of the *thrymsas* from Little Oakley may have been minted in Peterborough. However, the complex, mix modes of coin use at this time makes it difficult to propose monetary mechanisms behind early coinage distributions. For example, the Kentish *Pada thrymsa* from Little Oakley was pierced for suspension, indicating coinage was conceived of in much the same way as it had been since the 5th century when Roman coins were used as pendants. Indeed, links with East Anglia are suggested from 6th-century Byzantine and

Frankish coins (at 'north Essex' and the Rainham cemetery respectively) with added suspension loops, which were often fitted in East Anglia (Evison 1955).

The evidence seems to suggest that at least some of the sites which are apparent as centres of exchange in the later 7th century may have emerged from well-connected 6th- or early 7th-century eastern communities. Moreover, the rapid increase in trade in north-western Europe in the later 7th century appears to have been largely an expansion of an existing network. From the perspective of the Essex region, this was centred on links with Francia across the Channel and neighbouring regions of England. The interrelatedness of this network is seen in the complex movement of imported goods around the south-east of England. For example, East Anglian pendants made from foreign coins, which had perhaps been directly obtained from the Continent. The same may be true for Frankish goods, which were probably both obtained directly and via Kent (cf. Brookes 2007).

10.2.3. The expansion of the coastal network in the 7th and 8th centuries

It is only with the introduction of silver coinage in the late 7th and 8th centuries that we can begin to reliably track the development of the North Sea coastal network in Essex. The introduction of silver coinage in Francia and England may even have been born out of a desire to help facilitate trade (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 95-6). Indeed it is only at this time that many of the coastal sites identified in Essex become visible archaeologically; or at least

recognizable as sites of trade. In some cases we may be witnessing functional changes in existing settlements.

This may well have been the case for Tilbury and Barking – the communities founded by Cedd in the mid-7th century. The earliest evidence of trade at these sites comes from finds of primary *sceattas* at Tilbury and secondary *sceattas* at Bradwell. If Barford (unpublished) is correct in his argument that both monastic sites were short-lived, perhaps ending in the 660s, then monetized trading here was conducted in a secular context.

Notably, the Essex/London primary series of *sceattas* (Series B) is found at Tilbury, Bromley, Great Bromley, Little Oakley, City of London, and Fingringhoe. This series is distributed all over Essex, suggesting that it assisted internal trade, and was not restricted to use in the coastal regions. It is possible that some or all these sites acted as gateways for much of this coinage into inland Essex, especially if it was minted in London (Metcalf 1993a: 104). Thus the coastal route probably played an important role in linking *emporia* with inland sites. However, the network of Roman roads (Map 1) would also surely have acted as inland routeways for regional exchange.

The most notable centre of this period is of course *Lundenwic*, which emerged in the area of Covent Garden in the 7th century. The importance of the coastal route from London is perhaps supported by the strong coastal distribution of Series S (Map 19). These coins were possibly minted at Tilbury, where they are concentrated, and where a die has been found (Metcalf 1994: 537). The

lack of finds of Series S from the interior of Essex may reflect its relatively short production period at the end of the secondary series in the mid-8th century. The coastal distribution is clear for most of the other series of *sceattas* from England, and indeed is reflected later in the distribution of Offa's coinage which has the same coastal distribution regardless of mint (Map 31). This distribution corresponds to the distribution of Ipswich ware, which, in terms of the number of locations at which it has been found, is strongly concentrated along the coast. It has been found in the areas of Harwich, Colchester, Bradwell, Barking, and *Lundenwic*. The other concentration is at the high status site of Wicken Bonhunt. Interestingly no coinage was found at Wicken Bonhunt, which suggests a functional difference from the coastal sites. We are perhaps seeing in Wicken Bonhunt a rural central place, marked by consumption, production and different modes of exchange – possibly more socially embedded, though this need not be so. It is likely however, that this concentration derived from a hierarchical access to commodities. However, the regional picture for Ipswich ware, as with contemporary coinage, shows a primarily coastal distribution. Broadly speaking, the key sites which emerge at this time are best be distinguished by their *consistent* access to trade passing between Ipswich and London.

The distribution of Ipswich ware in Essex seems to match that found in Kent, where Ipswich ware is found primarily at coastal sites, many of which have ecclesiastical associations (Blinkhorn 1999: 8). The inland exception is Canterbury (*ibid.*).

The Frisian series, D and E, are exceptions to the dominant coastal distribution, as they have frequently been found in inland Essex. This reflects not only the great number that was minted, but also the burgeoning trade network around the North Sea littoral. As with Series B, although they are widely distributed, the exchange mechanism which brought them to inland Essex was probably an extension of the more strictly coastal network visible from other series. This can be argued not only from the sites up the coast, but also finds at Great Oakley, Great Bromley, the City of London, Barking, and Bradwell; some of which may have functioned as coastal/riverine gateways, providing an interface between sea-borne trader and inland distribution mechanisms.

The largely coastal distribution of import- and coin-rich sites in Essex contrasts to some extent with East Anglia, Cambridgeshire, and Lincolnshire to the north, where 'productive' sites have are distributed along navigable rivers (Blackburn 2003: 22, fig. 3.1) and inland routeways (Leahy 2003). It may be a lack of such rivers which prohibits this distribution in Essex. However, the distribution is reminiscent of that found for imports in Kent and examined by Brookes (2003). Brookes interpreted this pattern as representative of a series of 'gateway communities' (*ibid.*: 96) which were important in the redistribution of imports, especially in earlier centuries. This work on Kent also stressed the importance of a coastal location for communities to participate regularly in monetized exchange *(ibid.*).

Of the Continental series, there are markedly fewer coins from Denmark (Series X) and ?France/*Quentovic* (Series G). Series X is notable in the Essex region as it provides the earliest indicator of Canvey Island as a site of exchange. This might be taken to suggest that Canvey Island developed later than the other middle Saxon coastal trading centres in Essex. In the later 8th century, Canvey Island represents one of the concentrations of pennies of King Offa and Queen Cynethryth.

10.2.4. The Viking impact

In the 9th century minting and the North Sea trade network were severely disrupted by the impact of Viking raiders and invasions. The partially excavated religious communities at Nazeing and Barking ceased abruptly around the mid-9th century, possibly as a result of the instability and threat caused by Viking raids (Williams 1996: 93; Huggins 1997; Hull 2002: 164). Around the same time, at the trading site at *Lundenwic*, defensive ditches were built prior to the settlement's hasty abandonment in favour of the safety of the Roman walls of the City (e.g. Malcolm & Bowsher 1999: 10). The coin finds suggest that *Lundenburh* had already been engaging in monetized trade long before the mass movement of artisans and merchants to the area in the 9th century. However, this prior evidence is mostly only available through stray coins from the Thames foreshore. Much of the settlement archaeology may be buried underneath, or destroyed by, the St Paul's cathedral complex.

Away from London, there is also evidence that monetized trade – and perhaps trade overall – was much reduced. The number of coins falls dramatically in the 9th century, but, taking a long-view of the evidence, we can posit that the coastal sites at Canvey Island, Bradwell (PAS: ESS-B5A2F7), Tilbury, and Fingringhoe, at least survived the Danelaw period. Indeed, though they were clearly destructive, there is also evidence that the Vikings brought new networks in touch with Essex's coastal centres.

The contemporary Byzantine coins from Benfleet Creek (see Andrews *et al.* 2005); the 10th-century Kashmiri coin found on Canvey Island (Essex HER: 7170); the 8th-century Umayyad dirham minted in Wasit, Iraq, found at Fingringhoe (PAS: ESS-205772); and the possible ring-money from Bradwell (Essex HER: 2009) are all likely to reflect Essex's new involvement in Scandinavian long-distance networks involving mixed bullion/coinage exchange (see e.g. Blackburn 2005: 35; 2006: 221). The same may be said for a rectangular Viking lead weight decorated with a copper alloy disc (possibly a 4th-century Roman coin), found on Canvey Island, which may date to this time (PAS: SF6536). In addition to these foreign artefacts, St Edmund memorial pennies reference the spread of Danish East Anglian influence into north Essex supported by other materials (see Chapter 9).

There are other items in the region too which are generally indicative of Scandinavian activity from the late 9th century onwards. Much of this evidence comes from the London area. At Redbridge a handmade 9th/10th-century barlip tri-spouted bowl was found (Greater London SMR: MLO10970). A soapstone

bowl, of possible Norse origin was found on Bishopsgate (Sankey 2002). Two hone stones made of Norwegian ragstone, have also been found at sites in the City of London (Marsden *et al.* 1975; Schofield 1981; Dyson & Schofield 1981; Schofield *et al.* 1990). The most direct evidence for Scandinavian traders in the City of London comes from an antler 'Merkelappe' or merchant's tally, with scored marks (possibly runes) (PAS: LON-ADCBC1).

Secular exchange sites evidently continued to function at some level during the Danelaw period. However, except for Colchester, Barking (after a hiatus), and London, none of the sites accessing imports in earlier centuries is clearly apparent by the mid-10th century. These sites have either ceased to function, or had declined significantly. By contrast, it is during this period that long-distance trade is perceptible at Maldon for the first time. This may signify a trend away from frequent exchange at coastal landing places and towards a greater concentration of economic activity in and around *burhs* and more protected sites. This fits with a broader image that is now emerging of a general decline in these centres coinciding with the emergence of towns (Loveluck 2012).

In the post-Danelaw period the archaeological evidence principally shows a concentration of coinage and imported pottery in London. However, the evidence is complex and difficult to read. The short validity periods of contemporary coin issues post-973 and successful reminting policies has surely limited our dataset. Whilst almost no imported Continental pottery has been found outside of London, Thetford, St Neots, and Stamford wares are scattered

around Essex, particularly in the north, and notably at Maldon and Colchester. Additionally, at the mid-9th-late 12th-century settlement at Springfield Lyons (Buckley 1988; Tyler & Major 2005) St Neots ware and Thetford ware were found in addition to Rhenish wares. However, the other evidence suggests that it was not a high status site (Buckley 1988: 11). St Neots ware has even been found at the lower status rural settlement at nearby Chignall St James (Brook 1992). This might suggest that there was better access to imported goods in rural Essex than much of the coinage evidence implies. In central Essex this access may perhaps have been facilitated by the market at Maldon and Roman routeways towards the former centre of *Caesaromagus* (Chelmsford). It may be that there were better redistributive mechanisms from urban or proto-urban centres of trade than there had been from smaller trading places. Indeed, the coinage evidence appears to show a more generalized use of coinage for much of the 10th and 11th centuries, with a distribution skewed much more towards the interior of Essex than the coast. This is not to deny the importance of coastal communities – the pottery assemblages from the City of London (e.g. Vince 1985; Unattributed 2007) are testament to a wide range of continental contacts – but to note that perhaps coins were more regularly used in inland Essex than they had been previously. Indeed, *c.*40% of coins from the reign of Æthelred II onwards are found in Essex (rather than London).

10.3. Status-related networks

Much of the debate regarding early medieval networks has concerned the role of elites in their instigation, structure, and function. This is particularly the case in the light of the theories of Hodges (e.g. 1982; 1989), who argued that *emporia* and their associated networks served to secure prestige goods for the ruling elite. This theory has been hugely influential in framing the contemporary academic discourse concerning North Sea exchange networks. Hodges' theory has been subject to a great deal of criticism by many scholars who envisage a less regimented network structure (e.g. Carver 1987; 1993a; 1993b; Blackburn 1993). Alternative models to that proposed by Hodges posit long-distance exchange initiated and accessed by different social groups, with the elite class concerned largely with taxing trade rather than restricting access to it (e.g. Naylor 2004). Nevertheless, it is clear that many secular and ecclesiastical estate centres did become nexuses of exchange (e.g. Blair 1988; Kelly 1992; Astill 1991; 1994; Lebecq 2000; Ulmschneider 2000a; Loveluck 2007).

This section examines the interplay between elite groups, imported goods, and the mechanics of exchange through the Anglo-Saxon period in Essex.

10.3.1. Early exchange and the expression of elite status

Before the emergence of *emporia* in the 7th and 8th centuries, there was clearly a link between exchange systems and status. The link was particularly in the

expression of status, but also extended to the acquisition of exotic goods through elite networks. The link between status and imports is particularly evident from the burial record, which demonstrates how the ownership of imported goods was worth displaying. This may have been the case for imported glass and amber beads, though these were perhaps too common to act effectively as markers of status. Imported dress accessories are likewise difficult to generally interpret as status symbols, especially as most were made of copper alloy, and many may not have arrived via mercantile activity, but rather with migrants. However, if these items were used to express a Continental ethnic identity (see Chapter 9), then this may have been linked indirectly to a higher social status (e.g. Härke 1997: 152).

There are other items, however, which would have arrived via intermediaries, whether this was by socially-embedded processes, such as gift-exchange or tribute; or more neutral exchange mechanisms. In Essex, imported items such as glass vessels and elaborate dress accessories from Kent and Francia, gold coinage and wheel-thrown pottery also from Francia, and more rarely gold coinage and fine metalwork from Byzantium were all used to display social status.

This phenomenon is clearest at the elite cemeteries at Rainham (Evison 1955), Prittlewell (Tyler 1996; Hirst 2004), and Broomfield (Challis 1992). These cemeteries represent the peak of wealth display in Anglo-Saxon burial in Essex. Throughout the 5th and 6th centuries burial furnishing were being used

as media for social expression. Imports are strongly correlated with the most elaborate or richest grave assemblages.

Glass vessels are one class of artefact which were inherently symbolic. Behind beads, vessels were the most common items made from glass. Most glass containers were used as drinking vessels. Besides similar decorative techniques, glass vessels of the Anglo-Saxon period fall into a relatively limited range of forms, which were classified first by Donald Harden (1956; 1978). This typology has since been refined and expanded by Vera Evison (2000). The vessels can broadly be categorized into jars and drinking vessels. Almost all of the contemporary types have been found in Essex. Commonly drinking vessels types were fashioned with rounded bottoms. This form – reminiscent or directly imitative of drinking horns (another grave-good associated with elite burials) – seems to have been intended to reflect a symbolic or actual association with feasting. The rounded bottoms suggest that these drinking vessels were to be used either whilst standing, rather than at a table, or to consume the vessel's contents all in one go. It has been argued that this custom, and vessel forms linked to it, such as the horn, were the introduction of a *"Germanic custom"* (Evison 2000: 47). The inclusion of these items in individual grave assemblages may have signalled the interred as a giver of feasts.

Many, if not most of the glass vessels recovered from Anglo-Saxon archaeological contexts were imported by trade or immigration from the Continent. However, there is evidence that many forms may also have been

made in Kent and perhaps elsewhere in England (Evison 2000: 72, 91). Predominantly, early Merovingian glass was produced in the Rhineland and Meuse valleys. It seems that as well as importation by trade, continental glass might also have been made for Anglo-Saxon customers by itinerant glass workers from northern France working in England. Documentary sources suggest that requests for foreign glass workers were made by higher status settlements and markets (Evison 2000: 92-3).

Imported contemporary glass vessels or fragments were been found as grave goods in a small minority of graves at the large cemeteries at Mucking (6 graves), Great Chesterford (4 graves), Springfield Lyons (at least 1 grave), and Rayleigh (cremation cemetery; fragments found in one 1 burial). Glass has also been associated with burials at Wendons Ambo (Essex HER: 229). Imported Frankish pottery has also been found in coastal burials at Barling Magna (Essex HER: 9879) and North Shoebury (Wymer & Brown 1995).

The presence of imported glass and pottery vessels on settlements in Essex provides a rare indication of wealth or access of imports outside of burial contexts. Glass vessels are largely concentrated in the coastal and riverine areas of eastern Essex. A few of these sites provide enough evidence to posit that these articles were used as part of elite conspicuous consumption.

The largest concentration of early glass vessels and imported pottery comes from the Mucking/Linford settlement and cemeteries. Six burials here contained glass vessels (beakers and bowls) (Hirst & Clark 2009). Two cone

beakers and a claw beaker were found in three *Grubenhäuser* (Hamerow 1993). A pouch bottle was found on the Linford settlement (Essex HER: 5152). Fifteen imported wheel-thrown vessels in a variety of forms were also found on the settlement. These finds demonstrate that, though little social differentiation was visible in the architecture, there was variation and exclusivity in the use of material culture.

A smaller concentration of early imports was found at Rivenhall in east-central Essex. Here Merovingian glass bottles and Rhenish cone beakers were found on a site which appears to have continued without a break from its previous incarnation as a Roman villa, with continued use of villa buildings well into the 5th century (Rodwell & Rodwell 1985; 1993; Letch 2001; Clark 2004). These villa buildings were joined by a timber hall in the 5th or 6th century. Further evidence of the community's access to imported good was evidenced by a Rhenish lava quern stone. Rivenhall stands out not only for its imported early material culture, but also for its longevity. From the 7th century the settlement is no longer visible, but the site continued as a cemetery to which a church was later added in the 10th century. The absence of settlement evidence from the later phases has been attributed to a potentially aceramic culture, or a shift in settlement location (Rodwell & Rodwell 1985: 121). It has been argued (Rippon 1996: 123-4) that Rivenhall was one of the estate centres around which the rural world was structured from the 7th century.

Almost identical early conspicuous consumption is also evident near Southend, at Sutton (Brown 1985). Here a cone beaker and a lava quern were found in

addition to a crucible, providing rare evidence of both glass manufacture and consumption. It may be that the settlement at Sutton relates to the nearby elite burial ground at Prittlewell (Blackmore 2003b).

The late 6th- and early 7th-century elite burial grounds at Prittlewell, Rainham, and Broomfield are marked by their extensive use of imported material to set themselves apart. All three cemeteries interred imported Frankish pottery and glass vessels; and two Frankish gold coins were included in the 'princely' assemblage at Prittlewell. Long-distance contact with Byzantium was also showcased by a contemporary gold coin used as a pendant in one burial at Rainham, and from the spoon and drinking vessels in the Prittlewell 'princely' burial. The grave-goods of the Prittlewell 'prince' display the most geographically extensive collection of items found in any of the burials, with addition artefacts from Italy and the western British Isles.

However, the strongest affinities at Prittlewell, Rainham, and Broomfield are with Kent. This is particularly shown through the use of gold and garnet jewellery and other dress accessories, but might also be indicated by the display of glass, pottery, and coinage from Francia (e.g. Hirst 2004: 39-40). However, Essex's location suggests that it should have had little problem directly acquiring Frankish goods (Evison 1955: 195). Though it might be suggested that the idea of a near-monopoly of cross-Channel trade by Kent has been overplayed, Kent clearly had the most extensive contact with the Merovingian Continent (e.g. Huggett 1988; Brugmann 1999; Brookes 2007). This fits within the historical context derived from documentary sources,

which show family ties between the ruling elite of Kent and Francia, and in turn between Kent and Essex. Bede's narrative (*HE* II.3) suggests that Kent was the dominant political power in the south-east of England. The conversion of the East Saxon king Sæbert to Christianity appears to have resulted from Kentish influence. Within this context, the display of imports from Kent would have denoted an allegiance with a powerful neighbour. One of the most remarkable features of these cemeteries is the extent to which those creating the burial assemblages selected similar – and often identical – items. The grave-goods were clearly selected to exhibit the cosmopolitan connections between the ruling families of Essex and those of powerful European kingdoms.

There thus appears to have been a strong link between the consumption of imports and status in the 5th and 6th centuries. At this time all levels of society were usually living in the same settlements and burying their dead in the same cemeteries. Thus the access to imports should have been the same. However, the archaeological record shows that consumption of these goods was far from universal, and was thus prominently shown-off in the display of the funerary ritual.

In the later 6th and early 7th centuries the elites of society appear to have attempted to physically distinguish themselves from the rest of society, both in the location of their burials and in the artefacts which they exhibited. At Broomfield, Rainham, and Prittlewell the material culture is quite unlike that of the general population. The primary difference is the loud display of long-

distance contacts, reflecting an elite European socio-political network involving gift exchange.

10.3.2.Status and the emergence of centres of exchange in Essex

The distribution of the earliest imported goods in the 5th and 6th centuries is strongly concentrated in the eastern half of Essex, though their use and archaeological contexts prevent secure mapping of exchange routes. Nevertheless, the archaeological evidence presented in this thesis illustrates the emergence of coastal and riverine centres of exchange during the 6th and 7th centuries. The extent to which elites were involved in this transformation is complex. In Essex, current evidence indicates that certain elite centres – whether by 'accident' or design – did play an important role as nodal points of exchange. For example, one might reasonably argue that sites such as Barking, Bradwell, Tilbury, and perhaps the City of London developed into centres of trade as a result of their ecclesiastical past or present. However, it is more difficult to establish a clear causal relationship between elites and the emergence of centres in the areas of Great Bromley and Canvey Island. The enigmatic situation at Colchester is complex and unique in the region. The relatively rich early burials here (e.g. see Crummy 1980; 1981; 1996) may also point towards an elite resident in the area of Colchester which was behind the early imports found here.

Perhaps the best place to begin this discussion is with the 'ecclesiastical' sites in Essex. The early minsters of St Paul's (City of London), Bradwell, Tilbury, and Barking were high status estate centres to varying degrees. This would have resulted in these locations becoming 'nodal points' (to use Sindbæk's – 2007 – terminology). It is briefly worth discussing the chronology of these sites as far as it relates to an elite relationship with trade.

The earliest minster in Essex was St Paul's, founded in the City of London in 604 by the missionary Mellitus (Bede *HE* II.3). The next to be founded was Bradwell in 654. Much of the excavated evidence from the City of London does not give any indication as to the nature of life at this minster. Besides a later 6th- or early 7th-century Frankish pot, which may have been found in the City (Greater London SMR: MLO99351), there a lack of evidence regarding the minster's consumption of imports. However, the coin finds – especially those from the Thames foreshore, and the St Peter's Hill excavation (Schofield & Maloney 1998) – from the City suggest that the minster engaged extensively with cross-Channel networks. The earliest coin finds are four Merovingian *tremisses* dated to the early 7th century (EMC: 1989.0060; 1991.0201; 1991.0200; Greater London SMR: MLO99372) and a Kentish *thrymsa* dated to *c.*650 (EMC: 1948.0062). One might suggest that the hiatus in finds between the early 7th century and the mid-7th century relates to the period of apostasy which followed King Sæbert's death in 616. After the king's death, Mellitus was expelled by Sæbert's successors. The post of Bishop of London was then left vacant until Cedd took up the post in the 650s. However, there are

thrymsas from this time bearing forms of the name *Londinium*, one type under the Kentish king Eadbald (616-40). Though none has been found in the City, this might suggest that there was activity within the Roman walls at this time, and that rule over the area was quite complex.

From the later 7th century the City appears to have been in receipt of a full range of coin types from a pale gold *Pada* coin to Series B primary *sceattas* (2) and a range of secondary series *sceattas* (9 from Kent; 8 from East Anglia; 4 from Frisia). Indeed London was probably minting coins during the secondary phase (Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 178; Metcalf 1994: 298, 388-91, 401, 404, 432, 468). This all indicates that the City of London was a significant centre of trade in the later 7th and early 8th centuries, just as *Lundenwic* was emerging as a major centre.

By contrast, the minsters at Bradwell and Tilbury (both *c.*654) may have ceased to be monastic communities as early as the 660s, following the mass exodus of monks from Bradwell and Tilbury's absence from the later historical record (Barford unpublished: 177-9).

Besides the existing 7th-century church, further evidence – albeit modest – of the early monastic settlement was discovered by excavations at Bradwell in 1864 and 1865 (Essex HER: 32; 38600; Barford unpublished). These excavations revealed nothing of the layout of the monastery, though it has been presumed most of the structures were wooden and situated within the former Roman fort (*ibid.*: 185). Burials that were found oriented E-W, datable to the

7th-century, seem to have been associated with the monastery. The recorded finds from the 19th-century excavation reveal only traces about monastic life at Bradwell (see Challis 1992: 212-5). Finds included a circular reliquary mount made of bronze and framing a cross, and two styli (one bronze, one iron), and probable millefiori, all of which are characteristic of monastic settlements (Cramp 1976: 249). Other finds possibly from the monastery were an iron bowl, a lamp, and a key. None of these finds from the monastic phase at Bradwell necessarily designate that it was a centre of trade, but they do indicate a high status material culture.

No archaeological trace of the Tilbury monastery established by Cedd has yet been found. Its existent is based on rather uninformative references to it alongside fuller passages regarding Bradwell in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*.

At both Bradwell and Tilbury the evidence of trade post-dates the probable end of the monastic communities. Indeed, evidence of exchange for many centuries has been found in these areas, which indicates that at some point at least trading here was not conducted within a monastic context.

The presence of trading sites in these two locations is very unlikely to be coincidental. The coin finds at both sites are the result of amateur metal-detecting, rather than excavation, so the concentrations were at least not created by excavation bias.

The implication of this is that these ecclesiastical elite sites probably indirectly created the foundation for later secular exchange sites, by transforming later 7th-century Bradwell and Tilbury into focal points for wide social networks.

The situation at Barking (founded *c.*666 by Eorcenwald) (Redknap 1991; 1992; Hull 2002) is different again from other ecclesiastical elite sites in Essex. Unlike Bradwell and Tilbury, it was relatively long-lived, with constant occupation up until the mid-9th century; and unlike all of the ecclesiastical sites there is evidence of conspicuous consumption. In 1910, part of an interlace-decorated Saxon cross was found in the churchyard wall of St Margaret's Church, the parish church of the abbey (Greater London SMR: MLO25595). Unfortunately little of the 7th-century monastery at Barking has been found through archaeological excavation (Redknap 1991; 1992; Hull 2002). A leet, watermill, wells, and a small amount of local handmade pottery may be all that remains of its earliest years. The wealth of Barking is not apparent until later, in the 8th century, when Ipswich ware predominates. Even so, the excavations revealed only an extremely incomplete picture of this major early monastery. Bede's (*HE* IV.25) references to Barking suggest that it was an intensively occupied monastery in which space to build was extremely limited.

Excavations in 1998 (Hull 2002) found gullies and 4 structures, including two timber structures with internal partitions and a drystone building. These buildings were finished with wattle and daub, and white-painted plaster. Construction at Barking also reused Roman brick, tile, and stone, which were probably taken from London. These buildings were interpreted as the living

quarters of the monastery, possibly outside the main abbey complex (*ibid.*: 164). The settlement also contained ditches, wells, a gravel path, pits, a possible jetty, and a leat for a watermill. The excavation essentially excavated a portion of the 8th-century monastery, with little evidence of other phases. This century was marked particularly by the consumption of goods from Ipswich ware vessels. As at Bradwell, a recovered stylus also indicated literacy characteristic of contemporary monasticism. The cemetery referred to by Bede (*HE* IV.7) has yet to be found.

By contrast, the material culture excavated further north at the nunnery at Nazingbury (Huggins 1978; 1997) did not display any conspicuous consumption or evidence of trade. No imported pottery or coinage was found. Instead the assemblage consisted of handmade pottery (mostly grass-tempered). Fragments of loomweights and a bone-headed pin also suggest activities typical of any rural settlement at this time. This matches the absence of evidence from St Osyth, which may have been the location of a nunnery ('*Cicc*') from the later 7th century. Excavations in 1949 (Essex HER: 2914) found one sherd of Ipswich ware and a Frisian or Viking comb in a midden, but nothing to suggest that this was certainly part of a nunnery.

At both Barking and Nazingbury activity continued up until the mid-9th century, when the establishments may have been abandoned under the Viking threat. Later, in the 10th century, monastic activity continued at Barking (but not at Nazingbury), and it became one of the major land-holders in Essex through the medieval period. Today one can glimpse the distribution of this

territory from its former churches, which are found all over the county, always dedicated to St Mary the Virgin, often with one other saint.

The consumption on this site is remarkably similar to that found in London, with Ipswich ware as the most common pottery type in the 8th century. In the 10th and 11th centuries both sites are also using the same shelly ware from the upper Thames valley. This indicates that Barking was within a tight economic hinterland centred on the London economy. No other site in Essex matches London's consumption patterns over such a long period.

In addition to consumption, Barking also seems to have been a centre for the production of glass, as well as probably a marketplace, evidenced by six *sceattas* from London (3), Frisia, Kent, and an imitation of a Mercian Series U (EMC: 1991.0213; 1991.0230; 1991.0231; 1991.0212; 1991.0221; 1991.0207).

Contemporary sites from the London area suggest that sites such as Barking did have privileged access to imported pottery. Traces of a lower status settlement have been found in Barking away from the monastery area (Hawkins *et al.* 2003). The 55 sherds of pottery here included a few Ipswich ware sherds, though the vast majority of the assemblage was made up of Late Saxon Sandy and Shelly wares. However, no Ipswich ware has been found at small excavations of 8th-century London satellite sites at Upminster (Greater London SMR: ELO8427; MLO23762; ELO7326; MLO137), Camden (Greater London SMR: MLO73918), and Chelsea (Farid 2000), though two sherds of imported grey ware were found here with local handmade pottery. If Blinkhorn

(1999: 18) is right that ecclesiastical sites functioned as redistribution centres, then this may have been for commodities which are not so readily detectable in the archaeological record.

The evidence from the ecclesiastical sites in Essex is thus mixed and cannot be said to support the notion that elites were necessarily directing trade. Indeed, trade and consumption have only been found together at Barking. The concentration of 7th- and 8th-century coins at the City of London is interesting, but difficult to interpret. It cannot strictly be used to show dispersed participation in exchange networks, as it is might reasonably be considered part of a poly-focal arrangement at London. However, the concentration of finds might reasonably be taken to bolster the theory that ecclesiatsical sites had the wherewithal to directly access trade; and moreover that, as accessible, wealthy, multi-dimensional social centres, would have been prime targets for merchants in their own right.

But the picture is more complex than this. The chronologies at Bradwell and Tilbury, which suggests that trade here continued (?began) after the monastic phase had ended in the late 7th century. This might suggest that these sites had laid in place a secular infrastructure, which facilitated the continuance of these sites as socio-economic centres. Note that the disruption caused to ecclesiastical sites does not appear to have ended mercantile activity at Tilbury and Bradwell, though it was diminished. The archaeological record from Essex should thus urge us to be cautious when making broad judgements on the interaction of minster sites with trade networks. The lack of evidence from the

nunneries at St Osyth and especially Nazingbury suggests that not all religious foundations were necessarily nodes of trade. One wonders whether we are seeing differential engagement in trade linked to gender.

Moving on to the other sites, which appear to have functioned as centres of exchange in Essex, it is harder to argue for an elite control or monopoly over trade. While those sites in direct receipt of merchants appear to have consumed imported goods, such as those found in Ipswich ware vessels, the trade in these goods do not appear to have been the reason for their existence. For *emporia* such as London, commodities carried with Ipswich ware were probably seen within the context of the general provisioning of its inhabitants who were engaged in specialist industry. However, a minority of the Ipswich ware vessels excavated at London (Blackmore 2003a: 234-5) and Barking (Redknap 1991: no.3) were identified as pitchers, which would have been exchanged in their own right as a fine tableware.

The nature of the Little Oakley settlement (Barford 2002) is interesting. Aside from imported goods scattered in the locality, the limited excavated evidence does not suggest that this was anything other than a typical rural community. However, even this conclusion is based on a small amount of evidence. We know only that the settlement may have begun in the 5th century, and was probably engaged in producing its own handmade pottery, and – on the basis of one awl – working leather and/or wood. We have to make judgments about this site in the absence of architectural remains, dietary information, and with very little evidence of daily life. Indeed the heart of the settlement and

cemetery must lay elsewhere. The end of the Roman villa in the 4th century suggests that there was no significant continuity here from that period. The only suggestion of high status might come from the continuation of settlement evidence throughout the Anglo-Saxon period, and the possible association of the site with the Domesday manor of Fulton Hall to the north-east of the excavation (Barford 2002). Another factor we must consider is the significant hole in our knowledge that is represented by Harwich. It may well be the case that in Dovercourt, Little Oakley, and Great Oakley, we are looking at the satellite area of the 'army's *wic*'.

Colchester probably retained some symbolic status in the post-Roman period. There is a growing body of archaeological evidence which might well be taken to suggest that Colchester retained some meaningful status as an Anglo-Saxon settlement. This is not to imply any great continuity with the Roman *colonia*, but rather to suggest that the area was far from abandoned, and indeed was probably of at least local importance.

Firstly, the Frankish wheel-thrown pottery from the 6th/7th and 8th/9th centuries, found during the settlement excavations at Lion Walk (Crummy 1980; 1981), suggests that the settlement was better connected than is often recognized. Add to this an imported glass stemmed beaker from an unknown findspot within Colchester (Powell 1963), and 6th-century Byzantine coins from Colchester (EMC: 1975.7001) and Fingringhoe (Essex HER: 12594), and the area stands out from other sites in Essex; especially as Colchester is often assumed to have

been abandoned. As a site up the River Colne, rather than a stopping/landing place on the coast, Colchester must have been a specific destination.

There is also some evidence that there were high status individuals resident in the area at this time. Colchester is also the site of at least 5 burial areas dating from the 5th and 6th centuries. At the Guildford Road cemetery (Crummy 1981), the interred women are rather richly presented. This this especially true of the older woman (aged between 50 and 70) whose dress included a silver ring, alongside beads, a cruciform brooch, and a pierced Roman silver coin of Valens (AD 367-78). At the Mersea Road cemetery (*ibid.*) 9 spears and 4 shields were found, suggesting weapon burial at this site in Colchester over a long period from the 5th century, perhaps up until the late 7th and perhaps even early 8th century. Other weapons have also been found in Colchester dating to this time, though they have no exact provenance (*ibid.*; Challis 1992: 236-8). Three more spears dating to different points in the 5th, 6th and 7th centuries were found in a Roman cemetery at Butt Road (Crummy 1981). Weapon burials have been associated with the symbolism of high status (e.g. Härke 1990; 1992; 1997). The continued burial of weapons at this site well into the period when barely any graves were furnished may well be indicative of some special symbolism – if not contemporary significance – attached to the site of Colchester itself. Crummy's syntheses (1980; 1981) of some of the archaeological evidence from Colchester played down the importance of the town; perhaps in light of the limited settlement remains and clear degradation of the Roman environment. Crummy suggested (*ibid.*) that external

communities may have buried their dead in Colchester for its symbolism, whilst living elsewhere. However, the imported finds from the town suggest that it is at least reasonable to posit that Colchester had some significant function prior to its gradual urbanization from the 10th century onwards. Indeed, if Metcalf (1993a: 80-1) is right that *Vanimundus* coins were minted in Colchester, then the area must have had some importance in the later 7th century.

The Mucking settlement is interesting in the context of coastal networks. In the 6th and 7th centuries the inhabitants at Mucking clearly had access to imported goods. Given the size of the excavation one must be cautious about evaluating whether or not this was exceptional, especially within the coastal zone. However, it is notable that the settlement declined in the 7th and 8th centuries. The area of Mucking did not continue beyond this time and develop into a centre of trade despite its location and evidently varied small-scale industry. One of the major reasons for this may well be the emergence of nearby Tilbury in the later 7th and 8th centuries. The abandonment of numerous settlements in the 7th century has commonly been associated with a 'settlement shift' associated with elite reorganization of the countryside for the purposes of tribute and surplus production, rather than simply subsistence farming (Blinkhorn 1999: 14). Added to this settlement hierarchy were the new class of ecclesiastical sites during the course of the 7th century. The emergence of secular and ecclesiastical estates with wealth, power, and contacts clearly

would have had a strong hand in the structuring of early medieval trade in Essex.

However, this is not to say that only those of high status would have been accessing trade, simply that it is reasonable to see how wealthy coastal centres, acting as the foci for a number of networks and activities, attracted traders. It should be understood that these sites could be used by many levels of society. Trade at estate centres does not mean that it was only the heads of these estates that were trading.

From the later 9th and 10th centuries there was perhaps a more central role for elites in the creation of centres of trade. Planning witnessed at *Lundenburh* and Colchester, and the construction of *burhs* at these sites and at Maldon, shows the investment of the rulers of society in the process of urbanization. The desire of aristocrats to hold land in towns also shows an active engagement of otherwise rural lords with centres of trade (e.g. Loveluck 2011). The emergence of these sites coincides with a decline in apparent exchange activity at other sites along the North Sea coast. Loveluck (2012) has examined the impact of 10th-/11th-century elite patronage of aspects of particular towns and their associated industries in Lincolnshire and around the Danish straits on the wider coastal network. Loveluck (*ibid.*: 147-8, 159, 164-5) found a pattern akin to that observed for Essex in this study, in which coastal societies on both sides of the North Sea developed towards greater centralization of exchange in urban spheres, linked to elite patronage and presence at these sites.

10.4. Town & Country

10.4.1. Introduction

The previous sections have discussed the development of major centres of exchange in the Essex and London region. This was addressed firstly by examining the nature and development of Essex's engagement with the North Sea coastal trade network in Section 10.2. Section 10.3 discussed the role of elites in the creation and functioning of centres of exchange and their related economic networks. The final discussion section now turns to the crucial relationship between town and country in the Essex region. Specifically this section further examines the role of exchange centres, as well as the process of urbanization in Essex. In the previous section it was argued that the function of coastal exchange sites was not to redistribute prestige goods. This section discusses why they existed, and how they fit within the context of broader economic activity in the region.

10.4.2. The Roman legacy

Before reviewing urban development in Essex and the urban-rural network it is worthwhile reviewing the legacy of urban centres from the Roman period. This provides some background context to the emergence of centres of exchange and urban development in the Anglo-Saxon period.

It has been argued (e.g. Dark 2000; Henig 2011) that there was substantial continuity – at least of occupation – on former Roman urban sites into the Anglo-Saxon period. Henig (2011: 516) has even gone as far as to argue that, *"not a single one of them died; all of them retained a real presence and vitality in the landscape until the seventh century at least"*. This conclusion seems extreme when one assesses the Roman towns of Essex.

What we have to distinguish between is simply evidence of settlement or burial at former Roman towns and more significant functional continuity. The latter is most important for the question asked here, which is what did the Anglo-Saxon urban centres owe to their Roman predecessors?

The short answer to this question is probably very little. Towns and 'Small Towns' had been in decline in the late Roman period. In the 4th century there is evidence of occupation at several larger Roman settlements in Essex (Eddy & Petchey 1983; Baker 2006: 21-33). However, there is no apparent functional continuity at any of these sites into the Anglo-Saxon period.

At no site was the Roman built environment maintained. Small-scale settlement represented by *Grubenhäuser* has been found at Heybridge (Drury & Wickenden 1982; Wickenden 1986; Wallis & Waughman 1998), Colchester (Crummy 1980; 1981), and Braintree (Essex HER: 6288; 6292). At both Braintree and London, Roman remains are covered with 'dark earth' representing the build-up of organic matter from thatched roofs or signifying a return to cultivation. At Harlow, the post-Roman occupation around in the

temple area has been described as 'squatting' (Essex HER: 16171 & 16965). At Witham, a small typical Anglo-Saxon rural settlement and mixed burial ground was set out on a different alignment in the 5th century (Essex HER: 18505 & 18506; 17423).

At the former Roman 'Small Town' of at Heybridge there is also evidence that the earliest Continental migrants may have settled into a sub-Roman British community (Drury & Wickenden 1982; Wickenden 1986; Wallis & Waughman 1998). There is evidence here of new Continental pottery, such as carinated bowls and globular jars, being used alongside Roman pottery. However, it unclear how far this simply represents the common practice of reuse, as opposed to a truly mixed community.

No evidence has been found of either continued or renewed settlement at either the 'Small Town' of Great Dunmow, or at the *mansio* at Chelmsford in the post-Roman period.

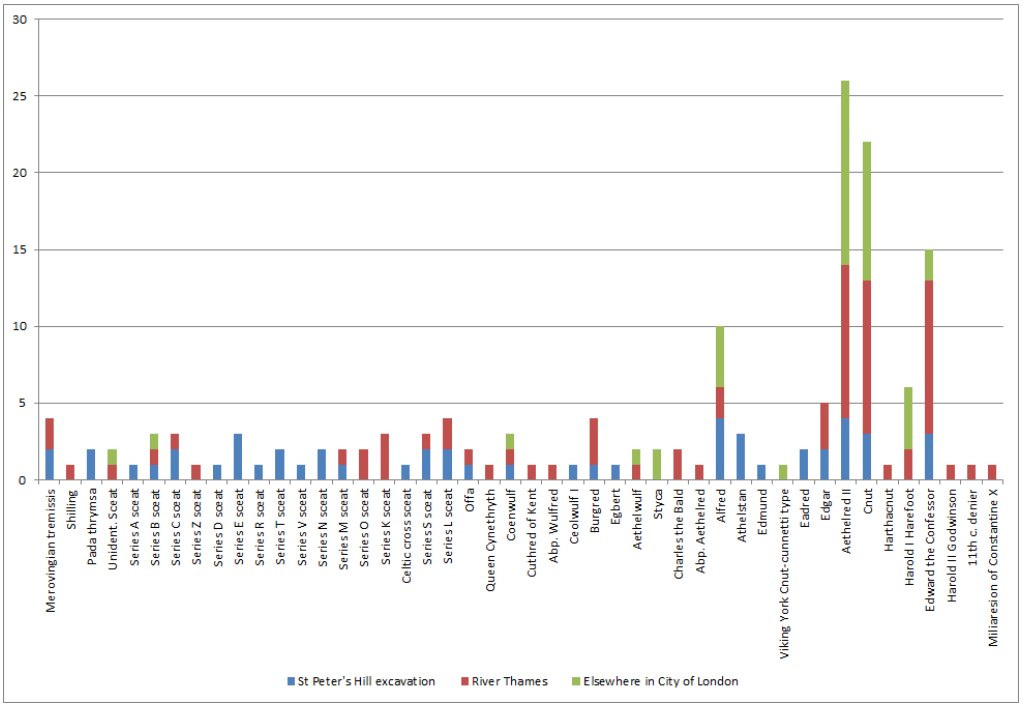
Though there was some level of settlement continuity on some of the above sites, none of them became urban sites in the Anglo-Saxon period. Thus, we cannot talk of any urban legacy from the Roman period beyond, perhaps, a symbolic one.

The best evidence of continued settlement comes from Colchester (*Camulodunum).* Continuity here exists in the form of a small area of settlement excavated at Lion Walk (Crummy 1980; 1981), burials at several locations (*ibid.*), and as series of finds indicating that people living in the area

of Colchester were consistently receiving imported goods or coinage from at least the 6th century. The evidence here is extremely fragmentary and difficult to read, but might suggest that there were families with wealth living in the area of the former *Colonia*. The lifestyles here, however, have almost nothing in common with Roman Colchester, but look rather like rural settlements, engaged in domestic activities such as weaving. Whether the status or renown of the former town enabled them better access to imports is not clear. The site may have remained as a centre for the local area, though this is only speculation based on the presence of 5th-7th-century burial sites in the town.

10.4.3.The emergence of exchange hubs from the 7th century

It appears as though the earliest centres of trade were essentially unrelated to their Roman predecessors. Access to trade at Colchester need not imply functional continuity, but does indicate that there was more to the settlement than crumbling Roman buildings. Coinage dating between the 7th and mid-9th centuries at the City of London surely reflects the areas importance as the ecclesiastical centre of London and Essex (Graph 16). The importance of '*Londinium*' as a religious centre was ultimately a legacy of its Roman heritage. Bradwell's (*Othona*) legacy was also probably symbolic, being chosen as the site for Cedd's ecclesiastical communities after a hiatus of 200 years or more.



Graph 16: Compositional graph of coinage found in the City of London

The major development of the 7th century is the development of the *emporium* in the Covent Garden area of London. The scope of this thesis allows only a summary of the general development of *Lundenwic*, the excavations of which are well covered over many papers (e.g. Cowie 1988; Cowie & Whytehead 1988; Whytehead & Cowie 1988; Blackmore *et al.* 1998; Bowsher & Malcolm 1999; Malcolm & Bowsher 2003) and are soon to be synthesised in a single monograph (Cowie & Blackmore *forthcoming*).

The trading centre at *Lundenwic* emerged in the 7th century in the area of a previous 6th-century burial ground. The heyday of the settlement was in the 8th

century. The archaeological area shows a densely populated settlement, with buildings fronting onto streets, and with backyards behind. As the settlement grew industrial activity became more intense and diversified. The early 7th century settlement was largely concerned with farming. In the later 7th and 8th centuries, specialist iron-, textile-, leather-, and bone-/antler-working are all evidenced, alongside butchers and bakers. These artisans had a symbiotic relationship with the great intensity of trade. The wealth and specialization of this settlement are particularly evident from 8th-century pottery assemblages, which show the majority of the vessels being used were imported, predominantly from Ipswich. Besides pottery, the material culture is far richer than any contemporary sites in Essex. Glass vessels are extremely numerous, especially given the artisanal context in which they are found. In London, imported luxury goods were widely owned. The commonplace experience of this material culture would surely have led it to be ascribed different social value (see Loveluck & Tys 2006). As a result, urban and rural high status would have been differently encoded. The widespread use of imported goods in densely-populated *Lundenwic* contrasts with the concentrated – and thus conspicuous – consumption at Wicken Bonhunt (Wade 1980).

It is difficult to compare the nature of *Lundenwic* with those of the other exchange sites in the Essex region. The intensity of occupation and activity at London would have far exceeded anything in contemporary Essex. However, an in-depth comparison is simply not possible owing to the fact that most of the sites are known from stray finds, rather than stratified assemblages and

features. We can be fairly sure from what we know already that they were probably varied in their functional role (e.g. Loveluck 2001; Naylor 2007).

What then can we say about the function of these sites and how did they relate to the *emporium* at *Lundenwic*? This question is a very difficult one to answer. From the materials examined in this study, it does not appear that they functioned primarily as sites for the importation of luxury goods. There is certainly little evidence for the consumption of 'luxuries'. However, 'luxury' items such as glass and pottery are not commonly found in the absence of professional survey or excavation. In contrast, Loveluck's findings (e.g. Loveluck & Tys 2006; Loveluck 2012) were based on excavated assemblages.

The small amount of imported pottery at these locations when compared to coinage may simply be a function of it being harder to find than coinage. Thus, these sites may suffer from a retrieval bias resulting from the survey strategist of hobby metal-detectorists (Ulmschneider & Pestell 2003: 3). However, grass tempered pottery has been found frequently across the county – at both coastal and inland sites – so the relative paucity of imported pottery is more likely to represent a genuine infrequency. The case of imported glass is different. *Lundenwic* represents an exceptional site of glass vessel use, and as such more has survived through to us in the archaeological record. Away from *Lundenwic* glass dating to the 8th century or later is an extremely rare find; even at *Lundenburh*. The main reason for this is that, as with contemporary dress accessories, none was now deposited in graves. Instead these items were melted down for reuse.

It should also be noted that, though imports are relatively scarce at coastal sites, they would surely have been readily available. In light of this, it does not appear that the primary role of coastal trading sites was to bring in commodities contained within imported wares, or indeed to bring in other imports, such as glass vessels.

Instead, it is likely that these sites were engaged largely in the exchange of ubiquitous goods, such as agricultural products, fish, salt, honey, as well as stone and slaves (e.g. Blinkhorn 1999: 10-7; Campbell 2003: 15-6; Naylor 2004). Increased specialization at *emporia* such as London and Ipswich would have created a market for rural products.

This was probably aided by the reorganization of the countryside, which would have increased surplus production. It is debateable whether elites founded and supported *emporia*. However, elites may indirectly have supported specialist centres through their organization of resources (Blinkhorn 1999: 20), which could then been exchanged at coastal sites, which provided the fastest route to the *emporia*.

Rippon (2000) has contrasted the patterns of land reclamation on the Essex coast with those around the Severn Estuary. He found that while the Severn Estuary was drained in stages during the Anglo-Saxon period, the contemporary marshlands of Essex were untouched. One of the reasons given for this was the impact of the market at London (*ibid.*: 65), to which the Essex economy geared itself, leading to a *"strong coastal economy"* (*ibid.*: 70)

during the Middle Ages. It was argued that seawater provided an important source of salt in the absence of inland deposits, such as those available to communities near the Severn Estuary (*viz.* Droitwich brine) (*ibid.*: 72). The Essex marshes would also have been profitably used as grazing land to produce animal products for the London market (*ibid.*: 70).

These conclusions are supported especially by the archaeology of the Blackwater region. There is extensive evidence of salt production in coastal areas of Essex from the Bronze Age onwards around the Blackwater and elsewhere (e.g. Barford 1988; Fawn *et al.* 1990; Wilkinson & Murphy 1995: 157-65; Strachan 1996; Buckley 2000: 11-4). Most famously, this evidence is derived from the 'Red Hills' which are scattered along the Essex coast. 'Red Hills' are mounds (often ploughed-out) of industrial waste – typically including pottery, ash, and soil – which have been coloured red from the boiling of seawater during salt production. They typically cover the remains of hearths and other material related to the evaporation of water. In addition, evidence of a possibly temporary structure associated with seasonal grazing or salt-making in the 10th century was found at The Stumbles, Goldhanger (Essex HER: 13663).

Moreover, the Blackwater Estuary is home to a concentration of contemporary fish weirs (Gilman 1993: 209; Wallis & Waughman 1998; Strachan 1998; Hall & Clarke 2000). Two were found off Mersea Island, three off the coast at Bradwell, another two at Collins Creek (Goldhanger), and one at Tollesbury. They are all datable between the 7th and 9th centuries. If this is a genuine

nationally important concentration – as it currently appears – it represents a very large number of fish weirs in a relatively small area. It is reasonable to assume the fish were being caught in such an organized manner with a view to the London market. The Blackwater may have represented a very efficient and productive region, being able to catch fish, raise animals, and provide the salt to preserve them. The Royal Opera House (Winder & Gerber-Parfitt 2003) site also produced the remains of oysters possibly from either the Colchester-Ipswich coastal region or the Thames Estuary. If the estuary was being exploited for this purpose, we might see this as a one resource behind the trade at Tilbury and/or Canvey Island.

Though Strachan (1998: 280) associated the fish weirs with provisioning for Cedd's monastery, the dating of them appears too late, suggesting that they were still in operation and maintained after the end of the monastic period at Bradwell. Instead it may be that the three fish weirs provide us with a rare productive/functional context for the 'productive site' at Bradwell. Perhaps strangely, no East Anglian coins have been found at Bradwell, and just one (Series N) London *sceatta* has been recovered. However, the mint only provides a heuristic as to the movement of trade. It is likely that coins from other mints came via London or Ipswich, rather than directly.

It is also tempting to see the Collins Creek fish traps as related to the group of settlements in the Goldhanger (Chigborough Farm and The Stumbles) and Totham (Rook Hall and Slough House Farm) area (Wallis & Waughman 1998), which may have functioned together as a part of an estate centred

around the Blackwater marshes, and involved in a range of activities potentially including specialist metalworking, fishing, sheep grazing, and salt panning. Evidence of settlement and productive activity has been found around Goldhanger from at least the 6th century (Essex HER: 12110; 19578) to the early 10th century (Essex HER: 13663). However, the only coin found in the area is a Series B *sceat* (PAS: ESS-E24917), found at Goldhanger.

The fish traps at East and West Mersea (Strachan 1998), as well as the impressive late 7th-century causeway ('The Strood') (Crummy *et al.* 1982) would all have required a great communal labour investment. It is possible that these structures relate to a monastic estate on Mersea Island with economic activity similarly geared towards London. *Sceattas* of Series J, Cross on steps type North No 61/62 BMC 25 a/b, and Frisian Series E may point towards some level of trade at Mersea at the time of the causeway's construction. The construction of such a large causeway shows that ready access to Mersea Island was very important *c.*700. An alternative suggestion is that the causeway was constructed for King Sebbi, the 'monk-king' of Essex (*c.*665-95), who may have used Mersea Island as a retreat, for religious contemplation (Crummy *et al.* 1982: 85-6).

However, it should also be noted that estuarine resources were being exploited across the shoreline of the study region, with fish traps also found to the north at Holbrook Bay in the Stour Estuary (Strachan 1998); and in the extreme south-west at Arundel St., Westminster (Greater London SMR: ELO76;

MLO77636), and in the Thames by Cheyne Walk, Kensington & Chelsea (Greater London SMR: ELO6432; MLO97906).

The next question to ask is whether we can see provisioning from London into the Essex hinterland. The most obvious place to start is with the distribution of London coinage. Though other coins are likely to have come via London, they potentially reveal less about London's own relationships and more about general routes of trade. Additionally London did not have its own export pottery industry, so it is impossible to track distinctive London products, bar its coinage.

The distribution of London coinage (presented in Chapter 7) is interesting but difficult to read. We can certainly see that there was a close connection between London and Tilbury, as the largest proportion of coins from the 'productive' site come from the London mint. We can also see a close connection between London and Barking as a result of the similar pottery assemblages, particularly in the 8th century with the predominant use of Ipswich ware, and lesser use of wares from the Middle Rhine. This close connection may also be suggested through the use of Roman building material at Barking, probably taken from *Londinium* (Hull 2002: 168).

Together the coin series from London are distributed largely in the eastern/coastal portion of Essex, but there are also a number of finds from inland Essex, especially Series N. Perhaps the most interesting aspect is that the number of London coins is not at all impressive – Tilbury aside –

especially when compared to coins from the Continent. The low numbers unfortunately mean that making any conclusions from these data is hazardous, not to mention difficult. In general, however, the coastal distribution of coinage surely suggests a close economic connection between coastal communities and London, as so much of this coinage – especially that from Kent and the Continent – is likely to have come via London. Indeed, Metcalf (2003) subjected the national distribution of certain *sceat* types to regression analysis and found an overlapping distribution for coins from different mints, indicating that the trade network did not respect political boundaries (*ibid.*: 47).

However, we must also note that the distribution of goods away from trading centres would have been influenced by a number of factors. The movement of goods was socially-embedded to some extent, privileging estate centres over nearby low-status rural sites (e.g. Condron *et al.* 2002: 9). This is a limitation when interpreting exchange routes, as many social, economic, and political influences are invisible to us (Newman 1999: 45).

Blinkhorn's (1999) study of Ipswich ware in East Anglia is an interesting contrast to Essex. He found that, although there appears to have been a more-or-less indiscriminate distribution of Ipswich ware to rural sites (*ibid.*: 5), this was not the case for imported materials (*ibid.*: 11), which suggests that the importance of *emporia* was their engagement with bulk trade in raw materials and mundane items (*ibid.*). He argued further that the internal provisioning of

emporia was the fuel behind the explosion in trade during the 8th century (725-40+) (*ibid.*: 20).

10.4.4. The Viking impact

The biggest changes in the urban-rural network came in the wake of the Viking attacks, invasions, and settlement in the 9th and 10th centuries. The biggest impact was the progressive move towards trade in or next to fortified enclosures, known as *burhs*.

Indirect evidence of Viking raids is provided by several settlements in the region. At the partially excavated religious communities at Nazeing and Barking ceased abruptly around the mid-9th century, possibly as a result of the instability and threat caused by Viking raids (Redknap 1991; 1992; Huggins 1997; Hull 2002).

The Royal Opera House site in *Lundenwic* shows defensive measures being taken in the mid-9th century (Bowsher & Malcolm 1999: 10). This was surely in response to a real Viking threat to centres of wealth, manifest in raids on London in 842 and 851. *Lundenwic* was abandoned for the Roman walled city in the mid-9th century. The Viking threat was surely one factor in this, but the decline in *Lundenwic* may also have been caused by a gradual silting up of the Thames, and a general economic crisis, manifested in a decrease in imported goods (linked in part to the disruption caused by the Vikings) (e.g. Vince 1991: 419).

The City of London was briefly occupied by the Danes in the early 870s, but later regained by King Alfred. The real development of *Lundenburh* begins after London was retaken. The excavated archaeology of this period is split over many articles (e.g. see Dyson & Schofield 1981; Schofield 1981; 1997; 1999; Schofield *et al.* 1990; Lyon 2004; Wroe-Brown 1998; 1999; Treveil & Burch 1999 for major sites) and books (e.g. Vince 1991; Milne 1992; Hill & Woodger 1999; Thomas 2002), as well as many entries in the MoLAS and Greater London SMR databases.

The evidence can be summarised as follows. The reestablishment of London as a West Saxon (nominally 'Mercian') town in the late 9th century preceded an overhaul of the interior of the former Roman centre. A new grid street system was laid out south of the Cheapside/Poultry road, with the Queenhithe/Thames Exchange area established as the major site of activity at the waterfront. Soon afterwards settlement began to the east of the now subterranean Walbrook river, especially in the areas of Threadneedle St., Cornhill, and Lombard St. In the later 10th and 11th centuries there was greater expansion and development of settlement to the north of Cheapside, around Gresham St.

Excavations have revealed evidence of a range of artisanal and mercantile activity, as well as comprehensive animal bone assemblage indicating exploitation and consumption of natural resources (e.g. deer, hare, duck, fresh- and saltwater fish, and molluscs), as well as animal husbandry and consumption (e.g. cattle, pig, sheep, goats, chicken, geese). Some of these assemblages, such as oysters, eels, and flatfish, will have come from the

Thames Estuary, providing a link between the Essex region (and Kent) and *Lundenburh*.

The archaeological picture of the Viking impact is enhanced by an analysis of the stray find data. The distribution of coinage shows that English/West Saxon coinage hardly appears to have entered Essex during the period of Viking rule in the later 9th and early 10th centuries. The English coins found in Essex at this time are almost all in hoards, which probably reflects the loot of Viking raiders. By contrast, Essex's coin assemblage reflects an East Anglian Danelaw network, with Viking East Anglian pennies and coins reflecting long-distance trade routes with the eastern Mediterranean and Asia. The small number of coins also reflects general instability (e.g. Grierson & Blackburn 1986: 284-6). The coins hoards from the region also reflect the socio-political instability of the time, the narrative of which is illustrated in contemporary documents.

10.4.5. Urban development in Essex

The Vikings also had an indirect impact on the nature of urban development in Essex. As at London, fortified sites, known as *burhs*, were created in Essex in the wake of the West Saxon reconquest. In the case of the Essex sites, these were constructed under the authority of Edward the Elder during the course of his reconquest of the 910s. *Burhs* were constructed during the campaign at

Witham (913), Maldon (916), *Wigingamere* (?Newport) (917), and Colchester (917).

Rippon (1996: 120) has argued that the use of Maldon as a base during Edward the Elder's reconquest of Essex suggests that it was a royal estate. Traces of the *burh* defences have been identified at several points to the west of the modern-day town centre (Bedwin 1992; Essex HER: 7767; 8029; 18787; 18788). To the east, evidence of the emergence of a trading centre at Maldon outside the defences of the *burh* has been found in several excavations on the High Street (Eddy 1979; Bedwin 1992; Essex HER: 7725; 13777; 7722 and in HER untitled grey literature) which have revealed evidence of the Anglo-Saxon street frontage, with a pottery assemblage including significant amount of St Neots ware, and some Stamford ware.

Thetford ware has also been found at 5 sites around Colchester (Essex HER: 12299; 12277; 13770; 12296; 12328; 12329), contributing to the fragmentary archaeological record of activity in the former Roman town. The layout of much the current town appears to have been planned using Anglo-Saxon pole measurements, probably during Colchester's transformation into a *burh* (Rippon 1996: 123). We know that a royal vill existed here in the early 10th century, though no definite physical trace of it, or any pre-*burh* estate, has yet been found.

There is no evidence as yet of a *burh* at Newport. This is not necessarily evidence that the *burh* of *Wigingamere* was not located here as, without

excavation, the extant evidence for these sites is often slight or obscure. Witham provides a good example of this. On section of a rectilinear *burh* enclosure may have been identified in a fragmentary earthwork at Burgate field, Rivenhall End (Warwick Rodwell in Essex HER: 14045). However, since the 19th century this earthwork has been cut by a railway line, a road, a pipeline, and housing developments. The most likely evidence of the *burh* Witham comes from Chipping Hill Camp (Essex HER: 8108). The evidence suggests that an Iron Age enclosure was renovated to create the *burh* (S. Tyler in Essex HER: 8108). As at Maldon, the contemporary church and market appear to have been located outside the fortified area (see Essex HER: 8121; 8123). 11th-century St Neots and Thetford ware pottery were found associated with a hearth over a levelled ditch at Chipping Hill Camp (Clarke 2004: 62; Essex HER: 8108).

Unusually for a low-lying eastern county, Iron Age forts may have been built and later reused by the Anglo-Saxons at Asheldham and Danbury (Morris & Buckley 1978: 14). Together with the *burh* at Maldon, these forts, if they were reused, would have provided protection for central Essex from invaders coming up the Blackwater and its tributaries (*ibid.*).

Clearly not all fortified sites had 'urban' functions, but we do know that Colchester, Maldon, and Horndon-on-the-Hill functioned as mints at periods from the late 10th century. Indeed, Maldon was one of only three royal mints named in 925. This was a period in which the duty of minting coins was split between many centres as a safety measure. Just one coin minted in Colchester

(EMC: 1987.0132, from Colchester) and one from Maldon (EMC: 1995.0182, from Thames, City of London) have been found in the study region. It has been speculated (Rippon 1996: 121) that a bank enclosure at Horndon may have been related to the short-lived mint there. The only excavated evidence at Horndon consists of some unremarkable 10th-/11th-century handmade pottery found in a posthole or truncated pit (Essex HER: 16799; 17291). There is an unexcavated enclosure at Horndon, which might possibly relate to the early town (Rippon 1996: 123). The Domesday Book states that land in the town was held by the king, at least in the 11th century (*ibid.*: 122). This fits with the general trend of aristocrats taking a stake in urban centres, rather than relying on rural rents (Loveluck 2011).

The Domesday Book also notes a hall in Maldon belonging to the king (Medlycott 1999: 7). As a royal mint in 925, it is clear that Maldon rapidly grew in importance following the West Saxon reconquest. The products of its mint have not been found in Maldon, but are relatively common in Scandinavia, testifying to a continuing links between this region and northern Europe (*ibid.*: 20-1). In 1066, Maldon and Colchester were the only two boroughs in Essex (Eddy 1983: 66).

The finds of St Neots, Stamford, and Thetford ware pottery from the new towns, the documentary evidence of aristocratic urban holdings, and the great investment in defensive infrastructure are all a testament to an elite desire to encourage these types of centres.

Thetford and St Neots ware have also been found in Saffron Walden (Bassett 1982; Essex HER: 442; 418; 419), reflecting the emergence of a poly-focal settlement here in the latter centuries of the Anglo-Saxon period. This may have been part of royal estate including parts of Essex and Cambridgeshire (Rippon 1996: 120-2). This estate perhaps also included Great Chesterford, which was a royal centre in the 11th century, and where St Neots and Thetford ware have also been found in excavations and stray around the parish church of All Saints (Brooks & Wallis 1991; Essex HER: 4953). This church, with its cruciform plan, may have originated as a minster church (Gadd 2001: 238).

The background pattern of local shell-tempered pottery contrasts with that of imports. While shell-tempered pottery is found dispersed in rural areas as well as towns, the traded wares are mainly found in known urban or proto-urban centres. Stamford ware has been found at Bradwell (Essex HER: 35); and 11th-century Thetford and St Neots wares were excavated at Little Oakley (Barford 2002), suggesting continued activity here, perhaps on a lower level. The later may be related to the manorial estate centred on Foulton Hall noted in the Domesday Book (*ibid.*). However, the overall distributions of the late English wheel-thrown wares seem to trace out the Ouse/Cam and the Blackwater as the major riverine entrance points into Essex. This illustrates both the continuance of the two major intra-regional zones and their respective north- and eastwards foci; and the emergence of Maldon as a market and gateway into Essex. It is possible that the inland finds of imported pottery – such as at Springfield Lyons (Tyler & Major 2005) and Chignall St James (Brooks 1992) – can be

associated with dispersal from the Maldon market via old Roman routeways (Map 1).

The coinage evidence does suggest that there was a move away from many of the previous hubs of exchange, such as Tilbury, Canvey Island, Bradwell, and Great/Little Bromley. Though few coins have been found in Maldon and Colchester, the historical evidence suggests that they were significant sites of monetized trade. Additionally, late 10th-/early 11th-century coins have been found at Saffron Walden (EMC: 2001.0571), Newport (EMC: 2001.1087), and Colchester (1987.0132). Though a coin of Æthelred II has been found at Fingringhoe (Essex HER: 18661), near Colchester, none has been found at Little Oakley, Bradwell, or Canvey Island. Additionally, no contemporary coins have been certified from Tilbury by the Fitzwilliam Museum, Portable Antiquities Scheme, or Essex HER; and Bonser's (1997: 44-5) record claims just a two coins from the period between 900 and 1066 (with none in the 11th century).

It is notable that the coastal trading sites which emerge particularly in the 7th and 8th centuries were in decline at this time. This supports the argument (e.g. Condron 2002: 26; Loveluck 2012) that towns were favoured over these landing places, particularly from the 10th century. These conclusions can only be suggested with caution, as the archaeological remains from 10th- and 11th-century urban and rural Essex is slight. However, this is an interesting trend which fits within current debates regarding the process of urbanization in north-western European societies in the Early Medieval period.

10.4.6.London-Essex relationship

The most striking aspect of the archaeology in the 10th and 11th centuries, however, is the great concentration of imported pottery and coinage in *Lundenburh*. In this period it is hard to see any special relationship between Essex and London. The pottery record from London shows a close relationship with pottery industries up the Thames in the Oxford region. By contrast, away from Barking, this shelly pottery is not found in Essex, which was producing its own shelly pottery. In addition, only a minority of the coins from Essex come from the London mint. The picture is rather of an indiscriminate mixing of coins from different mints. However, we must be careful drawing conclusions from such a small corpus. There are, after all, only two coins in Essex from the three Essex mints. We can be sure that London would have been a significant influence on the regional landscape.

Doubtless the bulk provisioning of commodities such as salt, fish, and meat, proposed for earlier centuries continued well into the medieval period and beyond. Indeed, an 11th-century date has been suggested (Strachan 1998) for the fish weirs at West Mersea on the basis of references to fisheries at Mersea in the Domesday Book; and those at Collins Creek, Goldhanger (Strachan 1998; Wallis & Waughman 1998; Hall & Clarke 2000) were possibly maintained into the 10th century. Indeed Rippon's (2000) study has shown the long-term economic significance of the late draining of the Essex marshes.

10.5. Summary

In summary, this study has revealed that the region of Essex was an active participant in the long-distance exchange networks that developed during the early medieval period. This thesis proposes two more-or-less separate zones of interaction. One in the north-west, tied into the socio-economic sphere of the Wash/Ouse region; while the other in the eastern coastal and riverine zone looked eastwards towards neighbouring coastal regions and the continent. The coinage and pottery evidence in particular have highlighted several previously unrecognized sites along the east coast, which were consistently engaging in long-distance exchange over a long period of time. However, these same distributions reveal coastal communities to be quite widely participating in monetized exchange with neighbouring and distant regions.

Imported goods and coinage have been found on numerous sites near the Essex coast, from as early as the 6th century. One of the biggest debates regarding contemporary economic networks is the level and nature of elite engagement with them. The evidence from Essex suggests that the relationship between imports, trade, and the social hierarchy is complex. From the 5th to the mid-7th century access to imported goods appears to have been used as part of symbolic elite display. However, access to goods such as pottery and glass appears to have been limited by location, with most finds located on the east coast.

Indeed, the mechanism by which the earliest exotic imports came to England to be buried in contexts such as the Prittlewell 'Princely' burial would have

been gift-exchange (Lebecq 1997: 70), rather than a result of mercantile activity, elite-directed or not, suggesting an early elite role in driving the importation of exceptional items.

With the expansion in trade in the later 7th century a number of exchange sites emerged in the coastal and riverine zone of Essex. There is no clear evidence that the development of these sites in general was an elite initiative. Some of the sites which have been identified – namely Barking, Bradwell, and Tilbury – have ecclesiastical associations. However, in the latter two cases, the finds that are indicative of trade post-date the probable monastic phases. It may be instead that these two monastic communities made nodal centres out of their locations, which continued in the secular sense after the end of the monasteries.

Additionally, we must guard against automatically thinking of all ecclesiastical sites as engaged in trade. There is very little evidence as yet of trade and exchange from Nazingbury and St Osyth. It may be that there was a difference in the level of engagement with the long-distance exchange network between monasteries and convents.

We should also be clear to differentiate the involvement of elite settlements in trade from Hodges' (1982; 1989) theory that *emporia* were used by elites to control access to prestige goods. In Essex, there is no evidence that London – or any of the other coastal markets for that matter – were effectively redistributing prestige goods to high status centres. The best evidence there is

in favour of Hodges' theory is the link between Barking and *Lundenwic* through their consumption of Ipswich ware. However, this link seems quite incidental in the long-term chronology of London.

The development of exchange sites is thus complex. It is likely that a number of factors were at play. Bradwell, Colchester, and the City of London each had Roman predecessors, but the significance of this fact for each of these sites is different. Tilbury, Bradwell, Barking, and the City of London are all linked with ecclesiastical sites. However, the different chronologies of these foundations relative to the emergence of the sites as centres of trade, makes this link more complicated. Indeed, not all of the ecclesiastical institutions of the region developed into exchange hubs. Then there are the sites at Canvey Island, Great Bromley, and Fingringhoe, which do not appear to have had any significant predecessor.

There is thus an interesting interplay inherent in the structure and functioning of the early exchange network in Essex, which suggests both elite structure and direction and potentially a more open and bottom-up development. This was probably motivated by the potential for individual profit-making for merchants clustered at these sites (e.g. Loveluck 2012: 127).

From the later 9th century there appears to have been a gradual decline in the general engagement of coastal communities with long-distance exchange at the traditional landing places and centres. This change is concurrent with the emergence of urban centres, such as *Lundenburh*, Colchester, and Maldon. The

development of these sites appears to have been much more intimately linked to social elites, particularly as manifest in town planning (including defences), patronage, taxation, and urban landholding.

Chapter 11

Conclusions

This study has brought together the totality of the archaeological evidence from Anglo-Saxon Essex and London for the first time. This was done with the aim of studying various specific aspects of group identities and society in the region. The main focus was on three material classes which were subject to diachronic distributional studies: dress accessories, pottery, and coinage. The findings from these analyses were then discussed within their wider archaeological context. The study has shown the value of using stray and excavated archaeological evidence and studying one region across the Anglo-Saxon period. In this way this thesis has been able to explore many of the key themes related to the development of early medieval England.

In the first two centuries of the Anglo-Saxon period the archaeological evidence from dress accessories in Essex demonstrates the emergence of a widely-held hybrid costume. At first, in the 5th century, numerous influences are visible on dress in the region, with the use of styles from Britain and the Continent. However, in the later 5th and 6th centuries, the dress styles of Essex – whilst hybrid styles were adopted – are influenced by a narrower range of cultural ideas. This fashion was clearly created to predominantly reflect 5th-century fashions in Lower Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein, and Frisia. Notably the

fashions were not identical to dress in any one of these regions, and the chronologies and use of common dress accessories was often different. This illustrates the active construction of dress at this time.

From these results, this thesis has argued for a rejection of the notion that 6th-century dress was related to ethnic labels given to regional kingdoms of the 7th century. Besides the weak theoretical basis for this link, there is no significant correlation between the territory of the kingdom of the East Saxons and any particular fashion. Rather, the distributions reveal two core zones of dress: one in the north-west of the county, and one in the south-east. We cannot begin to label Essex's hybrid costume with a specific ethnic identity. All that we can be sure of is that communities in this region were choosing to culturally affiliate themselves with aspects of north-western European cultures.

Chapter 9 questioned how this affiliation might have come about. The analysis contextualized 5th- and 6th-century dress within the broader contemporary transformations in culture and society. This included an up-to-date characterization of burial practice in the region. It now appears that there was a much more balanced use of cremation and inhumation practices than has previously been assumed (e.g. O'Brien 1999). The magnitude of cultural change is taken by this thesis to strongly suggest that large-scale migration was a significant factor in the formation of 'Anglo-Saxon' communities and their identities.

The use and creative adaptation of Continental culture in the 5th and 6th centuries indicates that there was extensive contact across the North Sea and English Channel in the immediate sub-Roman period. This was the beginning of a reorientation of the Essex region towards coastal communities around the North Sea. The pottery and coinage evidence presented in Chapters 6, 7, and 8, as well as the discussion in Chapter 10, all highlighted the early use of imported material; particularly from Francia. Gold coinage, glass, and Continental black wheel-thrown wares were used by 6th- and 7th-century individuals as markers of status. The common symbolism/language of later 6th- and early 7th-century elite burials, especially at Prittlewell, Rainham, and Broomfield shows how the iconography of status was bound up in engagement with long-distance social networks.

The distributional analyses of the coinage and pottery data demonstrated the existence of hubs of exchange from at least the 7th century, prior to the emergence of recognizable *emporia*. One of these centres appears to have been the City of London. The historical narrative of Bede (*HE* II.3) notes the creation of the see of St Paul's in the early 7th century. This thesis has highlighted a concentration of early coin finds here showing that the City of London was a destination for exchange from the early 7th century. This may well have been linked to the presence of a minster community.

The introduction of silver *sceatta* and later broad flan pennies and the production of Ipswich ware pottery in the late 7th and 8th centuries make it easier to identify sites which were consistently engaging with long-distance

trade during the period in which the North Sea trade network was expanding, and in which *Lundenwic* emerged as a significant nucleus of industry and exchange. In Essex, we can identify a diverse range of sites, which probably represent the engagement of many levels of society with the North Sea network. Importantly, there does not appear to have been any clear elite direction to the establishment of sites of exchange at this time. Moreover, there is no indication that the *emporium* of *Lundenwic* was being used to restrict access to prestige goods. 'Luxury' items, such as glass and imported tablewares, were heavily consumed in London, but do not appear to have been redistributed far from here. Indeed, imported pottery and coinage is found along the coastal fringe of Essex, indicating a much more generalized engagement with long-distance trade.

At the same time as maritime networks were expanding, the cultural affiliations of dress changed dramatically. From the 7th century, new female fashions replaced the folk costume, which had developed in the previous two centuries. These fashions show a great Continental influence, with Merovingian/Classical-style gowns replacing the *peplos*-type gown for women; and especially the use of Merovingian and Carolingian dress accessories by both men and women. While the change in gown was a wider European phenomenon, the use of Frankish dress metalwork was only adopted by a few. Much of this metalwork was rather fine, and might suggest a link between Continental affiliations and status. The adoption of Carolingian and Western European designs into English art also shows off this cosmopolitan

culture. Expressions of identity through dress now appear to have been linked to interlocking social, economic, and political European networks.

The archaeological evidence from Essex certainly shows the dynamic nature of the coastal zone. One of the greatest impacts on Essex's identity and society came from the Vikings in the 9th and early 10th centuries. The Danelaw period in Essex appears to have created a political and cultural north-south divide in the county, with the north of Essex pulled into the orbit of Danish East Anglia. This has not been recognized before. Scandinavian cultural and economic influence however, is reflected particularly in the adoption of new dress accessories in northern Essex; Scandinavian place-names; and the distribution of Danish East Anglian coinage.

Whilst this evidence gives a picture of a settled society, other evidence reflects the tumult of a contested territory. The first is the nationally important concentration of riverine votive deposits of weaponry that this study has identified across the region. The second is the disturbance to trade. The clearest indication of this is in the coinage record, which suffers from a severe reduction in the amount of coinage that was lost, representing fewer coins in circulation. By contrast, there is an increase in the number of coin hoards, signifying contemporary instability. The Viking threat also led to the abandonment of vulnerable sites, such as *Lundenwic*, Barking, and Nazingbury, and to the creation of fortified central places.

However, the Scandinavian impact on regional trade was more nuanced than this. Though the number of finds at the coastal hubs declines, there are indications that many still functioned. Indeed, there is strong evidence to suggest that these sites were incorporated in the extremely far-reaching exchange networks facilitated by Scandinavian traders, bringing goods from Byzantium, the Middle East, and beyond.

While Viking activity does not appear to have killed off the smaller sites of exchange in Essex, there does appear to have been a gradual decline in the level of activity of these sites from the around the mid-9th century onwards. This decline occurs at a time when the fortified centres at London, Maldon, and Colchester were being created and invested in by elites. Though the body of evidence from Essex is still small, the trend suggests that the coastal exchange of 'imported' English wheel-thrown pottery may have been centred on these sponsored sites. What is clearer is the concentration of imported pottery and coinage in *Lundenburh*. In the 10th and 11th centuries London appears to have dominated regional trade with the Continent more than at any time previously in the Anglo-Saxon period. Thus, in the Essex region, we appear to be seeing the beginnings of a medieval society in which urban and rural spaces were more clearly distinguished.

This study of the archaeological evidence from Essex, amassing the data from *c.*1,900 sites, has been able to reveal much of the grand sweep of history that took North Sea communities from the fall of the Roman Empire to the beginning of the medieval age. Within this period, communities in Essex

created dynamic identities, which shifted within changing social, political, and economic circumstances.

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