Lordship and Landscape examines the origins and development of the East Anglian kingdom in the fifth to eighth centuries through the lens of the elite settlement complex at Rendlesham, Suffolk. It also explores more widely pathways to territorial lordship in post-Roman England. The first part presents a comprehensive analysis of the results of field survey (including systematic metal-detecting) and trial excavation at Rendlesham between 2008 and 2017, establishing the socio-economic character of the site, its place in the local social and political landscapes, and the long-term development of the immediate settlement landscape. The second part examines the wider regional context through comparative analysis of unpublished 'productive' sites, and concludes with a new narrative of kingdom formation. The approach is inter-disciplinary, integrating archaeology, landscape history, place-name studies, textual history, numismatics and materials science. It offers innovative approaches to the analysis of metal-detected assemblages, and to modelling the development of regional rulership and its associated social and administrative landscapes.

Christopher Scull is an archaeologist with research interests in early medieval society and economy, on which he has published extensively. He is a Visiting Professor at the School of History, Archaeology and Religion, Cardiff University, and an Honorary Professor at the UCL Institute of Archaeology.

Stuart Brookes is Lecturer (Teaching) in Medieval Archaeology at the UCL Institute of Archaeology. He has published various books on the archaeology of early medieval Europe, including *Beyond the Burghal Hidage: civil defence in Anglo-Saxon England* (2013), *Polity and Neighbourhood in Early Medieval Europe* (2019) and *Peasant Perceptions of Landscape* (2021).

Tom Williamson is Emeritus Professor in the School of History, University of East Anglia and has written widely on landscape history, historical ecology and the history of landscape design. His publications on the early medieval period include *The Origins of Norfolk* (1993), *Sutton Hoo and its Landscape* (2008) and *Environment, Society and Landscape in Early Medieval England* (2013).

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UCL

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Lordship and Landscape in East Anglia AD 400–800

The Royal Centre at Rendlesham, Suffolk, and its contexts

Edited by Christopher Scull, Stuart Brookes and Tom Williamson

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The project *Lordship and Landscape in East Anglia CE 400–800* was funded by the Leverhulme Trust through a Research Project Grant (RPG-2017-172). The authors and publisher are grateful to the following for their generous financial support of this monograph publication: the Marc Fitch Fund, the Sutton Hoo Society, University College London, Historic England, and the Scarfe Charitable Trust.

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Christopher Scull, Martin Allen, Eleanor Blakelock, Stuart Brookes, Faye Minter, Timothy Pestell, Judith Plouviez, Eleanor Rye, Tom Williamson, Andrew Woods and Barbara Yorke

with contributions by Charles French, Valerie Fryer, Richard Kelleher, Lynne Keys, Marcos Martinón-Torres, Sam Moorhead, Charlotte Scull, Zofia Stos-Gale and Sean Taylor

Edited by Christopher Scull, Stuart Brookes and Tom Williamson

Dedicated to Robert Atfield, Roy Damant, Terry Marsh and Alan Smith

Research Report of the Society of Antiquaries of London No. 84

SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF LONDON

The detectorists, photographed at a day-conference on Rendlesham at the Apex Theatre, Bury St Edmunds, 24 September 2016.
Left to right: Roy Damant, Robert Atfield, Terry Marsh and Alan Smith. © *Andy Abbott/East Anglian Daily Times*

Foreword

We are very pleased to have been asked to write a foreword to introduce this scholarly work which is the product of painstaking analysis by a talented research team.

It was by pure chance that we found ourselves involved from the very start of the events that led to the very long road culminating in the publication of this work and indeed to the further fieldwork that has been undertaken here at Rendlesham in 2021, 2022 and 2023. Our family has owned the Naunton Hall Estate for nearly 100 years. Although the reference to the *vicus regius* by Bede was well known – and I understand that my grandfather hosted Rupert Bruce-Mitford during his investigations after the Second World War – no conclusive evidence for its existence on our estate had been forthcoming until, in 2006/7, we began to suffer a spate of illegal metal-detecting at night on our fields. Perpetrators arrested by the police for their illegal activity proved to have travelled to Rendlesham from many miles away. Why were they drawn to Rendlesham? Well obviously the grapevine told them that the journey to steal valuable items for illegal gain was worthwhile.

Thanks to the initiative of Jude Plouviez of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service a team of four dedicated and expert metal detectorists arrived – in daylight – in 2008 and began the painstaking and detailed investigation of the site as described in this book which is dedicated to them. Without the hundreds of hours that they toiled for, and then meticulously recorded their findings, neither this book nor the subsequent work undertaken here would have been possible. We wish to emphasise our admiration for them and are proud that they have become friends. We also wish to thank Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, initially Jude Plouviez and, after her retirement, her successor Faye Minter, for their unstinting support.

Once the importance of Rendlesham began to become apparent the County Council asked Professor Scull to help guide the project and we have been privileged to watch the unfolding of the academic enterprise which has resulted in the publication of this book.

Michael and Caroline Bunbury
Rendlesham
March 2024

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Front cover: View west across the Deben valley taken in August 2022 showing the exposed foundation of the timber great hall identified from aerial photographs in RLM 013, and beyond it the perimeter ditch identified from magnetometry and aerial photographs. The ploughsoil has been removed, and the archaeological features stand out clearly, but excavation has not yet begun. *Jim Pullen; © Suffolk County Council*

Back cover: English gold shilling of the 'Two Emperors' type from Rendlesham (RLM 013 0970). This, and coins like it, may have been minted at Rendlesham. © *Suffolk County Council*

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Abbreviations used in volume

ADS	Archaeology Data Service
BL	British Library, London
BM	British Museum, London
CBA	Council for British Archaeology
CUMAA	Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology
DB	Williams, A and Martin, G (eds) 2002. *Domesday Book: a complete translation*, Alecto Historical Editions, London: Penguin
DCMS	Department of Culture, Media and Sport
EH	Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*
EMC	Corpus of Early Medieval Coin Finds
EPNS	English Place-Name Society
GIS	Geographic Information System
HBMCE	Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England
HER	Historic Environment Record
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
LDB	Brown, P (ed) 1984. *Domesday Book Norfolk*, 2 vols, Chichester: Phillimore
LiDAR	Light Detection and Ranging
NAHRG	Norfolk Archaeological and Historical Research Group
NAU	Norfolk Archaeological Unit
NCM	Norwich Castle Museum
NE	Natural England
NHER	Norfolk Historic Environment Record
NMP	National Mapping Programme
NRO	Norfolk Record Office
OE	Old English
OED	*OED Online* <www.oed.com> (24 Jan 2021)
OS	Ordnance Survey
PAS	Portable Antiquities Scheme
RCHME	Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England
S	Sawyer, P 1968. *Anglo-Saxon Charters: an annotated list and bibliography*, Roy Hist Soc Guides and Handbooks, 8, London: Roy Hist Soc
SCCAS	Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
SHER	Suffolk Historic Environment Record
SRO	Suffolk Record Office
TNA, PRO	The National Archives (Kew), Public Record Office
TRE	*tempore regis Edwardi*
TRW	*tempore regis Willhelmi*
VA	Victoria and Albert Museum

Introduction

0.1 Project funding, project team and research contributions

The project Lordship and Landscape in East Anglia CE 400–800 was funded by the Leverhulme Trust through a Research Project Grant (RPG-2017-172) and was based at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London in partnership with the University of East Anglia and the Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge. It was originally scheduled to run for 30 months from November 2017 but was extended to April 2021 to compensate for delays arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Principal Investigator was Professor Christopher Scull (University College London), the Co-Investigators Professor Tom Williamson and Dr Tim Pestell (University of East Anglia) and Dr Martin Allen (Fitzwilliam Museum). Research Associates were Dr Eleanor Blakelock, Dr Stuart Brookes, Faye Minter and Judith Plouviez (University College London), Dr Andrew Woods (Fitzwilliam Museum), and Dr Eleanor Rye (University of East Anglia). Additional expert advice was provided on a consultancy basis by Dr Richard Kelleher, Dr Kelly Kilpatrick, Dr Sam Moorhead and John Newman. The project benefitted from an Advisory Board chaired by Professor Andrew Reynolds (University College London) whose other members were Professor Marcos Martinón-Torres (University of Cambridge), Dr Sam Lucy (University of Cambridge) and Professor Barbara Yorke (University of Winchester).

Christopher Scull was responsible for the overall direction of the project, and had particular oversight of analysis of the material culture assemblages, modelling Rendlesham and the other settlement complexes chosen as case studies, and characterising the broader social, economic and political dynamics bearing on the development of the early East Anglian kingdom. Stuart Brookes was responsible for the GIS environment that integrated and underpinned the project as a whole, and undertook the spatial modelling and statistical analysis as well as contributing significantly to the project's conclusions on pathways to lordship and regional rulership. Faye Minter and Judith Plouviez—with Tim Pestell for the Norfolk sites—led on the collation, data-cleaning and analysis of the material culture assemblages from the sites chosen as case studies, with advice from John Newman on sites investigated during the South-east Suffolk Survey. Work on reconstructing and modelling past landscapes, and on the relationships between terrain and human geographies, was led by Tom Williamson with analysis of place-names by Eleanor Rye and advice on the place-names of Suffolk from Kelly Kilpatrick. Numismatic and monetary analysis was undertaken under the overall guidance of Martin Allen by Andrew Woods, Richard Kelleher and Sam Moorhead. Analysis of non-ferrous metal objects and metalworking waste was carried out by Eleanor Blakelock with guidance from Marcos Martinón-Torres and advice on the results of isotopic analysis from Zofia Stos-Gale. Barbara Yorke re-examined from first principles the early history of the East Anglian kingdom from the written sources.

The project team's breadth of expertise across conventional disciplinary boundaries allowed a cross-

fertilisation of ideas and perspectives that generated new insights and new methods and approaches. As well as day-to-day collaboration between colleagues, the project team met as a whole, and with the Advisory Board, on a regular basis to review progress and discuss emerging results, and to develop interpretations and conclusions. All involved appreciated the opportunities to approach common questions from a range of perspectives, with expert support as needed from allied specialisms. With a collegiate inter-disciplinary project of this nature it is difficult to disentangle individual contributions from group effort: it is no exaggeration to say that every member of the project team contributed in some way to every major aspect of the analysis and interpretative narrative presented in this publication. Consequently, authorship is credited where one, two or three contributors are primarily responsible for a chapter or text section, but where no author is credited the text should be considered the joint product of collegial working by the project team as a whole, narrated by the Principal Investigator in the role of rapporteur.

The majority of plans, maps and plots were originated or prepared for publication by Stuart Brookes. Object photographs are by staff of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, and line illustrations of objects are by Donna Wreathall. Aerial photography by drone of key sites was undertaken by Jim Pullen and Geoff Lunn.

0.2 Acknowledgements

Lordship and Landscape builds upon the results of the Rendlesham Survey managed and co-ordinated by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service since 2008. Fieldwork and recording has been financed by contributions from Suffolk County Council, the Sutton Hoo Society, Historic England, the Society of Antiquaries of London, the Royal Archaeological Institute, the Society for Medieval Archaeology, and the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History. The meticulous metal-detector survey undertaken by Robert Atfield, Roy Damant, Terry Marsh and Alan Smith is the foundation of our understanding of the settlement complex at Rendlesham, and without their work the research reported in this volume would not have happened. Equally fundamental has been the firm support and encouragement throughout of the landowners, Sir Michael and Lady Caroline Bunbury, and the contract farmer, Philip Westrope.

In addition to those formally linked with the Lordship and Landscape project we are indebted to many colleagues who provided advice or assistance, or on whose related work we have been able to draw. Professor Charles French and Dr Sean Taylor, Dr Valerie Fryer, Professor Chris Gaffney, and Dr Charlotte Scull have kindly made available for publication results of fieldwork and analysis undertaken at Rendlesham between 2013 and 2018. Dr Keith Briggs generously made his draft survey of Suffolk place-names available to the project team, and provided regular updates to this material. Dr Helen Woodhouse and Neil Paveley undertook extensive magnetometry and topographic survey for Suffolk County Council, and additional magnetometry within the grounds of Naunton Hall was undertaken by John Rainer and members of the Suffolk Archaeological Field Group. Matthew Canti undertook a preliminary assessment of soils, which was followed by a trial geochemical survey by Dr Joanna Dunster and Dr David Dungworth. Rog Palmer assessed and plotted features visible on the aerial photography coverage, Damian Grady included the site in Historic England's programme of aerial reconnaissance, and Sarah Horlock and her colleagues made available the results of the National Mapping Programme's work on the East Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. Trial excavation in 2013 and 2014 was directed by Judith Plouviez and Christopher Scull, and undertaken by staff of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service and members of the Suffolk Archaeological Field Group under the supervision of Andrew Tester.

Dr Mary Chester-Kadwell and Dr Stanley West generously made their research archives available to the Lordship and Landscape project, Dr Will Bowden and Dr Natasha Harlow kindly shared information on finds from Caistor-by-Norwich, David Sherlock generously gave access to his unpublished research on Rendlesham, George Barlow shared his work on Domesday geography, Eamon Baldwin facilitated the use of his magnetometry survey at Hoxne, and David Cummings gave access to records and finds from his metal-detecting at Coddenham. Heather Hamilton and James Rolfe respectively facilitated access to data from the Historic Environment Records for Norfolk and Suffolk. Philip Wise allowed the loan of metalwork held at Ipswich Museum to the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, for scientific analysis, where the support of Dr Tom Gregory is gratefully acknowledged. Dr Andrew Rogerson has been unstintingly generous and supportive in sharing his knowledge of Norfolk's archaeology, and we are grateful also to Chris Fern, Professor John Hines, Dr Toby Martin, Edward Martin and Dr Andreas Rau for their willingness to discuss aspects of the material culture.

During the course of the project a number of academic and professional colleagues were invited to attend and contribute to project meetings, and a joint meeting was held with the Leverhulme-funded project People and Place: The Making of the Kingdom of Northumbria CE 300–800 to discuss methodological and interpretative issues common to both projects. We would like to thank Dr Brian Buchanan, Olav Gunderson, Dr Sue Harrington, Dr Catherine Hills, Professor Sarah Semple and Dr Gabor Thomas for their insights and contributions. We are also grateful for the helpful comments and suggestions from anonymous peer-review.

This monograph publication has been funded with grants from The Marc Fitch Fund, The Sutton Hoo Society, University College London, Historic England, and the Scarfe Charitable Trust.

0.3 Publication scope, structure and conventions

This publication presents the principal results of the project Lordship and Landscape in East Anglia CE 400–800, the aim of which was to investigate pathways to socio-economic complexity and regional rulership in early post-Roman Britain through the lens of the early medieval settlement complex at Rendlesham, Suffolk.

Following an exposition of the main research themes and methodological issues in Chapter 1, we present out our findings in two main sections: Part One (Chapters 2–7) deals with Rendlesham and its landscape; Part Two (Chapters 8–11) with the wider East Anglian contexts, the early East Anglian kingdom, and its place in the wider North Sea world. Supporting datasets and analyses, too large for conventional publication within the printed volume, are made available as digital resources through the Archaeology Data Service (below).

The Rendlesham Survey has generated a powerful dataset bearing on human settlement and activity across the landscape of a circumscribed locality from prehistory until the present day. Consequently, although our primary focus is the fifth to eighth centuries AD, when dealing with Rendlesham we have taken the long-term perspective, setting the early medieval settlement complex against antecedent and successor activity, and examining changing configurations of settlement, economy and material culture up to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For comparative studies and our broader contextual analyses, however, the chronological range is the fifth to eighth centuries AD. Earlier and later evidence is considered where relevant, and especially where it establishes a diachronic context, but the focus of our enquiry is the East Anglian kingdom of the seventh and eighth centuries, and the origins of regional rulership in the fifth and sixth centuries.

0.3.1 Chronological and cultural terminology

The conventional tri-partite chronological scheme which divides the 'Anglo-Saxon' or 'Saxon' period into Pagan or Early (fifth to seventh centuries), Middle (seventh to ninth centuries) and Late or Saxo-Norman (ninth to eleventh centuries) does not offer useful precision for the period of the fifth to eighth centuries with which we are primarily concerned. Moreover, because the different aspects of material culture and cultural practice held to define these sub-periods changed at different rates, and because the dating of these defining material and cultural characteristics is itself subject to change as understanding develops (cf Blinkhorn 2012; Hines and Bayliss 2013), there is no agreement on precisely where the horizons between them should be drawn (Scull 2023a, 131–2, 137). Such blunt periodisation masks more complex realities and can be seriously misleading. Alternatives such as 'Migration Period' and 'Conversion Period' pose similar problems and raise some of their own (see, for example, Hines 1999a, ix; 1999b, 65–7; Geake 1997, 1; Scull 2009a, 3–4; 2015, 76–7, 80; 2023a). According to these chronological schemes the settlement complex at Rendlesham has both Early or Pagan Saxon and Middle Saxon phases, and its incarnation as a major focal place straddles the interface between Early and Middle Saxon, or between the Pagan Saxon or Migration Period and Conversion Period. None of these labels is useful when we seek to characterise the archaeology and understand the past social realities it represents, nor do they provide an adequate framework for diachronic analysis, and the potential for confusion or misinterpretation is clear. The terms 'Anglo-Saxon', 'Saxon' and 'Anglian' have cultural as well as chronological connotations which bring a further element of ambiguity to their use. The dissonance inherent in referring to a major central place of the early East Anglian kingdom as 'Early Saxon' is obvious on a moment's reflection.

For these reasons we have tried as far as possible to avoid traditional cultural-chronological terms in this publication, giving instead absolute dates or date-ranges, or explicit citation of detailed chronological schemes. This allows us to undertake fine-grained synchronic and diachronic analysis within a consistent framework as far as current understandings of the archaeological material permit, and has the added advantage of separating for analytical purposes chronology from cultural-historical preconceptions, enabling a critical evaluation of the

archaeology as evidence for past social practice at a given time without embedded prior assumptions of cultural or ideological significance. The term 'early medieval' is preferred for the period of the fifth to the eleventh centuries AD. Where alternative phraseology is prohibitively clumsy we use 'Anglo-Saxon' to refer to the early medieval of eastern England in the fifth to seventh centuries, and to the early medieval of England as a whole from the eighth to the mid-eleventh centuries. AD (Anno Domini) is used rather than CE (Common Era) to accord with international conventions for the citation of radiocarbon dates. The terms 'Anglian', 'Saxon', 'Kentish' and so on are used strictly as a shorthand to differentiate between major material-culture provinces recognised in the archaeology of the fifth to seventh centuries (Leeds 1945; Hines 1984; Høilund Nielsen 1997) but geographical terms are preferred when discussing the spatial patterning of material culture types and cultural practices. We recognise that similar critiques may be applied to Continental and Scandinavian cultural and chronological terminologies and so have tried wherever possible to apply the same principles.

0.3.2 Archaeological recording and citation conventions

The Rendlesham metal-detector survey was undertaken systematically, with a single recording system aligned with that used by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service. Each field surveyed was treated as a survey unit and allocated a Historic Environment Record (HER) number; individual finds were then allocated a four-digit observed phenomenon (OP) number within a series for each survey unit (see fig 2.1.3 and tab 2.3.1 for a full list of survey units). In this publication, finds from the Rendlesham Survey are identified by a survey unit identifier followed by the OP number. Thus RLM 036 1156 is a fifth-century silver brooch fragment from Dog Kennel Field in Rendlesham parish, and EKE 019 1134 is a seventeenth-century trader's token from Steeple Tye in Eyke parish.

The majority of finds from Hoxne, all from a single field, were recorded in the same way as for Rendlesham with a four-figure numerical ID (1001–1255) attached to the HER reference (HXN 051). A minority, however, were recorded through the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) and are identified only with a PAS database reference number. The list of non-ferrous artefacts from Ipswich compiled for the project was collated from the Ipswich 1974–1990 Excavation Archive (SCCAS 2020) and every item is identified to site with a unique object number.

All of the finds from Barham and Coddenham are from fields with an HER reference and most, but not all, have an identifying number allocated by the finder. In this publication, therefore, they are identified using a similar formula to that for Rendlesham finds: thus BRH 016 0309 is a sixth-century harness mount from Barham, and CDD 022 2179 is a small-long brooch from Coddenham. Some of the finds from Coddenham without a finder's reference have been recorded on the PAS database and are identified here by their PAS reference. It was not felt sensible to overlay a further project-specific numbering system.

The metal-detected and surface finds from Burnham and Caistor-by-Norwich were collected by a number of individuals at different times and with greatly differing standards of recording, and in each case material from multiple locations with separate HER references is represented. Every find in the site assemblages collated for the project has been securely attributed to an HER site. Where there is a finder's reference or PAS reference these are used for citation but there is no single comprehensive reference system for these assemblages and a majority of finds have no unique identifier. Again, it was not felt sensible to overlay a further project-specific numbering system on multiple identifiers from a range of different sources, especially as there is no danger of duplication or confusion within the project databases, and so for the purposes of publication objects are identified simply to HER site if there is no finder's reference or PAS reference.

For studies of the early medieval coinage, and our broader samples of sites and finds for contextual and comparative studies, we have drawn information from the Corpus of Early Medieval Coin Finds (EMC), the PAS database, Suffolk Historic Environment Record, and Norfolk Historic Environment Record. Suffolk HER identifies sites and finds by a three-letter parish code and number (eg CDD 050: the early medieval cemetery at Shrubland Quarry, Coddenham), Norfolk HER by a single county-wide numerical sequence (eg 39278: a seventh-century inhumation at Bayfield, Letheringsett-with-Glandford).

For clarity, EMC and PAS references are always so designated (eg EMC 2009.0352; PAS SF-EE2953). HER identifiers are prefaced SHER (Suffolk) or NHER (Norfolk) only where there might otherwise be some confusion or ambiguity.

0.3.3 Digital resources and archive

The publication has two components: the printed volume, which presents methodological and interpretative narratives, and supporting data in digital format which are available for download from the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) at https://doi.org/10.5284/1083483.

The digital resources are:

E-Appendix 1: Summary catalogue of finds (Excel spreadsheet listing metal-detected finds from the Rendlesham Survey).
E-Appendix 2: Analysis of copper-alloy objects and metalworking waste from Rendlesham, Hoxne and Coddenham (pdf document).
E-Appendix 3: Analysis of precious metal objects and metalworking waste from Rendlesham and Hoxne (pdf document).

E-Table 1: Copper alloys: results of SEM and XRF analysis (Excel spreadsheet).
E-Table 2: Copper alloys: results of isotope and trace element analysis (Excel spreadsheet).
E-Table 3: Silver alloys: results of SEM and XRF analysis (Excel spreadsheet).
E-Table 4: Gold alloys: results of SEM and XRF analysis (Excel spreadsheet).

E-Figures: Photographic images of all early medieval metal-detected finds.

In addition, Excel databases holding full details of the finds assemblages from Rendlesham, Barham, Burnham Market, Caistor-by-Norwich, Coddenham, Hoxne and Ipswich, compiled for the project, are held by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service and are available for consultation by genuine researchers.

Finds from the Rendlesham Survey are held at Ipswich Museum and the finds from Hoxne at Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service.

0.4 Summary / Résumé / Zusammenfassung

Summary

This is an inter-disciplinary study of pathways to regional rulership and territorial lordship in early post-Roman Britain which takes as its starting point the East Anglian royal centre at Rendlesham and its contexts.

Rendlesham was an important centre from the end of the fourth century AD, and was a periodic elite residence, and the economic and jurisdictional centre of an extensive territory broadly equivalent to the catchments of the rivers Deben and Alde, between the late sixth and early eighth centuries AD. The late sixth century marks the point at which impermanent local hegemonies crystallised into permanent regional rule with a significant territorial dimension and this coincides with the emergence of the historically attested East Anglian kingdom and its ruling dynasty. At this time, south-east Suffolk appears to have been a polity comprised of formerly autonomous regions united under a single ruling dynasty and each looking towards a central place. In addition to the Deben territory, focused on Rendlesham, we are able to identify a territory based on the catchment of the river Gipping, with Coddenham as its central place, and one encompassing the catchment of the river Blyth, centred on Blythburgh. These early territories influenced, and are fossilised in, later hundredal arrangements.

The central places at Rendlesham and Coddenham lost both their high-level administrative functions and their economic centrality in the early eighth century. This appears to have been linked to wider changes in patterns of landholding and royal administration which saw jurisdictional functions distributed across a range of other places, and to changes in the patterns and scale of production and exchange seen, for example, in the dramatic expansion of the manufacturing centre and international trading port at Ipswich in the early eighth century. We can place this in the 720s and 730s, and identify both the changes at Rendlesham and Coddenham, and the expansion of Ipswich, as royal initiatives of King Ælfwald (713–49).

Comparative studies of Hoxne, Burnham and Caistor-by-Norwich identify similar administrative territories and central places elsewhere in East Anglia, but show a diversity of pathways within a common trajectory of development and illustrate the complexity of relationships between landscape, social aggregates and geographies of power. Different relationships between early medieval power centres and important late Roman places offer insights into the transitions of power and political identity in the aftermath of Roman rule, with indications that early medieval geographies of power inherited more from late Roman rural magnate power than from the formal administrative structures of the Roman state. Integrating archaeology, numismatics and textual history at the regional scale also allows the identification of a significant threshold of political integration *c* 670 which may mark the point at which the wider territorial authority of the ruling dynasty, with its original power base in south-east Suffolk, became fully established and accepted over what is now Norfolk.

The study also seeks to test and refine the perspectives offered by the 'river-and-wold' and 'peer-polity' models,

and to evaluate the 'deep-history' agenda. The inter-disciplinary approach to landscape history and archaeology allows the identification of post-Roman social aggregates and administrative territories that were structured in part by environment and topography, and that had a long-term influence on subsequent administrative geographies. It has also been possible to identify recurrent patterns of association between human settlement and activity and soils and terrain. The comparative case studies, though, show that 'river-and-wold' must be applied critically and flexibly if it is to accommodate the wide range of covariation between environment and human agency. One clear conclusion is that where topographies are more marked, and the range of environmental affordances more limited, then the spatial expression of social aggregates is more likely to conform to terrain. Another, that although early medieval conditions may structure later patterns of settlement and activity the trajectories of development are complex and there is no simple way of predicting earlier post-Roman human geographies from tenth-century and later sources.

Diachronic analysis has identified changing patterns of social and settlement hierarchy, with a trend to fewer, richer centres over the course of the fifth to seventh centuries. This is consistent with new levels of social stratification and political centralisation, and the concomitant control of landed resource and external exchange contacts by an increasingly powerful elite. Particularly clear in the Deben valley and its relationships with neighbouring territories, this appears to confirm the usefulness of the 'peer-polity' model.

Working with datasets of varying quality at a range of scales has required the development of new approaches that allow consistent quantification and characterisation for the purposes of comparative and integrated analysis, and spatial interrogation. Of particular value have been aoristic analysis to characterise activity trends over time, normalised presentation of spatial densities to investigate activity zoning within sites, and the semi-quantitative integration of data from single-finds, excavation and survey to chart changing regional patterns of human settlement and activity.

Résumé

Cet ouvrage est une étude interdisciplinaire des voies qui ont mené à la domination régionale et à la seigneurie territoriale au début de la période post-romaine en Grande-Bretagne qui prend comme point de départ le centre royal de Rendlesham en Est-Anglie et les contextes qui lui sont liés.

Rendlesham fut un centre important à partir de la fin du IVe siècle apr. J.-C. et par intermittence une résidence de l'élite, ainsi que le centre économique et juridictionnel d'un vaste territoire correspondant pour l'essentiel aux bassins versants des rivières Deben et Alde, entre la fin du VIe et le début du VIIIe siècle apr. J.-C. La fin du VIe siècle marque le moment où les hégémonies locales impermanentes se sont cristallisées en une domination régionale permanente avec une dimension territoriale importante, ce qui coïncide historiquement avec l'émergence du royaume d'Est-Anglie et de sa dynastie dirigeante. À cette époque, le sud-est du Suffolk semble avoir opéré sous un régime composé de régions qui étaient autrefois autonomes mais ensuite unifiées sous une dynastie régnante unique, chacune axée sur un lieu central. Outre le territoire de la rivière Deben, centré sur Rendlesham, il est possible d'identifier un territoire basé sur le bassin de la rivière Gipping, avec Coddenham comme lieu central, et le territoire englobant le bassin de la rivière Blyth, avec Blythburgh comme point focal. Ces premiers territoires ont influencé mais se sont aussi fossilisés ultérieurement dans des unités territoriales dénommées « hundreds ».

Les lieux centraux de Rendlesham et de Coddenham ont perdu à la fois leurs fonctions administratives de haut niveau et leur centralité économique au début du VIIIe siècle. Cette situation semble avoir été liée à des transformations plus profondes dans les formes de propriété foncière et d'administration royale dont les fonctions juridictionnelles ont été réparties sur plusieurs autres lieux ainsi qu'à des changements dans les modèles et niveaux de production et d'échange observés, par exemple, dans la croissance spectaculaire du centre manufacturier et port de commerce international d'Ipswich au début du VIIIe siècle. Il est possible de situer cette période entre les années 720 et 730, et ainsi d'identifier autant les changements à Rendlesham et Coddenham que l'essor d'Ipswich comme représentatives des initiatives royales du roi Ælfwald (713–749).

Les études comparatives de Hoxne, Burnham et Caistor-by-Norwich identifient des territoires administratifs et des lieux centraux semblables ailleurs en Est-Anglie mais démontrent aussi une certaine diversité des parcours au sein d'une trajectoire commune de développement et illustrent la complexité des rapports entre le paysage, les agrégats sociaux et les géographies du pouvoir Les différentes relations entre les centres de pouvoir du début du Moyen Âge et les lieux importants de la fin de l'Empire romain offrent un aperçu sur les transitions du pouvoir et l'identité politique après la chute de la domination romaine, avec des indications que les géographies du pouvoir du début du Moyen Âge auraient davantage hérité de l'emprise des magnats ruraux du Bas-Empire que des structures administratives formelles de l'état romain. L'incorporation de l'archéologie, de la numismatique et des sources écrites historiques à l'échelle régionale permet également d'identifier un seuil significatif d'intégration politique vers 670 qui pourrait marquer le moment à partir duquel l'autorité territoriale de la dynastie régnante, avec sa base de pouvoir à l'origine dans le sud-est du Suffolk, se serait pleinement établie et aurait été acceptée dans ce qui est aujourd'hui le Norfolk. Cette étude cherche également à tester et à affiner les perspectives offertes par les modèles « rivière et terrain » et « politique par les pairs » et à évaluer le programme « histoire profonde ». L'approche interdisciplinaire comprenant l'histoire et l'archéologie du paysage permet d'identifier des agrégats sociaux et des territoires administratifs post-romains, structurés en partie par l'environnement et la topographie, dont l'influence sur les géographies administratives ultérieures fut durable. Il a également été possible d'identifier des modèles récurrents d'association avec les habitats et les activités de leurs occupants, ainsi qu'avec les sols et le terrain. Les études de cas comparatives montrent cependant que le modèle « rivière et terrain » doit être appliqué de manière critique et flexible si l'on veut prendre en compte le large éventail des covariations entre l'environnement et la capacité d'action humaine. Il en ressort que là où les topographies sont plus marquées et l'éventail des possibilités environnementales plus limité, l'expression spatiale des agrégats sociaux est plus susceptible de se conformer au terrain. De plus, bien que les conditions du début du Moyen Âge puissent structurer les modèles ultérieurs d'implantation et d'activité, les trajectoires de développement sont complexes et il n'existe pas de moyen simple de prédire les géographies humaines post-romaines antérieures sur la base des sources du Xe siècle et plus tardives.

L'analyse diachronique a identifié des transformations dans la hiérarchie sociale et l''habitat, avec une tendance vers des centres moins nombreux et plus riches entre le Ve et le VIIe siècle. Ceci correspond à de nouveaux niveaux de stratification sociale et de centralisation politique, ainsi qu'à un contrôle connexe des ressources foncières et des échanges avec l'extérieur par une élite de plus en plus puissante. Ceci est particulièrement clair dans la vallée de la rivière Deben et dans ses relations avec les territoires voisins, ce qui confirmerait l'utilité du modèle de « politique par les pairs ».

Travailler avec des ensembles de données de qualité variable à différentes échelles a nécessité le développement de nouvelles approches permettant une quantification et une caractérisation cohérentes à des fins d'analyses comparatives et intégrées conduites dans le but d'interroger l'organisation spatiale. L'analyse aoristique pour caractériser les tendances de l'activité au fil du temps, la présentation normalisée des densités spatiales pour étudier le zonage des activités au sein des sites et l'intégration semi-quantitative des données provenant de découvertes uniques, de fouilles et de prospections pour documenter l'évolution des modèles régionaux d'implantation humaine et d'activité ont été de grande valeur.

Zusammenfassung

Dies ist eine interdisziplinäre Studie zur Herausbildung regionaler Oberhoheit und Territorialherrschaft im frühen nachrömischen Britannien, die das ostanglische königliche Zentrum in Rendlesham und sein Umfeld als Ausgangspunkt nimmt.

Rendlesham war seit dem Ende des vierten Jahrhunderts n. Chr. ein wichtiges Zentrum und zwischen dem späten sechsten und dem frühen achten Jahrhundert n. Chr. eine periodische Elite-Residenz sowie das wirtschaftliche und juristische Zentrum eines ausgedehnten Gebiets, das in etwa dem Einzugsgebiet der Flüsse Deben und Alde entspricht. Das späte sechste Jahrhundert markiert den Zeitpunkt, an dem sich unbeständige lokale Hegemonialstrukturen zu einer dauerhaften regionalen Herrschaft mit einer bedeutenden territorialen Dimension herauskristallisierten, und dies fällt mit der Entstehung des historisch belegten ostanglischen Königreichs und seiner Herrscherdynastie zusammen. Zu dieser Zeit scheint das südöstliche Suffolk ein Gemeinwesen gewesen zu sein, das aus ehemals autonomen Regionen bestand, die unter einer einzigen Herrscherdynastie vereint waren und jeweils auf einen zentralen Ort ausgerichtet waren. Neben dem Deben-Territorium, das sich auf Rendlesham konzentrierte, können wir ein Territorium im Einzugsgebiet des Flusses Gipping mit Coddenham als zentralem Ort sowie ein Territorium im Einzugsgebiet des Flusses Blyth mit Blythburgh als Zentrum ausmachen. Diese frühen Territorien beeinflussten die Herausbildung der späteren Hundertschaften und haben sie quasi fossilisiert.

Die zentralen Orte Rendlesham und Coddenham verloren im frühen achten Jahrhundert sowohl ihre hochrangigen Verwaltungsfunktionen als auch ihre wirtschaftlichen Schlüsselstellungen. Dies scheint mit weiterreichenden Veränderungen der Landbesitzverhältnisse und der königlichen Verwaltung einherzugehen. Dieser Wandel führte zur Verlagerung von Rechtsprechungsfunktionen auf eine Reihe anderer Orte sowie Veränderungen in Ausprägung und Umfang von Produktions- und Austauschstrukturen, die sich

beispielsweise in der dramatischen Expansion des Produktionszentrums und internationalen Handelshafens in Ipswich im frühen achten Jahrhundert zeigten. Wir können dies in die 720er und 730er Jahren datieren und sowohl die Veränderungen in Rendlesham und Coddenham als auch die Expansion von Ipswich als königliche Initiativen von König Ælfwald (713-49) identifizieren.

In vergleichbaren Studien zu Hoxne, Burnham und Caistor-by-Norwich konnten ähnliche Verwaltungseinheiten und zentrale Orte in anderen Bereichen East Anglias identifiziert werden, sie illustrieren jedoch eine weite Bandbreite möglicher Pfade innerhalb eines gemeinsamen Entwicklungsverlaufs und veranschaulichen die Komplexität der Beziehungen zwischen Landschaft, sozialen Gruppierungen und Geografien der Macht. Unterschiedliche Beziehungen zwischen frühmittelalterlichen Machtzentren und wichtigen spätrömischen Orten bieten Einblicke in die Übergänge von Macht und politischer Identität nach dem Ende der römischen Herrschaft, wobei es Hinweise darauf gibt, dass frühmittelalterliche Machtgeografien mehr von der Macht spätrömischer ländlicher Magnaten als von den formalen Verwaltungsstrukturen des römischen Staates geprägt waren. Die Integration von Archäologie, Numismatik und Schriftquellen auf regionaler Ebene ermöglicht darüber hinaus die Identifizierung einer bedeutenden Schwelle der politischen Integration um 670, die den Punkt markieren könnte, an dem die weiter ausgreifende territoriale Autorität der herrschenden Dynastie mit ihrer ursprünglichen Machtbasis im südöstlichen Suffolk auf das Gebiet des heutigen Norfolk vollständig etabliert und akzeptiert wurde.

Die Studie versucht auch, die Perspektiven der Modelle „Fluss und Hügelland“ und „Peer-Polity“ zu prüfen und zu verfeinern und die „Deep-History“-Agenda zu bewerten. Der interdisziplinäre Ansatz der Landschaftsgeschichte und der Archäologie ermöglicht die Identifizierung von nachrömischen sozialen Aggregaten und Verwaltungsgebieten, die zum Teil durch Umwelt und Topographie strukturiert waren und einen langfristigen Einfluss auf spätere Verwaltungsgeografien hatten. Des weiteren war es möglich, wiederkehrende Muster des Zusammenhangs zwischen menschlicher Besiedlung und Aktivität sowie Böden und Gelände zu erkennen. Die vergleichenden Fallstudien zeigen jedoch, dass das Konzept von „Fluss und Hügelland“ kritisch und flexibel angewandt werden muss, wenn es dem breiten Spektrum von Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Umwelt und menschlichem Handeln gerecht werden soll. Eine eindeutige Schlussfolgerung ist, dass dort, wo die Topografie stärker ausgeprägt und die Bandbreite der Umweltmöglichkeiten begrenzter ist, die räumliche Ausprägung sozialer Aggregate eher dem Terrain entspricht. Ein weiteres Ergebnis ist, dass die frühmittelalterlichen Bedingungen zwar spätere Siedlungs- und Aktivitätsmuster strukturieren können, die Entwicklungspfade jedoch komplex sind und es keine einfache Möglichkeit gibt, frühere nachrömische Humangeografien anhand von Quellen aus dem zehnten Jahrhundert und später vorherzusagen.

Die diachrone Analyse hat veränderte Muster der Sozial- und Siedlungshierarchie aufgezeigt, mit einem Trend zu weniger und reicheren Zentren im Laufe des fünften bis siebten Jahrhunderts. Dies steht im Einklang mit neuen Abstufungen sozialer Schichtung und politischer Zentralisierung und der damit verbundenen Kontrolle der Landressourcen und der externen Austauschverbindungen durch eine zunehmend mächtige Elite. Besonders deutlich wird dies im Deben-Tal und seinen Beziehungen zu den benachbarten Territorien, womit sich die Nützlichkeit des Modells der „Peer-Polity“ zu bestätigen scheint.

Die Arbeit mit Datensätzen unterschiedlicher Qualität in einer Reihe von Maßstäben erforderte die Entwicklung neuer Ansätze, die eine beständige Quantifizierung und Charakterisierung zum Zwecke der vergleichenden und integrierten Analyse sowie der räumlichen Untersuchungen ermöglichen. Von besonderem Wert waren aoristische Analysen zur Charakterisierung von Aktivitätstrends im Laufe der Zeit, die normierte Darstellung räumlicher Dichten zur Untersuchung von Aktivitätszonen innerhalb von Fundstellen und die semi-quantitative Integration von Daten aus Einzelfunden, Ausgrabungen und Surveys zur Darstellung sich verändernder regionaler Muster menschlicher Besiedlung und Aktivität.

1 Rendlesham and the investigation of social and economic complexity in early England

1.1 Background and significance

Archaeological fieldwork at Rendlesham, in south-east Suffolk, since 2008 has identified a major elite settlement of the fifth to eighth centuries AD (Scull *et al* 2016), almost certainly the East Anglian royal establishment recorded by Bede in the *Ecclesiastical History* (III, 22; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 284–5). Unique in England at this time in its spatial extent, material wealth and longevity, Rendlesham invites comparison with the central place complexes known in contemporary Scandinavia, where it would certainly be interpreted as the centre of a regional kingdom (Hårdh 2002; Jørgensen 2010; Ljungkvist and Frölund 2015; Stidsing *et al* 2014). The artefact assemblage, which is outstanding in its quality and composition, speaks of a range of social roles and identities, and of a wide spectrum of activities. There is evidence for fine metalworking, early coin use and monetisation, links with northern and western Britain and across the English Channel and the North Sea, and exchange contacts with the Mediterranean world. Survey evidence for antecedent and subsequent settlement activity allows the site to be placed within a long-term local context from late prehistory to the present day.

Narratives of the early post-Roman centuries in south-east England generally emphasise political, social and economic dislocation after the end of Roman Imperial rule, the impacts of migration from the Continent, and the subsequent re-emergence of socio-political hierarchies and economic complexity (Esmonde Cleary 1989; Hodges 1989). Initially, the kin- and client-based power structures of these ‘small worlds’ (Gerrard 2013) are thought to have sustained only local, personal and impermanent rulership, with the reach of social networks moulded by local geography and environment to the extent that river valley and watershed might effectively define local identities and polities (the ‘river-and-wold’ model: 1.6.2, below). By the later sixth century, through competition and conflict with their peers, some local rulers were able to impose their authority more widely, establishing patterns of territorial lordship and regional hegemony which appear in the documentary record as the earliest Anglo-Saxon kingdoms (the ‘peer-polity’ model: 1.6.1, below). In the fifth to seventh centuries, according to this perspective, surplus was extracted through impermanent tributary arrangements, production was organised on a predominantly domestic basis, coins were primarily used in social and symbolic rather than monetary or commercial transactions, and exchange was essentially embedded in social relationships (Arnold 1988; Wickham 2005). Settlement is characterised as dispersed and shifting, with transient high-status centres (Hamerow 2012; Blair 2005; 2018). By contrast, the ‘long eighth century’ (680–820) is seen as the key period for transformations of production, exchange and social relations (Hansen and Wickham 2000; Hodges 2012). This period saw the development of a monetised economy, commercial bulk trade and incipient taxation, an intensification of agricultural production and economic specialisation, and the beginnings of a shift from extensive lordship to a system of smaller proto-manorial estates.

The evidence from Rendlesham, however, suggests that these narratives may need substantial revision. They

may underestimate the degree of economic and administrative sophistication in the fifth to seventh centuries, and the extent to which there was already significant socio-political differentiation and some degree of territorial lordship. The evidence also suggests that Rendlesham's importance and longevity may have owed something to its character in the late Roman period, raising questions about the origins of power, and polities, in early medieval England. As something hitherto unrecognised in the archaeology of early medieval England, Rendlesham therefore poses a series of challenges to current understandings of society, economy and polity in the fifth to eighth centuries in south-east England, and for broader models of developing socio-economic complexity and state-formation around the North Sea.

Rendlesham must be seen in the context of the early East Anglian kingdom, which offers an optimal case study for exploring such new perspectives (Fig 1.1). Locally, south-east Suffolk has unique archaeological evidence for the key institutions of an early kingdom, including the princely cemeteries at Sutton Hoo and Snape, and the *emporium* or port-of-trade at Ipswich.

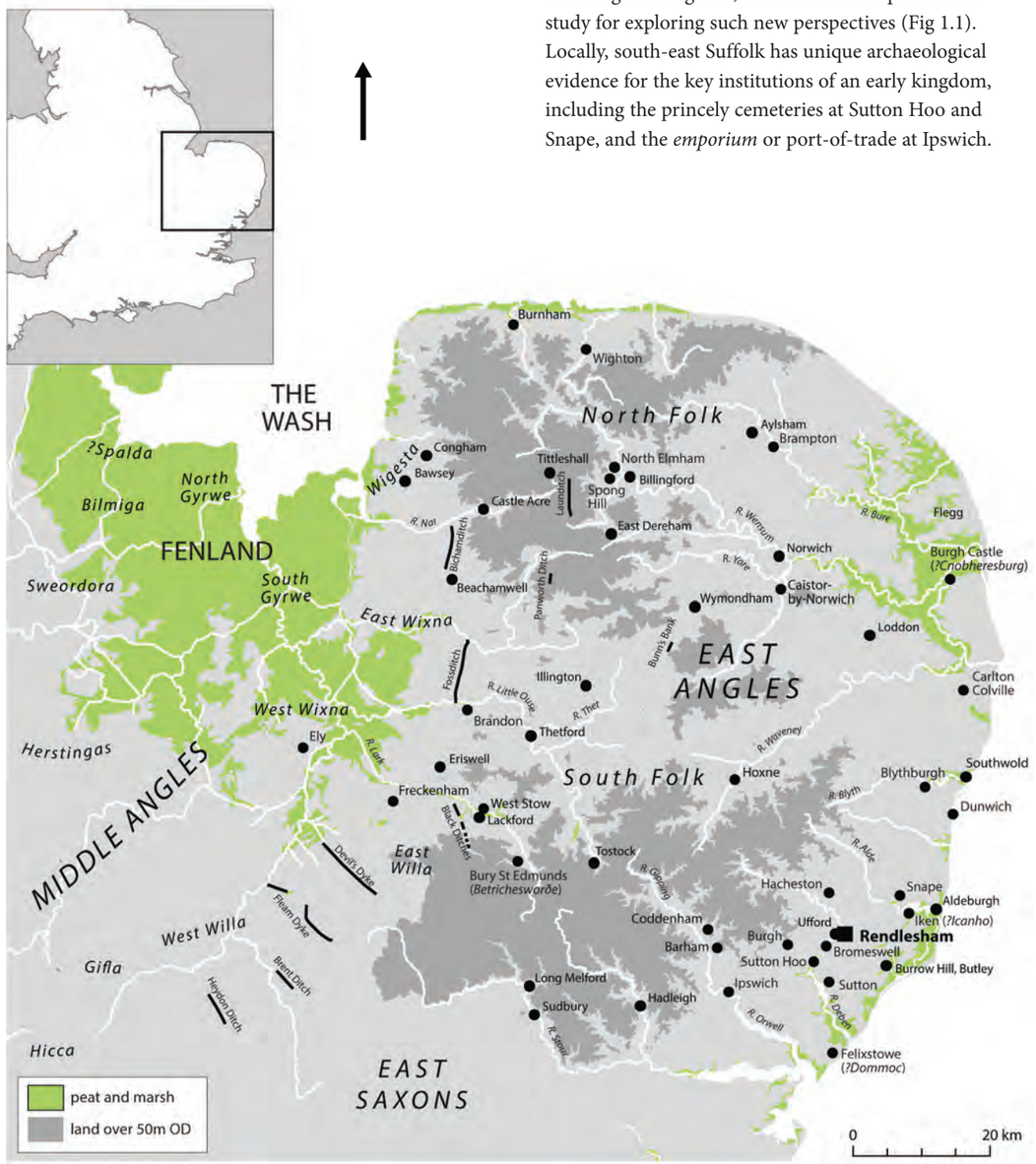


Fig 1.1 Map of the early East Anglian kingdom and adjacent polities showing the territorial locations of groups recorded in the Tribal Hidage and other early sources, and main places mentioned in the text

East Anglia more widely possesses rich Historic Environment Record (HER) and Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) datasets, nationally important but unstudied or under-studied comparative assemblages (eg Coddenham and Barham: West 1998), and a number of recent studies of early medieval sites, monument types and landscapes (Carver 2005; Williamson 2008; Scull 2009a; Davies 2010; Hills and Lucy 2013). Nationally and internationally, there is a body of recently published research that provides a baseline of interpretation to be tested against, and against which to test, new findings (Nicolay 2014; Carver 2015; Daubney 2015; Stidsing *et al* 2014).

Rendlesham and its contexts thus offer an opportunity to study the development and character of a regional polity – the early East Anglian kingdom – through scaled analysis of its cultural landscapes, and to situate it within the broader Insular, North Sea and Channel worlds. Such an investigation requires a comparative and integrative approach that aims to root grand narrative in fine-grained readings of the local and the regional, which recognises contingency and human agency as well as environmental determinants, and which acknowledges that high-level social and economic processes are the aggregates of a multiplicity of individual actions. Current models of socio-political development in the fifth to seventh centuries in England rest heavily on studies of cemetery data that privilege ideologically constructed funerary display (eg Harrington and Welch 2014). For a fuller understanding we need to re-balance our perspectives, focusing as much on the settlement and landscape data that are more representative of a living society. Situating early medieval social actors in their economic landscapes should allow the examination of critical but neglected relationships between landed economy and the establishment – and reproduction – of early lordship (cf Faith 1997). But the modelling of local and regional trajectories of economic and political development must involve a critical re-examination of a range of widely accepted approaches, including the 'peer-polity' model and the idea that early geographies of identity and lordship were moulded by topographic patterns and physical geography. Of fundamental importance is the question of how far the economic and administrative geographies of Late Antiquity may have conditioned post-Roman circumstances, and how movements and contacts across and around the North Sea from the fifth century may have shaped social identities and configurations of power. The belief that long-term regional identities – social and political – can be identified in the archaeology of lowland Britain from late prehistory, through to the early Middle Ages, is well-established in some archaeological circles, but rather less attention has been directed towards the question of what such apparent continuities might mean (cf Rippon 2018). These questions – which encompass contested narratives to be tested against modern data – go to the heart of current debates about early post-Roman Britain and the origin myths of the modern United Kingdom.

Although tested by small-scale excavation, the data from Rendlesham are mainly the product of systematic metal-detecting and non-intrusive survey techniques. The artefact assemblage is from the ploughsoil and so its contexts are its own internal spatial and chronological relationships, and spatial relationships with the natural topography and the archaeological features identified by the programme of remote sensing and aerial survey. This situation presents methodological and interpretative challenges, but also opportunities. It invites the integration of data from excavation, field survey, metal-detecting, chance finds and remote sensing in order to characterise and investigate human behaviour at a landscape scale. Indeed, the chronological range, size, structure and contextual understanding of the Rendlesham assemblage establishes a scale for calibrating other ploughsoil assemblages, especially those derived from so-called 'productive' sites, in terms of function and status (cf Ulmschneider 2000; Chester-Kadwell 2009). Two elements of the Rendlesham assemblage stand out as having particular significance. Very unusually for early medieval England, Rendlesham has produced good direct evidence for non-ferrous metalworking, and the technology, scale and organisation of production have been investigated through a combination of metallographic, compositional and morphometric analyses. In addition, the coin assemblage, which includes material from the first century BC to the end of the seventeenth century AD, is unique in its size, chronological depth and range of types and issues, and in the spatial precision with which it has been recorded. As well as being critical for understanding the Rendlesham site and landscape, it represents a benchmark numismatic resource of national and international significance.

1.2 Research agenda

Our aim is to characterise and understand the elite settlement at Rendlesham and its place in the early East Anglian kingdom, and from this to develop a new understanding of how territorial lordship and regional kingship developed in post-Roman eastern England. Our emphasis is on the human agency represented by material evidence, and our study period, AD 400–800, defined by

the lifetime of Rendlesham as a major centre, spans the period from the end of Roman authority to the imposition of Mercian hegemony over East Anglia. To characterise and compare configurations and trajectories of economy and power we must examine not only the landscape of Rendlesham itself but also wider, nested spatial contexts embracing south-east Suffolk, East Anglia more widely, and the broader North Sea world. Our approach was structured around three strands of questioning that, in our judgement, could be addressed successfully through the material evidence, approaches and techniques at our disposal.

Firstly, in thinking synchronically about the nature of settlement, community and identity we asked: what was the socio-economic character of the Rendlesham complex, and how does it compare to other elite centres regionally and inter-regionally? What was Rendlesham's place in the social and settlement landscapes of south-east Suffolk, and how does this compare to other sites and areas? And to what extent do the spatial expression of social and settlement networks confirm the determining influence of topography and environment, and conform to the predictions of the 'river-and-wold' model?

Secondly, in thinking diachronically about developing social and economic complexity we asked: does Rendlesham represent a uniquely sophisticated early lordship in south-east Suffolk, or does the critical assessment of other assemblages identify similar places elsewhere? What networks of surplus-extraction, production and exchange – local, regional, inter-regional – sustained such elite settlements and allowed magnates to exert social and political influence, and how did these develop? And how did early economic specialisation and coin use at elite centres influence the wider development of monetisation and markets?

Lastly, in thinking about territory and place we asked: to what extent do regional geographies of power and wealth conform to the 'peer-polity' model? Do elite settlements have specific morphological and locational characteristics, and how do these compare to those of other kinds of settlement and place? How did elite settlements of the fifth to eighth centuries influence subsequent patterns of settlement and activity in their hinterlands?

In the event it was not possible to address all of these questions with equal degrees of success, not least because many of them subsume in turn a range of more specific and detailed queries and issues. Moreover, during the course of our work new questions arose, and some directions of enquiry proved more profitable than others. Nevertheless, these represent the core of enquiry around which our data-collection and analysis were structured.

1.3 Approaches and methods

Our research agenda required an inter-disciplinary approach, integrating archaeology, landscape history, name-studies, history, numismatics and materials science both with each other, and with an awareness of physical geography (topography, drainage, soils, landcover) and landscape character. Not all specialisms were directly relevant to all aspects of the research, but all researchers were kept engaged with all work strands through regular review meetings, in order to ensure that everyone was able to contribute cross-disciplinary insights, and that no opportunities for inter-disciplinary working were missed that might not have been identified at the outset. We adopted a scaled diachronic and comparative approach, enabled by Geographic Information Systems (GIS), which integrated four levels of analysis designed to interlock and build upon each other.

1.3.1 Rendlesham and its locality

The aims at this first level were to characterise the material signature, layout and topography of the Rendlesham site; to locate it within its immediate physical, economic and cultural landscapes; and to identify and elucidate the local factors that determined the development of this specific settlement and community.

The first step was to employ GIS to examine the archaeological evidence within its topographic and environmental contexts, creating dynamic maps of soils and drainage, significant features from historic mapping, place-name data, and other sources relevant to an understanding of the medieval and earlier landscape. Detailed qualitative and quantitative analysis of the material culture assemblage was undertaken to establish its chronology, the range of activities and social identities it represents, and the cultural and economic contacts it demonstrates; this included scientific analysis of the metalworking evidence, and detailed study of the coin finds.

Spatial and density analyses were undertaken of artefact types and materials across the site, evaluating the extent to which different combinations may define areas of activity and how these changed over time. The patterns revealed were integrated with the evidence of aerial survey and remote sensing to model the spatial development of the settlement complex. In addition, landscape history approaches were used to model the wider physical, environmental, settlement and land-use contexts of the elite complex and its situation in the Deben catchment. This latter aspect of the research also allowed the elite complex to be set within its long-term context, allowing investigation of its 'afterlife' and thus addressing aspects of the broader 'deep-history' agenda – testing, in particular, the extent to which post-Conquest territorial and administrative arrangements might throw light on the social and economic patterns of the fifth to eighth centuries.

As part of this historical landscape analysis, an in-depth study of place-names was undertaken, including minor names and field names, to assess what they reveal about past landscape, land use and settlement, and about resources and their exploitation at the local level. Major names were extracted from published sources (eg Ekwall 1960; Watts 2004; Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016), minor names and field names from a fresh review of documentary and cartographic sources of the fifteenth century and later held at Suffolk Record Office and The National Archives.

1.3.2 Rendlesham in south-east Suffolk

Our aim here was to investigate socio-economic networks, hierarchies and dynamics at a supra-local but sub-regional scale, including the relationships between Rendlesham, Sutton Hoo, Snape and Ipswich. The study area, comprising the catchments of the rivers Alde, Butley, Deben and Gipping, has long been identified as the early territorial focus of East Anglian royal power (Warner 1996; Carver 2005). Archaeological, topographic and toponymic mapping was undertaken, and a comprehensive corpus of early medieval sites and finds compiled and analysed: once again, varied ranges of data were integrated, compared and contrasted using GIS. The archaeological corpus was derived from HER datasets, enhanced through the addition of key attribute data such as more precise location information and more precise dating; data from the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) and the Corpus of Early Medieval Coin Finds (EMC); and unpublished data from the South-east Suffolk Survey (Newman 2005). Unpublished material held in museum and private collections was also recorded as necessary, and additional information abstracted as relevant from both published and grey-literature reports.

The important comparative assemblages from Coddenham and Barham, and their immediate contexts, were subject – as far as possible within the constraints of assemblage size and recovery methods – to the same level of characterisation and analysis as Rendlesham, including historic landscape and place-name analysis.

Distributional analysis (Hirth 1998; Garraty 2010), which defines and contrasts patterns of consumption, informed our assessment of the assemblages and thus our comparative analysis of the status, function and economic reach of the various settlements, allowing us to characterise their communities and social relationships, and to model how these may have changed over time. All were examined within their topographic contexts, including access to possible communication routes; and assessments were made of trajectories of growth or contraction, and of specialisation and diversification, both within and around the target sites.

Historical landscape analysis was used to search for common patterns in the setting and location of these elite settlements, and neighbouring cemeteries, in terms of terrain, land use and human geography, with the particular aim of modelling their possible social and political territories. Phenomenological and cognitive approaches to landscape, using techniques such as visibility studies (Wheatley and Gillings 2000) and routing and movement analyses (Bell and Lock 2000; Palmisano *et al* 2015) which model how these sites may have been encountered and perceived by contemporaries, also informed our narrative. The spatial relationships of important fifth- to eighth-century sites to later centres such as Domesday minsters, hundredal centres, royal manors and early markets were considered to assess trajectories of continuity and change in the landscape of the later first millennium AD and, once again, to test the extent to which patterns revealed in Domesday Book and later documents might legitimately be read back into the earlier past. Major place-names, most of which were recorded by 1086, were interrogated for information about pre-Conquest settlement, landscape and land use, with a particular emphasis on assessing what they might or might not say about social and administrative arrangements of the seventh century or earlier.

1.3.3 North Folk and South Folk: comparative case studies

The approach taken for south-east Suffolk was applied, as far as possible, to three comparative case studies in East Anglia. These were selected on the basis of their potential to address our research agenda, to represent contrasting landscape zones, and to provide a sample of possible early polities or territories which may have been incorporated as constituent elements of the early East Anglian kingdom. The sites chosen, and their associated localities, are Hoxne and the Dove valley, Caistor-by-Norwich and the Tas basin, and the Burnhams and north Norfolk (Ch 10). Other possible focal places and their associated territories are also considered.

1.3.4 Regional and inter-regional comparisons

Finally, our key findings from the case studies were drawn together, focusing on the date, function and trajectories of development of elite sites, and their place in regional and inter-regional socio-economic networks, in order to characterise at a regional scale the dynamics governing the emergence of local and regional rulership and the developing social and economic complexities with which they were entangled. From this, we are able to offer a detailed interpretative narrative of how the early East Anglian kingdom was created and constituted that accommodates the diversity, complexity and contingency of pathways to lordship, and so provides a new level of understanding against which received narratives of socio-political development in post-Roman England, and around the North Sea, can be re-evaluated.

1.4 Methodological issues

1.4.1 Comparative and landscape approaches to archaeological data: quality, comparability and scale

One of the challenges of a project which explores past human activity at the landscape scale, and so goes beyond the individual site or intervention, is how to integrate archaeological data from different sources and contexts (excavation, chance find, metal-detecting, field survey, remote sensing) and combine these effectively with information from written accounts, cartographic sources and place-name information. Geographic Information Systems provide a powerful tool for the mapping, integration and analysis of spatial data but there are inherent problems in the acquisition and use of data derived from diverse sources, the quality and locational accuracy of which are often highly variable (cf Cooper and Green 2016; Gattiglia 2015; Smith *et al* 2016). These issues had to be taken into account when framing our levels and scales of analysis, and are important in defining what can and cannot be established from the data we have considered.

Metal-detecting finds from Rendlesham are located with greater consistency and precision than those from the comparative sites, and the contextual data are richer. From the outset of the Rendlesham survey it was understood that the interpretative value of the assemblage would depend upon systematic coverage and consistent and accurate recording, and protocols were put in place to ensure this (Ch 2.3.1). This was not the case at the other sites, and even where systematic metal-detecting has been undertaken, as at Caistor-by-Norwich, coverage is limited and represents only one episode in a much longer sequence of opportunistic detecting, sometimes by several detectorists working in isolation. At Rendlesham, decisions on what to record and what to discard were made on an explicit and consistent basis, and so we can be sure that the assemblage is representative of the total population of non-ferrous metal objects present in the ploughsoil. Elsewhere, there is evidence that retention is biased towards the complete, the recognisable and the exciting: even where less distinctive and appealing material has been retained it may not be recognised as of potential significance, and so may not be declared or recorded. In the case of Coddenham, for example, where there is a good record in the HER and the finder has gone to considerable efforts to catalogue the material recovered, rapid visual examination of bags of 'grot' which he retained identified unrecorded copper-alloy casting sprues, important evidence for fine metalworking. At Rendlesham, the quality of the data is such that detailed interrogation of chronological and spatial patterning is possible, and in consequence the sequence, morphology and character of the settlement can be modelled with considerable precision and confidence. Elsewhere, the data are more variable. We have been obliged to date and characterise each of the comparative sites to the level of precision that the data allows, and to undertake comparative analysis at this level. Thus the structure of the assemblage allows us to compare chronology and activity profiles in all cases, and to be reasonably sure about the overall extent of settlement and related activity, but our ability to compare the internal spatial structure and development is much more limited. We have used aoristic analysis of the metalwork assemblages (Ch 4.1.1) to model activity over time, and to provide a robust basis for inter-site comparisons in this respect.

When situating sites in their immediate context, and for comparative analyses within East Anglia, we collated archaeological and numismatic data from the Norfolk and Suffolk HERs, the PAS database, and EMC. This required significant cleaning and harmonisation of datasets (cf Robinson 2000; Cooper and Green 2016), and judgements to be made on the levels of characterisation to be employed. Even so, there are cases where we have to treat the HER and PAS data as complementary but distinct datasets, even though we know that much PAS data is incorporated within the two HERs. In using this data we have adopted a pragmatic distinction between *sites*, where excavation or recording has produced unequivocal evidence for the nature of past activity at a location (eg settlement, burial), and *finds*, lacking diagnostic contexts or associations, where interpretation is less secure – for example, where metalwork might derive from settlement or cemetery contexts or both, or where pottery might indicate a settlement site or the manuring of fields. This approach allows us to interrogate spatial evidence for human activity at the intra-regional and regional scales while still retaining the ability to interrogate in greater detail, and to offer further levels of interpretation, in the finer-grained analyses of our case-study sites and their immediate contexts. For higher-level mapping of excavated sites and finds clusters, location was generated by linking data to digitised centroids (Conolly and Lake 2006, 24–6). In effect, this approach allows us to pull-out, and zoom-in, without losing precision at the site and local levels, yet without drowning in point-data at the intra-regional and regional scales.

We could not have undertaken this project without the ability of computerised GIS to store information as different layers, to integrate a range of datasets at different scales, and to compare with ease different data types (Gregory 2009, 36–9). There is, however, always a degree of inaccuracy when locating data within a digital environment due to issues of scale, precision, and map projection. To ensure the levels of locational accuracy necessary for our analyses, site locations and findspots were assessed against other cartographic data (eg modern and historic maps, parish and administrative boundaries, and aerial imagery) in order to rectify such issues as multiple entries for the same data within and across datasets, or incorrect grid co-ordinates giving an obviously wrong location such as in a different county or out to sea. Where such issues were identified the data were corrected and normalised.

1.4.2 Modelling past landscapes

Discussions of early patterns of land exploitation, in contexts in which direct evidence in the form of field systems is lacking, are usually based on a consideration of soil types, sometimes analysed by drawing 'catchments' around known settlement sites. Such approaches often involve untested assumptions about past agrarian practices and they usually fail to allow for complexities of access, and the intricacies of resource distribution. For example, it is unclear how far, where small 'islands' of tractable land existed within more difficult agricultural terrain, farming and land clearance would expand on a broad front, or instead leap-frog the less attractive ground. The methodology adopted here is grounded more in the practices of landscape history than in those of archaeology. We have used early maps and place-names in a retrogressive manner in order to distinguish likely zones of fifth- to eighth-century cultivation from areas occupied by woods and pastures. Only to a limited extent have we attempted to differentiate between the latter two environments: during the periods in question most woodland was grazed, rather than managed as coppice, and the two thus lay on a continuum with the extent of tree cover doubtless changing over time.

Wood-pasture zones were identified by mapping a range of information: place-names; commons, heathland and areas of probable ancient, semi-natural woodland surviving into the post-medieval period; and the sites or areas of pre-fourteenth-century deer parks. Mapping of common land was primarily based on the late eighteenth-century county maps for Norfolk (Faden 1797) and Suffolk (Hodskinson 1783), adjusted to allow for inherent inaccuracies and supplemented with information from the tithe maps of *c* 1840 (using the copies held at the National Archives, Kew, accessed online at https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/search/advanced/landowner/tithe-records/) and a significant sample of manuscript maps held at the Norfolk and Suffolk Record Offices. Hodskinson, and to an extent the tithe maps, are unreliable for plotting the extent of the Suffolk coastal heaths (many of which were private property rather than common land), and these were accordingly mapped, in part, from the late nineteenth-century 6-inch Ordnance Survey maps. Ancient woods were mainly mapped using information from Natural England's Ancient Woodland Inventory (https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx), with the addition of woodland areas no longer extant, but shown on early maps, which could be confidently identified as 'ancient' on the basis of name, shape and location. Lastly, early deer parks were mainly mapped from the detailed county studies made by Liddiard for Norfolk and Hoppitt for Suffolk (Hoppitt 1992; 2020; Liddiard 2010).

The use of place-names for reconstructing wooded areas has been discussed on many occasions and need not be rehearsed here (Gelling and Cole 2000; Hooke 1989a; 2011). The assumption that parks, woods and commons known from medieval or post-medieval sources represent the remains of – and thus indicate the broad location of – early medieval wooded tracts requires more justification. All tend to occupy land which was, because of drainage or acidity, difficult to cultivate in the Middle Ages, but it is possible that earlier phases of cultivation changed soil character, and that in the sixth or seventh centuries much of this land was used for arable. Archaeological investigations elsewhere in England have certainly revealed earthworks of later prehistoric and Roman field systems within some ancient woods, although very little evidence for early medieval settlement or land use

(Bannister 1996; Morris and Wainwright 1995; Rackham 2006, 212–15; Rotherham and Ardron 2006, 238). But in East Anglia relatively few such woods seem to occupy abandoned farmland of early date. A recent survey of fifty Norfolk examples revealed that around two-thirds were largely or entirely 'primary' in character, in the sense that they contained no earthwork evidence that their areas had formerly been settled or cultivated (Barnes and Williamson 2016, 48–55). The remaining third were all small – with an average area of 6ha, as opposed to over 20ha for 'primary' woods – and all overlay medieval or post-medieval, rather than demonstrably earlier, settlement or farmland: all of the largest woods, such as Foxley (124ha) or Tindall (44ha), were entirely 'primary' in character. This kind of archaeological analysis cannot be carried out in the case of commons or deer parks, as most were destroyed, and usually ploughed up, in the course of the post-medieval period. But an examination of the county HERs reveals that, while settlement sites of late prehistoric and Roman date are sometimes found within their former areas, these are not abundant. Finds of early medieval date are almost unknown, one of the rare exceptions being the burials and probable settlement discovered within the former deer park at Winfarthing in Norfolk (Ch 10.1.4).

When these sources are combined it is striking that woods, commons and parks are generally clustered in the same areas, resembling the remains of once continuous blocks out of which 'islands' of cultivated land had been carved by the time the earliest maps were surveyed. Even where these apparent encroachments contain parish churches, fieldwalking reveals – unusually for East Anglia – no evidence of Ipswich ware scatters in their immediate vicinity, but instead only later ninth- to eleventh-century or post-Conquest material. Extensive tracts of early 'waste' thus appear to have been progressively eroded in the period between the eighth and the thirteenth centuries and, as this occurred, some portions were brought into lordly control and more intensively managed, as coppice or hunting ground, while others evolved into common land, exploited and managed on a local – parochial or manorial – basis (Barnes and Williamson 2016, 38–48). Not surprisingly, as we shall see, major place-names containing elements with woodland associations tend to cluster in the same general areas.

Place-names were also examined for the information they could provide more generally about early medieval landscape, land use and human geography. They were analysed at two scales. An in-depth collation of minor place-names was undertaken for the parish of Rendlesham in order to help set the early medieval elite settlement within as fine-grained a landscape context as possible. Minor names and field-names were extracted from the tithe apportionment and associated map (1840), and from a handful of maps and plans pre-dating these. There are also nine surveys detailing field-names and datable to between 1793 and 1828, six similar but undated plans, and a 1738 glebe terrier (with plans) probably compiled and surveyed by John Kirby. There are, in addition, a number of medieval surveys and extents. Undertaking analysis at this level of detail on a regional scale would have been impossibly expensive and time consuming, and so for broader landscape modelling of south-east Suffolk, and for other regional case studies, only the major place-names have been investigated, with field names recorded on tithe maps occasionally used to supplement these.

Many place-names in Norfolk have been collected and analysed as part of the English Place-Name Society's (EPNS) *Survey of English Place-Names*, which includes detailed etymologies of major and minor place-names, including extensive collections of both historic and modern field-names (Sandred and Lindström 1989; Sandred 1996; 2002). However, coverage of East Anglia is currently limited to areas of north-east Norfolk so other resources were used to supplement the ongoing Norfolk EPNS survey. The main sources used were national and county-scale place-name dictionaries (Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016; Ekwall 1960; Mills 2011; Watts 2004), a regional survey of Deben valley place-names (Arnott 1946), the collection of historical spellings of Norfolk place-names collected by O K Schram and Karl Inge Sandred (held by the Institute for Name-Studies, University of Nottingham), and ongoing unpublished work by Keith Briggs on a survey of Suffolk place-names.

These sources have been combined with other evidence to extrapolate further aspects of the historic landscape. Although early medieval roads and tracks are notoriously elusive archaeological monuments, with later surfacing and use eradicating any trace of earlier properties, the coincidence of travel-related place-names with routeways recorded in later medieval and early modern sources provides a good indication of the course of former routes (cf Witney 1976, 16–30; 189–95; Cole 2013; Langlands 2019). Retrogressive mapping of routeways can be combined with an assessment of the topological relationships between roads and other linear features in the landscape such as boundaries and other routeways to establish the primary framework of routes (Brookes 2013, 49–51; Rippon *et al* 2015; Brookes and Rye forthcoming). These in turn can be compared with the distribution of place-names and name elements that might be associated with medium- and long-distance routeways (eg *strǣt* 'main/paved road', *here-pað* 'army path') and river crossings (eg *ford* 'ford', *brycg* 'bridge') whose earliest recorded dates provide *termini ante quem* for the existence of the associated route sections (cf Cole 2013).

Other aspects of the historic landscape have been mapped with recourse to existing digital datasets: administrative divisions, including Domesday shires and hundreds (Brookes 2020), ecclesiastical parishes and civil parishes or townships (Satchell *et al* 2016); navigable waterways (Oksanen 2019); soils (Cranfield Soil and AgriFood Institute (CSAFI), license UCL Rendlesham project, 151060). Digital elevation models created from Ordnance Survey (OS), Space Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM; https://www2.jpl.nasa.gov/srtm/), and – in places – LiDAR data, provided the basis for geological characterisations discussed in Chapters 2, 4, 6, 9, and 10. Hydrological data was mapped from OS OpenData (https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/opendatadownload/products.html).

1.5 The written sources for the East Anglian kingdom

Barbara Yorke

The province of the East Angles is unfortunately the most poorly recorded of the major southern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. As there is every reason to think its churches were comparable with those of other kingdoms, and as literate, the almost complete loss of any records created in the province itself is presumably to be linked with disruption following Viking attacks and settlement that particularly affected those east coast areas where many of the major churches of the East Anglian kingdom were situated (Whitelock 1972). The cessation of the two bishoprics of *Dommoc* and Elmham is likely to have been particularly calamitous for the survival of local records. Elmham was subsequently revived, but *Dommoc* was apparently so comprehensively erased that even its location remains uncertain (Ch 8.2). Particularly to be regretted is the absence of any charters from the period before 900 as these can be so informative about the personnel, administration and major locations within kingdoms. A royal genealogy survives as part of the so-called Anglian collection of genealogies, but no regnal list (Dumville 1976). It has sometimes been assumed that an East Anglian regnal list was used in the appendix to John of Worcester's Chronicle (Thorpe 1848–9, I, 260–2), but it has none of the kings known only from coins and all its information could have been compiled from written records assembled at Worcester. Bede knew the sequence of East Anglian kings, but not the length of their reigns. He cites the lengths of the episcopates of the first three bishops of *Dommoc*, but does not seem to have had complete episcopal lists for either see (Whitelock 1972; Platts 2022). There are therefore likely to be major problems with the dates Bede provides for East Anglia which should be seen for the most part as approximations based on synchronisations with better-dated events from other kingdoms suggested by the narratives available to him (which are considered further below).

No East Anglian chronicle survives, although records of East Anglian affairs are included in various later compilations from eastern Britain that might conceivably derive from one. These include *Byrhtferth's Chronicle* (Ramsey) (Hart 2006), the *Annals of St Neots* (Bury St Edmunds) (Dumville and Lapidge 1985), the *Liber Eliensis* (Ely) (Blake 1962), and the 'F' version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Canterbury) (Baker 2000). Later Lives of East Anglian saints who died before 900 (considered further below) – Botwulf, the Ely princesses, King Æthelbert and King Edmund – have disappointingly little of substance to add to the history of the times in which they lived but do refer to a few places and traditions associated with their subjects. Anglo-Norman historians such as William of Malmesbury and John of Worcester seem to have had no greater access to significant written sources for the East Anglian kingdom than we do today (Mynors *et al* 1998; Darlington and McGurk 1995), and their inferences must be used with the greatest of caution (Whitelock 1972). The St Albans historians provide dates for the earliest rulers, but it seems doubtful if these are actually based on reliable evidence (Ch 8.2.1.2).

The East Angles are listed as one of the larger kingdoms in the Tribal Hidage, a document that is usually interpreted as a list of peoples or units that were autonomous for the payment of tribute under either Mercian or Northumbrian overlordship in the seventh or early eighth centuries (Davies and Vierck 1974; Higham 1995, 74–111). Three versions survive, the earliest of which is from the first half of the eleventh century, and over time the document may well have been altered from its original form (Dumville 1989; Rumble 1996; Baker 2017). One example of this may be that the majority of the listed smaller units, such as the North and South *Gyrwe* of 600 hides, were at some point in the province of the Middle Angles, although in fact most, if not all, of the early medieval English kingdoms contained such units. Bede confirms some of the hidages and may well have had access to a similar list. In one case, that of the Isle of Wight (IV, 16; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 382–3), the

hidage he gives is double that of the Tribal Hidage list, perhaps implying that hidages could be halved or doubled depending on circumstance. The East Anglian assessment was 30,000 hides, while that of Kent was 15,000 and the East Saxons 7,000, but this does not necessarily mean that East Anglia was twice as large or twice as wealthy as the Kentish province.

Most of the earliest sources for East Anglian history were in fact compiled outside the kingdom. There are references to East Anglia in the period before 900 in the administrative records of the English church and in occasional annals in the common text of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, but the major source for its early history today, as it was also for late Saxon and Anglo-Norman writers, is Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* (Colgrave and Mynors 1969). Bede himself identifies an account he received from Abbot Esi, whose monastery is unfortunately unknown, as one of his main sources of information for the history of the province, together with information from Canterbury (preface; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 6–7). It would appear likely that the monastery of Lastingham, North Yorkshire, was the source of the all-important reference to the royal vill of Rendlesham (Ch 7.1.1). Material relating to Fursey and his royal patrons Sigebert and Anna was taken from the *Transitus Beati Fursei* which survives independently in a number of manuscripts (Rackham 2007). This Life provides a welcome opportunity to see how Bede made use of a text available to him, and it is evident that in III, 19 he followed it very closely indeed (Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 269–77). It is the *Transitus* that supplied the statement that 'Anna and his nobles … adorned [Fursey's foundation at *Cnobheresburg*] with buildings and gifts' (Rackham 2007, 52–3), a possible allusion to lost East Anglian charters. Bede was particularly interested in King Anna and his saintly family, especially his daughter Æthelthryth who founded the monastery of Ely in 672/3 and who had previously been the wife of King Ecgfrith of Northumbria (670–85). Bede produced a lengthy chapter on Æthelthryth, and included a poem in praise of her as a queen who preferred to become a bride of Christ that he had composed some years before (IV, 19–20; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 390–401). Some of his information about Æthelthryth came from Northumbria, and Bede specifically mentions Bishop Wilfrid as a source for the translation of her incorrupt body in 695. He also knew of Æthelthryth's steward Owine who had accompanied her from East Anglia and became a monk of Lastingham, a rare reference to a non-royal East Anglian layman (IV, 3; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 338–45).

Rather surprisingly, Bede has nothing to say about Botwulf (St Botulph/Botulf) although he seems to have been a significant figure in the early history of monasticism in England (Newton 2016), described by the biographer of Bede's own abbot, Ceolfrith, as 'a man of unparalleled life and learning, and full of the grace of the Holy Spirit' (Grocock and Wood 2013, 82–3). The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* describes Botwulf's foundation of a monastery at *Icanho* in 654 (Whitelock 1961, 20), and Ceolfrith visited him there around 670. A Life of Botwulf (*Vita Beati Botulphi Abbatis*) was written, perhaps between 1070 and 1071, by Abbot Folcard of Thorney (Love 2015; Newton 2016, 526–30). The monastery had been the recipient of at least some of the remains of Botwulf in the early eleventh century, possibly with some documentation concerning him. The Life appears to provide information about an otherwise unknown East Anglian ruler, possibly a son of King Anna, called Æthelmund who as a minor ruled with his two elder kinsmen, Anna's brothers Æthelhere and Æthelwald, with the support of his mother. Æthelmund's sisters are said to have recommended Botwulf, whom they had encountered when travelling in Francia. The migration of East Anglian princesses to Francia in order to join the nunnery of Faremoutiers comes from Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* (III, 8; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 236–9). The Life's information is plausible and potentially has valuable information to supplement Bede (Love 2015; Newton 2016), but there also has to be a suspicion that the supplementary information could be an invented gloss based on Bede's text (Whitelock 1972, 10–12), and that this is an example of the proliferation of the saintly family of Anna that was a feature of the hagiography of eastern England in the tenth and eleventh centuries (see further below).

Bede's information on the East Anglian kingdom ceases towards the end of the seventh century, and records after that time are meagre. The *Vita Sancti Guthlaci*, probably written in the 730s (Colgrave 1956), has little directly to say about the province, but is dedicated to King Ælfwald (713–49) by its author Felix, who has the same name as the first East Anglian bishop and so was perhaps one of the episcopal clergy of *Dommoc*. There is reference to a sister of Ælfwald called Ecgburh who was an abbess and a patron of St Guthlac, the hermit of Crowland (Lincolnshire) in the territory of the *Gyrwe* (Colgrave 1956, 146–9). The interest in Crowland probably reflects East Anglian overlordship among the *Gyrwe*, evidently disputed with Mercia, and implies that Ælfwald's father Aldwulf had been in a position to protect the exiled Mercian princes Guthlac and Æthelbald (the latter became king of Mercia in 716). The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* provides brief details of the rivalry between Mercia and the East Angles in the reign of Æthelbald's successor Offa which led to the murder of King Æthelbert in Herefordshire in 794 (James 1917), and of some notable East Anglian victories against the Mercians in the ninth century, though for the names of some of the later East Anglian kings we are dependent on the evidence of coinage (Pagan 1982; Naismith 2016, 49–51).

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* sketches in something of the last days of the East Anglian kingdom under Viking attacks which forms the backdrop to the Lives and legends surrounding the martyrdom of King Edmund by the invaders in 869 (Whitelock 1969). The main source is the *Passio Sancti Eadmundi* written by Abbo of Fleury in the 980s (Winterbottom 1972, 65–87). Although the location of events has been much disputed, it seems likely that Edmund was killed near the royal vill of Bury St Edmunds and was subsequently buried in its church; the *Passio* was probably composed at a time of a major new promotion of the cult (Ridyard 1988, 211–34). Although Abbo's information is said promisingly to come from what Archbishop Dunstan had heard at King Athelstan's court from Edmund's armour-bearer, recent analyses have emphasised the derivative nature of his account (Gransden 1985; Barrow 2015). This and other sources relating to the ninth century might seem to stray beyond the 800 cut-off date of the volume, but they do refer to places that were royal residences at that time which, in the absence of earlier information, may be of value for identifying centres of royal authority (Ch 8.2.2.4).

Bede's fulsome praise for Æthelthryth and her community at Ely is likely to have been a major spur for its re-foundation by Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester as a Benedictine community, probably in 970 (Keynes 2003, 18–22). The *Libelli Æthelwoldi*, incorporated into the twelfth-century *Liber Eliensis*, records Æthelwold's enthusiastic recovery of lands that it was claimed had been part of the original endowment of Ely (Kennedy 1995; Blake 1962; Fairweather 2005). Among these lands were the five-and-a-half hundreds of Wicklaw that included Rendlesham and Sutton Hoo (Warner 1996, 152–6; Williamson 2008). The *Liber Eliensis* is a major source for later pre-Conquest East Anglia and its administrative structures, some of which may be of much older origin, but it has relatively little to add on the earlier history of the province. However, its information that King Anna and 'Iurminus' were buried at Blythburgh (Ch 8.2.3.3), King Sigebert, King Edmund and St Ælgetus at Bury St Edmunds (*Liber Eliensis* chs 1 and 23), and the East Anglian princess Wihtburh at her monastery in Dereham (ch 40) may well be based on local traditions. On the other hand, the claims that 'Iurminus' was a son of Anna, that Ælgetus was a steward of St Æthelthryth and that Wihtburh was also a daughter of King Anna (in spite of a record that implies her death in 743: Baker 2000, 58) are more suspect and likely to be examples of the trend at Ely, and in other eastern religious houses from the tenth century onwards, to relate any remnants of early East Anglian history to King Anna and his saintly daughters. Ely went on to produce a host of Lives and other commemorative material relating to Æthelthryth, her sister Seaxburh and the latter's daughter Eormenhild and granddaughter Wærburh, who were all, or were at least claimed to be, successive abbesses of Ely (Love 2004). This material adds nothing of historical value for the history of the East Anglian kingdom. More reliable, perhaps, is material relating to St Wihtburh which does seem to draw on traditions recorded at her foundation of East Dereham in Norfolk where she was buried and venerated until her body was moved to Ely in the late tenth century (to the fury of the local inhabitants) (Love 2004, lxxxvi–ci, 53–93, 204–17; Williamson 1993, 145–6 for debates on location). Included are references to a childhood spent at Holkham, but unfortunately little that adds significant insight into the early kingdom.

Norfolk is particularly poorly represented in such written material as we have. This may be a result of early royal and ecclesiastical power being concentrated in the south-east of the kingdom, and to relatively substantial Scandinavian settlement in parts of Norfolk (Margeson 1996; Abrams and Parsons 2004; Pestell 2013a; 2019), but does not necessarily reflect a lack of significant wealth or activity (Williamson 1993). There are further possibilities for recovering aspects of the history of the East Anglian kingdom with the aid of written sources. Domesday Book and other medieval records of royal or local administration contain information which when combined with place-names, archaeology and landscape studies can throw light on aspects of East Anglia's pre-Conquest past, as is demonstrated by case studies in this volume, as well as by publications such as Williamson 1993 and Warner 1996.

1.6 Power and territory

The existence of kingdoms in England, with rulers who claimed Continental Germanic ancestry, is securely documented from the beginning of the seventh century (Kirby 1991; Yorke 1990); their counterparts in west and north Britain, ruled by British potentates, are attested from sixth-century and later sources (Alcock 1988; Yorke 2006, 5–40). Changes in the archaeological record of the later sixth and earlier seventh centuries, in particular the phenomenon of princely burial and the development of a settlement hierarchy indicative of territorial authority and

formalised surplus extraction, suggest that this threshold of historical visibility genuinely coincides with a new degree of social differentiation and political power in eastern, central and southern England (Arnold 1988; Scull 1993; 1999; Carver 2005, 497–9).

There is, however, little reliable documentary evidence for the fifth- and sixth-century societies from which these polities emerged (Yorke 1993; 1999a; Ch 8.2.1). Archaeology is our prime source, and our understanding relies on models that marry the material evidence with both historical perspectives and generalising explanations from the humanities and social sciences (Scull 1993, 65–7). This said, no single simple model can adequately describe or explain change across the former provinces of Britannia. Circumstances in eastern areas, which saw substantial migration from the Continent in the fifth century (Gretzinger *et al* 2022; Scull 2023b), were different from those in areas of western and northern Britain, which did not come under Anglo-Saxon political control until the seventh century or later. Within these latter zones there were many local and regional complexities, and varying dynamics and chronologies of change. The experiences of societies beyond Rome's northern frontier were different again.

In what follows we set the scene for contextual interpretation of the archaeology at Rendlesham by summarising current thinking about the development of social and political hierarchies, culminating in regional rulership; how this process may have been linked to changes in rights to landed resource and surplus extraction; and how this may in turn have been related to, or promoted, the territorialisation of authority. The discussion draws heavily on Williamson (2013a; 2013b) and Scull (2019a).

1.6.1 Social hierarchy, lordship and hegemony

Prevailing models of social and political development in early post-Roman Britain take as their starting point an extreme fragmentation of political power and jurisdictional authority in the immediate aftermath of the rupture between the Diocese of the Britains and the Western Empire. Under this scenario administrative structures of state disappeared, devolving effective power to local magnates, embedded in long-standing networks of clientage and patronage; or, in the northern military zone, to garrison commanders (Gerrard 2013; Collins 2012; 2017). It is within this context that the impact of migration from what are now the Netherlands, northern Germany and south Scandinavia, and the new North Sea networks that this established, needs to be considered. The long-standing view that the appearance of new material culture types and cultural practices in the archaeology of lowland England from the earlier fifth century represents a sizeable movement of people is now strongly supported by biomolecular studies (Gretzinger *et al* 2022), but this did not amount to simple population replacement. The 'Anglo-Saxon' archaeology of the third quarter of the fifth century onwards should be seen as representing societies that had adopted the broad material culture norms of the North Sea cultural province, but which were made up of individuals of Continental, native and mixed descent whose lifestyles and material worlds were shaped by dynamics of emulation and acculturation as well as cultural inheritance (Scull 1995, 78–9; 2023b; Gretzinger *et al* 2022).

In essence, general models that seek to explain the emergence of regional elites and polities by the late sixth century in England emphasise processes of competitive exclusion whereby some groups were able to establish increasing social distance and wider political power culminating in regional hegemonies (Arnold 1988; Bassett 1989a; Scull 1993; 1997). Such models back-project the trends apparent in rulership and geo-politics in seventh and eighth-century England, in particular the dynastic conflicts that permeate Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, the nested levels of lordship and overlordship apparent in Bede's hierarchy of *reges*, *sub-reguli* and *principes* (Campbell 1979a), and the smaller groups recorded in the Tribal Hidage and other sources that can be viewed as a residual stratum of formerly autonomous local entities that were subsumed into regional kingdoms (Davies and Vierck 1974; Bassett 1989a, 17–19; Dumville 1989; Scull 1992, 6–7; Baker 2017). Such essentially historical perspectives are consistent with the material evidence from eastern England in the later sixth and seventh centuries, in particular the evidence in burial practices for increasing degrees of social distance and for significant levels of portable wealth at the disposal of elites, and the increasingly centralised elite control of a landed surplus implied by the emergence of a clear settlement hierarchy.

Such perspectives do not imply a post-Roman 'year zero' or envisage trajectories of social development which begin with pristine or egalitarian societies. Post-Roman British society retained intrinsic structures and infrastructures of power, and had in the Roman state powerful models of authority. Continental settlers in eastern England came from hierarchical societies which in some cases demonstrably had the capacity to impose and maintain authority over considerable geographical areas. They possessed models of authority both in their own societies and, like the British, in the late Roman army and state. Nor is there any reason to exclude indigenous British leaders from the power games of the fifth century, or to assume that their descendants were not represented among the upper echelons of sixth- and seventh-century English society. The perspective allows for the negotiation and transformation of cultural identities, and recognises that individuals might achieve positions of leadership regardless of ancestry or cultural background.

It is sometimes assumed that the cremation rite, the predominant burial practice of the earliest settlers from the Continent in eastern England, reflects a broadly egalitarian society. In fact, as with the furnished inhumation which becomes common from the third quarter of the fifth century, the cremation record shows, from the outset, clear evidence for significant degrees of social differentiation and demarcation, expressed in the character and value of accompanying artefacts (Hills and Lucy 2013). By the beginning of the sixth century, when the horseman in Eriswell grave 323 was buried on the western margins of what would become the East Anglian *provincia* (Caruth and Hines 2024), the burial record signals a ranked society whose leading members enjoyed preferential access to valuables and prestige items, and whose higher-status masculine identities were defined by weapon-bearing and an equestrian culture (Scull 1993, 72–3; Härke 1992; Fern 2005).

The funerary evidence stands in apparent contrast to the settlement record for eastern England in the fifth and sixth centuries, which shows little differentiation in building size and organisation within or between settlement sites, even where associated burials show access to portable wealth and express clearly differentiated social identities and ranking. The social model that best fits this evidence is that of a society in which social eminence, power and leadership at any but a local level were temporary and circumscribed: a society of internally ranked descent groups, within which the basic socio-economic unit was the ancestral farm or holding, rights to which were embodied in a central family but which was worked by a household which might include extended family, more distant kin, and a range of unfree dependants (Scull 1993, 72–3; Hamerow 2012, 70–2). There is little evidence from plan-form or the size and range of buildings for a settlement hierarchy prior to the inception of the great hall complexes in the later sixth century (1.6.2, below), but there are other indicators of earlier configurations of differentiation and centrality in social geography, and evidence that some elite sites were directly rooted in these (Thomas 2017; 2018, 266–73; Thomas and Scull 2021, 6–9). How and why these changes came about are central to our enquiry.

Within such societies the dynamics of social reproduction, played out between locally dominant families through networks of alliance and obligations, and sometimes involving competition and outright conflict, would over time act to tip the balance of reciprocity and power in such a way that individuals or lineages might establish wider power and authority (Scull 1993; 2011a). Initially, any leadership that was more than local would be personal and impermanent, but as powerful individuals sought to perpetuate their positions, new relationships of power and lordship would develop, locking more and more lineages into subordinate positions and ultimately resulting in a regional dynastic hegemony. This is to offer a key refinement to the influential model articulated by Steven Bassett (1989a) by emphasising the importance of dynastic competition in which the losers became subordinate to the winners rather than focusing solely on wars of conquest between territorial entities. It is a perspective which accommodates social transactions and competition within and between lineages at a range of scales and social levels (Scull 1993; 2011a; Reynolds 2018) as well as integrative and collaborative social mechanisms – such as assembly – that might underpin contingent political relationships (Semple *et al* 2021).

Conventionally, attention has been focused on how elite exploitation of long-distance exchange contacts, and intensification of inter-regional trade (whether in luxuries or prestige items, bulk commodities, or slaves), may have acted to promote socio-economic complexity in the sixth and seventh centuries (Arnold 1988; Hodges 1982; 1989). But such processes cannot, in themselves, be convincingly adduced as causal explanations for increases in social ranking or the emergence of royal power. A socially embedded prestige-goods economy – if such did indeed exist in sixth- and seventh-century England – implies pre-existing socio-economic ranking, while regulation and taxation of inter-regional trade requires power and authority. It is therefore significant that the major *emporia* – considered the main archaeological manifestation of royal regulation of international commerce in seventh- to ninth-century England – all show the planned expansion associated with royal interest in the final decades of the seventh century or the early eighth, long after the establishment and consolidation of regional kingdoms (Birbeck *et al* 2005; Malcolm *et al* 2003; Cowie and Blackmore 2012; Scull 2002; 2009a, 313–16).

Explanations for increasing social hierarchy in the emergence of regional elites are rather to be sought in how motivations to social reproduction were played out through the structures of early medieval society, and in the relationships between land as a social resource, farming and extractive production, and elite consumption

(Scull 1993, 77–9; 2011a, 853–5; Brookes 2007a). The broad social dynamics outlined above would intensify the capacity to accumulate social capital and human resources through the increasing numbers of lord : retainer relationships in the higher segments of the social hierarchy, and through the enhanced ability to reward followers and retainers which this necessitated. Intensifying and increasing these social relationships would in turn amplify the resources that those at the apex of the social and political hierarchy could accrue and redeploy. The combination of social capital, exercised through bonds of lordship, obligation, reciprocity, self-interest and kinship, and the ability to attract and retain valued specialists in war and craft through maintenance and reward, together served to translate a landed surplus into political and military muscle. This could be deployed in the wider dynastic arena, and the material benefits of access to inter-regional exchange networks would buttress the effects of success in war or diplomacy. Even the evangelisation of the English can be seen in this light, with royal support for the mission inviting the church's sanction of new elites and polities, royal acceptance or rejection of conversion signalling political affiliation or fault line, and individual royal baptisms firmly enmeshed within the diplomatic relations of overlordship (Yorke 2006, 122–8; 2019).

There are, however, alternative perspectives. Some emphasise the perpetuation of Roman administrative geographies into the fifth and sixth centuries (Dark 1994; Baker 2006), or argue that regional hegemonies in eastern England developed not from smaller, less permanent political groupings but from a fragmentation during the sixth century of such wider configurations of rulership (Halsall 2007, 311–19). This raises the important question of how, and at what scales, fourth- and early fifth-century jurisdictional and economic landscapes structured subsequent configurations of power, but the reversal of perspective raises at least as many questions as it answers and does not find support in the archaeological record. There was undoubtedly a fragmentation of power structures, whether early or late in the immediate post-Roman period, and models of peer-competition, of the kind just outlined, provide powerful explanations for the subsequent reconfiguration of regional hegemony.

1.6.2 Settlement hierarchy, territory and central place

The term 'central place' derives from Central Place Theory, developed by the German geographer Walter Christaller to explain patterning and hierarchy of settlement (Christaller 1933; 1966; 1968). Christaller's original thesis, that central places providing market and administrative functions to surrounding areas will emerge at roughly equidistant locations, was based on modern settlement patterns in the South German plain. Its application to earlier societies and differing physical geographies, for example in models of settlement hierarchy and territory in the classical world and medieval Europe, has shown that the approach must be adapted to context. Consequently, the term as applied to non-urban societies in early medieval Europe has taken on looser and somewhat protean meanings, being applied to places that served in a specialised capacity for a wide population as foci for undertaking or enacting one or more of a range of social, ideological, ritual, economic or jurisdictional transactions (Denecke 1975; Austin 1986; Høilund Nielsen 2014). In this sense, central place functions might be dispersed or combined across the landscape at a range of settlements and places. In the Late Roman Iron Age (LRIA) and Migration Period of south Scandinavia, poly-focal central place complexes, argued to be foci of regional polities, combine functions of rulership, exchange and cult. In fifth-century eastern England, where no settlement hierarchy is apparent, it is argued that large cremation cemeteries such as Loveden Hill, Lincolnshire or Spong Hill, Norfolk, serving dispersed populations, provided a mnemonic focus that acted to sustain local social networks and identities (Williams 2002; Hills and Lucy 2013, 293–4).

In modelling social and political dynamics and seeking to identify geographical expressions of power in the archaeology of the fifth to eighth centuries, it is important to remember that lordship was primarily exercised directly over people and only indirectly over territory. This brings in to question the extent to which it might be realistic to expect some simple spatial expression of rulership or a territorial administrative hierarchy (Davies and Vierck 1974, 228–9). Power may be exercised at varying scales, and transacted at different places. Just as lordship was devolved, so landscapes of jurisdiction might be dispersed, and different functions exercised at different places and social levels. There is also an important distinction to be drawn between central *person* and central *place*. Networks of social and economic relationships might focus on elite individuals regardless of where they are at any one time, on individuals performing specific actions at specific places such as residences, assembly sites and cult sites, or on specific places in ways which do not require the presence of the central person. These overlapping social geographies are further complicated by the fact that where the roles of central persons are linked to specific places these may or may not be at the same site, and because some central place functions fixed to specific places, notably agrarian administration and the gathering of dues and renders, were very likely the province of delegated authority. None the less, the material and onomastic evidence for these functions and transactions have a spatial dimension that must be rooted in social aggregates and entities of rulership: however conceptualised, central places were focal points of something (Gringmuth-Dallmer 2011, 437).

A key element of the 'peer-polity' model outlined above is the crystallisation of new relationships of power in ways which allowed the winners to extract and redeploy surpluses on an increasingly large scale. It is important to emphasise, though, that this need not in its earlier stages have involved any significant intensification of agrarian production, although it would probably have promoted this in the longer term. The ability to tax, or to acquire tribute or renders, across a larger area through new levels of domination would in itself have placed surpluses on a new scale at the disposal of the new elites. It is widely accepted that as a part of these changes the later sixth and seventh centuries saw reconfigurations of landholding and settlement as arrangements were put in place to facilitate regularised surplus extraction from ancestral holdings or 'folk-territories' that had previously been subject to intermittent or periodic tributary demands, culminating in a pattern of complex or multiple holdings administered from estate centres (Carver 1989, 156–8; Scull 1993, 77–9 ; Brookes 2010; Dickinson *et al* 2011, 71–3; Blair 2018, 104–8; Rippon 2022).

Across central and eastern England there is clear evidence for greater settlement diversity and complexity in the archaeological record from the later sixth century. Great hall complexes, such as those at Yeavering, Sutton Courtenay / Drayton and Lyminge, were a novel feature of the settlement landscape, monumental statements of a new level of elite power and centralising authority (Blair 2018, 103–30; Scull and Thomas 2020). The later seventh century saw the physical expansion of the major international trading sites or *emporia*, and below the level of the great hall complexes differentiation and complexity in rural settlement is evident through the seventh to ninth centuries both in the excavated record and in the metal-detecting evidence – the so-called 'productive sites' (Hamerow 2012; Pestell and Ulmschneider 2003; Ulmschneider 2000). Current thinking would link the great hall complexes to 'extensive lordship'. They were the places from which large territories (*regiones*) encompassing multiple holdings, devolved lordship and a tiered range of rights and obligations were administered. They also acted as the centres at which peripatetic rulership was exercised (Faith 1997, 1–14; Blair 2018, 103–30). The great hall complexes seem to have become redundant after the turn of the eighth century, when their functions and roles were met in different ways and at different places, reflecting the transition from extensive to increasingly fragmented and locally distributed systems of lordship in which the church, monasteries and secular lords were all players (Faith 1997, 153–64; Hooke 1997, 76–81; Lavelle 2007; Scull and Thomas 2020).

It is important, however, not to assume a simple correlation between settlement hierarchy and social hierarchy. A magnate residence would house a population drawn from all social levels, and there are distinctions to be drawn between its economic and jurisdictional functions and the social make-up of its population. Royal centres were not deserted between episodes of residence: as farms, and centres for taxation and renders, as well as residences, they had a permanent population (including slaves and tied labour and an aristocratic reeve) which was periodically augmented by the presence of the ruler and retinue. We might legitimately envisage lesser magnate establishments being similarly constituted, and even farms at the lower end of the social and economic scale probably embodied social distinctions between central family, dependants and slave labour. It may also be possible to see an emerging differentiation between social and administrative hierarchies in the evidence for rural centres where farm renders were collected and processed but which may not have functioned as elite residences, as has been suggested in the case of Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire or Sherburn, North Yorkshire (Hardy *et al* 2007; Powlesland 2011). In characterising higher-status establishments it is therefore important to acknowledge the range of linked functions they may have performed, and to envisage multiple and shifting valencies (Pestell 2004, 59–64). These were nodal places where social, economic, political, jurisdictional and customary landscapes intersected, but they were not the only places of importance in these different geographies, and not all would, at all times, have had the same range of significances and attributes.

We are able to recognise potential central or focal places in the archaeology of early East Anglia but how, in the near-complete absence of contemporary written records, can we model the social and administrative territories they represent?

Discussions of early medieval settlement and territorial organisation are often framed in terms of a contrast between 'light', freely draining soils, formed in permeable geologies, which are generally thought to have been suitable for arable land use; and poorly draining clays, considered inimical to it. Hypothetical boundaries of early territories are drawn accordingly, defining areas

whose cores approximate to tracts of light land. But some light soils were too acidic for regular cultivation; the cultivability of clay soils was critically affected by subtleties of gradient; and successful use of an area as arable is in part a function of its distance from a settlement whose location might itself be fixed by some non-agrarian factor, such as the availability of water. Simple analysis of soil type thus needs to be supplemented by other approaches. One is the concept of 'river-and-wold', first developed by regional historians like Everitt and Phythian Adams in the 1970s and 1980s, and widely adopted by landscape historians thereafter (Everitt 1977; Phythian Adams 1987; Fox 1989). This model emphasises the importance of topographic context, and in particular the enduring contrast between river valleys and intervening uplands. It assumes that, in general terms, the larger Roman and early medieval settlements were located in major valleys (often on well-drained gravel terraces) where there was also usually a good supply of water, with the main areas of arable land lying beside them. The higher interfluves, in contrast, were occupied by tracts of woodland and pasture. Such upland 'wolds' were either unsettled, or exploited by minor settlements which were only seasonally occupied. They corresponded to tracts of well-drained but acidic drift, as much as to areas of heavy clay, and were spatially as well as agriculturally marginal.

As the upland wolds were at most only sparsely settled, they tended to constitute cut-off points in patterns of human interaction – to form, that is, the margins of social territories. Communities were focused on particular valleys, or valley systems, developing identities distinct from those dwelling the other side of a watershed. Even when the interfluves came to be more intensively exploited, established patterns of social interaction tended to continue, not least because some of the valley settlements evolved into market centres, with important roles as the social and economic foci for local communities. Over time, in other words, social territories tended to approximate to drainage basins. This model has been used to study the spatial configuration of regional polities in early medieval England, in the work of Bassett and others (Bassett 1997; Short 1987; Warner 1988; Williamson 1993, 92–104; 2010, 119–41). 'Tribal groups', early territories and estates, and the patterns of ecclesiastical provision associated with these have, in a number of areas, been shown to be nested within topographic structures. The boundaries of medieval administrative units, especially hundreds, frequently follow watersheds, suggesting that rather than being arbitrarily imposed they developed organically from the territories of local communities, which had themselves been shaped by local topography (Williamson 2013a, 86–8). In the studies that follow we employ these approaches – critically, and with due caution – to inform our understanding of the wider landscape contexts both of Rendlesham and the various comparison sites. Retrogressive analysis of boundary patterns, analysis of tenurial and ecclesiastical connections indicated by Domesday Book and other early sources, the distribution of place-names, and the mapping of early wooded zones (above, 1.4.2), are all used to reconstruct their probable economic, and possible political, territories.

1.6.3 Conclusions

The emergence of regional elites and polities in late sixth-century England can be explained by the amplification of power relationships rooted in social structures and local lordship. There is strong evidence that even major kingdoms of the eighth and ninth centuries were partible, and it is highly likely that the early *provincia* of the East Angles that we know from Bede and the Tribal Hidage was more a patchwork of local entities over which a dynastic hegemony was recognised than an integrated territorial kingdom. Under such circumstances one would expect the superstructure of wider hegemony to have developed from small-scale extractive and jurisdictional networks embedded in essentially local identities and relationships. The seventh-century kingdom may therefore have included a core area or areas in which the ruling lineage and its close supporters were first established as local powers; groups over which lordship had been established at an early stage of 'peer-polity' competition and over which it was now consolidated; and groups over which lordship had been more recently imposed and was less securely established – and on whom the rulers of other kingdoms may have had designs.

The 'peer-polity' perspective privileges leaders as movers of social change, but we also need to be sensitive to the often unknowable balances between degrees of customary and communal rights, economic and social autonomy, and obligation and lordship. Rule may be imposed but at some level, in almost all circumstances, rulership exercised over a group is vested in and derives from that group, and we should not overlook the role of the ruled as well as the rulers in setting conditions of power: it is the societal structures of influence and authority that enable power to flow (Parsons 1963; Mann 1986; Barnes 1988). It has been argued that persistent features of the farming landscape reflect long-standing communal rights (Oosthuizen 2013; 2019) but neither are incompatible with lordship: at issue are degrees of

economic autonomy and levels of surplus extraction, and the extent to which it is valid to envisage different levels of local and regional lordship, each taking its cut and passing on its dues. The nature of ownership of (or rights vested in) land at the time we are concerned with is a complex and vexed question. Current scholarly perspectives (often implicit) range from widespread elite control to a free peasantry farming ancestral territories. There is uncertainty over the structure and extent of estates, and a degree of ambiguity in the very term: should we envisage vast tracts of royal-owned land, elements of which might be held for life by aristocrats, or envisage a patchwork of holdings with varying ownership or tenurial status and a range of obligations which were focused on specific farms for the purpose of collecting and redeploying a surplus? Either way, did any elements of the agrarian landscape lie outside such structures?

We find it useful, therefore, to adopt a social model which can accommodate and integrate the range of possibilities, in which semi-free to magnate lineages are seen as enjoying rights vested in ancestral land, and are themselves subject to degrees of lordship and obligation which may be manifested at any time in different ways which embody different degrees of formal administration. Such a model is scalable in that it is applicable both to small-scale and localised socio-economic structures and more complex regional hegemonies, and it allows for the development (and periodic disintegration) of greater degrees of spatial and hierarchical lordship. As such, it is consistent with the dynamics of competitive exclusion envisaged as governing developing social and economic complexity in the later sixth and seventh centuries, which would increasingly concentrate direct and indirect control on the land's resources in the hands of lords and overlords. We also adopt as an heuristic for the late sixth to eighth centuries the perspective provided by the general model of 'extensive lordship' (Barrow 1973; Faith 1997), while recognising that the articulation of authority and its commensurate geographies varied with time and place, and that over the latter part of our study period there was an increasing formalisation of landed rights and territorial jurisdiction, and a progressive development of service and labour obligations. It seems probable that seventh-century lords had ancestral farms: a successful lineage is unlikely to have lost core holdings as it expropriated property from, or established ties of obligation over, neighbouring magnates. From this perspective, we argue that grants to the church of bookland from the seventh century might be seen not as the inception of heritable land rights in English society but a response to specific circumstances whereby new corporate ecclesiastical entities were gifted the fundamental rights to social and economic resources long enjoyed by secular elite lineages, with attestation by diploma witnessing the transaction in a form understood and acceptable to literate and Latinate recipients (Campbell 1986, 134; Wormald 1984, 20–2; Scull 2019a, 400).

Part 1

Rendlesham: the site and its landscape

Setting, survey and investigation 2

2.1 Landscape and history

2.1.1 Location, terrain and historic land use

The modern civil parish of Rendlesham lies in south-east Suffolk, on the east side of the river Deben some 7km north-east of the town of Woodbridge (Fig 2.1.1). The area surveyed for this project (covering 170.46ha) occupies the western side of the parish and also embraces four fields in the adjacent parish of Eyke to the south. The survey area extends for *c* 3km from south to north along the east side of the Deben valley, and for up to 1.3km from west to east.

Rendlesham has usually been examined by archaeologists and historians within the context of the 'Sandlings' or 'Sandlands' region, the strip of light, acid soils, formed in glacial outwash overlying Eocene Crag, which runs down the coast of Suffolk (Fig 2.1.2). This was first identified as a distinct geographical entity by the anonymous author of the *Chorography of Suffolk* in 1605, who described it as 'fitte for sheep and corne'. It was thus distinguished from the clayland area of 'Woodlande & High Suffolcke', running through the centre of the county, which was more devoted to cattle husbandry (MacCulloch 1976, 19). 'Sandlands' first appears as a term in the writings of John Kirby in 1735, later replaced – in the course of the nineteenth century – by the less evocative 'Sandlings' (Kirby 1735, 1–2). The emphasis on the sandy nature of the terrain obscures important variations in topographic detail and especially the broad contrast between the higher ground, dominated by soils characterised by the Soil Survey as belonging to the Newport 4 Association (deep, acid and very infertile), and the lower ground featuring the slightly more attractive sandy soils of the Newport 2 and Newport 3 Associations, as well as loams formed in thin layers of till or glaciofluvial drift (Hodge *et al* 1984, 272–3; 277–8). More important, though, is the fact that Rendlesham is actually located on the south-western margins of the 'Sandlings' region, close to the junction with 'Woodland' Suffolk, and in an area of mixed soils lying in and around the valley of the river Deben. This major watercourse has its source around Debenham, in the heart of 'High' Suffolk, and flows south and east through the claylands before reaching the 'Sandlands' near Rendlesham. It then continues for a further 20km, passing the barrow cemetery at Sutton Hoo some 5km downstream from Rendlesham, until it meets the sea close to the site of Walton Castle, near Felixstowe, a Roman fort of the Saxon Shore now lost to coastal erosion.

The western boundary of Rendlesham parish is formed by the Deben, the broad valley floor of which lies at around 6m OD (Figs 2.1.3–4). The ground rises to the east, reaching 25m OD in the north-east of the survey area; still further to the east, beyond the area studied, the terrain is more level, forming part of the broad interfluve between the Deben and the Butley river systems. The topography is, however, made more complex than this simple description suggests by the presence of two tributaries of the Deben, which have carved out minor valleys running back from the river. One, to the north of Naunton Hall, runs approximately south-east–north-west; the other, in the north of the survey area, runs roughly east–west. The former is the more significant feature and

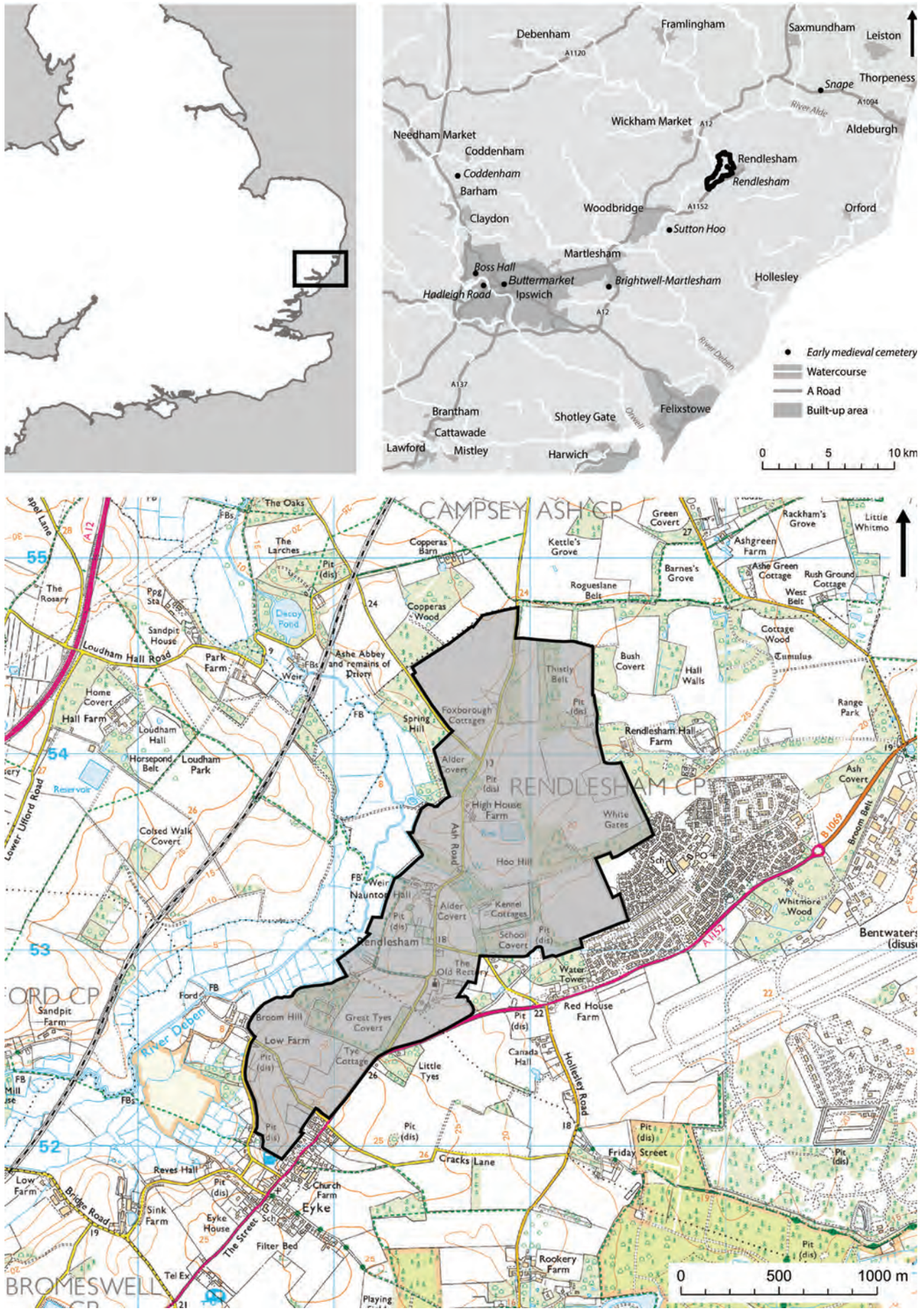


Fig 2.1.1 Location map showing Rendlesham in south-east Suffolk and the survey area. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

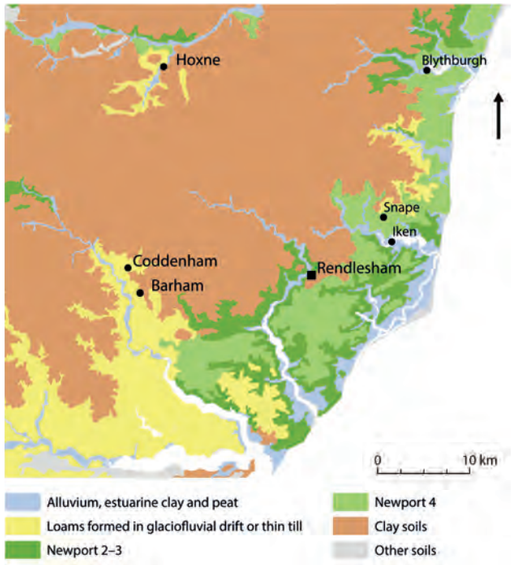


Fig 2.1.2 The 'Sandlings' region of south-east Suffolk showing main soil types

runs through the core area of fifth- to eighth-century activity identified by the survey.

The locality is still essentially rural, although much of the east of Rendlesham parish is occupied by the redundant Bentwaters air base – originally a Royal Air Force station, later United States Army Air Force – and associated housing, now privatised and its area expanded. This in turn lies to the south of what was formerly the site of Rendlesham Hall, once the centre of an extensive estate which had gradually emerged in the course of the eighteenth century through the amalgamation of a number of smaller properties, a process completed at the end of the century by the merchant and banker Peter Isaac Thellusson. Like many others in East Anglia, the Rendlesham estate was gradually broken up in the 1920s and 1930s, the hall itself becoming a sanatorium for a period before it was finally demolished in 1949 (Roberts 2016, 130–4). The modern Naunton Hall estate is one of the successor properties.

The 'Sandlands' was, by the nineteenth century, characterised by a relatively nucleated pattern of settlement, with few farms and hamlets lying outside the principal villages. In this respect it contrasted with 'Woodland' Suffolk to the west, where isolated farms and common-edge hamlets dominate the modern as they did the medieval settlement pattern (Martin 2001). In fact, although it has been suggested that this distinction 'reflects a thousand or more years of development' (Roberts 1999), it was much less marked in the Middle Ages. Fieldwalking for the South-east Suffolk Survey identified numerous isolated scatters of medieval pottery on the light land in Sutton and neighbouring parishes, indicating the sites of farmsteads and hamlets, many located beside what are still roads and lanes (Newman 2005; Williamson 2008, 44–7). Seventeenth-century maps, like that made in 1601 by John Norden of the Stanhope estates in the southern 'Sandlings' parishes, show that the settlement pattern even then remained relatively dispersed (SRO V5/22/1; EE5/11/1). They also indicate that large areas of open field, mixed with the enclosed land, existed on the better 'Sandlings' soils, those of the Newport 2 Association, with extensive tracts of heathland on the higher, more acid ground. The medieval and early post-medieval landscape of Rendlesham (and the adjacent parts of Eyke) displayed many of these more general 'Sandlings' characteristics but – and not surprisingly, given its location and soils – some which aligned it more with the claylands of 'High' Suffolk.

By the time the tithe map was surveyed in 1840 (TNA, PRO IR 30/33/334) much of the parish had been transformed by the creation of an extensive landscape park around Rendlesham Hall, with its associated plantations (covering nearly 2sq km) and by various 'improvements' made to the wider agricultural landscape by the Thellusson family. As we have already seen (Ch 1.4.2), much of the parish – including almost all of our survey area – was mapped by John Kirby around 1730, while the far south of the survey area, within Eyke parish, was included in Norden's survey of the Stanhope estate in 1601. Kirby's maps show that Rendlesham parish church was already, as now, isolated and that there was no village in the parish, but instead a scatter of farms and cottages. Within the survey area, these scattered dwellings included Naunton Hall and High House, a number of cottages, as well as a small farm, now lost, lying on the western side of a green which then occupied much of the area between the church and Naunton Hall, and which survived until at least 1798 (SRO HD 427/3) (Fig 2.1.5). Norden's map shows that in 1601 large areas of open field remained in the north of Eyke, one section of which lay within EKE 022 (Figs 2.1.6–7). The maps of Rendlesham drawn up *c* 1730 (SRO HD 427) show a landscape entirely of enclosed fields, although with hints (in the sinuous boundaries, sometimes displaying small kinks) that open fields had once existed in the parish. This is confirmed by court rolls and other documents from the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which bear witness to a complex mixture of enclosed and open arable land, the latter indicated by references to parcels lying 'in' certain fields, like the two pieces of land granted in 1409 'which contain 1a. 3r., lying in field called Aayescroft' (SRO HD

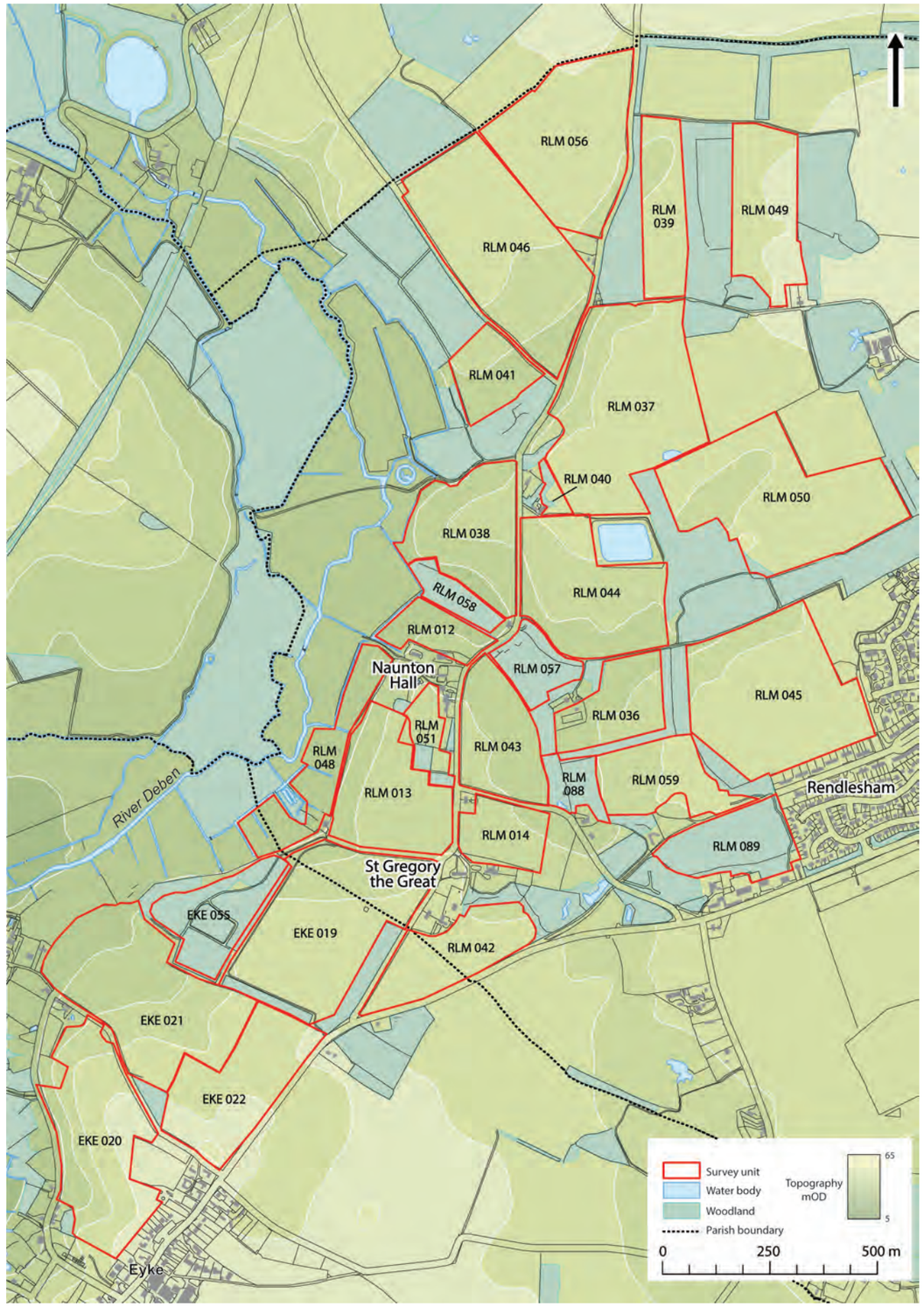


Fig 2.1.3 Map of the survey area and surroundings, showing metal-detecting survey units. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

a

Fig 2.1.4 The Rendlesham landscape: (a) looking north from the south end of Park Field (RLM 013); (b) looking south-west from Sand Walk (RLM 044). *Jim Pullen*

b

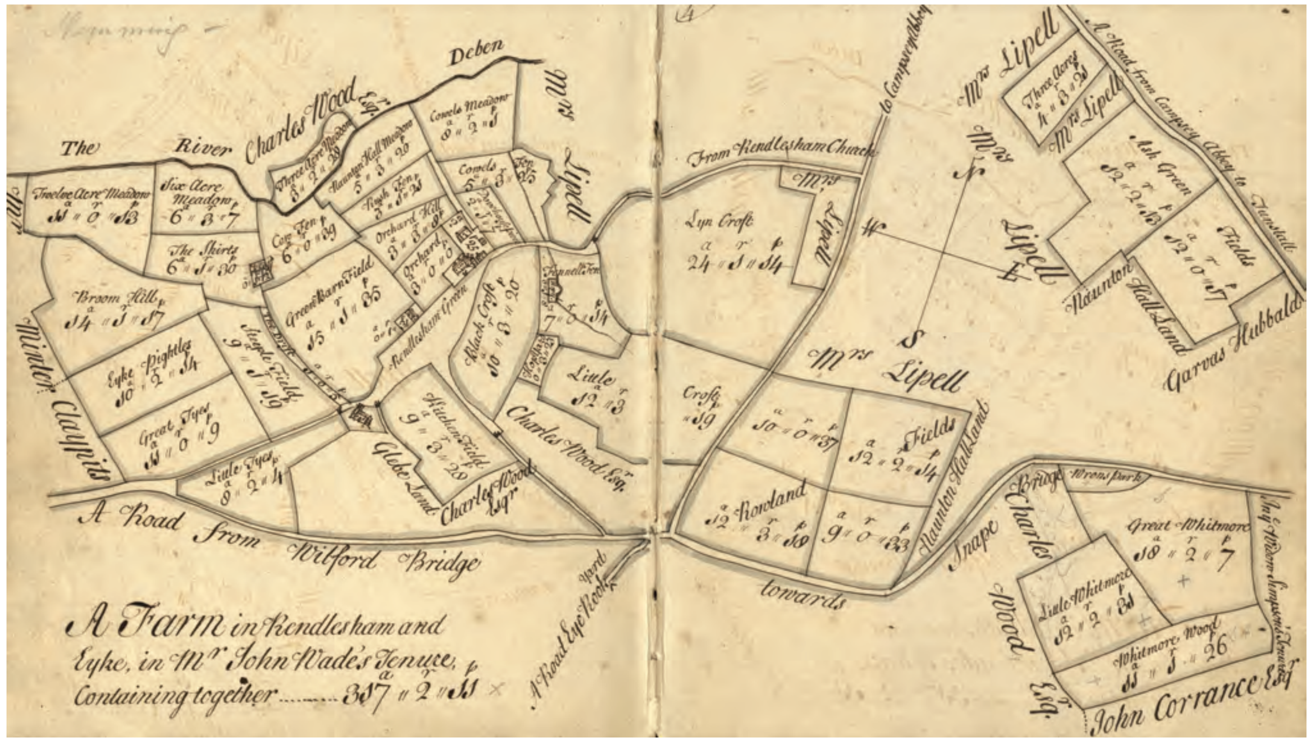


Fig 2.1.5 John Kirby's map of a farm in Rendlesham in the tenure of John Wade, *c* 1730, covering most of the survey area and showing Rendlesham Green, the parish church of St Gregory, and the site of the current Naunton Hall. © *Suffolk Archives*

Fig 2.1.6 Detail of John Norden's map of 1601 survey, showing the parish church of St Gregory and fields in the south of Rendlesham parish and the north of Eyke parish. © *Suffolk Archives; reproduced by kind permission of New Orford Town Trust*

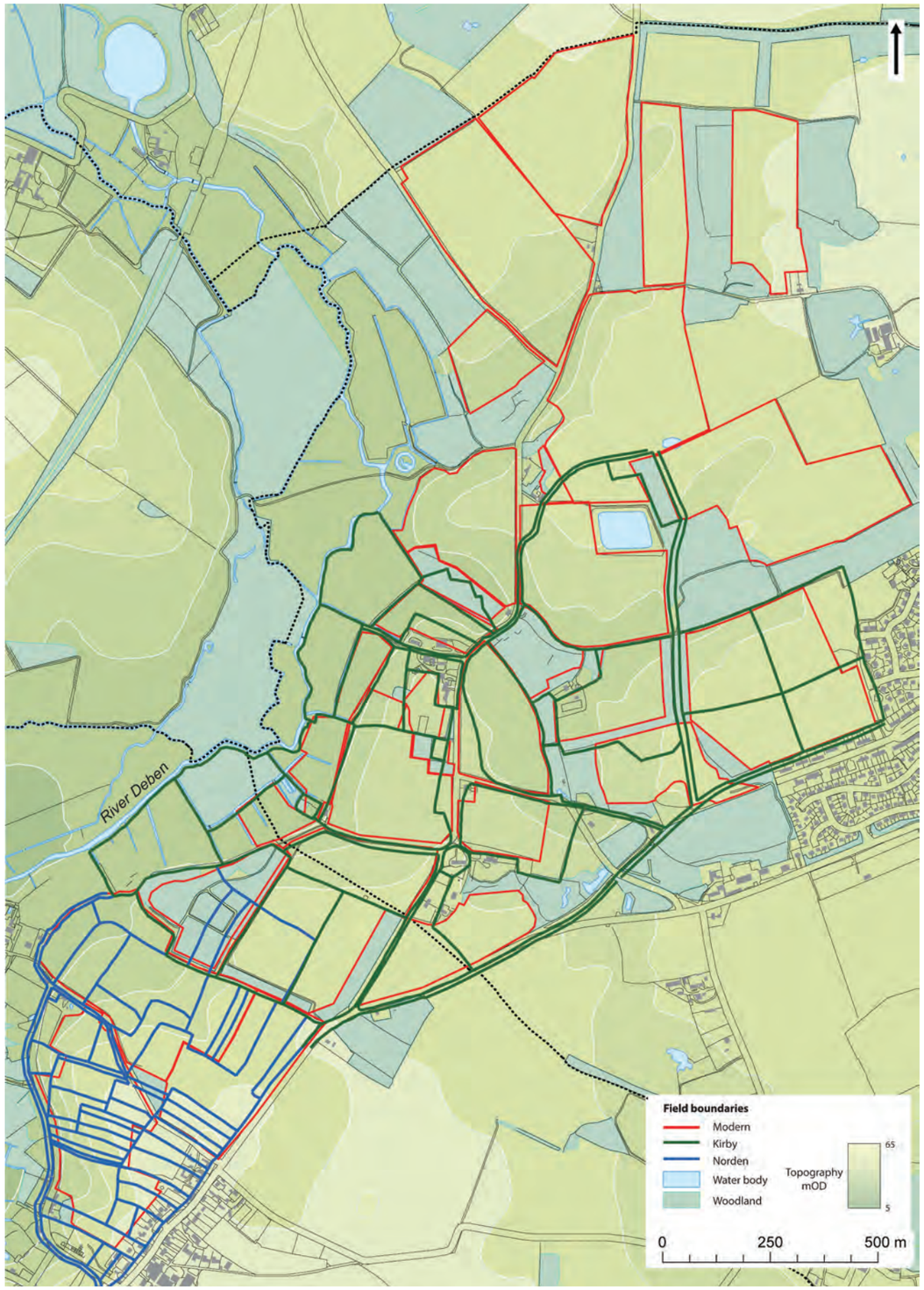


Fig 2.1.7 Early field boundaries from the Kirby and Norden maps shown against the survey area. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

1538/329/7). These open fields were, typically for this part of Suffolk, complex and multiple in character (Burrell 1960; Williamson 2005, 86–97; 2008, 44–52), with some confusion between large open fields, smaller subdivided fields enclosed with hedges ('crofts') and individual furlongs.

Key to understanding the development of settlement and land use within the study area is the character of the local soils. The Soil Survey of Great Britain employs two units for analysing and mapping soils: *series*, and *associations* (Avery 1980; Clayden and Hollis 1984). A series is a soil with a particular mineral content, structure and other characteristics; an association is a group of series that regularly occur together. Few areas in the country have been mapped in terms of series and Rendlesham is not among them. Instead, published maps, at a scale of 1:250,000, feature associations only. This can cause problems in interpreting archaeological data because relatively minor differences between series – unimportant in the context of modern agricultural use – may have had a determining effect on patterns of settlement and land use in the past.

The valley floor of the Deben comprises a wide (0.3km–0.4km) strip of peat and alluvium and narrow ribbons of similar land occupy the floors of the tributary streams. The lower valley sides are characterised by mainly sandy drift, giving rise to Newport 2 Association soils. Only towards the south – in Eyke parish, and outside the survey area – do the poor, acidic soils of the Newport 4 Association occur. Instead, reflecting the fact that Rendlesham's landscape is not typical of the wider 'Sandlings', the higher ground is mainly occupied by clayey rather than sandy drift, giving rise to soils of the Burlingham 3 Association. The transition from the lighter Newport 2 to the heavier Burlingham 3 soils was noted on the ground during the metal-detecting survey, particularly in the east of EKE 019, and was recorded in RLM 013 during excavation in 2013–14, where a sandy drift subsoil was found in Trenches 5 and 6, in the west of the field, but a clayey drift subsoil in Trench 7, in the north-east. t is with the Burlingham 3 Association that the lack of detailed soil mapping causes the most significant problems. The association includes the Burlingham, Ashley, and Honingham Series, stagnogleyic argillic brown earths which are seasonally waterlogged and tenacious. These occur where the terrain is more level. On the valley sides, in contrast, more loamy and better-drained soils are found, including those of the Maxted Series (Hodge *et al* 1984, 136–8). These differences within the Burlingham 3 Association can, therefore, be broadly mapped by distinguishing between those on slopes greater and lesser than 1.75 degrees (Fig 2.1.8).

Medieval documents suggest that the most extensive and continuous areas of arable land were concentrated on the Newport 2 soils and on the more sloping areas of Burlingham soils. In contrast, references to woodland, or to place-names which suggest its former existence, occur on the more level areas of higher ground, although precise locations are elusive. *Norwoodes* is mentioned in a number of court rolls (eg SRO HB 416/B1/57/2) and a late fourteenth-century extent, surviving as an annotated sixteenth-century copy and apparently relating to a minor manor not noted by Copinger or other historians (SRO HB 416/B4/1/30), refers to Tunley ('the farm clearing'), Wrangtunley and Overtunley, Northwood Croft and Close, and Netherwood Croft. Most of their locations cannot be identified but *Tunley* is probably preserved in *the too tullyes* mentioned in a sixteenth-century list of the lands of John Latton Esq in Rendlesham (SRO HB 416/B4/7/5), identifiable with the fields called Great Tilley, Little Tilley and The Tilley on the 1840 tithe map (TNA, PRO IR 29/33/334), in the far east of the parish near the now lost Walnut Tree Farm

Further information is provided by one of Kirby's maps from the 1730s, which shows Whitmore Wood in the east of the parish, later incorporated into the belt around Rendlesham Park and surviving today as a registered area of Ancient Woodland. Kirby also shows Brick Kiln Wood, later Cottage Wood, to the north (likewise later incorporated within Rendlesham Park). A number of field names in the east of the parish, on level clay soils in the area around Rendlesham Hall (then called Naunton Hall – see below), also refer to woodland. Kirby's maps include 'Wood Norrolds', while Great, Little and Middle 'Wheatstocks' probably incorporate OE *stocc*, 'a tree-trunk, a stump', probably indicating land cleared of trees but with the stumps left standing (Cavill 2018, 404). Other names in this general area may suggest rough grazing land in the past, most notably the group of 'Rowland Fields', probably from OE *rūh*, 'rough' (RLM 045). A map of 1798 adds 'First Wood' and 'Wood Field' close to the parish boundary (SRO HD 11/475).

What is striking is that the tithe map of 1840, although drawn up at a time when arable land use had expanded at the expense of pasture to an unprecedented extent even on the heavier soils of East Anglia (Wade-Martins and Williamson 1999), still shows a marked concentration of grassland on the more level areas of the Burlingham soils, although the pattern is slightly distorted by the presence of Rendlesham Park. More importantly, distributions of archaeological material reflect the same contrast: that is, not simply between Newport 2 and Burlingham soils, but between the more

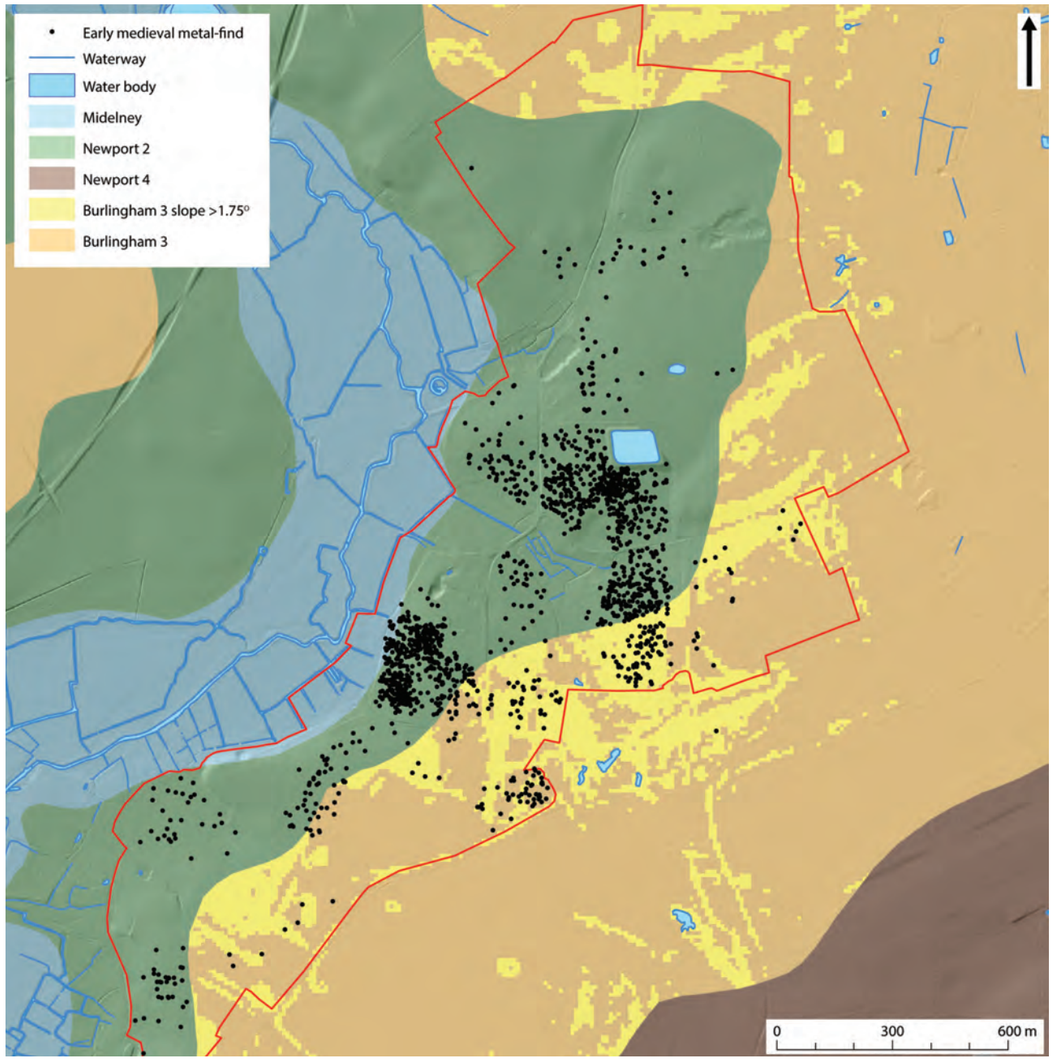


Fig 2.1.8 Early medieval metalwork finds plotted against main soil types, with a distinction drawn between Burlingham 3 soils on slopes greater and lesser than 1.75 degrees. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

level areas of the Burlingham soils, and the other main soil types (Fig 2.1.8). Scatters of Roman, early medieval and even medieval metalwork all tend to avoid the former, suggesting both that much of this material must result from the manuring of arable land and that the more level clays, in all periods, were more likely to be occupied by pasture, wood pasture or coppiced woodland, than by arable (Fig 2.1.9). The distribution of early medieval material, in particular, falls off abruptly where lighter soils give way to the level areas of clay, as for example in EKE 019 and EKE 021.

Other types of land use are recorded in the parish in historic times. On low-lying land, in addition to pasture and meadow, there were turbaries: seventeenth-century documents refer, for example, to 'Buryes Fen, held of the manor of Naunton Hall' (SRO HB 416/B1/59/1–3). No heaths are shown on the various eighteenth-century maps but some fields with heathy vegetation are shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey 6-inch map in the far south-east of the parish, on Newport 4 soils, perhaps indicating the dereliction of poor land resulting from the late nineteenth-century agricultural depression. To the north, on similar soils or on Burlingham 3 soils immediately adjoining, one of Kirby's maps shows a

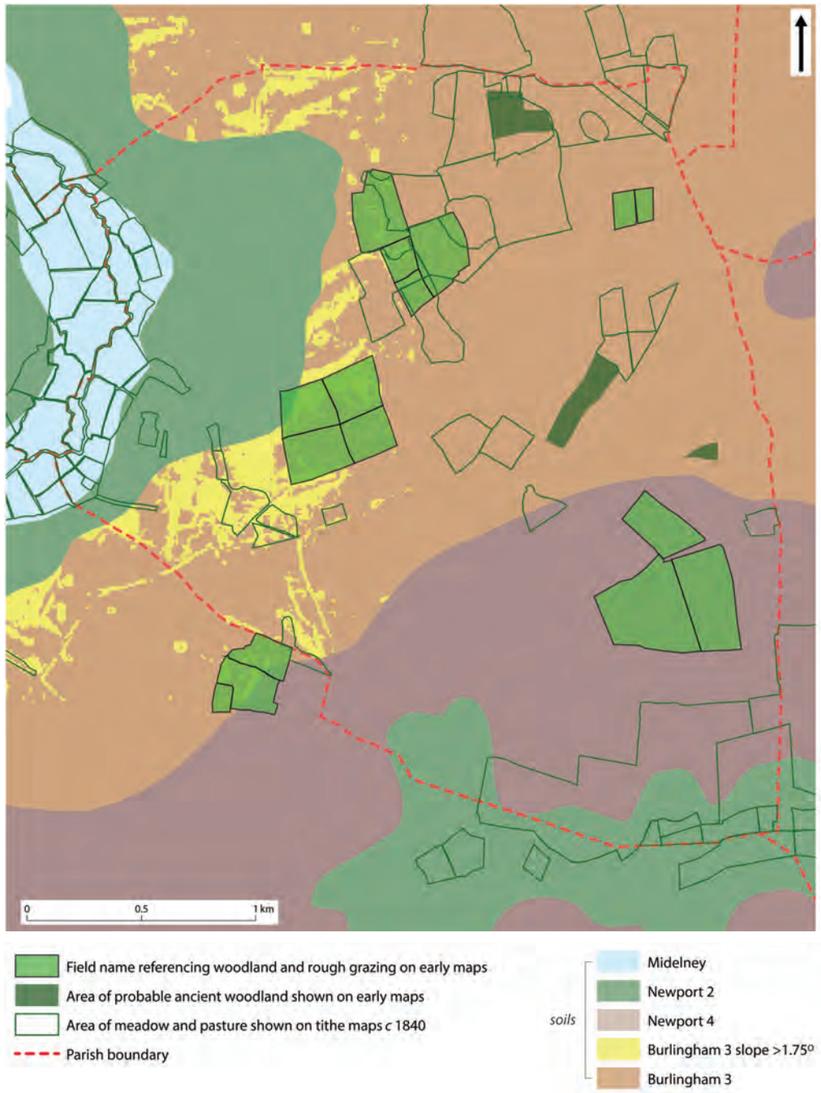


Fig 2.1.9 Map showing areas of ancient woodland, field names from Kirby's map indicating former woodland, and land use on the tithe maps of *c* 1840 against main soil types. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

group of straight-sided fields with names containing the suffix 'walk', a term often used for intakes from heath.

2.1.2 The place-name Rendlesham

Eleanor Rye

The place-name Rendlesham (*Raendlesham, Rendlæsham c* 731; *Rendlesham c* 890; *Renlesham* 1086) is usually interpreted as containing an OE personal name **Rendel* (earlier **Rendil*) and OE *hām* 'homestead, village' (Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, sv Rendlesham; Ekwall 1960, 384). The underlying descriptive label would then mean '*Rendel's homestead/village'. This is the interpretation offered by Bede, who records the baptism of Swithhelm, King of the East Saxons, *in uico regio qui dicitur Rendlaesham, id est mansio Rendili* ('in the royal village which is called Rendlesham, that is the residence of Rendil') (III, 22; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 284–5).

In this interpretation, the first element is an otherwise unrecorded Old English personal name **Rendel*, a name formed from the element **Rand* and a hypocoristic suffix

OE *-el* (Ekwall 1960, 384; Insley 2013, 226–7, 230). The change in vowel quality is explained by *i*-umlaut, by which the /i/ of the suffix (< earlier **-il-*) caused raising and fronting of /a/ to /æ/ and, in later OE, to /e/ before nasals (Hogg 1992, §5.78(1), §5.85(10d)).

The personal name element **rand* is unparalleled in other Old English personal names but is found in both Viking-Age Scandinavian personal names (Peterson 2007, 181) and Continental Germanic names from medieval Francia. Morlet (1968, 187) lists sixteen dithematic names with the first element *Rand-* (some with multiple bearers), the hypocoristic forms *Rando, Randicus, Randinga, Randingus, Randanus* and *Rancelinus*, and a secondary theme *Rens-* in *Rensuisa* (a. 1042–4). The hypocoristic form *Rando* is the first element of the place-names Randerath (Aix-la-Chapelle) and Randonnai (Tourouvre, Orne) (Morlet 1985, 431). Connections between early medieval East Anglia and Scandinavia are well documented (Hines 1984; 2013) and have assumed particular weight in discussions of the Mound 1 ship burial at Sutton Hoo (eg Bruce-Mitford 1949; 1975, 693; Hines 1984, 286–92). However, given the historical evidence for connections between the emergent East Anglian royal dynasty and Francia (Ch 8.2, below), and the archaeological and numismatic evidence for links between south-east Suffolk and the Merovingian kingdoms (eg Chs 5.5 and 5.6), it is worth bearing in mind that a personal name **Rendel* could just as well preserve a trace of Frankish onomastic connections.

An alternative suggestion is that the first element of Rendlesham is an otherwise unknown noun OE **rændel, *rendel* (Gelling 1978, 189; Watts 2004, sv Rendlesham). Such a noun would be explicable as a diminutive of attested OE *rand*, which occurs in other place-names (Smith 1956, sv rand). OE *rand* probably had the sense 'border' or 'strip' in addition to its recorded poetic sense 'shield', a sense surviving in an East Anglian dialect word for marshy, reed-covered ground between a river and an embankment (OED 2020, sv rand, n.1). Reference to a marshy strip of land would be topographically appropriate to Rendlesham's situation overlooking a narrow strip of riverside land.

Favouring one etymology over the other entails deciding whether an unattested personal name with a thematic element well attested elsewhere, or an unattested noun with a semantically plausible root, is more likely. Certainty is impossible at this chronological remove but, although OE speakers' place-name etymologies are not infallible (Gelling 1978, 56–9, 78–9), Bede's support for the first etymology may swing the balance of probability in favour of '**Rendel's* homestead/village' rather than 'homestead/village at the strip of land'.

2.1.3 Manorial history (Fig 2.1.10)

Copinger and others agree that there were four medieval manors in Rendlesham but offer differing accounts of their descents, which at several points seem at variance with the surviving documentary evidence (Copinger 1909, 317–23; Kirby 1735, 114–16; Page 1847, 123–6). These were Naunton Hall, referred to as 'Rendlesham alias Naunton Hall' from at least 1307 (SRO HB 416/B4/1/1); Colvilles; Bavents; and Caketons. This, however, simplifies a more complex picture. An extent of 1387, surviving as a sixteenth-century copy, describes what is almost certainly a fifth manor, also apparently detailed in an undated fourteenth-century rental amongst the records of the manor of Colvilles (SRO HB 416/B4/1/30 and HB 416/B4/3/7). A small number of the parcels named can be identified with fields which appear in later sources, all in the south of the parish: the 'peece of pasture three cornered called holmergreen' abutting on 'holmer watering', for example, must be near the fields called Watering Close (TM 32839 52858) on the Rendlesham tithe apportionment and map (TNA, PRO IR/29/33/334; IR/30/33/334) and Homer (TM 32962 52493) in a terrier of Rendlesham glebe and townlands surveyed in 1733 and 1738 (SRO FC 173/L1/5) and on a 1793 map of the Rendlesham glebe (SRO HD 11/475/2147). The manorial hall was probably located at what is now Red House Farm, outside the survey area and some 600m east of the parish church. The document mentions a small park lying to the south of the manor site, which the sixteenth-century copier has glossed with the words 'nowe called hogge close'; an undated early nineteenth-century map from the Isaac Johnson map collection, and the tithe documentation of 1840, give this name to the field immediately to the south of Red House Farm at TM 33255 52620 (SRO HD 11/475/2170; TNA, PRO IR 30/33/334). In addition, the 'cony close on the west p[ar]t of the saide mannor', identified with a 'Broome Close' in the marginalia, is probably the Broom Field shown at TM 32977 52810 on the former map. The same extent also refers, in details of abuttals, to land held of the manors of Kettleburgh and Blaxhall. In addition, material included as evidence of title for property in the parish, drawn up in 1601 (SRO HD 1538/329/35), describes the lands of a manor of 'Rendlesham als Rendlesham with Staverton Hall' which is evidently distinct from any of the properties so far mentioned.

Any attempt to reconstruct the location or bounds of the various manors is complicated by the extensive reorganisation of the landscape effected by the Thellussons from the late eighteenth century, the alteration over time of many minor place-names, and the fact that

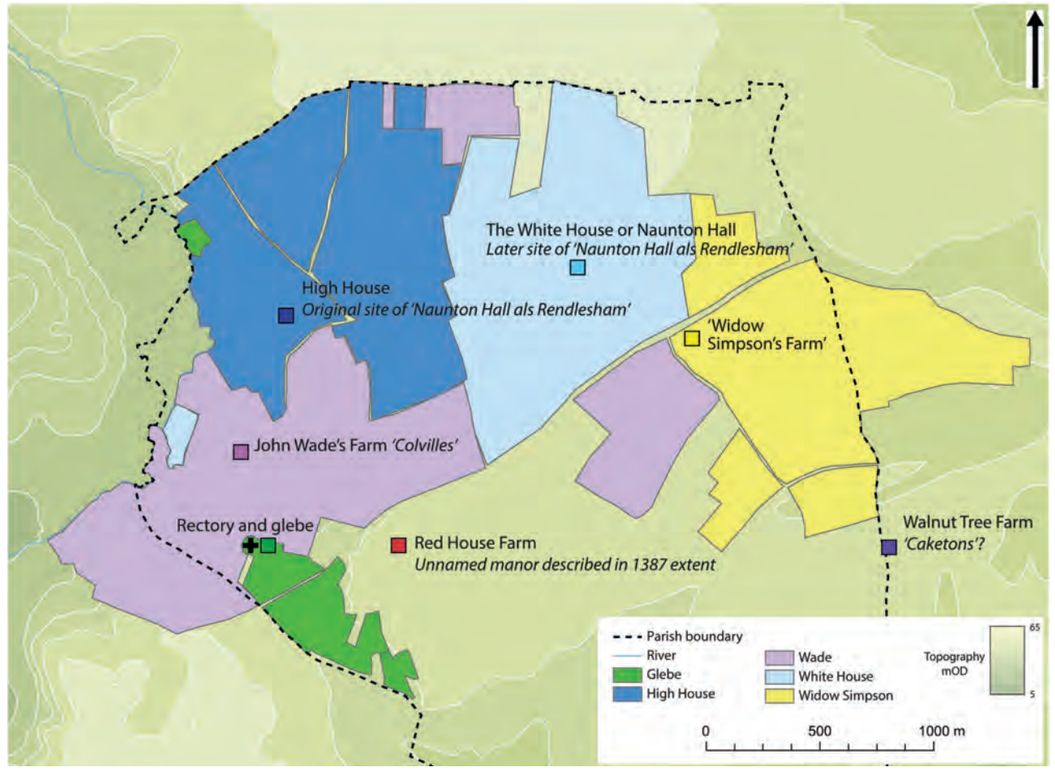


Fig 2.1.10 Map showing the location of principal farms in Rendlesham parish, *c* 1730, and probable sites of principal medieval manors. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

several of the manors also held land in neighbouring parishes, making it uncertain whether particular parcels described in documents actually lay in Rendlesham at all. One extent refers, for example, to the land of 'Bavents in Rendlesham', 'Bavents in Eyke' and 'Bavents in Tunstall' (SRO HB 26/12228/49). It is clear that the customary lands of the various manors lay intermingled, both as closes and as open-field strips. The 1387 extent thus refers to: 'A peece of lande lyeinge … betwixt the lande of Rob[er]t Swone of Eyke on the south p[ar]te and land of the cheefe mannor of Bavents, of Colvilles, and of other mannors of the north p[ar]te' (SRO HB 416/B4/1/30). But, as elsewhere in southern East Anglia, most of the demesne land was apparently of 'block' or consolidated form (Martin and Satchell 2008, 196–8) and this was presumably augmented through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as copyholds were absorbed and exchanged with other manors. By the eighteenth century most of the land in Rendlesham was occupied by six large compact farms, the majority of which – like Red House, just noted – probably developed directly from medieval manors and occupy the sites of their halls.

There is general agreement that the manor of Naunton Hall represents the second largest of the Domesday holdings to be described as a manor (held by Godiva from Hervey of Bourges) and is named after the Naunton family whose property it remained from the twelfth until the fourteenth century, when it passed by marriage to the Fitz-Ralphs and subsequently, in the fifteenth century, to the Harmans (Copinger 1909, 318). John Harman alienated part of the demesne in the early sixteenth century and in 1552 sold the manor itself to his brother-in-law James Spencer. When Edward Spencer commissioned John Kirby to survey his lands in Rendlesham *c* 1730, 'Naunton Hall' occupied a site some 1.6km north-east of the house which now bears that name, close to that of the later Rendlesham Hall (at *c* TM 33937 54035). The present Naunton Hall, within the study area, was then a substantial farm in the tenure of a 'Mr Wade' (SRO HD 427/1). Edward Spencer's daughter married James, 5th Duke of Hamilton, and when she died in 1771 the manor passed to her son, Richard Archibald Hamilton, who sold it in 1786 to Sir George Wombwell. He in turn sold to Peter Thellusson,

who extended Naunton Hall, also known as Rendlesham White House and subsequently as Rendlesham Hall, in modish Gothic style: an illustration of 1818 shows the gable of the earlier, seventeenth-century structure surviving to the rear (Jones 1818). The hall was destroyed by fire in 1830 but rebuilt, on a reduced scale, on a new site some 400m to the west (TM 3350 5399) (TNA, PRO IR 30/33/334). This in turn was replaced by a new house on a third site, 250m to the south-east (TM 3376 5392), in the late 1860s, which was designed by the architect William Burn in his typical Jacobean Style (Brown *et al* 1991, 56). This is the house which was finally demolished in 1949 after several decades of institutional use (Roberts 2016, 130–4).

Colvilles presumably represents the main Domesday manor, held by Gilbert de Colville from Robert Malet. The family continued to hold it into the fourteenth century (SRO HB 416/B1/5). According to Copinger, it subsequently passed to the Holbrooke and Fastolf families and in the sixteenth century to the dukes of Norfolk, from whom it was acquired by John Lane in 1557 (Copinger 1909, 322). The advowson of the parish church lay with this manor. Bavents, which has court rolls surviving from as early as 1352–73 (SRO HB 416/B4/2/1), may originally have been held of Colvilles and was certainly a less important manor. It was granted to a chantry in Eyke in 1355 and, following the Dissolution, passed through several hands before being acquired by John Lane. Colvilles and Bavents were then united, sharing a manorial court (SRO HB 416/B4/4/1). Robert Lane was Lord of the manors of Bavents and Colvilles when he drew up his will some time before 1665 (TNA, PRO E 134/16Chas2/Mich7) but sold them to John Corrance MP soon afterwards. His son, also John, sold the freehold and manorial rights to Edward Spencer of Naunton Hall (ie the White House) some time before 1720 (SRO HB 416/B4/7/8, 9 and 10), thereby uniting two of the largest properties in the parish. The size of the present sixteenth-century house and evidence in field names for a dovecote (SRO HD 427/1) clearly indicate that the modern Naunton Hall was a manorial site. It is labelled as 'Berevets coll [joined with] Colvilles' on Hodskinson's county map of 1786. Norden's survey of the Stanhope estates of 1601 (SRO EE 5/11/1) labels land lying to the south – within what is now EKE 019, and thus within Eyke parish, but forming part of 'Mr Wade's' farm in 1730 (SRO HD 427/1) – as 'Bavens', and as the property of John Lane. All this might suggest that the present Naunton Hall was the site of Bavents manor but an extent of 1726, and other documents, reveal that the holdings of the latter were small and widely spread through Rendlesham, Eyke and Bromeswell (SRO HB 26/12228/49). Moreover, as already noted, Bavents manor was held by Eyke chantry for several centuries and may have lacked a residential complex. The modern Naunton Hall is thus more plausibly identified as the site of Colvilles manor.

Caketons was a minor manor, named after the family that held it in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (SRO HB 416/B1/8, 10 and 54). It was acquired by the Harmans, who sold in the sixteenth century to John Spencer, together with Naunton Hall (SRO HB 416/ B1/57/1 and 2). After the 1550s it does not appear to have existed as a separate tenurial or administrative unit. It may have occupied the site of Walnut Tree Farm on the eastern boundary of the parish which is indicated as an early manorial site by the field names 'Hall Pightle' and 'Brome Dovehouse' which appear beside it on the Wantisden tithe award of 1845 (TNA, PRO IR 29/33/ 437). This farm, together with another substantial ring-fence holding, now lost, in the east of the parish, lies well outside the survey area and, like Red House, need not be discussed further here. But some attention needs to be given to a sixth site, High House, which does lie within the survey area.

A map of 1795 (SRO HD 427/3) shows that High House comprised a compact property of *c* 100ha which, to judge from abuttals given in the map book of *c* 1730, belonged at this time to 'Mrs Lippell' (SRO HD 427/1). A note added to the front of the book in the nineteenth century informs us that she was Mary Brooke (who married Brigadier-General Nicholas Lepell) and that the Brookes had held the property since its purchase by Thomas Brooke, Lord Cobham, in the sixteenth century. (The Lepells' daughter was the celebrated Mary Lepell who married John Hervey, later second Baron Hervey of Ickworth, from whose family the property was later bought by Peter Thellusson.) The place was evidently occupied by the Brooke family, rather than being a tenanted farm, for a document of 1679 lists three resident gentry in the parish as John Brooke, John Corrance and John Spencer, who were presumably living at High House, the present Naunton Hall (Colvilles), and Rendlesham Hall/the White House respectively. High House Farm was, in fact, almost certainly the original focus for the manor of 'Naunton Hall als Rendlesham' and is actually named as 'Rendlesham Hall' on Hodskinson's county map of 1786. The eighteenth-century antiquary David Davy suggested this possibility, and noted a local tradition that the farm was 'the residence, at a distant period, of a king' (Copinger 1909, 322), a story which also appears in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1829 and which suggests that the place appeared to contemporaries to be of ancient importance. The farm occupies a well-drained site 320m from the Deben. 'Old' Naunton Hall/the White House, in contrast, occupies higher ground and heavier soils and, as already noted, the 1730s' map shows that areas of woodland and fields bearing names suggestive of woodland clearance existed in its immediate vicinity. High House, the property of which adjoins it to the west, was almost certainly the medieval manor site and Naunton Hall a secondary settlement, established in the twelfth or thirteenth century, which became the manorial focus after part of the demesne, and the earlier manorial site, were alienated – probably by the Harmans in the sixteenth century.

The survey area thus includes the sites of two post-medieval elite residences, both of which appear to have developed from the two most important medieval manors in the parish – Colvilles (on the site of the present Naunton Hall) and 'Naunton Hall als Rendlesham' (on the site of High House) – which in turn represent the two largest Domesday manors. In addition, we should note the existence, immediately to the east of the parish church, of the rectory, which by the post-medieval period had an associated farm complex and cottage immediately to the south of the church.

2.2 Antiquarian research and prior archaeological work

On account of Bede's mention of Rendlesham as an East Anglian *vicus regius* the place has always drawn antiquarian and historical attention (Bruce-Mitford 1974, 73–5). This interest intensified after the Second World War, following the discovery and excavation of the Mound 1 ship burial at Sutton Hoo in 1939, but no concrete evidence for the site of the settlement was identified before the early 1980s.

2.2.1 Discoveries and archaeology before 1982

Bede's account does not associate Rædwald with Rendlesham, referring to it only as the place where Swithhelm was baptised in 655, several decades after Rædwald's death, with Æthelwald as his sponsor. It was William Camden who first proposed the link in his *Britannia* (Camden 1586, 258) and this elision of Bede's narrative has remained influential ever since (Bruce-Mitford 1974, 73–5). The 1722 edition of *Britannia*, edited by Edmund Gibson and substantially updated, apparently describes the first significant archaeological find from the parish (Camden 1722, 445; SHER ref RLM 082):

> It is said, that in digging here, about thirty years since, there was found an ancient silver Crown, weighing about sixty ounces, which was thought to belong to *Redwald* or some other King of the East-Angles; but it was sold and melted down.

However, the attribution of this supposed discovery to Rendlesham is probably an editorial or compositor's mistake for Mendlesham in north-central Suffolk: this part of the text is concerned with the source of the river Deben, which does indeed rise near Mendlesham, and the separate entry for Rendlesham ('Rendilis-ham') comes forty lines further on in its correct place in the topographical itinerary down the Deben valley. At this point in the text the first edition of *Britannia* gives Debenham as the source of the Deben (Camden 1586, 258) but 'neere into Mendelesham' in the first translation into English (Camden 1610, 465). John Kirby (1735, 51), paraphrasing the 1722 edition of *Britannia*, certainly assumed that the story of the silver crown referred to Mendlesham. It remains possible, however, that the account of the silver crown was intended to be attached to Rendlesham, where East Anglian kingly associations – documented and inferred – make a good story, and that it was inserted in the wrong place because of the mistaken transcription of 'Rendlesham' for 'Mendelesham'.

Less problematic is David Elisha Davy's 1837 record of the discovery of many pieces of 'Roman' urns on 'a piece of glebe land of the parish, known by the name of How or Haw hill piece' (BL, Add MS 19097, fol 303; RLM 006). They were brittle and fragmentary but one, containing cremated bone, was recovered intact in July 1837. Davey's sketch clearly shows a decorated hand-made urn of the fifth or sixth century (Bruce-Mitford 1974, 102–5, pl 19).

Following the 1939 excavation at Sutton Hoo, Rupert Bruce-Mitford thoroughly reviewed the evidence for early medieval Rendlesham in a paper originally published in 1948 but reprinted with additions and revisions in 1974. He explored the parish on foot and concluded that there was a 'lack of local lore or of stray archaeological finds' relating to the royal settlement. Discussing the topography of the parish and the position of St Gregory's Church, Bruce-Mitford concluded that the spur overlooking the Deben between the church and Naunton Hall was 'perhaps too exposed and somewhat too confined a site for the royal "palace"' and he focused instead on the area around Hoo Hill. Here he was able to identify a strip of former glebe land along the south edge

of what is now RLM 050 as the Hoo Hill Piece from which the cremations recorded by Davy had come (Bruce-Mitford 1974, 102–6; fig 15).

In 1949, at Bruce-Mitford's instigation, Basil Brown dug some trial trenches within the former glebe strip. He found no trace of cremations, nor any pottery of any kind, but did record evidence for surface extraction that might have removed any cremations in this area and which would provide a plausible context for the discoveries reported by Davy (HER ref RLM 016, drawing on Basil Brown's unpublished notebooks; Bruce-Mitford 1974, 104). Four Iron Age sherds were found immediately south of here in 1951 (RLM 010). Metal-detecting between 2011 and 2014 recovered very little material of any period from RLM 050 and only one fragment of early medieval metalwork, found more than 200m north of the former glebe strip in what is a separate field on the tithe map. This would suggest either that all cremations in the area investigated by Basil Brown had been removed by surface extraction in the nineteenth century and that any remaining had not been significantly disturbed by ploughing, or that Davy recorded the wrong location (see Ch 4.3.1.2).

In the 'tailpiece' to his paper, Bruce-Mitford considered the possible significance of 'Hall' and 'Woodenhall' field names recorded in the north of the parish on an early nineteenth-century map, and speculated that their association with an oval earthwork enclosure might point to the seventh-century *vicus regius* (Bruce-Mitford 1974, 106–8). However, the earthworks have now been shown to be the boundary of an eighteenth-century plantation, overlying an older field boundary (Harrison and Williamson 2007).

In 1972 David Sherlock explored the Rendlesham landscape and, amongst other earthworks mostly related to Rendlesham Park, he identified within the wood at Hoo Hill a broad low mound about 1 foot (*c* 0.3m) in height and 22 yards (*c* 20m) in diameter, potentially the remains of a barrow (RLM 006; Sherlock unpublished notes in SHER; Bruce-Mitford 1974, 103).

2.2.2 Fieldwalking and development-led recording 1982–2015

In 1982, fieldwalking and limited excavation to the north and west of the parish church of St Gregory the Great identified the first hard evidence for early medieval settlement activity. Fieldwalking on RLM 012, 013 and 014 was carried out by Tom Loader for Suffolk County Council as the first stage of the South-east Suffolk Survey, a project designed to contextualise Martin Carver's excavations at Sutton Hoo (Newman 2005). Surface collection was by 25m squares aligned on the OS grid and produced pottery ranging in date from the first to the twelfth centuries AD (Roman, hand-made, Ipswich, Thetford-type and early medieval wares) from each of the fields (Fig 2.2.1; section 2.4.4, below); dark soil and animal bone were also noted on the surface of RLM 013, and daub and oyster shells in RLM 012. In addition, immediately north of Naunton Hall (RLM 011), excavation of the footprint (300sq m) of a new barn revealed early medieval and medieval features (Martin *et al* 1983, 235; Figs 2.2.1–2). The earliest, dated by hand-made pottery and Ipswich ware, were two parallel ditches running 4.4m apart on an east–west alignment, apparently the boundaries of a track or drove. Two fragments of decorated copper-alloy strip were recovered from the southern ditch. One has been identified as a fragment from the decorative binding of a wooden bucket of the late sixth or earlier seventh century, but the specific parallel adduced, with a fragment recovered during the British Museum's excavations at Sutton Hoo in 1968, is unconvincing (Newman 1992, 38, fig 9; Webster 1980, 30, fig 19b). The material recovered by fieldwalking represented the most extensive spread of Ipswich ware identified by the South-east Suffolk Survey and the potential significance of the evidence from both fieldwalking and excavation was clear, even though nothing about the material in itself suggested a site of unusual status (Newman 1992, 36–8; 2005, 486).

Since 2003 a number of development-led interventions have taken place on or adjacent to the Naunton Hall estate. In 2003 evaluation trenching in advance of housing in the field east of RLM 045 revealed a single undated shallow ditch on a north-west–south-east alignment. This lay adjacent to a concentration of Roman finds subsequently revealed by metal-detecting in the north-east corner of RLM 045. Both the evaluation and subsequent monitoring of groundworks showed extensive twentieth-century disturbance. No Roman material was recovered and the only pre-modern finds were two flint flakes (RLM 029; McLannahan 2003; Everett 2004).

In 2005 two areas (RLM 030 and 035) were evaluated prior to the construction of an agricultural reservoir in Sand Walk (RLM 044). The field as a whole has a sandy subsoil, as its name suggests, but the area examined was characterised by deposits of clay. A number of features were recorded and, while most could not be dated, they included a ditch of possibly later prehistoric date, and a potentially Roman pit, in RLM 035, together with unstratified Roman and medieval coarse pottery (Meredith 2006). Soil stripping undertaken for the construction of the reservoir in 2006 was also monitored.

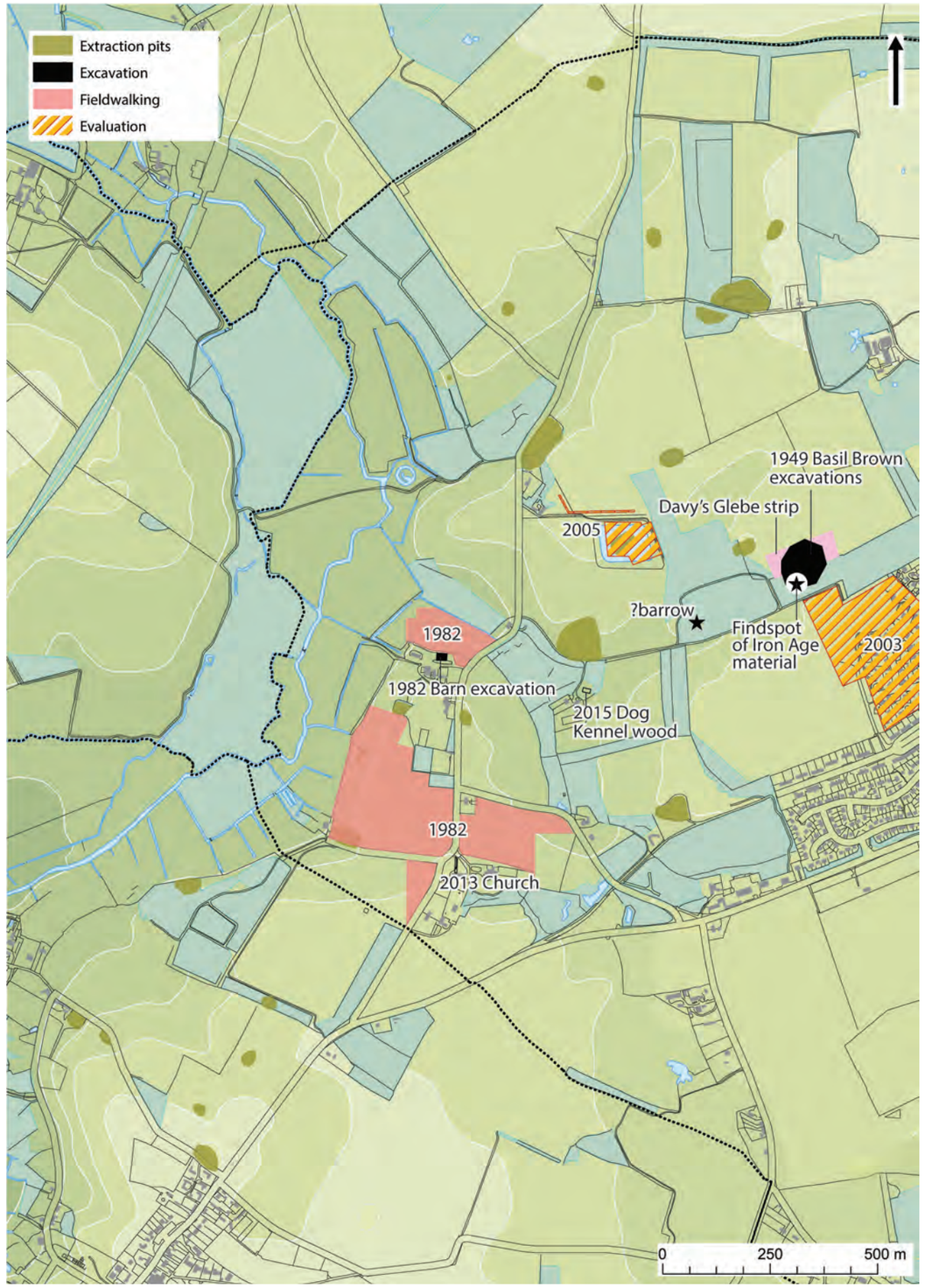


Fig 2.2.1 Map showing location of nineteenth- and twentieth-century finds and fieldwork, development-led interventions and recording since 2000, and historic extraction features. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

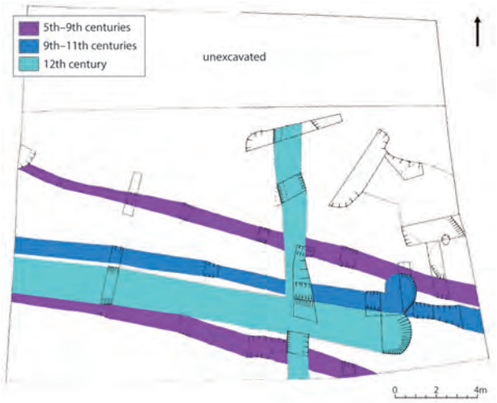


Fig 2.2.2 Plan of features excavated in advance of barn construction in 1982 (RLM 011)

Most of the features were small-scale clay extraction pits, largely medieval, but there was at least one undated ditch and two pits that contained late Neolithic Grooved Ware (Meredith and Damant 2008).

Several years later, in 2013, monitoring of a water pipe trench laid along the line of the path to the north door of Rendlesham parish church recorded a single burial and a fragment of human bone. Lastly, monitoring in 2015 of the footing trenches for a replacement building in Dog Kennel Wood identified no archaeological features or finds.

2.3 Survey and investigation 2008–19

2.3.1 Background and survey area

In 2007 the owner of the Naunton Hall estate sought archaeological assistance in response to illegal metal-detecting taking place on arable land. Damage was being caused by repeat visits, suggesting that significant amounts of archaeological material were being stolen. The land affected included much of the area fieldwalked in 1982 and at least one further field. The response by Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service (SCCAS) was to undertake, in 2008–9, a controlled metal-detecting survey of the area being damaged. This was augmented by limited magnetometry, a desk-top assessment of information in the county Historic Environment Record (HER), and a plot of available aerial photography covering the 1982 survey area.

The initial metal-detecting survey confirmed a concentration of archaeological material in the ploughsoil that included coins and other finds consistent with early medieval settlement, with a pronounced high-status element of the sixth to eighth centuries, and showed that this extended over a much wider area than had previously been thought. In 2009 the metal-detecting survey was therefore expanded to cover the whole of the Naunton Hall estate, under a private agreement between the individual detectorists and the landowners. This was undertaken as part of a larger project, co-ordinated through SCCAS, which provided finds recording to the standards of the PAS, professional guidance, and expert academic advice. The project commissioned environmental survey work and further magnetometry, and geochemical soil investigation was undertaken by Joanna Dunster and David Dungworth of English Heritage (now Historic England). The survey area was already included in regular flying schedules for aerial photography by Damian Grady of English Heritage, and the project benefitted from inclusion within the area covered by the National Mapping Programme (NMP) project for the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. Small-scale evaluation excavations were undertaken in 2013–14 to test the results of surface collection and survey, characterise and date the buried archaeology, and assess its condition and potential.

The main survey area forms a continuous block of land covering 170.46ha. Within this, survey focused on eighteen arable fields covering 145.38ha, but there was also less intensive survey of areas of adjacent woodland and pasture and a further small arable field (RLM 041). Each field was allocated a parish number within the HER; survey units are shown in figure 2.1.3 and summarised in Table 2.3.1. All of the survey area except one field (RLM 059) lies within the Naunton Hall estate, and all but four fields and a wood within Rendlesham parish, the others (EKE 019–022 and 055) being in Eyke. Although defined by opportunity and circumstance, the area surveyed provides a transect along the east side of the Deben valley and across the grain of the landscape large enough to be sure that patterns of clustering, presence and absence are real rather than coincidental, and to identify variations in activity across the range of local soils and terrains.

2.3.2 Surface collection

All surface collection was carried out by the same team of four experienced metal-detector users – Robert Atfield, Roy Damant, Terry Marsh and Alan Smith – who had undertaken the initial survey in 2008–9. Although this first phase of detecting had been commissioned by SCCAS, and all subsequent work was undertaken on a voluntary basis, there was no significant difference in methodology. All four detectorists had worked previously on commercial archaeological projects but were primarily independent operators, normally reporting finds to the PAS and, for many years before the initiation of PAS, directly to SCCAS.

Table 2.3.1 Metal-detecting survey units

HER code	Name	Area (ha)	Landcover
EKE 019	Steeple Tye	11.34	arable
EKE 020	Sutton Barn	9.17	arable
EKE 021	Clappet	11.43	arable
EKE 022	Eyke Road	6.93	arable
EKE 055	Broom Hill Woods	4.56	wood
RLM 012	pasture	1.97	pasture
RLM 013	The Park	6.67	arable
RLM 014	Kitchen Piece	2.84	arable
RLM 036	Dog Kennel Field	3.86	arable
RLM 037	Collets	13.27	arable
RLM 038	Dock Hill	6.47	arable
RLM 039	Duffals	4.14	arable
RLM 040	High House Farm	0.52	pasture
RLM 041	Spring Hill	2.87	arable
RLM 042	Three Corner Tye	4.95	arable
RLM 043	Black Croft	5.10	arable
RLM 044	Sand Walk	8.30	arable
RLM 045	Hut Field	11.85	arable
RLM 046	Foxburgh South	12.66	arable
RLM 048	Water Meadows	4.72	pasture
RLM 050	Rearing Ground	12.30	arable
RLM 051	garden areas	1.80	garden
RLM 056	Foxborough North	9.87	arable
RLM 057	Sand Walk, wood to S	2.40	wood
RLM 058	Dock Hill, wood to SW	1.47	wood
RLM 059	School Field	4.23	arable
RLM 088	Black Croft, wood to E	1.39	wood
RLM 089	School Field, wood to S	3.38	wood
Total		**170.46**	

Detecting was carried out by linear walking, with the individuals spaced a few metres apart to enable 100 per cent ground coverage in the detector sweeps (Fig 2.3.1). Fields were walked in blocks as time and conditions permitted. Every arable field bar one (RLM 041) was completely covered in this way at least twice, although differential cropping, for example for game cover belts, meant that the entire area of each field might not be covered within the same year. One of the team (RA) kept diary notes recording who was detecting each day, on which field and under what ground conditions; he also noted if there was any sign of illicit detecting, whether any non-metal finds were also made, and whether there were any particularly notable finds. A set of paper 1:2500 maps was provided for recording the extent of soil variations in each field. Most wooded and permanent grass areas were also metal-detected once, as was RLM 041.

As well as recovering metal objects the team also collected pottery and worked flint tools (but not waste flakes) when they saw them. However, metal-detecting was often undertaken in conditions that are not good for the visual identification of surface finds, such as in partially rotted stubble and on freshly drilled land. The survey was carried out with iron discrimination on the detectors switched on: sieving of the ploughsoil during evaluation in 2013 confirmed a very large amount of modern or undatable iron that would have made the

Fig 2.3.1 Metal-detecting under way on 31 August 2012. *Damian Grady; © Historic England Archive, re-use not permitted*

survey impossibly slow had all iron signals been investigated and recorded. Any modern items definitely later than 1650 were not retained for recording but were removed by the detectorists and kept or disposed of where they would not affect any future detecting. Each recorded find was immediately bagged and a hand-held GPS (Garmin eTrex) reading noted on the bag, together with the field name and the finder's initials. There is a potential error of 5m–15m integral to the Garmin hand-held machines (on the more recent models used around 5m or less). This was not considered significant given that ploughsoil finds might be moved by as much as 5m in a single year of ploughing (2.4.2, below).

It was strict policy that buried archaeological deposits or features should remain undisturbed. All the material recovered came from the top 15cm–20cm of the ploughsoil or topsoil and had therefore long since been removed from its original archaeological context by ploughing or cultivation.

Finds were deposited with SCCAS in regular batches. Each find was allocated a four-figure sequential number within the HER site (following the practice on SCCAS excavations) to give a unique number consisting of the combination of HER and sequential numbers (eg RLM 036 1001 was the first find recorded on Dog Kennel field). Each find was recorded on a project-specific MS Access database. All finds made between November 2008 and July 2017, a total of 5,201 individual items, have been recorded on the project database; subsequent finds have been reported through the PAS. The assemblage is discussed in Chapter 3.

The metal-detecting survey was not intended to 'sterilise' the site by removing all archaeological material from the ploughsoil. It aimed instead to recover a representative sample of non-ferrous metal artefacts so that the date and nature of past human activity could be securely characterised, and its significance and research potential assessed. The presence of approved detectorists also appears to have helped protect the archaeology, with the incidence of illegal detecting dropping very markedly since survey began. In total, the detectorists spent 1,740 person days in the field between 2008 and 2017. Mounting a survey on this scale as a one-off exercise, supported by a fully funded professional team, would have been prohibitively expensive and would have posed major problems of capacity and logistics. Aggregative survey over the longer term by a small team that combined archaeological understanding and skills with detecting expertise allowed greater flexibility and more effective deployment of resources. The detectorists were able to build up a thorough understanding of site, terrain and landscape, and – working closely with the landowner and farmer – were able to work within the often narrow windows of opportunity offered by the cultivation cycle, an important consideration on a working farm. Regular discussion of progress between the detectorists, the landowner and professional and academic advisers allowed survey priorities to be managed in line with developing archaeological understanding of the site.

2.3.3 Magnetometry

Magnetometry was initially commissioned in 2008 on parts of RLM 012 and RLM 013; both had been fieldwalked in 1982, and RLM 013 was being detected illegally (Woodhouse 2008). From 2009, magnetometry was extended across *c* 50ha in order to cover the same area as the main concentration of early medieval finds, ending in 2019 with the survey of RLM 059.

Most of the area was surveyed between 2009 and 2013 by Neil Paveley and Dr Helen Woodhouse of the Woodhouse Consultancy, with processing carried out by Dr Woodhouse (Woodhouse 2010; 2012). The Suffolk Archaeological Field Group, under the supervision of John Rainer, surveyed grass areas around Naunton Hall in 2014 and areas of lawn around the church of St Gregory in 2016; the results from 2014 were passed to the Woodhouse Consultancy for integration with the earlier data (Fig 2.3.2). Survey was carried out with a Bartington Grad 601-2 dual sensor vertical component fluxgate gradiometer, except in 2014 and 2016 when the two grassed areas were surveyed using a single sensor Bartington Grad 601. Readings were taken at 0.25m intervals along traverses spaced at 1m, a procedure which enabled a reasonably high density of data to be collected while not impairing the speed of the survey. All survey was carried out on a consistent 30m grid aligned on OS grid north. In January 2019, members of the Suffolk Archaeological Field Group working with Professor Christopher Gaffney and Helen McCreary of the University of Bradford surveyed RLM 059 using two Bartington Grad 601-2 dual sensor gradiometers on a 20m grid aligned with OS grid north; data processing was by Helen McCreary. As part of this exercise a limited area was also surveyed by multidepth electromagnetic induction (McCreary 2019).

Probable archaeological features were identified in most of the fields surveyed and their density and distribution were found to correspond broadly with the overall densities of finds made by metal-detecting. The density of probable archaeological features diminishes to the south of the area surveyed in EKE 019 and EKE 021 (Fig 2.3.4).

In the north of the area surveyed magnetometry

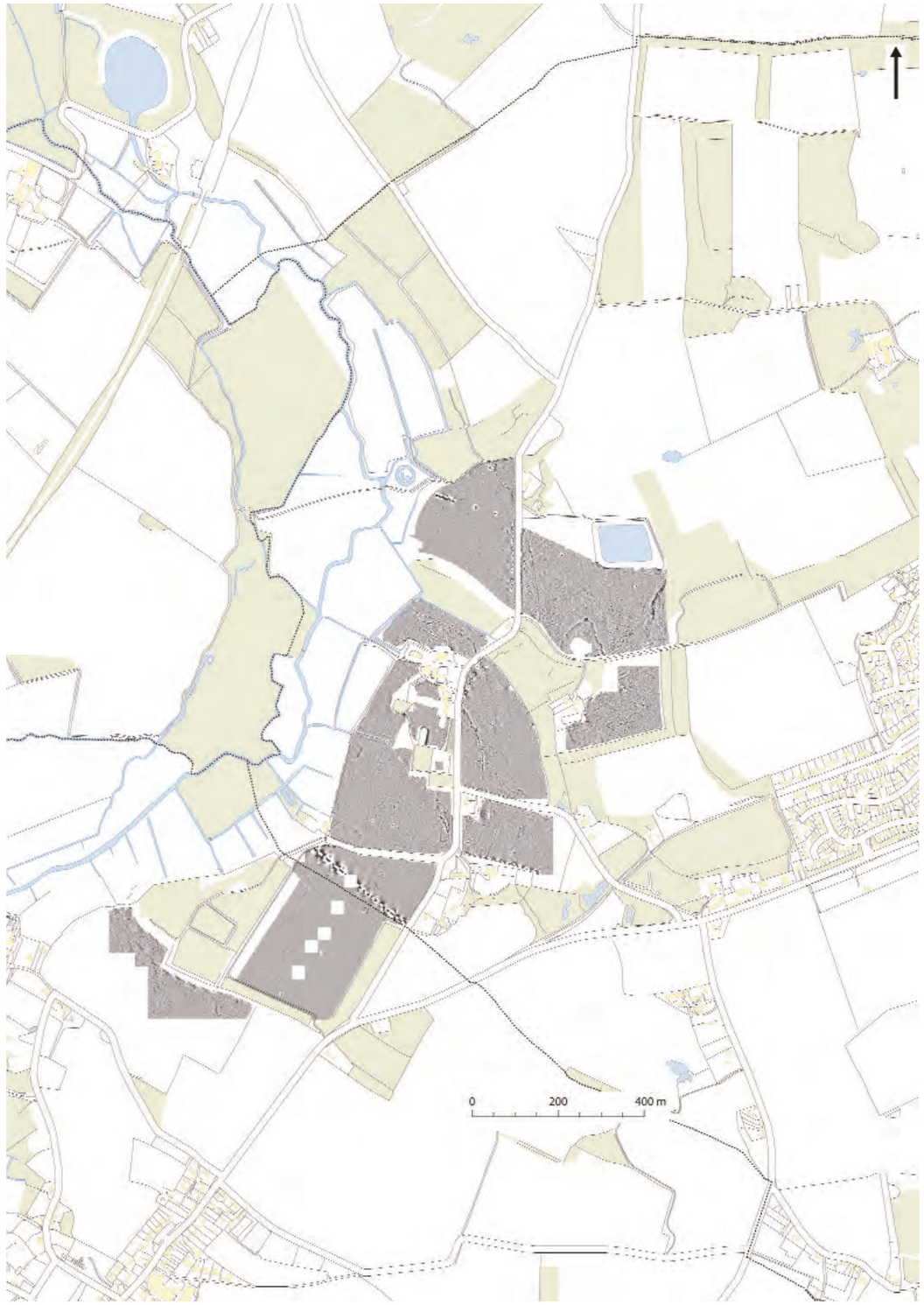


Fig 2.3.2 Magnetometry survey 2008–14. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

identified a number of potentially prehistoric features: an incomplete ring 15m in diameter in RLM 038, and a double oval long enclosure, *c* 25m by 35m, in the north part of RLM 044. The latter was shown by evaluation excavation in 2014 to pre-date the fifth century AD, although no finds were recovered from it. An incomplete circular feature, 18m across, in the south of RLM 038 and two incomplete circles, 12m and 13m across, in RLM 036 may also be prehistoric.

In this same area, particularly in the eastern half of RLM 044, there are suggestions of a rectilinear ditch system aligned north-west–south-east, and similar traces are apparent on aerial photographs. These features appear relatively low in magnetic response, suggesting a field system defined by relatively shallow ditches, perhaps either later prehistoric or Roman in date: small ditches containing late Bronze Age or early Iron Age pottery were recorded during construction of the reservoir (RLM 030) in the north-east of RLM 044 (above, 2.2.2).

There is a high density of macular features in RLM 036 and RLM 044, both fields with a large number of fifth- to eighth-century metalwork finds. Targeted evaluation in 2013 confirmed that two of these were fifth- to sixth-century *Grubenhäuser* and another a contemporary pit. This strongly suggests that most of the macular features visible in RLM 044 represent contemporary early medieval settlement features. Some of the macular features in RLM 036 might also be *Grubenhäuser* but there are also many smaller pit-like features in this field. A discontinuous circle *c* 10m across with what may be a central feature could be interpreted as an inhumation burial within an annular ditch.

In the east of RLM 038 and the west of RLM 044, bisected by the modern road, magnetometry revealed a double-ditched pentagonal enclosure with single ditches extending southwards from its south-eastern corner, and south-west from its north-western corner, downslope towards the bottom of the northern of the two tributaries of the Deben described above (2.1.1). The eastern single ditch was sectioned during evaluation in 2013 but no secure dating evidence was recovered. This feature does not appear to respect or be respected by the distribution of early medieval settlement features. There are similarities in form and size with Iron Age enclosures in eastern England, notably the northern enclosure at Mucking, Essex (Evans *et al* 2016, 291–303, 453–6, fig 5.31; Lucy and Evans 2016, 397–400, fig 5.2), and on this basis we propose a later Iron Age date.

In the south of the area surveyed, a roughly D-shaped enclosure, *c* 85m by 95m, in the south of RLM 013 was shown to be late Iron Age by evaluation in 2013; the smaller oval ditch, 20m by 28m, inside this enclosure is very probably contemporary. Elements of rectilinear enclosure systems and trackways are visible in EKE 019. These are better defined in the cropmark plots and by analogy with similar features elsewhere are assigned a late prehistoric or Roman date. They do not appear to extend northwards into RLM 013 but may be obscured here by other features.

On the west side of RLM 013 two parallel ditches, 55m apart, show strongly in the magnetometry survey results and also as cropmarks; the eastern ditch runs along the break of slope, the western at the base of the slope. The eastern ditch runs north to the edge of the field, and cropmarks confirm that it also runs south into EKE 019, where magnetometry readings are obscured by the presence of a modern pipe. It changes direction about three-quarters of its way across RLM 013, and its northern section appears to follow an element of the earlier rectilinear enclosure system that shows as a weaker magnetic response south of the change of direction where it cuts across the Iron Age enclosure; this rectilinear system appears more clearly on the air photo plots. The northern part of the eastern ditch was sectioned during evaluation in 2013 and found to have two cuts, both filled with material deriving from refuse deposits of the fifth to eighth centuries (2.3.7, below). On the basis of this *terminus ante quem* we propose that the rectilinear enclosure system post-dates the late Iron Age enclosure and is earlier than the latest phase of the eastern ditch, a range that encompasses the Roman and immediately post-Roman periods.

There are some macular features in RLM 013 of a size and shape that would be consistent with *Grubenhäuser* but nothing like the density of such features apparent in RLM 044 and 036. Linear features in the north-east of RLM 013 proved, when investigated during evaluation in 2014, to be ditches of the tenth to fourteenth centuries AD; they include the Y-shaped southern terminal of a trackway running north, almost certainly intended to channel livestock, which is dated to the tenth century. Linear anomalies in RLM 012 probably represent medieval and later boundaries.

A ditch line is apparent running north–south through the eastern half of RLM 043, continuing south-south-west through RLM 014, where a re-cut or earlier feature on a slightly different alignment is also visible. This could be seen as a counterpart to the early medieval ditch in RLM 013, which would imply a boundary feature around the promontory delimiting an area of at least 10ha, but could also be an earlier or later feature whose situation simply follows the topography.

As already noted, John Kirby's estate map of the 1730s shows a small green (Rendlesham Green) lying between St Gregory's Church and Naunton Hall, with the existing roads in the area feeding into it from the north, south and east. The green edge is clear in RLM 013, 014 and 043, with the kinds of small enclosures and drains typically associated with common edge locations in East Anglia around the outside. To the east of the green, north–south ditches follow the contours and might relate to the enclosure system just described in RLM 013. A single curving ditch in the north of RLM 043 could be part of a later Iron Age enclosure similar to that in RLM 013.

In RLM 059, which was wooded as late as 1958 and only subsequently cleared for arable, the strongest features are a north–south trackway which is recorded on nineteenth-century OS maps and a large pit which remained open into the later twentieth century. A linear feature running north-west–south-east appears to be an earlier ditch or hollow-way, and this is crossed by a second linear feature on a south-west–north-east alignment that appears to be another element of the extensive late prehistoric or Roman field system. Larger macular features are possibly pits or *Grubenhäuser* but may equally well have been caused by recent tree clearance.

2.3.4 Aerial photography and mapping

Air Photo Services was commissioned in 2008 to assess and plot features visible on the available aerial photographic coverage of the immediate vicinity of Naunton Hall (Palmer 2008; Plouviez 2009, app 2). Flying by English Heritage generated additional information and in 2015 the project area was included in the NMP project covering the East Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB (Horlock *et al* 2016) from which what follows is summarised. The NMP aerial photographic interpreters were given access to the results of magnetometry and metal-detecting.

Although they identify many of the same major features, the NMP and magnetometry data are broadly complementary in that aerial photographs show features in areas where little or nothing was identified by magnetometry, and vice versa (Figs 2.3.3–4). At the narrower scale, aerial photography sometimes shows more distinctly or in greater detail features identified by magnetometry, and vice versa (eg the rectilinear enclosure system in RLM 013 discussed above). Most notably, the NMP has identified what appear to be the foundations of a large rectangular timber structure, *c* 23m by 9.5m, in RLM 013 (Fig 2.3.5). This was interpreted as very probably a hall of the later sixth to earlier eighth centuries AD, and subsequent excavation in 2022 – to be published in detail elsewhere – has confirmed this (Cutler *et al* 2023, 554–5). This was initially identified in aerial photographs, but has been plotted in detail from a combination of the two datasets. The NMP has also identified what are probably areas of *Grubenhäuser* in RLM 042 and 059 and, less securely, in the south-west of RLM 013.

Covering a wider area, the NMP has plotted features beyond the fields surveyed by magnetometry. These include a complex of rectilinear enclosures and trackways in the north of RLM 037 (RLM 028; Horlock *et al* 2016, 63–4, fig 5.5) identified as probably Roman, and elements of field systems orientated north-west–south-east that are interpreted as either prehistoric or Roman.

2.3.5 Geochemical survey

In 2011, following a preliminary assessment of the soils by Matt Canti (English Heritage), surface geochemical survey was carried out by Joanna Dunster and David Dungworth (English Heritage) in RLM 013, 014 and part of RLM 037 in order to determine whether significant concentrations of trace elements might point to areas of specific past activity, in particular non-ferrous metalworking. The technique was effective in detecting heavier trace-elements in ploughsoil but did not identify any significant spatial concentrations and so is unlikely to be useful as an extensive survey technique in the conditions at Rendlesham (Dunster *et al* 2012).

2.3.6 Environmental survey

Charles French and Sean Taylor

Geoarchaeological sampling was undertaken in June 2015 to investigate the soil and sedimentary sequence across the Deben valley floor and to prospect for wet or waterlogged deposits that might throw light on the Holocene vegetational development of the valley (French and Taylor 2016). Two hand-augered borehole transects were made (Fig 2.3.6): Transect 1, comprising thirteen boreholes, ran east to west across the Deben, starting at the north-east of RLM 013 and extending to the boundary with arable land on the opposite side of the valley; and Transect 2, comprising four boreholes, which ran across the small tributary stream valley in RLM 012. Borehole logs are held in the project archive.

The soil on the high ground in RLM 013 is a weakly acidic to neutral loamy sand with a thick ploughsoil, all developed on Pleistocene sandy till deposits, of the kind defined as Newport 2 Association by the Soil Survey (above, 2.1.1). There appears to be a hillwash component to these soils on the slope to the floodplain, resulting in

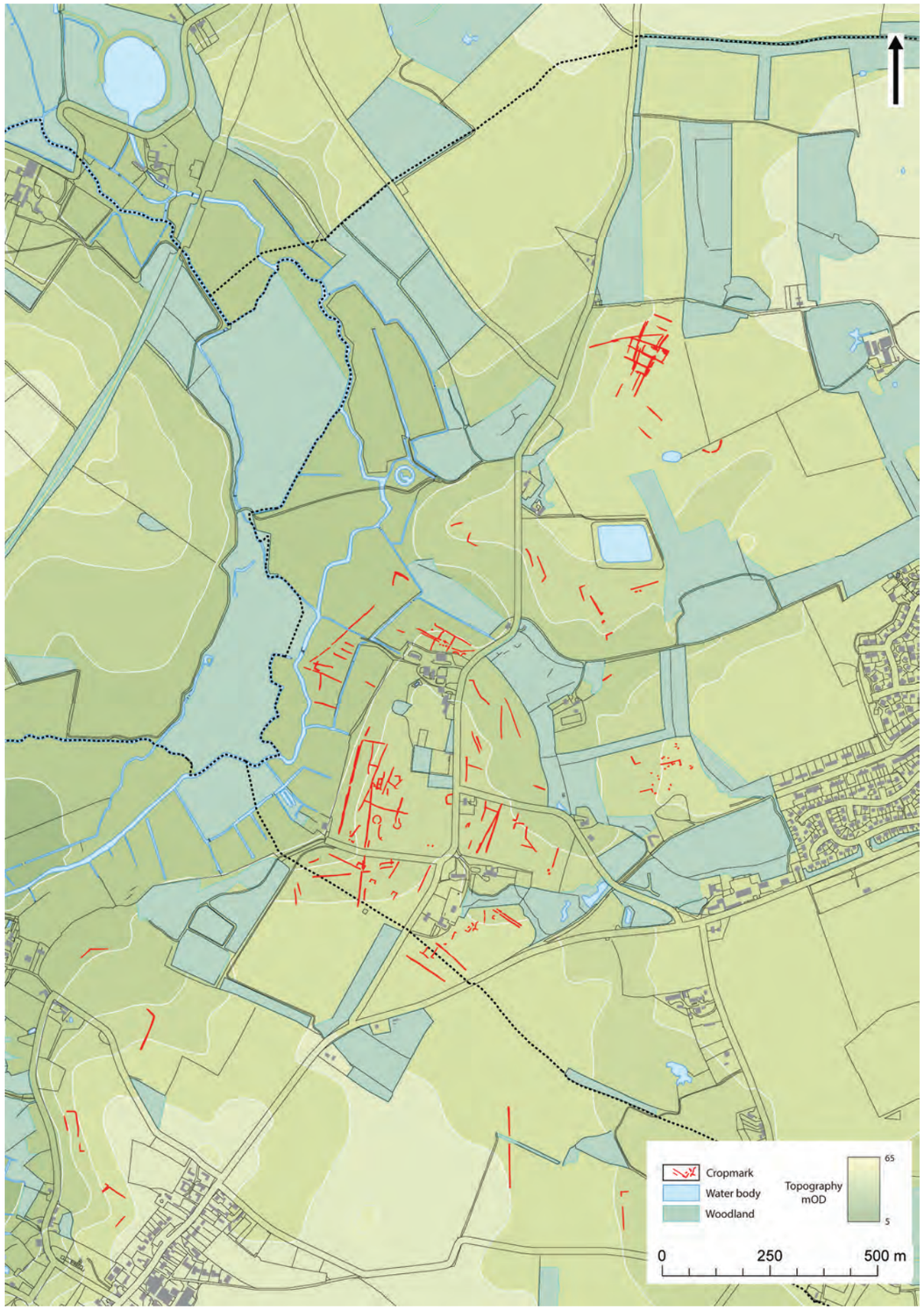


Fig 2.3.3 Plot of main features identified by aerial photography. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

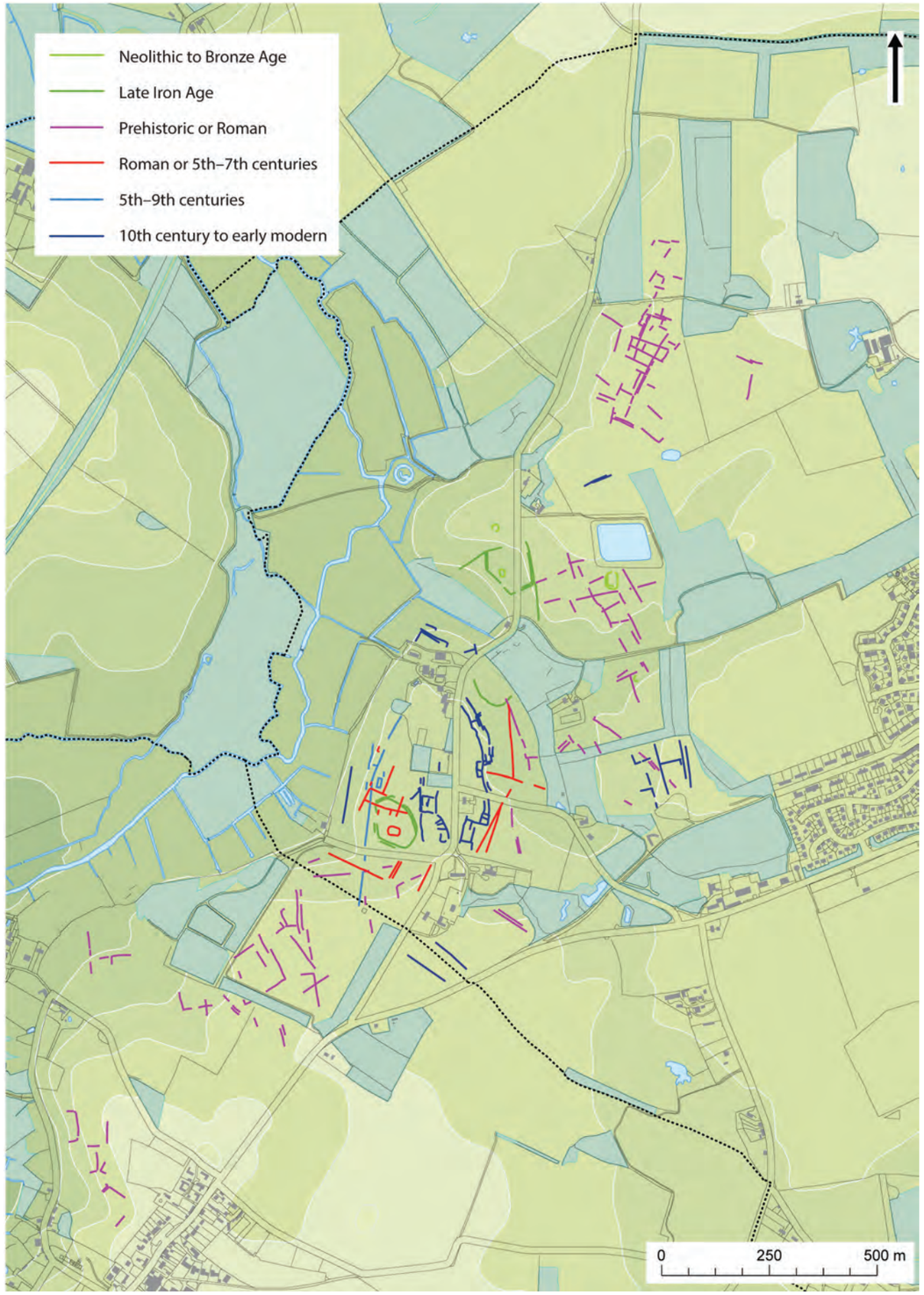


Fig 2.3.4 Interpretative phasing of major features identified by magnetometry and aerial photography. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

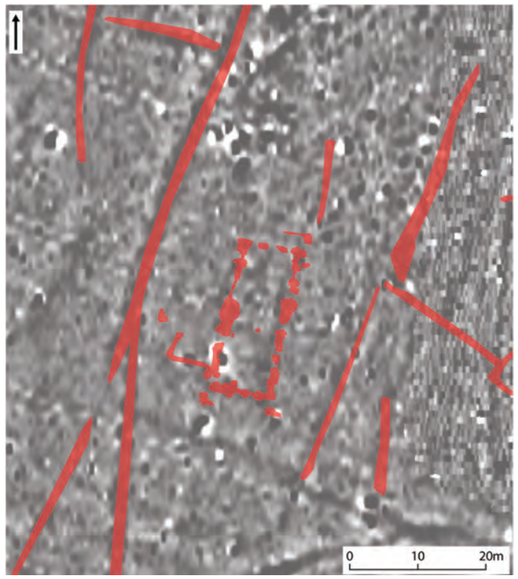


Fig 2.3.5 Transcription of major features identified by aerial photography in RLM 013 against magnetometry, showing the foundation of the great hall (after Horlock *et al* 2016)

an approximate doubling of soil thickness to about 1.3m–1.75m. On the eastern side of the Deben floodplain an organic silt loam topsoil overlay *c* 10cm–60cm of detrital peat, suggesting that there is either a lateral flush zone leading to waterlogging and organic accumulation or that a shallow stream had formerly existed at the base of the slope. Within the main central section of the transect, on the floodplain itself, the profile changed and shallowed to one of an organic sandy loam topsoil overlying a partially gleyed silt above a thin, humified peat, all developed on sands and gravels at the base of the valley; this gleyed silt appears to be an overbank alluvial deposit.

More or less in the centre of the floodplain, to the west of the present river channel, there is a waterlogged palaeochannel 3.6m deep. The upper *c* 72cm of its fill was composed of silt and silty clay alluvial deposits beneath which was an alternating sequence of reed peat and organic silt mud, interrupted by bands of shelly sands to a depth of 2.6m. Below this were alternating horizons of silt and sand to the base of the channel at 3.6m below the modern ground surface. Radiocarbon dating of the upper and lower contacts of the organic fills at 60cm and 180cm below the modern ground surface in Borehole 10 yielded determinations of 2927±29BP (1065–1058 cal BC; SUERC-64614) and 5587±29BP (4425–4371 cal BC; SUERC-64610). These suggest that this feature represents the main prehistoric river channel that was gradually filling up and slowing down between the early Neolithic

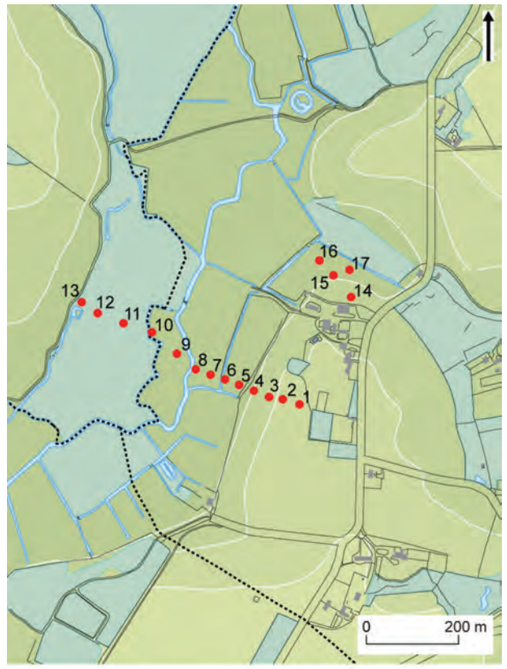


Fig 2.3.6 Environmental survey: location of boreholes. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

and the late Bronze Age. On the western edge of the floodplain augering suggests another shallow channel, 1.0m–1.9m deep, containing possible tidal beach, sand and silt deposits in its base.

These results give only very limited evidence for possible tidal activity, at the base of the large early palaeochannel and at the base of the shallow channel at the western edge of the floodplain. The large channel was probably a partially infilled oxbow remnant by the Bronze Age. The location of the main channel in the first millennium AD remains unknown, but may be preserved in part by a sinuous existing ditch, followed by the parish boundary, that runs west of the present river but immediately east of the palaeochannel in the area of the Transect 1. This line is lost just to the north and a straight boundary line links it to another ditch to the north-west, nearer to the western edge of the floodplain.

2.3.7 Trial excavation

Targeted excavation in RLM 013 (Trenches 5–7) and RLM 044 (Trenches 1–4) was undertaken in 2013 and 2014 to test conclusions drawn from the magnetometry and metal-detecting surveys, and to provide information on the preservation, character, date and potential of buried archaeology (Figs 2.3.7–8). The results have been

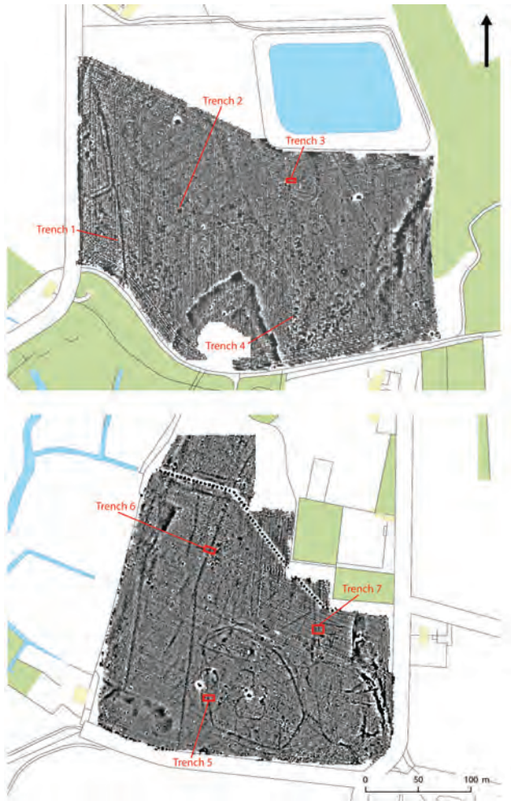


Fig 2.3.7 Location of excavation trenches against magnetometry in RLM 044 (above) and RLM 013 (below). *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

fully assessed (Caruth *et al* 2014) and are summarised here because they provide significant information about key features and aspects of past activity, and thus allow the wider survey results to be interpreted with greater confidence.

All trenches were 10m by 5m except Trench 7 which was 10m by 7.5m, and Trench 3, where a smaller area was opened. In order to provide a control for the metal-detecting survey, all trenches had at least two 2.5m squares excavated by hand to the base of the ploughsoil in 100m spits, with each spit being metal-detected and all the removed soil being passed through a 10mm sieve. In Trench 3, where cremations were anticipated, one of the sample squares was then extended by hand excavation across an area of 7.5m by 2.5m. In the other trenches, the remaining ploughsoil was machine excavated in 100mm spits with each spit metal-detected for iron as well as non-ferrous metals. Any archaeological features found below the base of the ploughsoil were excavated by hand. All major deposits and features were bulk sampled for

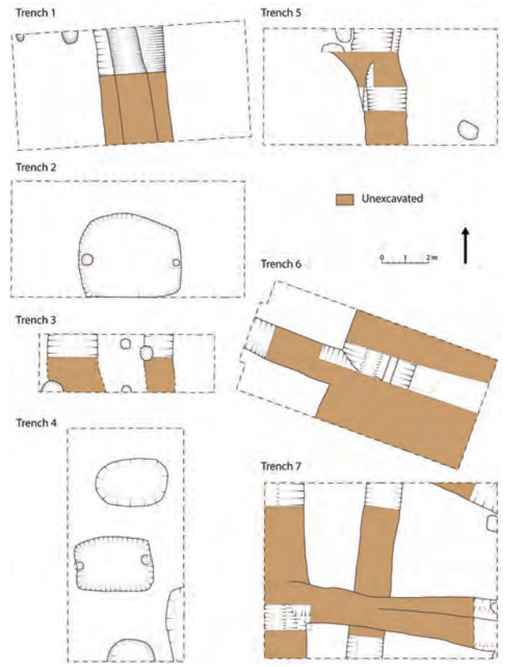


Fig 2.3.8 Excavation plans of Trenches 1–7

environmental residues and all other material excavated from stratified deposits was sieved through a 10mm mesh. Soil columns were taken through key stratigraphic sequences, and samples identified from key contexts for scientific dating.

Excavation revealed that in both fields buried features of archaeological significance had been damaged to varying extents by recent agricultural subsoiling, with visible score lines apparent below the ploughsoil in all trenches. As well as causing physical damage to the buried archaeology, it is clear that subsoiling can move intrusive material into earlier deposits.

In RLM 044, Trenches 1 and 3 were excavated to investigate enclosure ditches identified by magnetometry and Trenches 2 and 4 to examine macular features, one of which was interpreted as a *Grubenhaus*. The earliest feature examined, in Trench 3, was the double-ditched oval enclosure in the north-east of the field; the ditches pre-dated the early medieval period and are likely, in the absence of finds, to be prehistoric. A shallow pit of probable late Bronze Age or Iron Age date was also found in Trench 4 to the south. Four urned cremations of the fifth and sixth centuries AD, all plough damaged, were recovered at the base of the ploughsoil in Trench 3 (Fig 2.3.9); grave goods included glass vessel sherds, a glass bead and copper-alloy fragments. Cremations had been

anticipated because the detectorists regularly found hand-made early medieval pottery, including decorated pieces, in this area of the field. Trench 2 revealed a *Grubenhaus* of two-post plan (Fig 2.3.10). Pottery from the backfill included fifth-century material and among other finds were clay loom weights and an incomplete small-long brooch of the later fifth or early sixth century. A second two-post *Grubenhaus* and a pit, both probably of sixth-century date, were excavated in Trench 4 (Fig 2.3.11). The ditch in Trench 1 proved to be a substantial feature, 2.2m wide and 1.5m deep from the base of the ploughsoil. The only readily datable material recovered, any or all of which could be intrusive, was five fragments of pottery from the upper fill, none weighing more than 7g: two hand-made early medieval sherds, two Ipswich ware sherds and one sherd of Essex orange ware of the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. The middle and lower fills of the ditch were very similar to the sandy subsoil in which it had been dug, with little or no admixture of darker soil, suggesting that where sectioned the feature

Fig 2.3.9 Trench 3: plough-damaged cremation. © *Suffolk County Council*

Fig 2.3.10 Trench 2 looking east, showing *Grubenhaus*. © *Suffolk County Council*

lay at a distance from any contemporary cultivation or occupation, or that it was dug and backfilled before any cultivation soil had developed. A small posthole adjacent to it contained no finds.

All three trenches in RLM 013 were opened to examine linear features which had been identified by magnetometry. In Trench 5, the ditch of the D-shaped enclosure was found to be a relatively shallow feature (1.5m–2.0m wide and 40cm–60cm deep from the base of the ploughsoil) which showed evidence for re-cutting and had finally been filled by the middle of the first century AD.

Trench 6 was dug to examine the eastern of the two major north–south ditches at its junction with another ditch running to the west. Immediately below the ploughsoil, a layer of dark soil containing large quantities of animal bone overlay the ditches, which were filled with the same material; soil micromorphology confirms that this includes a range of occupation and domestic detritus (Fig 2.3.12). The north–south ditch was *c* 2.3m wide and was found to have two cuts: the western a V-shaped

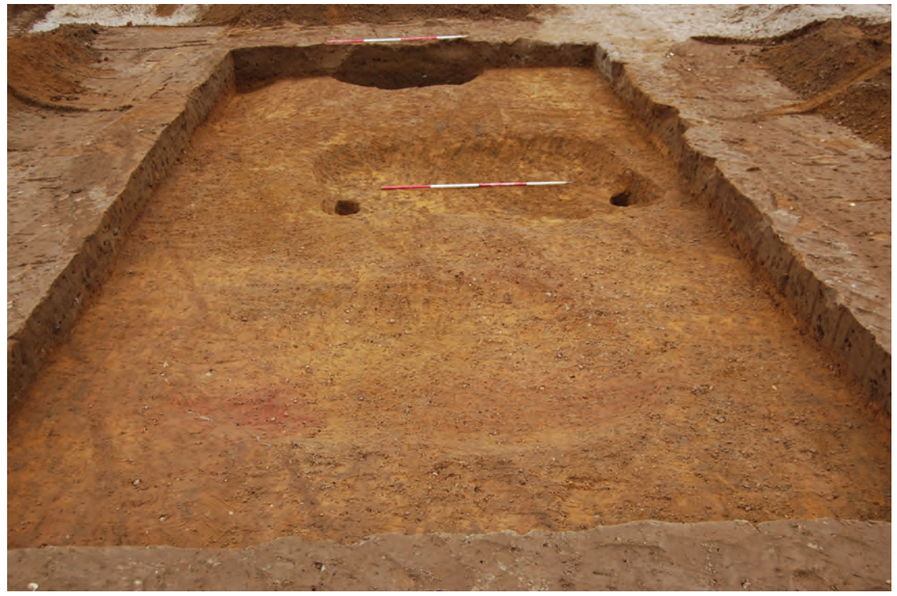


Fig 2.3.11 Trench 4 looking south, showing *Grubenhaus* and pit. © *Suffolk County Council*

Fig 2.3.12 Trench 6: dump layer and ditch sections, looking south. © *Suffolk County Council*

profile 1.5m deep from the base of the ploughsoil, the eastern a U-shaped profile 1.0m deep from the base of the ploughsoil; in the base of the eastern cut was a slot that may have held a timber palisade. No stratigraphic relationship was discernible between the two cuts. The dump layers and ditch fill contained hand-made early medieval pottery and Ipswich ware in proportions that suggest a *terminus ante quem* in the first half of the eighth century, after the inception of Ipswich ware 700/720, for the accumulation of the dump deposits and backfill of the ditches. This is consistent with radiocarbon dates from three pieces of disarticulated animal bone recovered from the refuse deposits: cal AD 330–540, cal AD 530–650 and cal AD 590–670 (all at 95% probability). The extent of the refuse layer had been recorded on the surface as an area of darker soil containing animal bone that runs north–south along the line of the ditch for *c* 125m and extends for up to 50m east–west.

Trench 7 investigated features in the east of the field, lying *c* 30m from the edge of Rendlesham Green. One was the eastern ditch of the Y-shaped trackway terminal which contained a substantial assemblage of Thetford ware with a small amount of St Neots ware, and can thus be dated to the tenth century. This was cut by an east–west ditch backfilled in the thirteenth or fourteenth century but containing residual pottery of the eleventh to twelfth centuries.

2.3.8 Ground-penetrating radar

In February 2018 Professor Christopher Gaffney and Helen McCreary of the University of Bradford surveyed a 40m by 40m area of RLM 013 using ground-penetrating radar and multidepth electromagnetic induction in order to investigate further the probable early medieval hall identified by aerial photography and any associated deposits. The hall was not detected by either technique.

2.4 Interpreting ploughzone archaeology

Material culture items in the ploughsoil represent the residue of human actions. The character of the material, and patterns of presence, absence, clustering, dispersal and association, thus provide evidence for past human activity at a range of spatial scales. However, the relationships between material culture patterning in the archaeological record and past human behaviour can be complex. The effects of cultural and natural transforms must be taken into account (Schiffer 1972; 1987), and sampling strategies, recovery techniques, and what is identified and retained for analysis can all affect the quality of the sample. With ploughzone archaeology there is the further complication that some material will have been entirely removed from its original archaeological context by cultivation.

Considerable attention has been paid in the archaeological literature to the ways in which modern agricultural practices have created and shaped ploughzone assemblages (eg Hinchliffe and Schadla-Hall 1980; Haselgrove *et al* 1985; Schofield 1991; Boismier 1997; Francovich *et al* 2000). There are case studies of artefact displacement (eg Dickson *et al* 2005; Diez-Martin 2009; Gustavsen *et al* 2017); of damage to objects including metalwork (eg Dunnell and Simek 1995; Fjaestad *et al* 1997; Gerwin and Baumhauser 2000; Haldenby and Richards 2010; Robbins 2012); and of the relationships with buried archaeological features and deposits (eg Cherry 1983; Steinberg 1996). Specific issues relating to the interpretation of finds and assemblages recovered by metal-detecting are also now being addressed at scales from site to landscape to region (eg Chester-Kadwell 2009; Daubney 2015). With this awareness, it is possible to assess the range of factors that need to be borne in mind when attempting to interpret what the Rendlesham assemblage might tell us about past human activity, to control for these where possible and to be aware of their impacts when not.

Multi-period ploughzone assemblages, like that from Rendlesham, have been characterised as 'ploughzone palimpsests', extending the metaphorical model originally derived from manuscript studies and now widely applied to landscapes and archaeological sequences which exhibit evidence for long-term or successive episodes of activity (Daubney 2015, 10–14; cf Foley 1981; Bailey 2007). However, although a powerful and useful perspective, it needs critical modulation when applied to ploughzone assemblages. The defining feature of a palimpsest is that it physically embodies a chronological relationship (originally, the overwriting of an erased text of which traces still remain) but by their nature the constituents of ploughzone assemblages have been removed from their original contexts: to extend the original metaphor, we are dealing not with the palimpsest but with the mixture of ink powder and skin scrapings which derive from clearing the vellum for new use. In broader physical and temporal contexts (as where they overlie buried stratigraphy in a sequence of activity that includes modern cultivation, or on a landscape scale) ploughzone assemblages can be seen as *components* of palimpsests but, following Bailey's distinctions (Bailey 2007, 204–7), it is more helpful to think of the Rendlesham assemblage as

deriving from a temporal palimpsest or palimpsests (where these include both buried stratigraphy and the accumulation of material on old ground surfaces) and as retaining some elements of the spatial palimpsest.

2.4.1 Representativity, survival and condition

It is important to acknowledge at the outset the obvious and over-riding bias arising from the fact the metal-detecting survey was aimed at recovering non-ferrous metal finds. The detectors were set to screen out iron (above, 2.3.2) and although some iron objects were recovered this was through visual identification. Similarly, although an effort was made to recover non-metal finds, especially pottery, when recognised on the surface, this was not the main focus of attention as it would have been in a fieldwalking survey. Moreover, while the survey was generally carried out in conditions which were good for metal-detecting, they were often poor for the visual identification and recovery of material on the surface. Some of the implications this may have for the comparison of data generated by metal-detecting and fieldwalking are considered below.

The database records 5,201 items of archaeological significance pre-dating AD 1650 (above, 2.3.2) but this represents only a tiny fraction of the total material actually found – estimated by the detectorists as 130,000 items over the period 2009 to 2017 – the bulk of which relates to agricultural or sporting activity over the past 100–150 years. As with detecting iron, recording all finds would have been impossibly time-consuming. Commonly encountered items included the copper-alloy bases of ejected shotgun shells (easily mistaken for Roman copper coins at first sight) and lead ammunition with a calibre range indicative of seventeenth- to nineteenth-century sporting activity (Fig 2.4.1).

The experience of the detectorists was that levels of retrieval were affected by the composition and morphology of the material, the state of tillage, and other ground conditions. They report that silver generally produces the strongest detector response, with gold fairly good and copper alloys and lead rather weaker, especially if the object is small and thin. In general, the larger and thicker the object the better the response. Angular items produce stronger signals than flat profiles, and a bent or distorted silver coin would be easier to detect than a flat undamaged one. The orientation of the object can also have a crucial effect on signal strength. A coin lying horizontally will give a signal many times stronger than when on edge, but if it is tilted in the ground then the signal may depend equally on the angle of the detector search coil and the direction of approach. An object which does not register when the search coil passes overhead in one direction may register, if only faintly, when scanned again at right angles. All this is consistent with biases in metal-detected assemblages which suggest that some artefact morphologies are less susceptible than others to discovery by metal-detecting (Cool and Baxter 2016) and this may explain the apparent under-representation of annular brooches in the early medieval dress accessory assemblage from Rendlesham (Ch 3.4.1.1). There is also the potential for nearby metal fragments to distort or even mask the signals from a particular object.

Variability in signal quality decreases if the object is near the surface. Higher rates of recovery were reported for RLM 013 when it was under plough rather than minimum tillage, and more widely after ploughing and subsoiling. This may in part be due to new material being

Fig 2.4.1 Modern metal-detecting finds post-dating 1650: (left) lead ball ammunition; (right) base of shotgun shell

pulled into the ploughsoil from buried archaeological deposits but can also be explained by soil inversion bringing objects already in the ploughsoil closer to the surface and/or altering their orientation in ways that might enhance the detector response. The detectorists' view is that soil inversion from ploughing, and from the harvesting of crops such as potatoes and sugar beet, is the main reason why new material is recovered on repeat visits over a period of years. They report that depth limitations are less of an issue on weathered or flat rolled ground surfaces, and that detector responses are generally better when soils are damp after rain.

The ways in which soil conditions, and especially the presence of modern agricultural chemicals, affect the survival of non-ferrous metal items in the ploughsoil are not fully understood. At Rendlesham, gold, being inert, is in very good condition with only some loss of copper from the surface resulting in gold enrichment (Blakelock 2016; Lehrberger and Raub 1995; Tate 1986). Lead and copper alloys have differing degrees of surface corrosion but are generally robust, with high metal content (Cronyn and Robinson 1990, 214–17), and even small composite items such as buckles survive in good condition. Objects made of silver, of all the metals, tend to be most affected by the burial environment and can suffer embrittlement, which might explain the fragmented nature of many of the silver objects (Cronyn and Robinson 1990, 232). Metal-detecting has recovered material dating back as far as the Bronze Age and there is no indication that any significant component of the non-ferrous assemblage accumulated over time has been lost to burial conditions.

Most (69 per cent) of the coins recovered, of all periods, are complete and undamaged except where deliberately cut or altered. It is demonstrable that in some cases they have moved considerable distances in the ploughsoil (below) but by and large they have not been damaged in the process, presumably because of their small size and regular shape. By contrast, a high proportion of non-coin finds (68 per cent) is damaged or fragmentary. We are dealing with items which in many, if not a majority of cases were probably broken or incomplete when they entered the archaeological record, but their condition suggests that there has also been a significant incidence of damage and fragmentation from impact or destructive movement in the ploughsoil. Our data indicate a cumulative incidence of damage over time (Fig 2.4.2). The older the artefact the more likely it is to be found incomplete (50–95 per cent complete) or represented by fragments (less than 50 per cent complete), and the proportion of complete objects recovered increases steadily from the Roman to the post-medieval period. To some extent this may be explicable by chronological variations in material culture forms, social practice and taphonomic pathways: for example, one would expect a higher proportion of complete or near-complete dress accessories in the modern ploughsoil from recently disturbed furnished inhumations of the sixth century AD than from manuring scatters of the second or third centuries AD. Where joining fragments from the same object have been recognised (2.4.2, below) the breaks are sometimes fresh, indicating the impact of modern mechanised agriculture, but often show considerable corrosion and abrasion. The long-term trend seems clear and – whatever other factors may be in play – would appear to indicate that earlier farming regimes and technologies, as well as modern ones, have contributed to the levels of post-depositional damage and fragmentation seen in the Rendlesham assemblage. This is consistent with the overall distribution of metal finds, which have been retrieved almost entirely from terrains which are likely to have been settled and cultivated since prehistory – soils of the Newport 2 Association, and soils of the

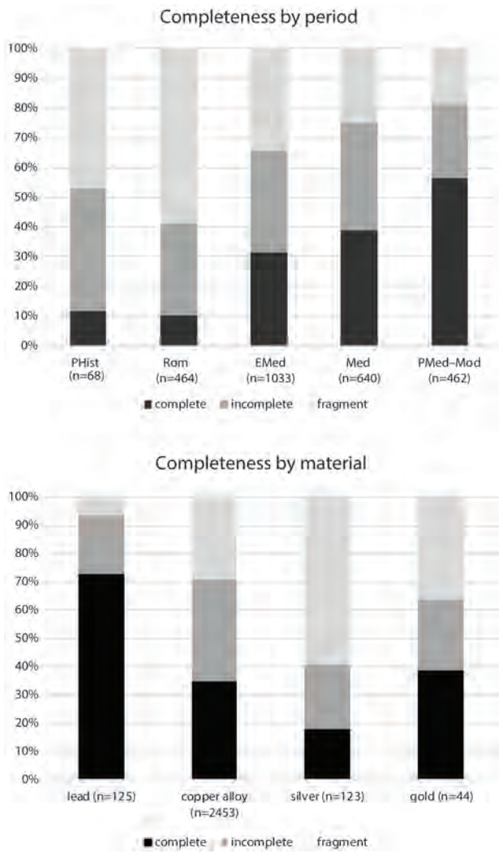


Fig 2.4.2 The proportion of complete, incomplete and fragmentary non-coin finds by major period (above) and material (below)

Burlingham 3 Association with slope greater than 1.75 degrees (above, 2.1.1).

Objects of different metals show different patterns of completeness and fragmentation (Fig 2.4.2); due to its malleability and durability, the highest incidence of complete items and the lowest incidence of fragmentation is found among the objects made of lead. The highest incidence of fragmentation and the lowest incidence of complete items is found among silver objects. This is consistent with silver being more prone to embrittlement than gold, lead or copper alloys but may also reflect the relatively high number of silver fragments in the early medieval assemblage that appear to be cut or broken pieces awaiting recycling.

It is possible that chronological imprecision may bias some readings of the assemblage. As the material is unstratified, only diagnostic artefacts can be dated securely and the chronological precision varies with type and period. In a few cases it may be possible to assign some material to a date-range on the basis of apparent spatial association with chronologically diagnostic material, but 7 per cent of artefacts are undatable and a further 3 per cent can only be attributed to a range spanning two or more major chronological periods (Ch 3.1; tab 3.1.2). Had such material been recovered from stratified contexts then, even if residual, we could at least propose a *terminus ante quem* for deposition. This would, for example, allow us to judge whether undiagnostic copper-alloy melt represents a greater intensity of non-ferrous metalworking at any period or the aggregate of low-level activity over the long term.

A final consideration is the removal of material without it having been recorded. The site came to our attention in the first place because of illegal metal-detecting, and further evidence of illegal detecting was occasionally noted during the survey. There is no doubt that archaeological material was stolen, but the scale of the survey means that – whatever the quality or significance of any individual items that have been lost – such removal is unlikely to change our overall understanding of the assemblage and what it says about activity here over time.

2.4.2 Spatial precision and movement in the ploughsoil

The extent to which valid interpretations about past behaviour can be drawn from spatial patterning depends upon the precision with which the findspot of an individual item is recorded and on how closely that findspot corresponds to the location of the original archaeological context. As noted above (above, 2.3.2), the precision of the hand-held GPS units used by the detectorists ranged from 5m–15m for the earlier models to within 5m for the later models, a level considered acceptable given the scale of the survey and the likely extent to which objects had moved in the ploughsoil.

At the most extreme, problems can arise from the transport of material culture items from their original place of deposition to another location entirely, either through the movement of topsoil for improvement or dressing, or through the redeposition of soil after off-site processing or grading of root crops. This has the effect of entirely divorcing material from its original context and creating false positives in landscape-scale distributions, reflecting modern agricultural or development practice rather than activity in the more remote past (Daubney 2015, 79–82). We are, however, confident that this is not a significant factor at Rendlesham. On a smaller scale, we have to consider the possibility that objects may have been transported between fields in soil adhering to agricultural machinery. Although we cannot rule this out, the coherence of spatial patterning and the fact that in all cases but one joining fragments from the same object – even when found considerable distances apart – have been recovered from the same field indicates that this is not a significant factor and that there is no significant movement of archaeological material between modern fields as a result of farming activity. A final consideration is the redistribution of material from extraction pits (clay, marl and sand). A number are known within the survey area, dating from the medieval period to the second half of the twentieth century (Fig 2.2.1) but collectively they represent only a small area and, as overburden is likely to have been mounded or dispersed around the pit, can have had only a very local impact on distributions of archaeological material in the ploughsoil.

On arable fields, ploughing disperses archaeological material, whether this was originally dropped on an old ground surface or has been pulled into the ploughsoil from stratified archaeological deposits by agricultural activity. Recent studies of the effects of ploughing have shown that artefacts can be moved between 5m and 10m in a single episode, with finds swept in the direction of ploughing (Reynolds 1988; Boismier 1991, 17; Dickson *et al* 2005; Diez-Martin 2009; Spandl *et al* 2010, 28). Discussion has focused on ceramics and worked flints, but there is also evidence for the quite rapid dispersal of coins and other small metal artefacts. Coins and fragments of other precious metal objects from the late Roman Hoxne hoard probably travelled up to 20m in the four years preceding their discovery (Plouviez 2010, 15–16), and recent work at the Lackford cremation cemetery in west Suffolk has shown that the upper part of

an urn and its contents was moved onto the surface and about 0.5m laterally from the *in situ* lower part by the turning action of the plough in the year it was hit. Dispersal impacts can be assessed at Rendlesham through two strands of evidence: pieces broken from the same object that have been moved apart by cultivation; and coin hoards that have been dispersed by ploughing.

Fifty-three finds have been identified as pieces broken from twenty-four original objects (Table 2.4.1; Fig 2.4.3). These are either adjoining fragments or, as in the case of the hanging-bowl mount RLM 013 0045/0604, ones that are clearly from the same object. Some pieces from the same object were found on the same day, others on different occasions up to three years apart. Some, but by no means all, of the fragments join to make up the complete or near-complete artefact. In only one case have pieces from the same item been found in different fields: two non-joining fragments from a late Roman buckle loop (RLM 038 1194 and RLM 044 1711), found 405m apart. One has been damaged by burning, and one has not, a difference that suggests breakage and dispersal in antiquity, probably before the medieval road line separated what are now RLM 038 and RLM 044. For the rest, the damage is best explained as result of impact or movement in the ploughsoil, and so the distance between them indicates movement since breakage rather than movement from the original place of deposition. The recorded distances between the findspots range from 2m to 251m, and in all but two cases fall within the range 2m–40m. However, given the GPS margin of error these figures can only be considered indicative. There does not appear to be any simple correlation between how recent the damage, judged by degrees of corrosion and abrasion to the broken surfaces, and the recorded distance apart. The exceptional distance (251m) between the two pieces of the strap fitting (RLM 044 1104/1105) is probably to be explained by one of them having been transported by farm machinery. Plotting the fragments indicates the directions in which they have moved (Fig 2.4.4). Although there are cases where the main direction of displacement is downslope or along the present line of tillage these are a minority, with movement across the present line of tillage evident in most cases. This suggests that ploughing at right angles to the current line of tillage at some time in the past has had an effect.

Three dispersed Roman coin hoards have been identified (Fig 2.4.5). The most clearly defined, because of the low incidence of other contemporary finds in the field,

Table 2.4.1 Discovery time and distance apart of items identified as coming from the same object

Find nos	Type	Discovery times	Distance apart
RLM 013 0560; RLM 013 0561	Roman brooch	same batch	6m
RLM 037 1158; RLM 037 1159	Roman brooch	same day	11m
RLM 044 1033; RLM 044 1039	Roman brooch	5 months	65m
RLM 044 1302; RLM 044 1303	Roman buckle	same day	2m
RLM 044 1432; RLM 044 1614; RLM 044 1635	Roman coin	10 months + 2 months	28m + 11m
RLM 044 1711; RLM 038 1194	Roman buckle	23 months	405m
RLM 013 0045; RLM 013 0604	Early medieval hanging-bowl mount	3 years	40m
RLM 014 1015; RLM 014 1016	Early medieval mount	same batch	17m
RLM 038 1127; RLM 038 1193	Early medieval spur	5 months	27m
RLM 044 1049; RLM 044 1050	Early medieval cruciform brooch	same batch	10m
RLM 044 1104; RLM 044 1105	Early medieval strap fitting	1 month	251m
RLM 044 1242; RLM 044 1243	Early medieval pendant	same day	15m
RLM 044 1250; RLM 044 1435; RLM 044 1509	Early medieval mount	18 months + 7 months	34.5m + 16m
RLM 044 1459; RLM 044 1466	Early medieval florid cruciform brooch	same day	4m
RLM 044 1566; RLM 044 1704	Early medieval wrist clasp	5 months	22m
RLM 044 1121; RLM 044 1604	Early medieval swastika-type disc brooch	33 months	72m
RLM 059 1136; RLM 059 1076	Early medieval disc brooch	10 months	21m
RLM 044 1052; RLM 044 1325	Early medieval purse ring fragments	9 months	22m
RLM 013 0447; RLM 013 0448	Medieval penny	same batch	14m
RLM 044 1608; RLM 044 1609	Medieval penny	same batch	25m
RLM 059 1232; RLM 059 1233	Medieval coin	same batch	20m
RLM 037 1442; RLM 037 1467	Medieval spur	same batch	38m
RLM 037 1293; 1332; 1289; 1392; 1112	Medieval ?furniture	44 months	max 65m x 37m
RLM 038 1057; RLM 038 1274	Medieval mounts	13 months	0m

Fig 2.4.3 Broken fragments from the same objects: (1) RLM 044 1049 and 1050; (2) RLM 044 1104 and 1105; (3) RLM 013 0560 and 0561; (4) RLM 044 1242 and 1243; (5) RLM 044 1711 and RLM 038 1194; (6) RLM 044 1459 and 1466; (7) RLM 014 1015 and 1016; (8) RLM 013 0045 and 0604. Scale 1:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

is a group of twenty-five silver *denarii* from EKE 022, deposited after AD 172. The first ten coins found were located only to a 6-figure NGR. Of the fifteen located with 12-figure NGRs, twelve lay along the broadly north–south axis of modern ploughing within an area of *c* 70m by 50m with two outliers some 50m and 80m to the north. One further coin was found *c* 130m west and south of the main group but this is the only forgery present (a silver-coated copper-alloy coin of Domitian) and may be unrelated to the hoard. With this exception, all the fully located coins were found within or on the boundaries of two fields shown on the 1887 and 1905 OS maps, and all except three within the eastern field. These fields were amalgamated before 1945, and their southern boundary removed before 1955. The distribution suggests that the hoard was deposited near the south-western corner of the eastern field and was initially struck and dispersed before the fields were combined, with only limited subsequent movement after the boundaries were removed.

A second dispersed silver hoard, from EKE 020, consists of *siliquae*, mostly clipped, and was deposited after AD 402, probably after 410. There is a concentration of Roman finds here spanning the first to early fifth centuries but although any individual coin might be the result of casual loss occurring on a settlement the numbers involved strongly suggest a hoard. Seven coins were recorded up to July 2017 but another six were found in 2018–19. The coins cluster within an area of *c* 40m by 70m with single outliers to north and south. The line of tillage in this field in recent years normally follows the contours north to south but is sometimes south-west to north-east. Only one clipped *siliqua* had been found

before 2016 and so it is possible that the hoard has only recently been disturbed.

Of the 224 Roman coins from RLM 013, 136 are dated to the period AD 379–402. While some of these may be single losses, the numbers and distribution suggest a hoard of late Roman *nummi*. The high concentration of small *nummi* in a limited area in the south of the field was first noted by the detectorists on 15 September 2012 when they found nineteen coins close together, all but one of which are likely to be from the hoard. More than fifty Theodosian bronze coins have now been found in an area extending for some 45m east–west and 30m north–south occupying the top of the slope. A more even scatter lies to the north of this, with some examples from the eastern and northern extremities of the field. The usual direction of ploughing today is west–east, which would correspond to the oval spread of the main concentration, but cultivation is occasionally north–south, which may have caused the northerly drift. The distribution also suggests that some movement has occurred downslope to the west.

Fig 2.4.4 Plot showing the distances between fragments from the same object and the direction of movement. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

Analysis of a late Roman silver coin hoard from Tisbury, Wiltshire showed dispersal over an area of 40m by 40m (Henry and Algar 2018) and coins from the later Roman hoard at Spilsby, Lincolnshire, had travelled up to 90m along the axis of ploughing (Daubney 2015, 83–4). The evidence from Rendlesham is consistent with these findings but indicates that individual components of hoards can be moved substantially greater distances.

A greater lateral displacement of artefacts might be expected downslope, with the level apex and upper slopes of undulating ground more affected by erosion and soils accumulating at the base of the slope (Wilkinson *et al* 2006). The effect of slope on the density of artefacts within the Rendlesham survey area can be visualised by grouping the data into 10m squares for which the average slope has been calculated. Bilinear interpolation of 2m LiDAR Digital Terrain Model data was used to produce 10m grid squares ranked in order of slope steepness. The resulting

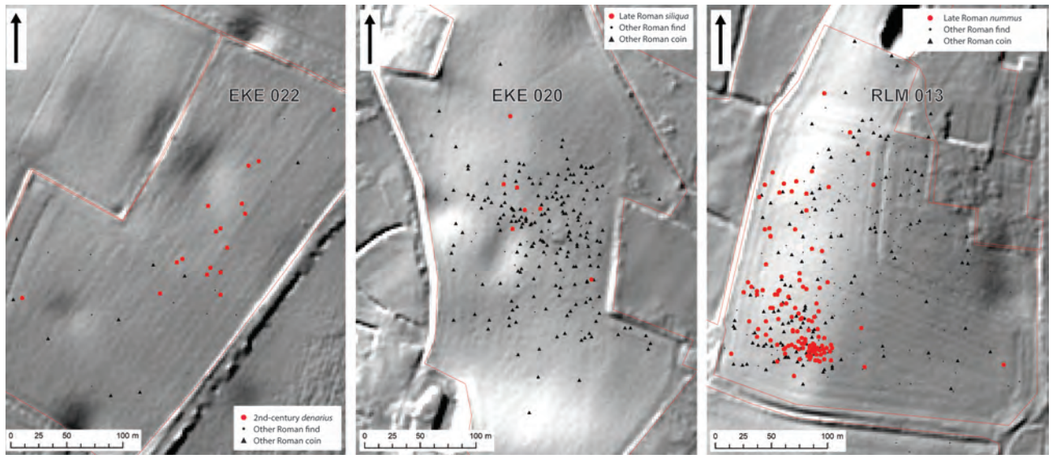


Fig 2.4.5 Plots showing: (a) dispersed coin hoard in EKE 022 with field boundaries from 1887 OS map; (b) dispersed coin hoard in EKE 020; (c) dispersed coin hoard and distribution of Theodosian coin finds in RLM 013. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

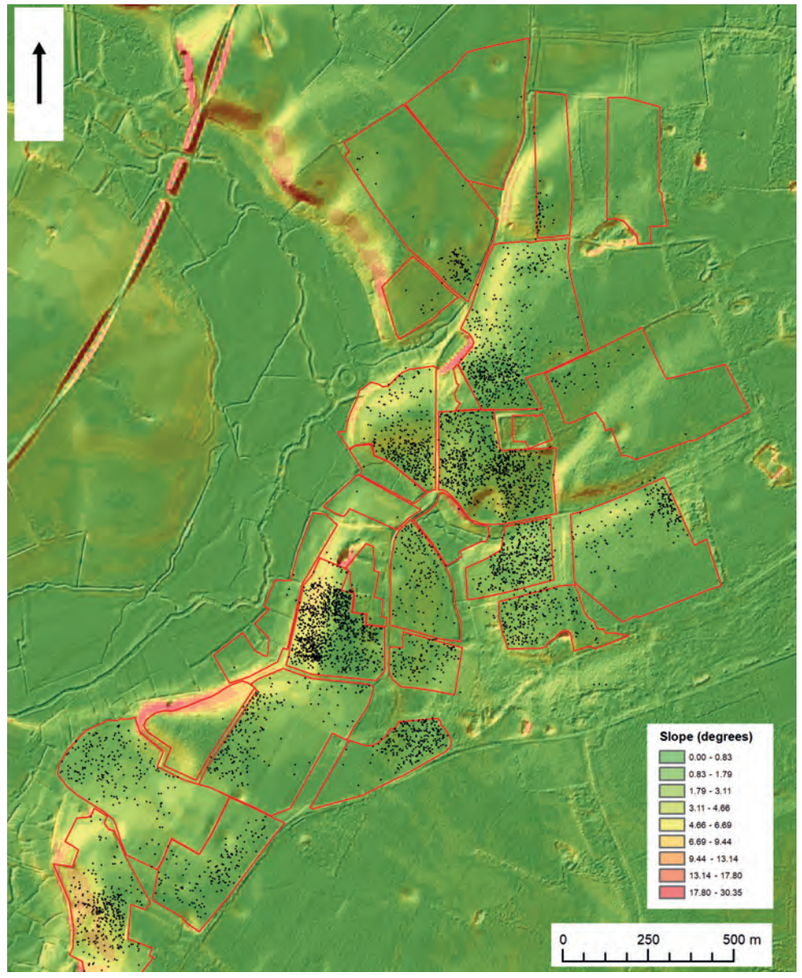


Fig 2.4.6 Slope map of Rendlesham showing aggregate distribution of finds (all periods). *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

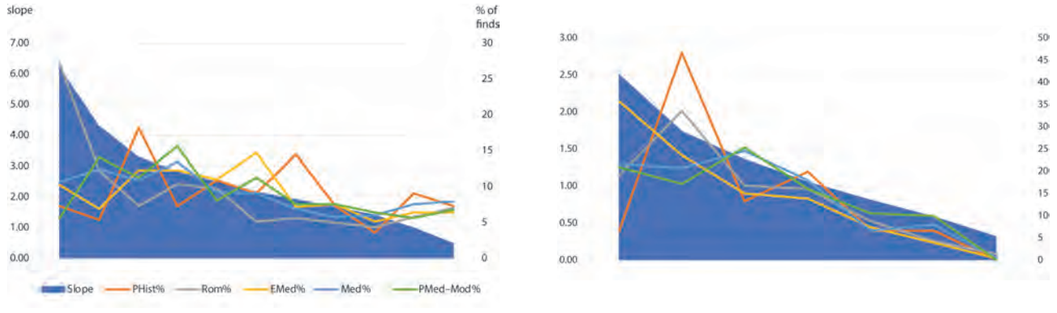


Fig 2.4.7 Percentage of finds recovered relative to the gradient of the ground surface. Left: all soils. Right: Burlingham soils only

map shows three areas of particularly sharp gradient: the western flanks of RLM 013 and continuing south along the scarp edge to EKE 020; the north, west and south slopes of RLM 038; and an area of modern quarrying in the south-western corner of RLM 044 (Fig 2.4.6).

Examination of the numbers of finds recovered from grid squares of different gradients shows only a weak correlation between steepness and the numbers of finds recovered (Fig 2.4.7). Only amongst Roman material does a steeper gradient seemingly correlate with larger

numbers of finds; for all other periods there is a relatively even proportion of finds recovered from gradients of between 1 and 4 degrees of slope (ie a maximum of 1:14 ratio). This is consistent with the results of similar analyses in Lincolnshire (Daubney 2015, 85–6) and the Isle of Wight (Robbins 2012, 142) which showed that respectively 96 per cent and 95 per cent of finds were found at gradients of less than 4 degrees. The only area where downslope movement may have had some impact on artefact distribution is along the western side of RLM 013, where there is a concentration of finds on the pronounced slope down to the floodplain of the Deben. The slope takes up almost exactly half the area of the field (50.9 per cent) but has more than half of the finds (62.7 per cent), including the putative late fourth-century hoard discussed above. Without this, however, the proportion of finds on the slope falls to 58.2 per cent, suggesting that this apparent concentration of finds may be influenced by the hoard. This may also reflect deliberate tipping or disposal of material downslope in the fifth to eighth centuries (Ch 4.3.1.4): over two-thirds (68.7 per cent) of fifth- to eighth-century finds are from the slope whereas finds of other periods are closer to the expected proportion (57.9 per cent).

Otherwise, slope only appears to be a significant factor on the soils of the Burlingham Association, where 53 per cent of Roman and 60 per cent of early medieval finds were found on slopes greater than 1.75 degrees (Fig 2.4.7). However, this seems to reflect the broader land-use distinction between the more level areas of Burlingham soils and other soil types (above, 2.1.1) rather than any downslope movement of material in the ploughsoil.

Ploughsoil will accumulate at the base of slope or against downslope field boundaries but there is little evidence for concentrations of artefacts in these zones. The strong concentration of finds along the western boundary of EKE 019 cannot be explained in this way as the land gradient here is almost level. A more plausible example of this phenomenon may be the scatter of finds at the north-eastern edge of RLM 043. In RLM 013, 044 and 038 there is no significantly denser concentration of finds at the base of slope than on the slope itself or immediately above it.

There is no doubt that tilled soil moves downslope at Rendlesham: auguring has identified significant hillwash deposits in RLM 013 (above, 2.3.6), and during fieldwork in 2013 gullying and soil movement downslope were observed in conditions of heavy rain in both RLM 013 and RLM 044. However, for whatever reason, there does not appear to be a proportionate effect on the density of finds recovered. This is consistent with experiments charting ploughzone artefact movement in Calabria (Ammerman 1985, 39) and at Sonning on the middle Thames floodplain (Hosfield 2008), which both concluded that while slope had some effect on displacement it had little significant impact on overall patterns of density. At Rendlesham, a number of mechanisms are likely to be in play. Where there are accumulations of hillwash it is possible that the depth of deposits masks varying densities of material in the soil column, a proposition that can only be tested by sampling for volumetric comparisons. Different constituents of the soil can also move in different ways. In RLM 044, for example, sand washes out of the ploughsoil and can accumulate rapidly to a considerable depth over the track at the base of slope, but organic soil constituents and stones – and, it would appear, metal objects and pottery – do not move in the same way.

Archaeological material at Rendlesham has clearly been moved by agricultural activity, sometimes for considerable distances from the places at which it was first deposited or pulled up from buried deposits, with lateral movement along the line of tillage apparently having a greater impact than slope. This certainly has implications for our interpretations of artefact distributions but patterns of presence, absence and concentration, structured by past human activity, can still be discerned and interrogated, at a range of spatial scales. In part this is because, by its very nature, ploughing does not disperse material across field boundaries (Boismier 1991; 1997; Daubney 2015, 81–3). Map regression shows that the modern field pattern, although in part the consequence of twentieth-century boundary removal and field amalgamation, largely perpetuates (albeit in simplified form) that which had emerged by the early eighteenth century. This itself developed directly from a medieval landscape which, as already discussed, comprised a mixture of hedged fields held in severalty and small open fields. It is thus likely that a significant proportion of modern field boundaries have medieval origins. This is particularly true of those bordering roadsides or forming the junction between floodplain meadows and higher ground but others – especially those which follow a more irregular or curving line – may also have originated before the fourteenth century. Others were added in the post-medieval period, creating a pattern which, to judge from the available evidence, remained largely stable for around three centuries, until limited field amalgamation occurred in the 1950s and 1960s.

This dense and long-lived mesh of boundaries would have reduced the degree of lateral movement of artefacts resulting from ploughing and other activities. In this

context, it is striking how metalwork distributions can display a measure of discontinuity not simply at modern hedgelines – something which might be a consequence of variations in the intensity with which different parcels have been detected – but also along the line of some long-established boundaries which were grubbed out five or more decades ago, as most notably within RLM 042 and EKE 022. While there may be significant soil differences on either side of the lost boundaries in question, which have broadly patterned past land use and other activities, the close fit of the artefact distribution to the former boundary lines is striking. The constraints on lateral movement imposed by these particular boundaries have evidently not yet been significantly obscured by several decades of modern ploughing.

Within modern fields, gridding, choropleth mapping or heat mapping at appropriate scales can be used to offset uncertainties arising from spatial imprecision and the effects of movement in ploughsoil. Overall, though, we should not take too pessimistic a view. Although the Roman coin hoards had been dispersed their original areas of deposition were strongly indicated by concentrations of material; similarly, the location of fifth- and sixth-century cremations, verified by excavation in 2013, was predicted by concentrations of material, especially stamped funerary pottery, in the ploughsoil. Taken with the recorded distances between joining fragments of the same object, this suggests that a majority of items from the ploughsoil at Rendlesham, perhaps as much as 70 per cent of the total assemblage, was recovered within 50m of its original position.

That said, it remains possible that some minor, relatively low-density concentrations of material may be the consequence of movement in the ploughsoil, perhaps compounded by processes of recovery. In this context, attention should be drawn in particular to the western side of EKE 019. Here a moderately dense scatter of medieval material superficially suggests the presence of a settlement, yet the configuration of boundaries shown on Norden's 1601 map leaves no doubt that this part of the field, like that on the slightly higher ground to the east, had formerly been an area of open-field arable which is unlikely to have developed at the expense of an abandoned farm site.

2.4.3 Calibrating retrieval and distribution

The methodology of the metal-detecting survey has already been described (above, 2.3.2). All arable fields except RLM 041 were covered at least twice, and factors that may have affected rates of recovery such as ground conditions, weather and direction of line walking were carefully recorded. When it was not possible to cover a field in a single survey episode because of the time available or other factors, repeat visits were made to ensure full coverage and every effort was made to ensure a consistent intensity of coverage within each arable field. It should be emphasised, however, that the more productive fields (those from which there was a greater yield of archaeological metalwork) were subject to repeat visits over the years and so some fields have been more intensively prospected than others. For example, RLM 044 and RLM 013 have respectively seen 316 and 296 person-days effort, as against 67 for RLM 043 and 62 for EKE 021. This does not invalidate broad patterns of presence and absence, or seriously affect relative densities of distribution within survey units, but it does bias densities of distribution across the survey area as a whole for the obvious reason that repeat visits to productive areas have accentuated patterns of concentration.

In principle it should be possible to calibrate for different intensities of prospection by linking individual finds back to specific survey episodes. Unfortunately, the date on which any individual item was recovered was not recorded: the finds are dated according to when they were handed to SCCAS for identification and recording, and these batches incorporated finds from more than one episode of detecting. This also makes it difficult to control for the effect of different tillage regimes and ground conditions on recovery rates. We are, however, able to normalise finds recovery by field by dividing the number of finds by the number of person-days spent detecting and the area in hectares.

Normalised recovery data for each survey unit are presented in Table 2.4.2. These indicate that greater and lesser densities of material within the arable fields that have been fully surveyed at least twice cannot be wholly explained by differing intensities of coverage. It is important to note that by this measure the areas with both the highest and the lowest rates of retrieval are those which have seen only a single limited episode of metal-detecting, most of them non-arable. It is no surprise that detecting has recovered archaeological material from the gardens of Naunton Hall, which is adjacent to RLM 013 and where there has been a house since at least the sixteenth century, or from woodland adjacent to archaeologically productive arable fields (eg RLM 057, 058, 088 and 089). These examples serve as a useful reminder that modern groundcover and land use may mask areas of past activity, but the differences in land use and very limited coverage skew the overall picture. This can be seen in the much greater range of normalised retrieval rates from such areas than from more comprehensively surveyed arable fields (0–7.71 as against

Table 2.4.2 Normalised finds recovery data for each survey unit: summary of finds recovered and intensity of survey

HER code	Name	Area (ha)	Total days	Total finds	Finds per day	Finds per day/ha	Days per ha
EKE 019	Steeple Tye	11.34	104.88	215	2.05	0.18	9.25
EKE 020	Sutton Barn	9.17	65.70	326	4.96	0.54	7.17
EKE 021	Clappet	11.43	62.00	207	3.34	0.29	5.43
EKE 022	Eyke Road	6.93	82.30	166	2.02	0.29	11.87
EKE 055	Broom Hill Woods	4.56	1.75	0	0.00	0.00	0.38
RLM 012	pasture	1.97	6.00	0	0.00	0.00	3.05
RLM 013	The Park	6.67	296.38	1141	3.85	0.58	44.46
RLM 014	Kitchen Piece	2.84	51.66	120	2.32	0.82	18.22
RLM 036	Dog Kennel Field	3.86	124.19	353	2.84	0.74	32.14
RLM 037	Collets	13.27	140.25	496	3.54	0.27	10.57
RLM 038	Dock Hill	6.47	126.07	354	2.81	0.43	19.50
RLM 039	Duffals	4.14	10.50	40	3.81	0.92	2.54
RLM 040	High House Farm	0.52	0.50	2	4.00	7.71	0.96
RLM 041	Spring Hill	2.87	2.10	7	3.33	1.16	0.73
RLM 042	Three Corner Tye	4.95	73.55	250	3.40	0.69	14.86
RLM 043	Black Croft	5.10	67.00	139	2.07	0.41	13.13
RLM 044	Sand Walk	8.30	315.64	847	2.68	0.32	38.05
RLM 045	Hut Field	11.85	43.50	162	3.72	0.31	3.67
RLM 046	Foxburgh South	12.66	29.00	85	2.93	0.23	2.29
RLM 048	Water Meadows	4.72	3.56	7	1.97	0.42	0.75
RLM 050	Rearing Ground	12.30	14.00	32	2.29	0.19	1.14
RLM 051	garden areas	1.80	3.75	4	1.07	0.59	2.09
RLM 056	Foxborough North	9.87	1.50	2	1.33	0.14	0.15
RLM 057	Sand Walk, wood to S	2.40	0.50	3	6.00	2.50	0.21
RLM 058	Dock Hill, wood to SW	1.47	1.00	2	2.00	1.36	0.68
RLM 059	School Field	4.23	79.00	222	2.81	0.66	18.66
RLM 088	Black Croft, wood to E	1.39	2.50	5	2.00	1.44	1.80
RLM 089	School Field, wood to S	3.38	1.00	3	3.00	0.89	0.30

0.14–0.92), and by probable false negatives: thus it is likely that the low recovery rate of archaeological metalwork from EKE 055, immediately adjacent to a concentration of finds in EKE 019, reflects difficult ground conditions in a conifer plantation.

With these caveats, we are therefore able to calibrate between survey units and to gauge with reasonable accuracy the likely effects of differential spatial coverage within the fields that were most intensively detected. In effect, this allows us to treat the survey data as the product of a two-stage exercise: 1) an initial extensive survey to identify broader patterns of presence, absence and clustering; and 2) intensive follow-up intended to maximise retrieval where concentrations of material have been identified in order to better date and characterise past activity.

The distribution of all finds across the survey area and the normalised distribution by arable field are shown in Figs 2.4.8–10. The aggregate finds distribution shows a strong concentration from the floodplain of the Deben in the west to RLM 036 and 059 in the east, and from RLM 042 in the south to the southern part of RLM 037 in the north, with further pronounced concentrations to the north in RLM 039, 046 and the northern part of RLM 037, to the east in RLM 045, and to the south in EKE 019 and 020. Within the modern arable fields, areas with no finds or largely devoid of finds are taken to represent terrain which was pasture, woodland or wood pasture before the early modern period (above, 2.1.1). The normalised distribution is consistent with this. However, when the data are broken down by broad chronological period a more complex picture emerges, and again the aggregate finds distributions and normalised distributions are consistent. These show a dispersed pattern in prehistory, a number of separate foci of activity in the Roman period, strong aggregation in the early medieval period, and more dispersed foci in the medieval and post-medieval periods. This patterning, and its implications for long-term dynamics of settlement and landscape, is considered in detail in Chapters 4–7.

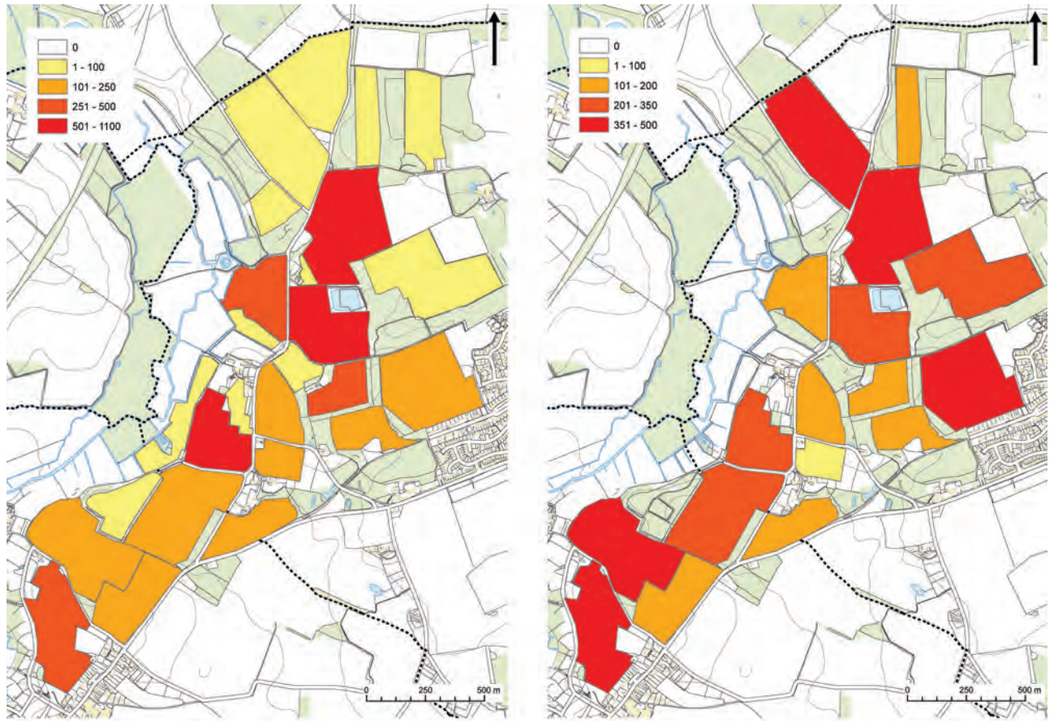


Fig 2.4.8 Finds distribution, all periods, by survey unit: (left) aggregate; (right) normalised. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

In an ideal world, all fields would have been detected the same number of times, as far as possible under the same conditions, with each field completed in a single day and any intensive follow-up similarly structured to ensure comparability. In practice, for the reasons rehearsed above (2.3.2), it would have been impossible to mount such an exercise on this scale. The information recorded during the detector survey does allow us to control for biases due to differential intensity of prospection, but this could be done more effectively in any future exercise by recording in addition the date each item was found. Systematic pro-forma logging of each survey episode, including the precise area line-walked, would facilitate interrogation and calibration.

Finally, the records of repeat visits provide evidence for the rate of finds recovery over time. This can of course be affected by a range of factors, including changes in the tillage regime. It is none the less worth noting that on the three most intensively detected fields within the survey area, for which there is the best longitudinal data, the trend suggests a gradual decay over time in the number of finds recovered per day spent detecting, and a similar trend in the median weight of finds recovered (Fig 2.4.11).

2.4.4 Fieldwalking and metal-detecting

Fieldwalking – the visual recovery of archaeological material, principally pottery and worked flint, from the surface of the ploughsoil – developed as a systematic research tool in England in the late 1960s. Through the 1970s and 80s it made a major contribution to our understanding of early settlement, not least by correcting the bias towards soils formed in permeable geologies which is inherent in aerial photography (Taylor 1975). Concentrations of material denote the presence or proximity of settlement areas: thinner distributions, in contrast, indicate arable land, the material having been transported from settlements with yard manure or the contents of middens (Gaffney and Tingle 1989; Hayfield 1980; Schofield 1991). While fieldwalking remains an important research method, it has in recent decades been eclipsed, even amongst amateur archaeologists, by the rise of other non-invasive techniques, most notably metal-detecting and various forms of geophysics.

For the Rendlesham survey area the evidence of non-metallic artefacts recovered from the surface comes from two sources. As already noted, five of the fields were systematically fieldwalked in 1982 with the material

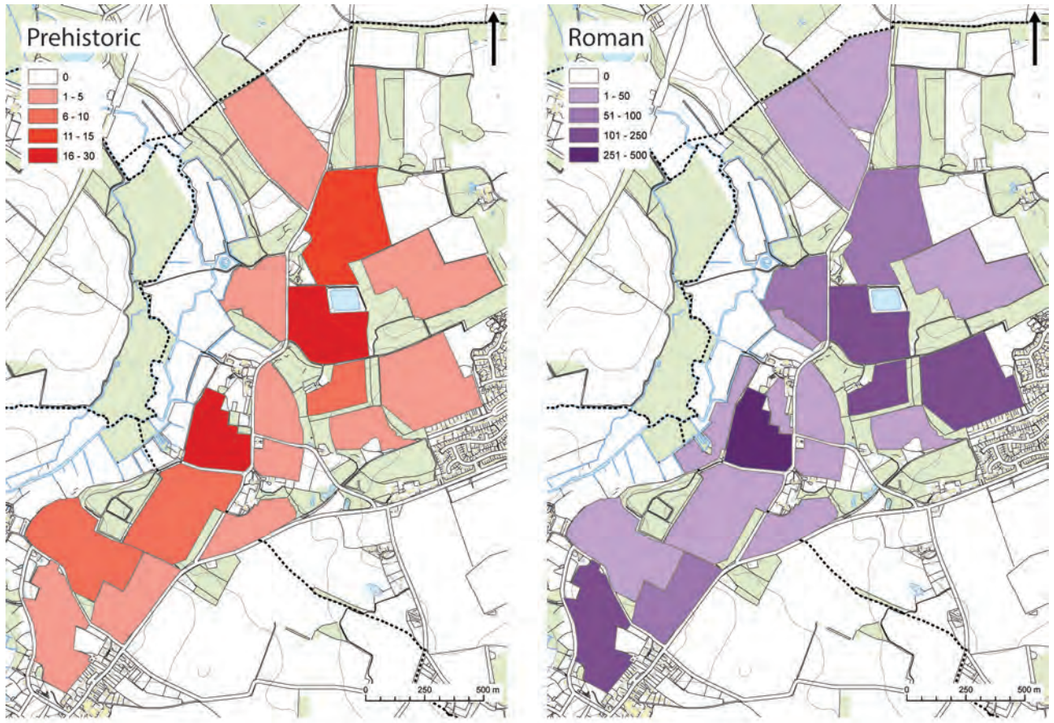


Fig 2.4.9 Aggregate finds distributions by major chronological period. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

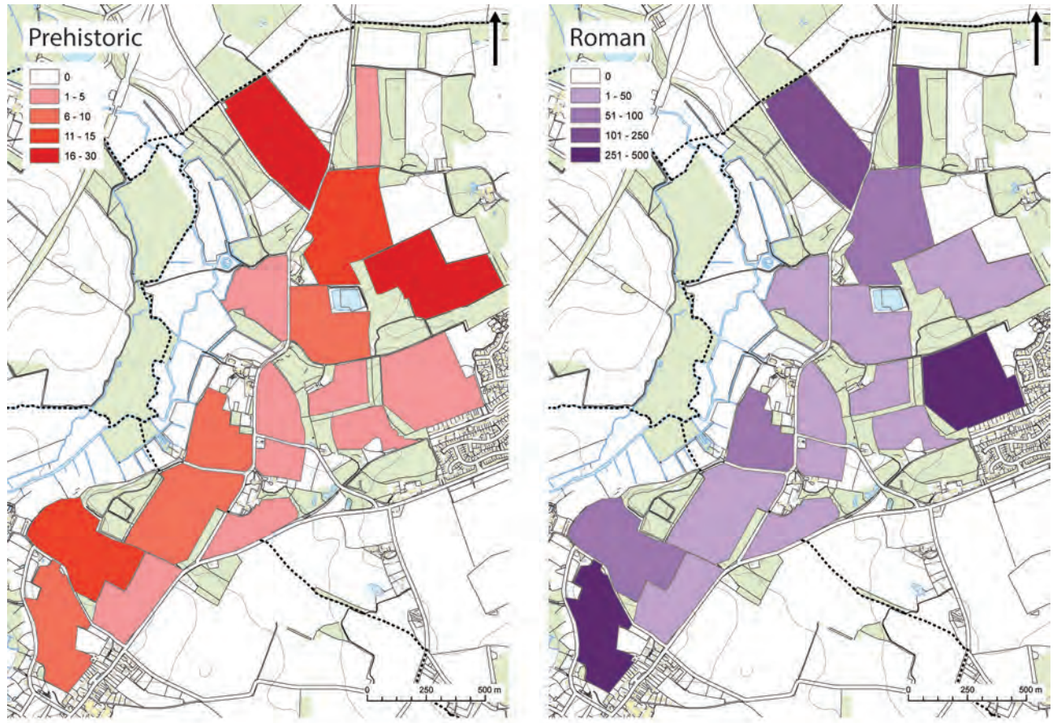


Fig 2.4.10 Normalised finds distributions by major chronological period. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

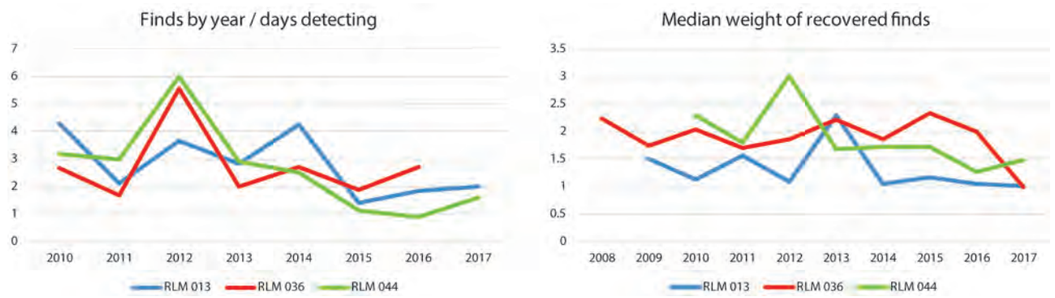


Fig 2.4.11 Finds recovery in RLM 013, RLM 036 and RLM 044: (left) the rate of finds recovery by year; (right) median weight of objects recovered by year

collected on a 25m grid. Smaller quantities of lithic and ceramic material were subsequently collected by the detectorists but not as the main aim of the exercise and often in conditions unsuitable for fieldwalking. Of the 284 identifiable sherds collected by the detectorists, 45 per cent were Roman and 24 per cent medieval, compared with 9 per cent hand-made early medieval (some of which might be prehistoric) and 6 per cent Ipswich ware, broadly the same ratio as for the material collected in 1982. These variations presumably result in part from differential survival and visibility, and in part from differences in the quantities of pottery in use in different periods.

The distribution of the pottery found by the detectorists displays a broad congruity with that of the metalwork finds, especially for the Roman and medieval periods for which ceramic evidence is sufficiently abundant to make such a comparison useful. When the densities of metalwork are compared with that of material recovered by the 1982 survey, however, the situation is different, something seen most clearly in fields RLM 013 and RLM 014 (Fig 2.4.12). For the Roman period, fieldwalking suggests the presence of a small settlement in the south-west of RLM 014, with only a thin scatter of sherds, suggestive of manuring, across RLM 013. For the medieval period the highest densities of material are also in the south-west of RLM 014, indicating the presence of farms fronting on the lost green, with hints of settlement on the western side of the green at the eastern edge of RLM 013. Across most of RLM 013, however, only a thin scatter of material was again recovered. The number of sherds collected from these apparent settlements is rather low when compared to the results of fieldwalking elsewhere (eg Williamson 1984). This is perhaps due to the conditions in which the survey was undertaken, but in the case of the Roman material it may also be because the main focus of settlement lies further to the south beneath permanent pasture or the churchyard. Whatever the explanation, the fieldwalking evidence clearly suggests that no settlements of Roman date existed within RLM 013, and that any medieval ones were limited to its eastern margins. There is thus a marked contrast with the distribution of metalwork finds, which for both periods is heavily concentrated towards the north and to an extent the west of RLM 013, and with little material recovered from RLM 014. This is also seen in the Roman material recovered from the south-west of RLM 014 during metal-detecting, where nine out of a total of thirteen items are sherds of pottery. Superficially this pattern is perplexing, for we might expect that metalwork entered the ploughsoil in similar ways to the pottery: that is, through a combination of on-site loss and manuring. The observed differences, however, are not only explicable but also assist interpretation of the metalwork distributions in two key ways.

First, they draw attention again to the fact that some parts of the survey area were more intensively detected than others (above, 2.4.3). When allowance is made for the differing size of the two fields, the amount of time spent detecting each hectare of RLM 013 was roughly 2.4 times that spent on RLM 014. If the densities of material recovered from RLM 013 are divided accordingly the overall distribution of metalwork from both periods more closely resembles that of the pottery sherds, although differences remain. Second, these remaining differences tell us something about the taphonomy of the metalwork finds. One reason why the density of finds is so high in RLM 013 is the dispersed late Roman coin hoard there, and this is probably an extreme example of a more general rule: that in all periods, metalwork entered the ploughsoil in more diverse ways than pottery. In addition to manuring and on-site loss, and any intentional deposition, the loss of personal ornaments and coins in the wider landscape (especially during routine agricultural work) seems to have occurred on a significant scale. Pottery, in contrast, generally remained within the home, was discarded there, and only became

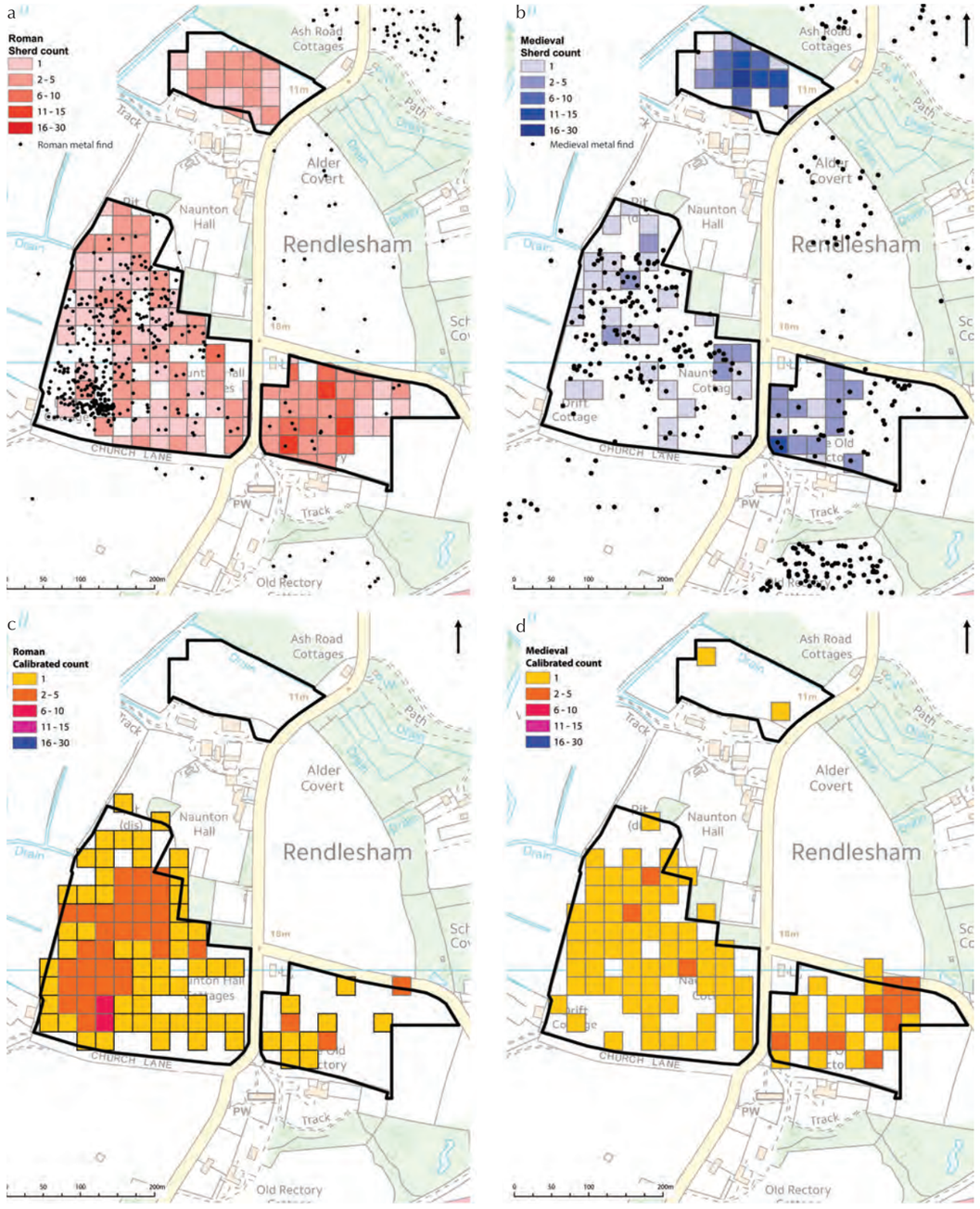


Fig 2.4.12 Comparison of fieldwalking and metal-detecting results in RLM 012, RLM 013 and RLM 014. Top: metal-detecting finds plotted against sherd densities from 1982 fieldwalking for (a) Roman and (b) medieval. Bottom: metal-detecting finds calibrated by 1982 fieldwalking grid for (c) Roman and (d) medieval. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

more widely distributed through manuring. In the fifth to eighth centuries, when Rendlesham was at the peak of its importance and was a focus for exchange, manufacture and assemblies, there would have been a correspondingly diverse range of ways in which metalwork was lost or deposited (2.4.5, below).

For the fifth to ninth centuries, moreover, contrasts between the evidence of metalwork finds and pottery scatters are compounded by the considerable differences in the quantities of material recoverable from the ploughsoil. Fieldwalking in 1982 recovered thirty sherds of early medieval pottery and Ipswich ware from RLM 013 and 014 but no metal objects; metal-detecting has recovered seven sherds and more than 300 metal items of the same date-range. The pottery was thinly scattered, and in itself hardly indicative of a place of significance. Fieldwalking and metal-detecting are thus complementary approaches and the patterns they recover are representative, in part at least, of different kinds of past activity and behaviour. The two techniques should thus ideally be deployed together but recognising how their inherent biases and limitations have shaped the Rendlesham data also helps us interpret it in more sophisticated ways.

2.4.5 Taphonomic pathways

This discussion of contrasting distributions of pottery and metalwork brings us to a more general consideration of the ways in which material was lost, discarded or deposited in the first place before ultimately becoming incorporated in the modern ploughsoil. The spectrum of possibilities ranges from the intentional actions of deliberate deposition and deliberate discard, through accidental loss modified by degrees of effort to retrieve or recover, to abandonment or simply leaving something where it was (Schiffer 1976; 1987, 27–98). In all cases the original archaeological context – settlement features and deposits, burials, ancient field, trackway or uncultivated ground – has since been disturbed or destroyed by ploughing.

As a general rule it is assumed that the rarer and more valuable a particular class of item, then the fewer examples there were in circulation at any one time, the greater the care with which they would have been handled, and the greater the effort made to retrieve them if dropped. As a corollary of this, it is more likely that intact items represent accidental loss or deliberate deposition, while those that are broken or fragmentary reflect deliberate discard or abandonment. Within the assemblage as a whole our data are consistent with these contentions: excluding coins, the ratio of copper-alloy finds to those of silver and gold is 56:3:1, and gold finds have the highest proportion of unbroken items. Judgements of value, however, cannot be universal and must take into account chronological and cultural context, and recognise social as well as economic dimensions. The value accorded an object or material may vary with socio-economic status, investment of craft skill, ascribed social or ideological symbolism, or simply with geographically determined preferential access (Appadurai 1986; Loveluck and Thys 2006).

The retention, or deliberate acquisition and re-use, of selected material culture types after their currency has passed, in effect giving them a second use-life, can distort chronological and spatial patterning if not recognised and addressed. This is particularly relevant to early post-Roman settlement and mortuary assemblages in eastern England, where there is evidence for the collection and curation of oxidised or colour-coated pottery, and of certain copper coinages, before final discard or deposition in the fifth and sixth centuries (Drury and Wickenden 1982, 20–3; Plouviez 1985; King 1988). The only class of material in the Rendlesham assemblage where this is likely to be major factor is Roman copper coins, a high proportion of which are pierced, and display a pattern of distribution which correlates better with that of fifth- to seventh-century material culture types than with contemporary Roman material (Chs 3.4.1.5 and 4.2.2.2). Most if not all of these items are likely to derive from fifth- and sixth-century contexts, with a significant proportion of those pierced for suspension likely to come from disturbed inhumation burials. Late Roman military or official belt fittings may also have been used well into the fifth century and deposited as grave goods.

The most commonly encountered forms of deliberate deposition are the burial of hoards (for votive purposes, or for security with the intention of recovery) and the provision of grave goods or grave offerings in human burials (cremated or inhumed). These are the subject of an enormous scholarly literature and are well enough understood to allow judgements to be made with a fair degree of confidence as to whether material recovered from the ploughsoil is likely to derive from such modes of deposition. Less easy to recognise in ploughsoil assemblages are the remnants of other forms of structured deposit, such as foundation or closure deposits, or the deliberate concealment or deposition of single items as stored or hidden valuables, or as votive items, although in some cases type, material and spatial context may allow judgements to be made.

As noted above, a majority of the material retrieved from the ploughsoil is probably the result of accidental loss, such as coins dropped during transactions and metal fittings falling from equipment or clothing during use or everyday activity. The item drops to the ground unnoticed, or if noticed cannot be found. It may be trodden into the ground or incorporated into the topsoil through natural processes and then into the ploughsoil when the land is cultivated. If lost in a settlement or domestic context, items may become incorporated in the

ground, or the floor levels of buildings, and/or be caught up in the clearing of domestic refuse and livestock waste in rubbish pits and middens. Depending upon whether they were recycled, discarded or left where they fell the same processes operated on residues from craft production.

Non-ferrous metals had a value and were regularly recycled. It seems unlikely at any period that copper-alloy items, let alone those made of silver or gold, were often thrown away deliberately. There is direct evidence for the recycling of silver and gold at Rendlesham in the sixth to eighth centuries, and across all periods the proportion of incomplete and fragmentary items among the copper-alloy finds, which cannot be explained solely by post-depositional damage, suggests retention and recycling of intact or near-complete items. Most of the material from settlement and deposits, including that which was subsequently deposited on arable land through manuring, therefore probably represents accidental loss or casual abandonment but it is important to recognise that a variety of factors might be in play. A case in point is the concentration of material deriving from early medieval copper-alloy working in RLM 013, in particular failed or unfinished castings and casting sprues. One would expect these to have been recycled, but it is possible they represent the residue of what was mislaid or overlooked from a much larger collection of material, most of which was re-used (Ch 5.3; app 2).

Concentrations of lost or discarded items in the ploughsoil imply concentrations of people and human actions. They may directly reflect settlement activity, deriving from disturbed floor layers, middens, rubbish pits and other settlement deposits, or they may come from the re-working or redeposition of settlement refuse and midden material in the manuring of garden plots and arable fields. Concentrations of material representing aggregate loss over time might also be expected along routeways and at the sites of periodic gatherings such as markets, fairs or assemblies. The absence or relative infrequency of losses will also have implications for patterns of activity and land use, indicating areas which were not settled or cultivated, and which did not see regular or intense human activity, such as pasture and woodland. This appears to be the best explanation for the fact that few finds of any period have been recovered from the area of Rendlesham Green, or from the more level areas of heavy soils in the east of EKE 019 and the south-west of RLM 042.

There is a broad consensus that extensive low-density spreads of pottery from the Roman to early modern periods represent manuring and can be taken to indicate arable fields (Lawson 1983; Williamson 1984; Gaffney *et al* 1985) but less agreement on whether this might also be true of coinage and non-ferrous metal finds (Daubney 2015, 73–5). Broadly speaking, interpretations hinge on assumptions about what non-ferrous metalwork and coinage might have become incorporated in farmyard waste and middens, and these in turn depend heavily on assessments of value. By this reasoning, it is more probable that a dispersed distribution of low-value objects, especially if broken or fragmentary when lost or discarded, is more likely to derive from contemporary or near-contemporary manuring of arable fields than single finds of higher value or special-purpose items. That said, it is also likely that such material may indicate areas of arable land because it was lost during work in the fields such as ploughing, harrowing and weeding. A further complication, however, is that when dealing with extensive but relatively low-density areas of settlement the distinction between material representing occupation and that derived from manuring may be problematic. Some of the material recovered by detecting may have entered the soil through the manuring not of fields lying at a distance from buildings but of garden plots scattered amongst them.

The activity signals embodied in the Rendlesham assemblage are complex, contextual, and vary with period. The ways in which material entered the archaeological record was structured by changing economic and monetary conditions, social and cultural practices, attitudes to acquisition, consumption and discard, and patterns of settlement and land use. Fortunately, the assemblage is sufficiently large and diverse, offers sufficient spatial discrimination, and embodies sufficient time depth to allow meaningful interrogation of these factors, with the added advantage that some of the patterning can be tested against the evidence of terrain and soils, remote sensing, aerial photography, historic mapping and excavation. Allowing for the recognised biases arising from recognition, retrieval and post-depositional disturbance, it is possible to draw context-sensitive and period-specific conclusions about the conditions and behaviours that structured how the material entered the archaeological record, and so about the nature of activity at these specific places in this landscape, and more broadly about the societies in which the material circulated. The detailed reasoning behind specific interpretations, informed by the factors outlined above, is set out as relevant in the interpretative chapters that follow.

3 Material culture

3.1 Introduction and approaches

The project database records 5,201 material culture items recovered between November 2008 and July 2017. Most (66 per cent) are copper alloy and 341 (just under 7 per cent) are non-metallic. When compared with all Suffolk PAS finds (as at February 2019) the proportions of metal to non-metal are similar, and metals show the same order as proportions of the whole (Table 3.1.1). The Rendlesham assemblage has slightly less copper alloy and lead and a higher proportion of silver and gold than the Suffolk average. The non-metallic finds show a strong bias towards pottery sherds and there are only two items of ceramic building material in the Rendlesham assemblage.

The finds include 2,130 coins of all periods, 44 per cent of the metal items. Coins make up almost half (48 per cent) of the gold and a third (30 per cent) of the copper-alloy items but are 90 per cent of the silver finds, reflecting the predominance of silver coinage from the eighth to the sixteenth centuries.

Quantifying by broad period (Table 3.1.2) shows the unusually high proportion of early medieval material at Rendlesham – over a quarter of the assemblage, as against 5 per cent for finds recorded through PAS across Suffolk as a whole, with the figure for Roman material correspondingly lower. The figures are slightly distorted compared to the general pattern of surface surveys and the PAS database by the deliberate discard of objects post-dating 1650 when these were identifiable in the field.

In order to provide a basis for characterising the assemblage in ways that will allow intra-site, inter-site and diachronic comparisons, every identifiable object type has been allocated to a functional group based, with some modifications, on the system used by Crummy (1983) for assemblages from Colchester (Table 3.1.3). We acknowledge that this is not perfect, and that in real life objects might be embedded in intersecting fields of practice and carry meaning in functional and symbolic spheres. Without contextual information, for example, allocating an object type such as girdle hangers to 'personal possessions' rather than 'dress accessories' is a fine judgement. Similarly, with vessels we have not attempted to draw distinctions between, for example,

Table 3.1.1 Materials represented in the Rendlesham assemblage and comparative PAS data

Material	Rendlesham	%	Suffolk PAS	%
Copper alloy	3,447	66.3	53,625	71.3
Silver	1,191	22.9	12,853	17.1
Lead	127	2.4	3,337	4.4
Gold	82	1.6	612	0.8
Iron	13	0.2	139	0.2
Pottery	287	5.5	1,005	1.3
Ceramic	2	0.0	1,660	2.2
Flint	40	0.8	1,784	2.4
Stone	7	0.1	99	0.1
Glass	5	0.1	119	0.2
Total	**5,201**	–	**75,233**	–

Table 3.1.2 Relative numbers of finds by period from Rendlesham and comparative PAS data

Period	Rendlesham	%	Suffolk PAS	%
Prehistoric	78	1.5	3,985	5.2
Late Iron Age or Roman	30	0.6	–	–
Roman	1,441	27.7	34,580	45.0
Roman or early medieval	13	0.2	–	–
Early medieval	1,364	26.2	3,896	5.1
Early medieval or medieval	13	0.3	–	–
Medieval	1,220	23.5	21,857	28.4
Medieval or post-medieval	87	1.7	–	–
Post-medieval and modern	571	11.0	11,000	14.2
Undated	384	7.4	1,528	2.0
Total	**5,201**	–	**76,846**	–

'containers' used in burial assemblages and 'utensils' associated with food preparation, recognising that some may have served both functions and others neither. In some cases, too, an object may have a bearing on an activity outside the functional category to which it is assigned: a number of early medieval brooch fragments and jewellery components, for example, very probably represent scrap metal awaiting recycling in metalworking. Finally, some categories and object types, such as tools, are under-represented because the retrieval method discriminated against iron (Ch 2.4.1). None the less, our classification is congruent with those used to structure discussion of major excavated assemblages (Evans and Loveluck 2009; Tester *et al* 2014) and in comparative approaches to early medieval cemetery and settlement data (Brookes and Harrington 2013; Lewis 2019). Despite its limitations, it provides a good starting point for

Table 3.1.3 Functional categories used for the Rendlesham assemblage

Category	Object types included in category	Code	Total	%
Agriculture and animal husbandry	Bells	AA	3	0.1
Buildings and services	Box flue tile, tile, nails, structural fittings	BS	4	0.1
Coins, tokens jettons	Plus coin blanks, coin weights, ingots	CTJ	2,270	43.7
Dress accessories	Beads, bracelets, brooches, buckles, button and loop fasteners, buttons, finger-rings, hooked tags, pendants, spangles, strap ends, wrist clasps	DA	1,382	26.6
Equestrian and transport	Harness fittings/mounts/pendants, horseshoes, linch pin, spurs, stirrup strap mounts, terrets	ET	72	1.4
Fasteners and fittings	Swivel, rings, hooks and other multi-use objects	FF	42	0.8
Household	Candlesticks, furniture fittings (including large boxes), implements (including spoons but not knives), lamp suspenders, lock bolts, vessels (ceramic, metal, glass, includes hanging bowls), querns	HO	390	7.5
Hunting and fishing	Arrowheads, powder cap	HF	5	0.1
Metalworking	Metalworking debris, models, unfinished objects	MW	167	3.2
Personal possessions	Bag catches, book clasps, chatelaines, cosmetic and toilet implements, girdle hangers, keys, knives, mirrors, small padlocks, purses, razors, seal boxes, seal matrices	PP	333	6.4
Recreation	Gaming pieces, Jew's harps	RO	5	0.1
Religion and cult	Ampullae, bell, miniature objects, pilgrim badges, staff terminals	RC	10	0.2
Textile production	Cloth seals, sewing rings, spindle whorls, thimbles	TP	57	1.1
Tools	Awls, axes, chisels, flint implements/scrapers, whetstone	T	56	1.1
Weapons and military equipment	Armour, pommel caps, scabbard chapes, shield (fragment and studs), spearheads, sword belt fittings, sword pyramids	ME	90	1.7
Weights and measures	Balance arms/scales, weights	WM	105	2.0
Unknown	Unknown or uncertain function	UN	210	4.2
Total			**5,201**	

characterisation and comparative analyses of the assemblage, on which the discussion and conclusions in Chapters 4–5 and 9–10 are based.

This chapter presents first the non-coin finds by period and functional category, and then the coins by period. It is not intended as a detailed descriptive discussion but rather as a synthetic overview, intended to characterise the assemblage, drawing attention to significant elements and establishing the basis for material culture dating. A full listing of finds with supporting images is available through the online summary catalogue (app 1), and more detailed information on all finds is available in the project database and archive curated by Suffolk County Council. In the discussions below, published comparanda have been sought but many objects, especially medieval and post-medieval, are best paralleled in the corpus of material recorded on the PAS database.

3.2 Prehistory (Mesolithic to Iron Age *c* 10,000 BC–AD 43)

Judith Plouviez

Seventy-eight prehistoric artefacts have been identified, just 1.5 per cent of the total survey assemblage. Fourteen are late Iron Age coins (3.7.1, below), forty worked flints, twenty-two copper-alloy objects, and four pottery sherds; these figures exclude the twenty-nine late Iron Age or Roman brooches (3.3.1, below).

The worked flint collection recovered by the detectorists only includes retouched pieces and generally excludes waste flakes, and so is heavily biased. None the less it demonstrates activity in the Deben valley from the Mesolithic onwards (a tranchet axe: RLM 044 1084), with some characteristic Neolithic material (end scrapers, a leaf arrowhead fragment and a complete polished flint axe) and Bronze Age material (tanged arrowhead, scrapers), although close dating of many of the individual pieces is not possible.

The hand-made pottery collection is very small, reflecting the poor survival rate of such material in ploughsoil and the difficulty of finding it in poor surface conditions. There were also problems identifying some abraded sherds to a specific period (with a particular difficulty in distinguishing between Iron Age and early medieval hand-made wares), and a couple of pieces are listed as of unknown period for this reason. The four pieces identified as probably prehistoric include a flint-tempered rim of the middle to later Iron Age from RLM 013, another flint-tempered sherd and two probably dating to the first century AD.

From the Bronze Age the use of metal broadens the range of finds: fourteen pieces are attributed to the Bronze Age and eight to the Iron Age (excluding the fourteen coins); many of the latter date to the first century AD. These numbers are low compared to the overall PAS figures for Suffolk, where Bronze Age and Iron Age objects each comprise just over 1 per cent of the total copper-alloy finds recorded. The equivalent Rendlesham figures are less than 0.5 per cent.

3.2.1 Mesolithic–early Bronze Age

The earlier prehistoric evidence (Table 3.2.1) consists of worked flint tools and projectiles (functional categories Tools and Hunting/Fishing). The material is selective, with none of the waste flakes that would dominate an excavated assemblage, and mostly found widely scattered across the landscape except for a concentration of pieces at Sand Walk; these include a Mesolithic tranchet axe, several end scrapers of probably Neolithic date, a late Neolithic or early Bronze Age tanged arrowhead and other probably early Bronze Age scrapers. By comparison, 273 pieces of worked flint were recovered during trial excavations in RLM 013 and RLM 044 (Ch 2.3.7; Stewart 2014, 42–3).

Table 3.2.1 Earlier prehistoric (Mesolithic to early Bronze Age) object types by functional category

Category	Type	
HF	Arrowhead: leaf	2
HF	Arrowhead: tanged	2
Un	Laurel leaf and other biface	2
T	Axe: tranchet	1
T	Axe: polished	1
T	Plano-convex knife	1
T	Scraper	27
T	Retouched and notched flakes/blades	4
Total		**40**

3.2.2 Bronze Age

The copper-alloy objects (Table 3.2.2) are mostly fragments of common types – spearheads, blades, socketed axes, chisels and awls – some of which might have been deposited in late Bronze Age hoards but all of which could equally derive from settlements or accidental loss.

Table 3.2.2 Bronze Age copper-alloy object types by functional category

Category	Type	
T	Awl	4
T	Axe	2
T	Chisel	2
PP	Knife	2
ME	Spearhead	2
T	Uncertain	2
Total		**14**

3.2.3 Iron Age

The Iron Age sees a diversification in the range of material and functional types (Table 3.2.3). A significant component in the final pre-Roman century is the coinage (3.7.1, below).

Dress accessories are represented by brooches, which first appear in Britain *c* 450 BC and increase dramatically in numbers during the final century before the Roman conquest. These late Iron Age brooch types are discussed below with the related Roman types. The Rendlesham assemblage also includes three examples of earlier Iron Age types. Two of these (RLM 013 0339 and RLM 043 1111) have a moderately arched bow, and one (EKE 021 1137) a highly arched bow, but diagnostic features at the head and foot are missing. It is likely that these are La Tène 1A and 1B types which have recently been reassessed and dated to *c* 450–300 BC but one (RLM 043 1111) is possibly a later bulbous type, La Tène 2L, dated to *c* 300–150 BC (Adams 2013). At present just thirty-two of these early and middle Iron Age brooches are recorded on the PAS database from Suffolk.

More common in Suffolk are transport-related items, particularly terret rings that guided the reins on carts or chariots. The three terrets from Rendlesham include one knobbed example (RLM 044 1575) and one flat ring type (RLM 046 1052), both of which are likely to be first century AD; the third is an undiagnostic fragment. The 'mini-terret' (RLM 037 1117), a probable fastener, perhaps for attaching a linch pin to the axle, and the linch pin fragment (RLM 037 1318) are datable to between the third century BC and first century AD.

Table 3.2.3 Iron Age object types by functional category

Category	Type	
DA	Brooch	3
CTJ	Coin	14
ET	Terret ring	3
ET	Mini terret ring	1
ET	Linch pin	1
HO	Pottery	4
Total		**26**

3.3 Roman (first to fifth centuries AD)

Judith Plouviez

The Roman material overlaps chronologically with the late Iron Age material in the first century AD. Datable finds such as brooches, bracelets and belt fittings, as well as the coins (3.7.2, below), show continued activity from the first century into the fifth century, though with considerable variations in character and intensity across the survey area.

The assemblage includes 1,441 items that are certainly Roman in date (28 per cent of the whole), including 993 coins. Excluding coins, but including a further twenty-eight items that could be late Iron Age or early medieval, 476 objects can be confidently assigned to the Roman period, including twenty-nine late Iron Age to Roman brooch types. Coins represent 68 per cent of this assemblage, compared with 76 per cent of Roman finds in Suffolk recorded through the PAS. Table 3.3.1 shows the breakdown by functional category.

3.3.1 Dress accessories (Table 3.3.2)

3.3.1.1 Brooches

As is normal in Roman metalwork assemblages in southern Britain the commonest objects are brooches, at 13.5 per cent of the Roman assemblage (the PAS figure in Suffolk is 10 per cent); all are copper alloy. Of 199 brooches from Rendlesham, 182 can be identified to type (Table 3.3.3). These are important chronological indicators, particularly in the late Iron Age and early Roman periods when coinage is relatively scarce, and relative proportions of the brooch types also indicate regional and functional variations (Plouviez 2008).

Fig 3.3.1 compares the Rendlesham assemblage with the small town at Hacheston and the broader picture, drawn from the PAS data in 2008, in south-east Suffolk. This shows activity at Rendlesham before AD 43, with

Table 3.3.1 Roman artefacts quantified by functional category

Category	
Agriculture and animal husbandry (AA)	0
Buildings and services (BS)	1
Currency: coins only (CTJ)	993
Dress accessories (DA)	271
Equestrian and transport (ET)	1
Fasteners and fittings (FF)	3
Household (HO)	152
Hunting and fishing (HF)	0
Metalworking (MW)	0
Personal possessions (PP)	23
Recreation (RO)	0
Religion and cult (RC)	1
Tools (T)	0
Textile production (TP)	0
Weapons and military equipment (ME)	6
Weights and measures (WM)	5
Unknown (UN)	13
Total	**1,469**
Total excluding coins	**476**

Table 3.3.2 Roman dress accessories quantified by type

Type	
Brooch	199
Bracelet	30
Finger-ring	5
Hairpin	15
Mount, strap fitting	3
Late Roman / fifth-century belt fittings	19
Total	**271**

types of both Continental and local origin (Groups B, D – Langton Down, Rosette and Colchester types), continuing into the second half of the first century with large numbers of local types (Groups F, G, H, K, M – mostly the various types derived from the Colchester) and some imported (Groups I, J – Aucissa, Hod Hill and early plate brooches). A notable gap in the first century is the complete absence of Group E (Nauheim derivative and Drahtfibel types) but these are relatively uncommon in East Anglia. The moderate to low proportion of Hod Hill types indicates a rural character rather than significant direct contact with the Roman army. The predominance of Harlow-type Colchester derivatives (Group F) over the rear lug pin attachment type (Group G) may be explained by the proximity of Colchester and a Trinovantian

Table 3.3.3 Summary of late Iron Age and Roman brooch types (cf Fig 3.3.1)

Group	Brooch type	
A	Nauheim	0
B	Langton Down, Rosette/thistle, Nertomarus	17
C	Various one-piece: Eye, Birdlip, Knickfibel …	0
D	Colchester	12
E	Nauheim derivative	0
F	Colchester derivative (double pierced lug) / Harlow	53
G	Colchester derivative (rear hook)	15
H	Aesica, fantail	1
I	Aucissa, Hod Hill	13
J	Early plate	3
K	Polden Hill	8
L	T-shaped, usually hinged	0
M	Colchester derivative (hinged)	29
N	Trumpet, Backworth	4
O	Headstud, Lamberton Moor, Sawfish	7
P	Plate, dragonesque	0
Q	Developed T-shaped	0
R	Trumpet derived, Alcester	0
S	Trumpet, Celtic fantail	2
T	Enamelled hinged Continental	1
U	Continental symmetrical hinged	3
V	Continental disc	1
W	British umbonate	1
X	British flat disc	3
Y	Applied repoussé	0
Z	Zoomorphic, misc representational	5
ZA	Knee	1
ZB	Gilded with glass setting	3
ZC	P-profile	0
ZD	Crossbow	0
Total		**182**

affiliation. The rear lug types are associated with the Iceni and were probably not produced after *c* AD 65; they may then have been replaced by the hinged Colchester derivatives (Group M) which are particularly common in Norfolk and east Suffolk.

In the second to third centuries brooch numbers drop in line with the wider regional pattern (Groups N, O, S – Trumpet, Headstud and derivative forms; Groups T, U, V – mainly enamelled imported plate brooches; Groups W, X – British enamelled types). The latest types present are third-century plate brooches (Group ZB – glass boss centre types). The relatively uncommon late Roman brooch types (Groups ZC, ZD – P-shaped, Crossbow) are absent; this would suggest a rural assemblage with no military or official contacts.

Four figurative plate brooches, two birds and a hare (RLM 013 0468, 0843, 0907) and a hippocamp (RLM 045

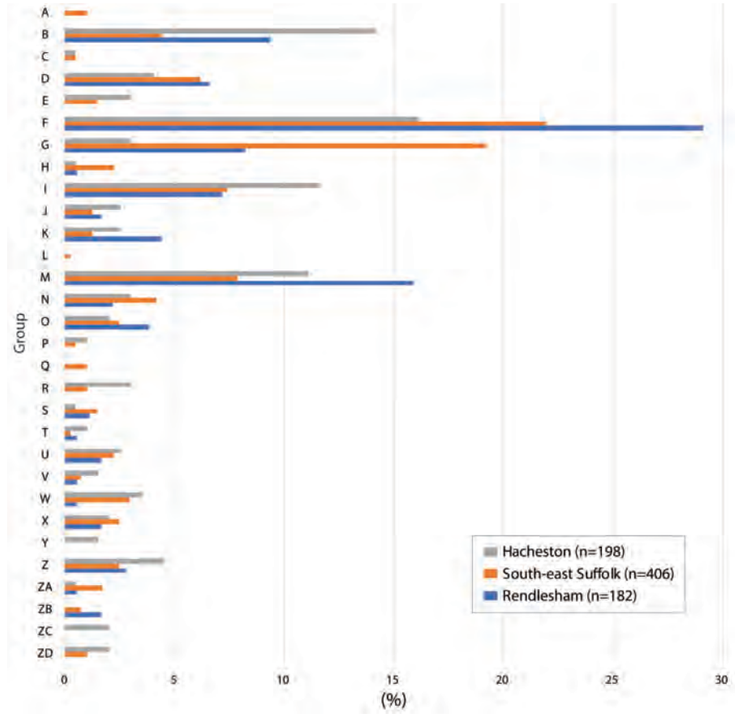


Fig 3.3.1 Comparison of the Roman brooch assemblages from Rendlesham, Hacheston and south-east Suffolk

1145), and a wheel-shaped brooch (EKE 020 1020), are types of the first to third centuries commonly found at shrines and temples.

Modifications were noted on four plate brooches, two of the Group ZB glass boss centre type (RLM 037 1125 and 1362) and two other disc types (RLM 038 1006 and RLM 044 1377). A Colchester-type brooch (EKE 019 1193) appears to have been modified for use as a pin.

3.3.1.2 Bracelets

Thirty bracelets or bracelet fragments, all copper alloy, were recovered. Where possible these have been identified to the groups defined by Cool (1983).

Two fragments (RLM 036 1331 and RLM 044 1729) are from wide bracelets of an early type (Cool Group 9) interpreted by Nina Crummy (2005) as military *armillae*, ornaments awarded to soldiers after battle, relating to the British campaigns immediately following AD 43. Both are very worn, and RLM 036 1331 may have been cut down.

Two fragments are from two cable twist bracelets (Cool Group 1), in use from the early second century (RLM 036 1103; RLM 044 1144); a single fragment of a twisted bracelet (RLM 013 0943) also might be first or second century. The remaining twenty-two pieces identifiable to type are all late Roman narrow bracelets of the late third to early fifth centuries, and were probably worn as groups of bangles: the Cool groups represented are 13 (one example), 19 (three), 21 (two), 25 (five), 29 (two), 31 or 32 (seven), 34 (two).

Three pieces (EKE 020 1247; RLM 013 0913; RLM 046 1055) have been bent to form rings, possibly examples of late or post-Roman re-use (Swift 2012). One probable bracelet fragment (RLM 036 1003) has been flattened and pierced with two iron rivets to form a rectangular mount.

3.3.1.3 Finger-rings

Two silver and three copper-alloy finger-rings were recovered. All are fragmentary but one (RLM 036 1155; Henig 1978, type 2) has half a glass intaglio surviving; all are likely to date to the second to third centuries. They form a remarkably small proportion of the assemblage: at Hacheston, thirty finger-rings were found with thirteen bracelets and 211 brooches (Seeley 2004, 112–15).

One spiral ring (RLM 059 1120) might be prehistoric, Roman or early medieval in date. Cool has suggested that these rings of her Group 2 were relatively unpopular in Roman Britain (Cool 1983, 225–6) and so this example is discussed with the early medieval material (3.4.1.8, below).

3.3.1.4 Pins

One silver and fourteen copper-alloy pins are classified as Roman hairpins but at least three are possibly early medieval. Where possible these have been identified to the groups defined by Cool (1990).

Eight pins are Group 1 with simple knob heads, rounded or biconical, with a date-range spanning the Roman period from the first to the fourth centuries. Of these, three are subgroup D with biconical heads, and one subgroup E with a swelling in the shaft. A couple of Group 3 pins are first to third century, and single examples of Groups 6, 8 and 10 are also likely to be early Roman. The silver pin, RLM 044 1386, appears to be a variant of Group 7, where the pinhead is in the form of a hand holding something between the thumb and index finger. In this case the object being held is missing and the pinhead, instead of being just a hand, also has a sleeved forearm. If this is contemporary with the commoner Group 7 form then it is first century.

3.3.1.5 Mounts and strap fittings

These are two disc mounts, one with millefiori enamel decoration (EKE 019 1106) and one with raised concentric circles. Of early Roman date (before 200) is a single example of a button and loop fastener (RLM 037 1124) of Wild class III (Wild 1970, 138–40, fig 1). These are often found in military contexts but also seem to continue a pre-Roman style of fastening. All three items are copper alloy.

3.3.1.6 Late Roman belt fittings

The assemblage includes six propeller-shaped belt mounts (or stiffeners), four strap ends and six buckles (two of which were recovered in two pieces) of types associated with late Roman military or official use. Many of the pieces are very fragmentary which has made precise identification to type difficult. All are copper alloy.

The propeller belt mounts include very plain examples with single rivet holes at each end but one complete example (EKE 019 1123) has a centre rib, punched decoration and four rivet holes. One fragment (RLM 044 1461) is unusual in having an integral rivet and is also small. These mounts, which are in sets of two to eight on belts found in Continental graves, can be dated to the fourth century but probably not much beyond, associated for example with Sommer's chronological group 2, 364/70–407 (Sommer 1984, 62, 79).

The eight buckle fragments are all types with zoomorphic elements defined by Hawkes and Dunning (1961). The only complete buckle loop (found in two pieces, RLM 044 1302 and 1303) is a simple example of Hawkes and Dunning type IA, a form that was current by the late fourth century. Part of a decorated narrow buckle plate, RLM 044 1131, very like an example from Silchester (Hawkes and Dunning 1961, fig 15q), is also from a type I buckle. Other fragments are less diagnostic but include two fragments that appear to be parts of the same type III buckle loop (RLM 038 1194 and RLM 044 1711), the latter piece also apparently burnt.

Four strap end fragments are of amphora form and Hawkes and Dunning type VA forms, in use from the middle or late fourth century into the first half of the fifth century.

3.3.2 Personal possessions (Table 3.3.4)

These are mostly toilet implements, reflecting both Insular and wider Roman practices. All are copper alloy unless otherwise noted.

Table 3.3.4 Roman personal possessions quantified by type

Type	
Cosmetic mortar/pestle	6
Nail cleaner	3
Toilet implements	8
Razor	1
Mirror	3
Knife	2
Total	**23**

3.3.2.1 Toilet implements

Five mortars and one pestle are from cosmetic sets, a British type of toilet implement classified by Ralph Jackson (Jackson 2010) and dated between the late Iron Age and the mid-Roman period. End-looped and centre-looped types are represented and two of the mortars have bovid heads. Two nail cleaners (RLM 013 0075; 0837), also a British toilet implement, are of the common 'Baldock' type of the early Roman period. A nail cleaner of strap end type (EKE 020 1274) is very late fourth or early fifth century; this type is mainly found in southern Britain in a range of rural contexts (Eckardt and Crummy 2006). Other possible toilet implements include a silver shaft from a spatula and fragments of a spoon-probe, two spoons or scoops, and a possible stirrer terminal with a bird terminal. It has not been possible to distinguish eight pairs of tweezers from early medieval examples of similar forms.

3.3.2.2 Knives, razor and mirrors

Two fragments of 'hare-and-hounds'-type knife handles (RLM 036 1187 and RLM 044 1041) are probably third century or later, as is a fragment of a griffin-head razor handle terminal (RLM 045 1146). Three fragments of speculum (copper alloy with a high tin content) mirror all lack any diagnostic detail of the form.

3.3.3 Household objects (Table 3.3.5)

3.3.3.1 Food-related

Two copper-alloy spoon fragments are likely to be second or third century. Copper-alloy vessel fragments include two detached lugs, probably from a bucket and from a bowl, a smaller mount (of less certain function) and a small tripod leg in the form of a panther.

Food processing is represented by querns. The assemblage includes a substantial piece from the upper stone of a Roman lava quern (RLM 044 1486). Four other fragments of lava quern, from RLM 044 and RLM 014, may be Roman or post-Roman.

The largest group of material in this category is 130 sherds of pottery. Most are local grey wares but there are also fine table wares: six sherds of imported samian ware (Central Gaulish where identified, including one decorated Dr 37, probably all second century) and a single colour-coated rouletted beaker, perhaps from Colchester and mid-second to mid-third century. The grey wares include jars, bowls, dishes and large storage vessels. Distinctive fourth-century material includes two jar rims from RLM 038 in late Roman shell-tempered fabric and from RLM 013 a bowl rim and another sherd of Oxfordshire red colour-coated ware which is unlikely to have reached east Suffolk until after 350.

Table 3.3.5 Roman household items quantified by type

Type	
Pottery	130
Spoon	2
Metal vessel fittings	4
Quern	1
Box hasp	5
Lock, key	3
Furniture mounts	7
Total	**152**

3.3.3.2 Furniture

Three solid bun-headed nails are probably from pieces of furniture, as are two more ornate knobs. Two small pieces with decorative heads and integral shafts may also be furniture fittings. All are copper alloy.

The commonest pieces of furniture identifiable from their metal fittings are boxes of various sizes, represented in the assemblage by five fragments of hasps, two of which are definitely Roman (EKE 020 1269 and RLM 036 1107) and the others of a plain type most likely also Roman (from RLM 013 and 036). A lock bolt fragment and a couple of key fragments are also probably from boxes.

3.3.4 Military equipment

Late Roman belt fittings, many of which are associated with military or official use, and possible first-century *armillae*, are discussed above with other dress accessories (3.3.1).

Six other copper-alloy items, likely to be military and of the first to third centuries, include a possible scabbard slide fragment, a buckle tongue, a pendant and two openwork objects, probably from belt or harness mounts.

Embossed fragments of copper-alloy sheet RLM 045 1043 (and more recently excavated pieces recorded as RLM 092) are parts of a piece of 'sports' armour with a relief representation of Hercules. The piece may derive from a chamfron and may have been cut from the larger object for re-use in a religious context. Such material is very rare in Britain, and even more unusual in a rural context.

The assemblage of military objects is widely scattered and does not suggest a strong presence but does add to a growing number of such pieces from rural contexts, particularly in the Midlands and eastern England (Worrell and Pearce 2012, figs 30, 32).

3.3.5 Equestrian

The only equestrian item is a rectangular strap slide (EKE 021 1136) with an unusual decorative front showing a male head; this is probably from horse harness.

3.3.6 Religion and cult

There is very little direct material evidence for Roman religious activity. Apart from the possible votive re-use of the decorated armour fragment (above), one copper-alloy object (RLM 013 0152) is perhaps the leg of a miniature vessel such as a tripod and, as noted above, there are five brooches of types often found at shrines and temples.

3.3.7 Weights and measures

A possible balance arm fragment of copper alloy (EKE 021 1199) lacks any surviving marker points and might be post-Roman. Four lead steelyard weights are likely to be Roman.

3.3.8 Buildings and services

Ceramic building material was not usually collected during the survey because it is undatable when in small abraded fragments. A single piece of Roman building material, a fragment of box flue tile, is recorded from RLM 013, and fragments of Roman brick were recovered from the fills of fifth- to sixth-century *Grubenhäuser* in RLM 044 during excavation in 2013, but on present evidence there is nothing to suggest a villa-type building within the survey area.

3.3.9 Fixtures and fittings and unidentified objects

Amongst various fragments of uncertain function, many of which might also be later in date, one (RLM 037 1371) is stylistically very close to the fourth- and early fifth-century flat-bladed nail cleaners (Eckardt and Crummy 2008, 126) and related strap ends. Also of note is a gilded silver terminal with a stylised lion (RLM 044 1245) that seems most likely to derive from a high-status toilet or eating implement.

3.3.10 Overview

The Roman assemblage probably derives from several small settlements and a possible shrine within the survey area, as discussed below (Ch 4.2.2). The latest material suggests activity continuing into the early decades of the fifth century, although some of this may represent re-use or curation in the fifth century or later (Ch 4.2.2.2).

3.4 Early medieval (fifth to eleventh centuries)

Faye Minter

There are 1,364 certain early medieval finds from Rendlesham, 26 per cent of the total assemblage. The proportion of early medieval finds reported from Suffolk as a whole through the PAS is 5 per cent. This in itself indicates that Rendlesham was a major focus of early medieval activity.

Excluding coins, 1,080 artefacts are securely dated to the fifth to eleventh centuries, most of which are copper alloy. This figure includes as separate items the few fragments that join, or are recognisably from the same object, but which were found apart or at different times (Ch 2.4.2). When we include objects which are less securely dated but which on balance are at least as likely to be early medieval as Roman or medieval – such as fragmentary pins and tweezers – the figure rises to 1,105 (tab 3.4.1). Not included in this total, but discussed below where relevant, are Roman objects that may have seen post-Roman re-use, such as pierced coins, and metalworking debris that is undatable in itself but which is probably early medieval. Of the 284 coins, 278 were issued before *c* 973 and six between that date and 1065 (3.7.3 and 3.7.4, below).

Some objects, especially long-lived types and those for which there is no current typo-chronology, cannot be dated closely within the fifth to eleventh centuries but it is possible to date most of the assemblage sufficiently precisely to show that the majority of objects are of fifth- to early eighth-century date (*c* 65 per cent of the early medieval assemblage, excluding coins). This can be partly explained by the proportion of fifth- to sixth-century female dress accessories from RLM 036 and 044 that are likely to derive from disturbed burials, and the greater quantity of metal accessories in contemporary female dress fashions, but even when these are taken into account there is a quantitative and qualitative distinction that indicates a higher rate of loss and discard between the fifth and early eighth century, and so a greater intensity of activity. The quantity, variety and quality of the eighth- to eleventh-century assemblage is unremarkable compared to what preceded it.

Table 3.4.1 shows the breakdown by functional category. Dress accessories are most numerous, followed by personal possessions, a high proportion probably deriving from fifth- to seventh-century furnished burials. There are also relatively high numbers of objects of the same date-range linked to weapons, metalworking and currency use. The household category is dominated by pottery sherds of the eighth to eleventh centuries. Only a single object can be directly linked to religious or cult activity but objects from this category are uncommon in Suffolk as a whole. Several categories are unrepresented, very likely due to biases introduced by prospecting for non-ferrous metals (Ch 2.4.1).

Objects are classified according to recent typologies wherever possible, and related to broader chronological frameworks where these exist. For the fifth to seventh centuries, objects are dated as appropriate according to the East Anglian scheme of Penn and Brugmann (2007),

Table 3.4.1 Early medieval artefacts quantified by functional category

Category	
Agriculture and animal husbandry (AA)	0
Buildings and services (BS)	0
Currency (CTJ) excluding coins	23
Dress accessories (DA)	640
Equestrian and transport (ET)	28
Fasteners and fittings (FF)	0
Household (HO)	90
Hunting and fishing (HF)	0
Metalworking (MW)	53
Personal possessions (PP)	152
Recreation (RO)	0
Religion and cult (RC)	1
Textile production (TP)	0
Tools (T)	0
Weapons and military equipment (ME)	57
Weights and measures (WM)	25
Unknown (UN)	36
Total	**1,105**

the broader framework for England in the sixth and seventh centuries (Hines and Bayliss 2013), the chronology of Legoux *et al* (2009) for northern France, and the chronology of the Franken AG Bonn for the Rhineland (Müssemeier *et al* 2003); these are summarised and integrated in Fig 3.4.1.

3.4.1 Dress accessories

This category, which makes up 58 per cent of the assemblage, is dominated by brooches and buckles (Table 3.4.2). This does not include failed or unfinished castings, which are discussed under metalworking.

Table 3.4.2 Early medieval dress accessories quantified by type

Object type		Notes
Brooch	204	
Buckle	163	172 including lead model and unfinished examples
Hooked tag	71	75 including possible lead models
Pin	43	50 including unfinished examples
Wrist clasp	40	
Strap end	32	
Finger-ring	18	
Belt fittings	23	24 including unfinished example
Jewellery component	9	
Pendant	11	48 including pierced coins and coin pendants
Spangle	10	
Bead	5	
Slipknot wire ring	2	
Gusset plate	2	
Unidentified	7	
Total	**640**	

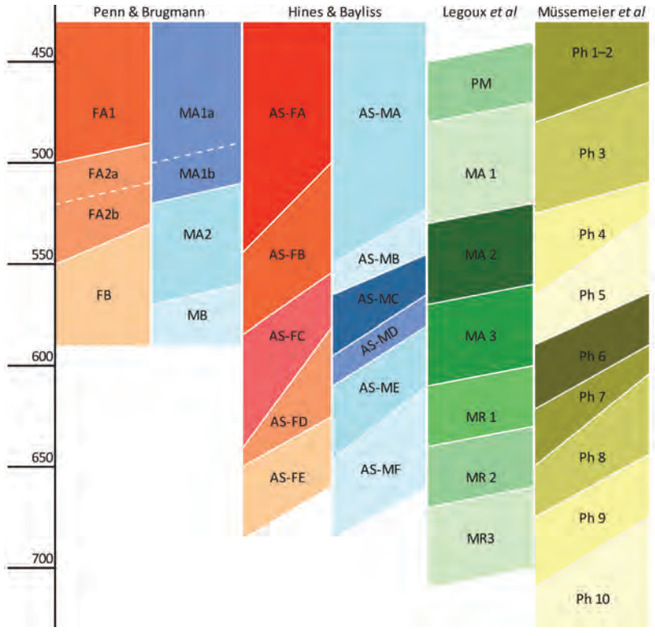


Fig 3.4.1 Main chronological frameworks for early medieval material culture items of the fifth to seventh centuries (after Penn and Brugmann 2007; Hines and Bayliss 2013; Legoux *et al* 2009; Müssemeier *et al* 2003)

3.4.1.1 Brooches (Figs 3.4.2–4)

A minimum of 198 individual brooches is represented by 204 objects; all are copper alloy except for five silver and two lead pieces. Table 3.4.3 shows all identifiable brooches by type. They mostly reflect local and regional dress and material culture traditions, but at least twenty indicate links with the wider North Sea coastal areas and the Merovingian Continent. Most (81 per cent) were made and used in the later fifth and sixth centuries, with markedly fewer thereafter. This reflects the national picture, which shows a sharp reduction in the number of brooches and range of types used in female costume after *c* 570 (Hines and Bayliss 2013, 520). Ansate brooches are the only type found in any quantity at Rendlesham after this date.

It has been possible to classify most incomplete or fragmentary brooches with a high degree of confidence, but it is often difficult or impossible to allocate bow fragments to specific brooch types, and in particular to distinguish between bow fragments from small-long brooches and the simpler cruciform brooch types. There are twenty-two copper-alloy fragments from Rendlesham that could be from either cruciform or small-long brooches.

Table 3.4.3 Early medieval brooches quantified by type and date

Brooch type		Date-range
Supporting-arm	5	380–420
Upturned foot	1	400–450
Cruciform	79	420–550
Small-long	37	420–550
Cruciform or small-long	22	420–550
Annular	9	500–600
Great square-headed	6	530–570
Small square-headed	2	530–570
Radiate-headed	4	500–600
Other (fifth to seventh centuries)	9	400–650
Ansate	22	700–1000
Other (eighth to eleventh centuries)	8	750–1100
Total	**204**	

Supporting-arm brooches and bow-brooch with upturned foot

Supporting-arm brooches are a late fourth- and fifth-century Continental type with a distribution concentrated in the Elbe-Weser region of north Germany. At Rendlesham three of the five examples are Böhme's Typ Perlberg, dated to his Zeitstufe II (*c* 380–420) on the Continent and to the first half of the fifth century in England (Böhme 1974, 13–14, 155–7; 1986, 530–2; Evison 1977), but more recently dated to the first half of the fifth century on the Continent (Brieske 2001, 29–32; Rau 2010, 93–109). Other Suffolk examples include those from Coddenham, Mildenhall, Pakenham and Stonham Aspal (West 1998, 293, figs 18, 116, 118, 127). RLM 037 1276 also appears to be Typ Perlberg, and is very similar to an example from Mucking, Essex (Hamerow 1993, 61, fig 185), but has a single pin lug and so is not technically a supporting-arm brooch. A very similar brooch from Norfolk also has a single pin lug (PAS NMS-532664). Applying a simpler pin configuration while retaining the overall form of the brooch would appear to be an Insular development (cf Evison 1977, 129).

RLM 036 1183 is a rare form of supporting-arm brooch, the latest development of the type, otherwise represented by silver examples from Eastry, Kent and Riensförde, Lower Saxony (Ager 1989). The copper-alloy brooch from Rendlesham was probably locally produced during the second half of the fifth century.

RLM 044 1501 is the lower half of the bow and part of the foot and catchplate from a bow brooch. Although the upturned foot that would clinch identification is missing, the size and form of the narrow high bow and the position of the catchplate suggest that this is very probably from a brooch of Typ Glaston (Böhme 1986, 519–22, 565, Abb 43) with an expanded foot like the example from West Stow SFB 61 (West 1985, 48, fig 202). This would place its manufacture and use in the first half or middle of the fifth century.

Cruciform brooches

Cruciform brooches are the most frequently occurring type. Seventy-seven individual examples can be identified from seventy-nine pieces, with two brooches represented by joining fragments; seventy-three of these can be classified according to Toby Martin's typology (Martin 2015; Table 3.4.4). Sixteen show evidence of burning and are likely to be from cremation. All are copper alloy but RLM 044 1265, a detached knob, has applied silver wire. Where evidence for pins survives these are iron.

Only one brooch (RLM 044 1579) is complete; seven are incomplete, and the rest fragments. Of these, 43 per cent are side knobs, 71 per cent of which were cast separately. The way they were attached, to the ends of the spring axis, means that they were prone to loss and a similar proportion is found nationally (Martin 2015, 135).

Two early brooches may have been made in north Germany, the Netherlands or south Scandinavia (RLM 044 1314: group 1.1 and RLM 014 1008: group 1.1.2;

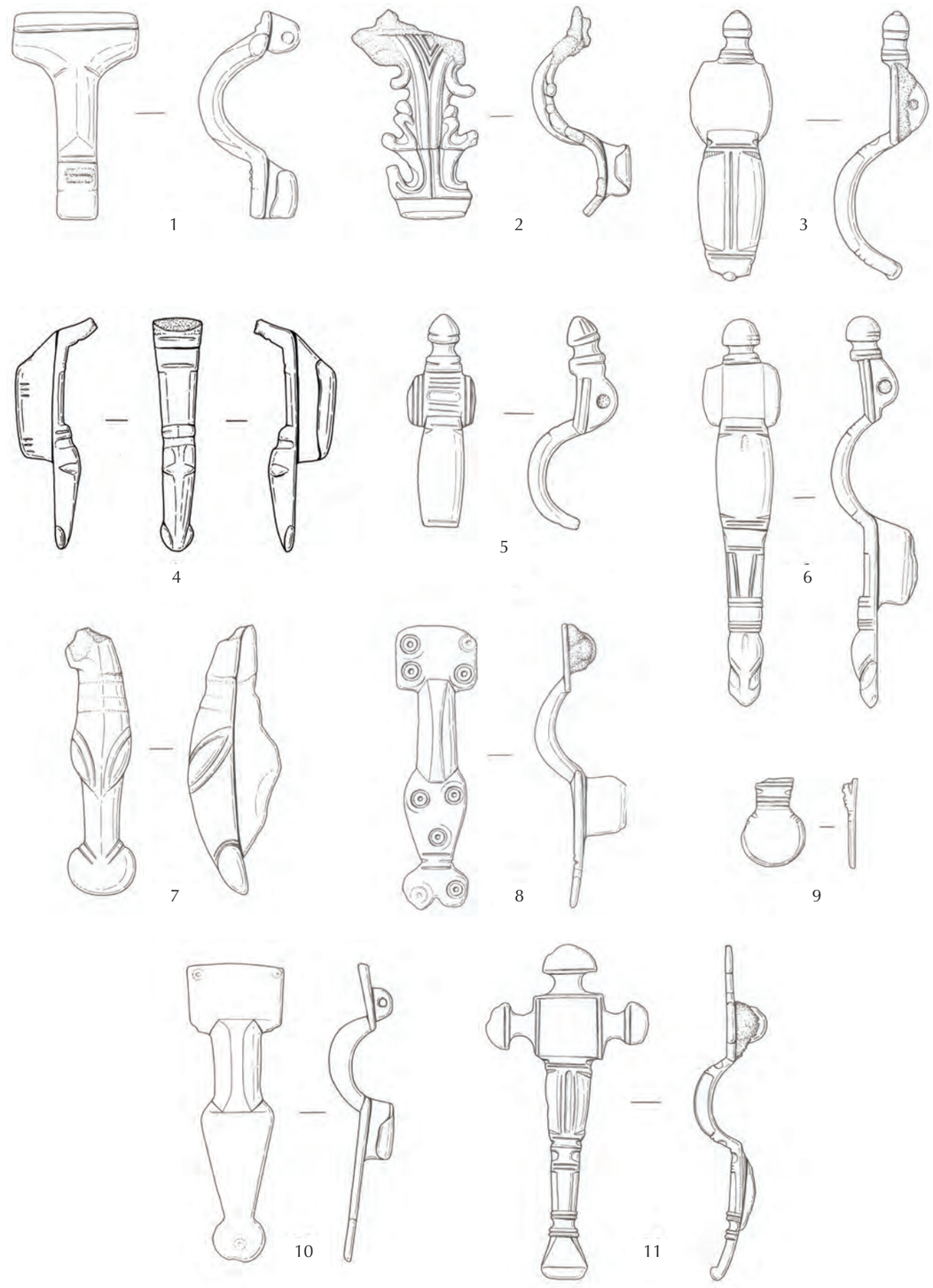


Fig 3.4.2 Supporting-arm brooches: (1) RLM 037 1276; (2) RLM 036 1183; Cruciform brooches: (3) RLM 044 1314; (4) RLM 014 1008; (5) RLM 044 1091; (6) RLM 044 1579; (7) RLM 044 1440; Small-long brooches: (8) RLM 044 1697; (9) RLM 036 1268; (10) RLM 036 1327; (11) RLM 044 1357. Scale 1:1. *Donna Wreathall; © Suffolk County Council*

Fig 3.4.3 (1) Horse-and-rider brooch, EKE 021 1126; Disc brooches: (2) RLM 046 1049; (3) RLM 037 1301. Scale 1:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

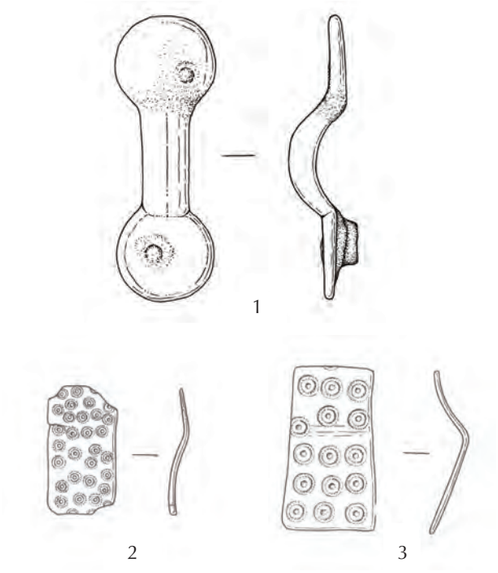


Fig 3.4.4 Ansate brooches: (1) RLM 014 1001; (2) RLM 038 1219; (3) RLM 042 1084. Scale 1:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

Bode 1998, 23–71; Martin 2015, 26). The remainder belong to Insular types. One of the earliest of these is RLM 044 1440 (group 1), with a long tapering catchplate running the length of the foot similar to examples from Howletts and Milton-next-Sittingbourne, Kent (Åberg 1926, figs 37, 41), and a zoomorphic terminal and slanted eyes, paralleled only on a brooch from Lyminge (ibid, fig 59). Martin (pers comm, 2015) places this brooch in the earliest stage of group 1 and sees its incipient spiral nostrils as indicating a Kentish type. It appears to have been cremated, which would be consistent with an early date. The other groups represented at Rendlesham are all restricted to, and likely to have been developed in, eastern England (Martin 2015, 40–3, 64). For example, RLM 044 1579 (group 1.2.1) is an early brooch representing the first stage in the Insular development of the English cruciform brooch series and joins sixteen other known examples concentrated in East Anglia and Lincolnshire (Martin 2015, 26).

Group 3 brooches, the most numerous at Rendlesham and nationally, include several unusual examples. RLM 038 1097, a foot fragment, and RLM 044 1049 and 1050, which join to form a bow and foot, can be assigned on stylistic grounds to group 3 but have no known parallels elsewhere (Martin, pers comm, 2015). The group 3 examples also include the only two cruciform brooches with evidence of later repair or re-use. EKE 019 1037 is a foot fragment with a notch in the upper incomplete edge of the half-round panel, perhaps suggesting the one-time presence of a riveted repair, or possible re-use as a pendant. RLM 044 1428, also a foot fragment, has a copper-alloy rivet through the centre of the triangular terminal extension, perhaps to allow the suspension of an object from the terminal, or for re-use as a pendant. The group 4 brooches include RLM 044 1265, a unique example of a detached knob with applied silver wire.

Cruciform brooch use at Rendlesham conforms to the broader trends of inception, development, use and abandonment of the type (Martin 2015, 110–28; tab 3.4.4). Only five examples can be allocated to Martin's phase A (420–75), represented by brooches of group 1. Seventeen are allocated to phases A or B (420–550), and the overwhelming majority, fifty-one examples or 76 per cent of the total, to phase B (475–550: groups 2.1–4.3). During phase B there is a major creative surge and increase in cruciform brooch production with a large variety of forms in simultaneous circulation (Martin 2015, 127). There are no definite examples from Rendlesham of phase C (525–70: groups 4.4–4.7), the final phase of production and use. Phase C has far fewer examples nationally and is shorter-lived than the previous phases; its geographical range is greater, but examples are concentrated in the east Midlands rather than in East Anglia and Lincolnshire as in phases A and B (Martin 2015, 172).

Table 3.4.4 Cruciform brooches by group and phase (after Martin 2015)

Group	Phase A *c* 420–75	Phase A/B *c* 420–550	Phase B *c* 475–550	Phase C *c* 525–70	Total
1	1	–	–	–	1
1.1	1	–	–	–	1
1.2	1	–	–	–	1
1.1.2	1	–	–	–	1
1.2.1	1	–	–	–	1
2 or 3	–	–	1	–	1
2.1.2	–	–	1	–	1
2.2.1	–	–	1	–	1
3	–	–	5	–	5
3 or 4	–	–	1	–	1
3.0.1 or 3.0.2	–	–	1	–	1
3.0.2	–	–	1	–	1
3.2.7	–	–	1	–	1
4?	–	–	1	–	1
4.1.1	–	–	2	–	2
4.1.1 or 4.1.2	–	–	1	–	1
4.1.2	–	–	1	–	1
Ft1	–	2	–	–	2
Ft2	–	–	5	–	5
Ft3	–	–	1	–	1
Hp1	–	2	–	–	2
Hp2a	–	–	1	–	1
Hp2b	–	–	4	–	4
Hp2c	–	–	2	–	2
Hp3a	–	–	2	–	2
Hp3b	–	–	1	–	1
Kb1	–	2	–	–	2
Kb2	–	6	–	–	6
Kb3	–	5	–	–	5
Kb4	–	–	9	–	9
Kb5	–	–	9	–	9
Total	**5**	**17**	**51**	**0**	**73**

Small-long brooches

A maximum of thirty-seven individual small-long brooches are represented, of which six are complete. All are copper alloy and four have traces of a white metal coating. Small-long brooches show wide formal variation and there is no comprehensive typo-chronology. Leeds (1945) offers the most comprehensive formal classification but we follow Penn and Brugmann (2007) which deals with East Anglian grave finds and offers a robust chronology.

Twenty-two small-long brooches can be allocated a Penn and Brugmann type. Seven are type sm1, with square head plates; three could be type sm1 or sm3, as they are rectangular head fragments and it is uncertain whether they originally had lappets and/or spatulate terminals; twelve are type sm2, with trefoil heads. Type sm1 is dated to phase FA1, sm2 to phases FA1–FA2a and type sm3 mainly fall within FA2a (Penn and Brugmann 2007, 25; fig 3.4.1). Nationally, when small-long brooches are found with cruciform brooches as elements of funerary costume they are most frequently associated with brooches of groups 2 and 3 belonging to Martin's phase B (Martin 2015, 107).

Brooches that cannot be allocated a Penn and Brugmann type include some unusual examples. RLM 044 1697 has a rare bifurcated terminal, similar to a brooch from Dover Buckland (Evison 1987, 39, 219, 280, fig 9, no. 5). RLM 044 1029 has an octagonal central boss on the bow, paralleled by an example from Old Buckenham, Norfolk (PAS SF-899164). The original pin lug has been filed down to accommodate a soldered replacement, now missing.

Other examples of repair and re-use include RLM 013

1328, (type sm1), which has a small drilled circular indentation in the top right corner of the head. RLM 044 1279 (type sm2) has an incomplete filed-down side knob and RLM 036 1268, a circular terminal fragment similar to a brooch from Shakenoak, Oxfordshire (MacGregor and Bolick 1993, 147, no. 15.83) which is split and may have been re-used as a strap end.

Annular brooches

The annular brooch is often the commonest type in East Anglian inhumation cemeteries (Penn and Brugmann 2007, 25; Hills and Lucy 2013, 42; cf tab 4.3.3) but only nine annular brooches have been recovered from Rendlesham; all are copper alloy and incomplete or fragmentary. This may reflect local preference and cultural tradition, or represent a difference between brooches commonly worn and lost and those selected for burial (cf McLean and Richardson 2010), but it may also be that the shape of annular brooch pieces is less susceptible to discovery by metal detectors leading to under-representation in the assemblage (Ch 2.4.1).

There is no comprehensive typo-chronology of annular brooches and we follow Penn and Brugmann (2007) and Høilund Nielsen (2013, 222–3). Only RLM 044 1109 has the pin perforation surviving, a rectangular slot, and is therefore the only example that can be assigned a Penn and Brugmann type, ASlot of phase FA2a (Penn and Brugmann 2007, 25). Six examples are allocated a Høilund Nielsen type, primarily on form as they are too fragmentary for diameter to be measured accurately. Five are type BR3-c, which is the most common nationally, and RLM 037 1144 is type BR3-d but of an unusual form (Hines and Bayliss 2013, 223). Both types occur in phases AS-FB to AS-FE (ibid, 561).

The remaining examples do not fit either typology. RLM 044 1116 is from a narrow-ringed cast brooch with faceted and non-faceted bands of decoration, also seen on a brooch from Morningthorpe grave 334, a burial of FA2a (Green *et al* 1987, 308, fig 405; Penn and Brugmann 2007, tab 5.1). RLM 037 1043 is bevelled on inner and outer edges, giving it a trapezoidal section, with oval-shaped stamped notches along its outer edge and traces of a white metal coating; brooches with bevelled edges and stamped decoration are known from burials of FA2 at Spong Hill grave 58 and Morningthorpe graves 50, 80 and 251 (Hills *et al* 1984, 112–13, fig 109; Green *et al* 1987, 48–50, 58, 104–5, figs 313, 320, 378; Penn and Brugmann 2007, tab 5.1, fig 5.6c). RLM 036 1185 has conjoined lobes and a pin bar. There are annular brooches with lobed moulding from burials of FA2b and FB at Spong Hill, grave 24 and Morningthorpe, grave 359 (Hills *et al* 1984, 72–3, fig 80; Green *et al* 1987, 139, fig 420; Penn and Brugmann 2007, tab 5.1, fig 5.6c) but the moulding is much less pronounced and the lobes separated by bars.

Great square-headed brooches

There are six fragments of great square-headed brooches from Rendlesham. All are copper alloy and three retain traces of gilding. Three are from brooches of Hines group XVI (RLM 036 1157 and 1259, RLM 059 1019). They belonging to his phase 3 (*c* 530–70) and to AS-FB (Hines 1997a, 118–33, 201–2, 231–2, table 25; Hines and Bayliss 2013). The remaining three fragments cannot be identified to group.

Small square-headed brooches

RLM 044 1012, a chip-carved silver fragment, may be from the footplate of a small Kentish square-headed brooch, similar to examples from Finglesham, Kent, grave 203, a high-status burial of 530/40–560/70 (Brugmann 1999; Hawkes and Grainger 2006, 142, fig 2.142). RLM 013 0571, a flat copper-alloy footplate, has downward-biting animal heads above engraved circles and may be from a simple miniature imitation of a great square-headed brooch.

Radiate-headed brooches

This Continental brooch type (Koch 1998; Soulat 2018, 151–64) is represented at Rendlesham by one silver-gilt and three copper-alloy fragments. They are uncommon in East Anglia but the English examples, although usually argued to be imports, could include some local copies (Soulat 2018, 361–7, 373–8).

Two burnt copper-alloy fragments (RLM 036 1037 and RLM 036 1306) are from brooches of Typ Hahnheim (Koch III.3.3) and 1037 is of the *westlichen Form* (Koch III.3.3.2) (Koch 1998, 203–5, Taf 29–31, Typentafel 2). The type is widely distributed in northern France, Belgium, the Low Countries and the Rhineland, with examples known from south-east England and the Isle of Wight (Koch 1998, Karte 16; Soulat 2018, 15–16). In France it occurs in burials of MA1–MA2, mainly MA1 (Legoux *et al* 2009, type 265). RLM 046 1054 is from the footplate of a copper-alloy brooch of Typ Troyes (Koch III.6.1: Koch 1998, 255–6, Taf 38, Karte 18). Koch catalogues only two examples, from Troyes and from Lede in East Flanders, Belgium and a similar brooch from Heidelberg. This is an uncommon type, found in France, the Low Countries and the Rhineland, which greatly strengthens the case for it being a Continental import at Rendlesham. Koch (1998, 463–80, Typentafel 2) dates this type to the middle and second half of the sixth century.

RLM 036 1043, a silver headplate fragment, is most similar in form, size and decorative style to five-knobbed brooches with equal-armed or slightly trapezoidal feet. It is likely to be of Koch I.3.3.1, which has a distribution in northern France and the Rhineland, with examples in Kent (Koch 1998, 51–77, Taf 5–8, Typentafel 1, Karten 4–6; Soulat 2018, 159). In France it occurs in burials of MA1–MA2, mainly in the latter part of MA1 (Legoux *et al* 2009, type 270).

Other brooches of the fifth to middle seventh centuries

Seven brooch types are represented by nine finds.

Silver fragment RLM 036 1156 is from the bow of an equal-armed brooch, probably of Böhme's Typ Wehden (Böhme 1974, 14–19): it is almost identical in size and motif to the equivalent part of an incomplete copper-alloy Typ Wehden brooch from Lidgate, Suffolk (PAS SF-F10E65). Böhme (1974, 13–14, 155–7; 1986, 529–31) assigns Typ Wehden to his Zeitstufe II *c* 380–420 on the Continent and to the first half of the fifth century in England.

EKE 021 1126 is a gilded silver brooch depicting a horse-and-rider in profile. This is an uncommon Continental form, dated to the middle and later fifth century (Legoux *et al* 2009, type 283; Soulat 2018, 186). There are good parallels from Saint-Nicolas-les-Arras, Pas-de-Calais, France and Rhenen, Netherlands, grave 152 (Sellier and Demolon 1984, no. 83; Wagner and Ypey 2012, pl 61, fig 61c). An example is also known from Buckland, Dover, grave 223 (Parfitt and Anderson 2012, 392, fig 10.6).

RLM 046 1049 is a cast copper-alloy disc brooch with a recessed front seating a sheet decorated with dot-in-ring stamps. This type is known from northern French burials of MA1–MA3 (Legoux *et al* 2009, type 209) and, like the horse-and-rider brooch, is almost certainly an import.

RLM 037 1301 is small gilded copper-alloy disc brooch with a circular garnet setting backed by a hatched foil with a band of Style I ornament and a raised border with punched dots. There is a close parallel from Buckland, Dover, grave 440, but with a red enamel central setting (Parfitt and Anderson 2012, 451, fig 10.69), and another from Ickham and Well, Kent (PAS KENT-0B7513). Buckland grave 440 is dated to the end of the fifth century or the earlier part of the sixth (phase 1a–2b: Parfitt and Anderson 2012, 329–57), and the use of Style I makes it unlikely that the Rendlesham brooch was manufactured much later than the second quarter of the sixth century.

RLM 059 1076 and 1136 are joining fragments of a cast copper-alloy disc brooch with ring-and-dot decoration and traces of a white metal surface, datable to the later fifth and earlier sixth century, equivalent to AS-FA in the national seriation (Dickinson 1979, 53–4; Hirst and Clark 2009, 709; Ager 2011). This type is not common in Suffolk but there is a very similar example from Eriswell (West 1998, 28, fig 28.11). Of an equivalent date is the copper-alloy swastika brooch (RLM 044 1121 and 1604). This type is most common in the east Midlands (Timby 1996, 36–7); there is an example from the cemetery at Hunstanton, Norfolk (NCM 7–2–950a; Clarke 1939, 166, 171–4, 177; 1940, 222–3).

RLM 044 1246 is a gilded silver fragment from a keystone garnet disc brooch of Avent's class 7, and can be securely dated to the later sixth or early seventh century (Avent 1975, 46–8).

Ansate brooches

The twenty-two ansate brooches are all copper alloy. These are a seventh- to tenth-century type on the Continent, first appearing in furnished burials of MR2 in northern France and phase 8 in the Rhineland (Legoux *et al* 2009; Müssemeier *et al* 2003). Although in origin a Continental type it seems likely that a brief period of importation was followed by large-scale production in England (Weetch 2014, 227), their initial introduction and adoption being linked to communication and commercial networks around the North Sea. The English brooches have been classified by Weetch (2014), building on the Continental typologies of Hübener (1972) and Thörle (2001) and revising the chronology for England in line with finds from ninth- and tenth-century urban contexts.

The brooches from Rendlesham represent seven different Weetch types (Table 3.4.5), spanning the eighth to tenth centuries. The early type I brooch is probably an import, but most of the rest were probably manufactured locally. Type VII.B is an English sub-type; there are unfinished examples of X.Aii and XII from Norwich, and known examples of the latter concentrate in Norfolk; type XI.D is known only from East Anglia.

The assemblage contains some unusual examples. RLM 044 1647 is a fragment of a Weetch type I (Thörle group 1 A2), common on the Continent but rare in England. RLM 014 1001, a type II.A brooch, has an attached rather than integral pin lug and catchplate, perhaps suggesting a local product rather than an import. There are ten examples of Weetch's English type XI.D

(2014, 168), reinforcing their distribution in East Anglia with most examples known from Suffolk.

Other brooches of the eighth to eleventh centuries

Eight other brooch types are represented by single examples (Table 3.4.6): two lead and the rest copper alloy. Weetch type 31.B (EKE 019 1122) is concentrated in East Anglia and Lincolnshire (Weetch 2014, 139, 186, fig 4.6), with examples from contexts of the late eighth to early tenth centuries at Flixborough, North Lincolnshire (Evans and Loveluck 2009, 1–2) and of the mid- to later ninth century at Brandon (Tester *et al* 2014, 24, 220–1, fig 8.1, no. 5007). Other Insular brooches are Weetch type 15.B, with a concentration in Norfolk (Weetch 2014, 216) and Weetch type 4.B, which is common in eleventh-century London (ibid, 74–6, 347).

RLM 043 1049 is probably a Continental type (Weetch 2014, 132–4) but is paralleled in Suffolk by an example from Hemingstone (SHER HMG 015). The two lead sub-nummular brooches (EKE 019 1201 and RLM 038 1201) may be imported and represent continuing cross-influence in brooch fashions around the North Sea region (ibid, 288).

The enamelled disc brooch (RLM 044 1334) is assigned to Weetch type 20.B as an atypical example. The decoration resembles Roman examples but the transverse pin lugs and catchplate, unknown on Roman disc brooches, indicate the later date.

Table 3.4.5 Ansate brooches by type and date (after Weetch 2014)

Weetch type		Date-range
I (rounded ends with basal notches)	1	675–750
II.A (disc-shaped terminals)	2	700–975
VII.B/Lincoln type (rhombic terminals with corner projections)	3	700–900
VIII.B (cross-shaped terminals)	1	700–925
X (parallel-sided)	2	700–950
XI.D (ribbon-shaped English type)	10	800–975
XII (leaf-shaped terminals)	3	750–1000
Total	**22**	

Table 3.4.6 Eighth- to eleventh-century brooches by type and date (after Weetch 2014)

Find no.	Weetch type	Date-range
EKE 019 1122	Type 31.B (strip brooch with narrow flattened plate)	700–900
RLM 043 1049	Type 29.Bii (non-enamelled rectangular plate brooch with concave sides)	750–900
RLM 013 0291	Type 15.B (openwork cross brooch)	800–900
RLM 038 1201	Type 5 (disc brooch with concentric circles)	900–1000
EKE 019 1201	Type 4.A (disc brooch straight-armed cross motif)	900–1000
RLM 013 1341	Type 17.A (hub-cap disc brooch)	900–1100
RLM 036 1328	Type 4.B (disc brooch with cross motifs with jewelled crosses)	900–1100
RLM 044 1334	Type 20.B (enamelled disc brooch without circumferential lobes)	1000–1100

3.4.1.2 Pins (Fig 3.4.5)

There are forty-eight copper-alloy dress pins, one silver and one gold. Fourteen are complete, and there are seven unfinished examples. This figure excludes circular-sectioned shaft fragments which are impossible to date. Where there are similar Roman and post-Roman forms, and the pins are too worn to classify accurately, those with collars have been allocated to early medieval types.

All the copper-alloy pins can be classified according to Ross's typology (Ross 1991; Table 3.4.7), but stratified examples from excavated sites such as Flixborough and Brandon have revised the dating of types LXVIII, LXIX, LXX and LXXII (Evans and Loveluck 2009, 43–4).

The pins span the sixth to early eleventh centuries and most appear to represent two broad phases of use and loss: the late sixth and first half of the seventh centuries (type L), and the period from the late seventh to the early eleventh century (types LXVIII, LXIX, LXX, LXXII and LXXIII) with a probable peak in the later eighth and ninth centuries. There is a single earlier example (Ross type XIX), and a few dated to the seventh to eighth centuries including Ross type LVI and the unique gold pin, RLM 013 0372.

Disc-headed pins of Ross type L or Høilund Nielsen type PI1-e are the most numerous type (Ross 1991, 224–31, fig 5.22; Høilund Nielsen 2013, 225). The form is very consistent but there is variation in decoration on the shaft and collar zone. Six unfinished pins of this type, all from RLM 013, show that they were being made at Rendlesham (Ch 5.3).

Fig 3.4.5 Pins: (1) RLM 013 0386; (2) RLM 013 0601; (3) EKE 021 1157; (4) RLM 042 1217; (5) RLM 013 0372. Scale 1:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

The nine examples of type LXVIII are all LXVIII.ii, the 'medium' biconical-headed sub-type (Ross 1991, 281–8). These are the most common type from Flixborough, where a distinction is drawn between those with a flattened or conical top (Evans and Loveluck 2009, 34, 58–9). Most of the Rendlesham examples have a conical top but the flat top of RLM 043 1009 is decorated with an incised cross and the sides of the head have incised ring-and-dot motifs. One type LXX pin (RLM 044 1158) may be burnt or unfinished.

Within type LXXII there are two examples are of LXXII.i, nine of LXXII.ii, and one of LXII.iii, sub-types that have the same head form but become progressively larger (Ross 1991, 306). There are also two of LXXII.iv.c, which at Flixborough may have been in use into the tenth century (Evans and Loveluck 2009, 34).

The last three pins are unusual but are closest to type LXXIII (Ross 1991, 319–20). EKE 021 1157 is in poor condition but appears to have asymmetrical zoomorphic and interlace decoration (Ross 1991, 319–20). The silver-gilt fragment RLM 042 1217, interpreted as part of a pinhead, has interlace comparable with that on eighth-century silver-gilt pins from Brandon and Flixborough (Tester *et al* 2014, 238–9, pl 8.6, fig 8.7; Evans and Loveluck 2009, 37–8, fig 1.29, no. 681) and on a probable pinhead from Norfolk (PAS NMS-EDBFDE). Finally, the gold pin, RLM 013 0372, has a flat head with engraved opposed bird heads. These are very similar in treatment to bird heads in Insular manuscript art, notably the Lindisfarne Gospels (Backhouse 1981), and date this elite dress accessory to the later seventh or early eighth century.

Table 3.4.7 Early medieval pins by type and date (after Ross 1991)

Ross type		Material	Date-range
XIX (crook-headed)	1	copper alloy	500–600
L (Kingston disc-headed)	15	copper alloy	580–650
LVI (Castle Dyke wedge-headed)	1	copper alloy	600–800
LXVIII (biconical-headed)	9	copper alloy	700–900
LXIX (hot-air-balloon-headed)	3	copper alloy	650–850
LXX (ball/spherical-headed)	4	copper alloy	650–1000
LXXII (facet-headed)	14	copper alloy	700–1000
LXXIII (flat zoomorphic-headed)	3	copper alloy; silver; gold	650–800
Total	**50**		

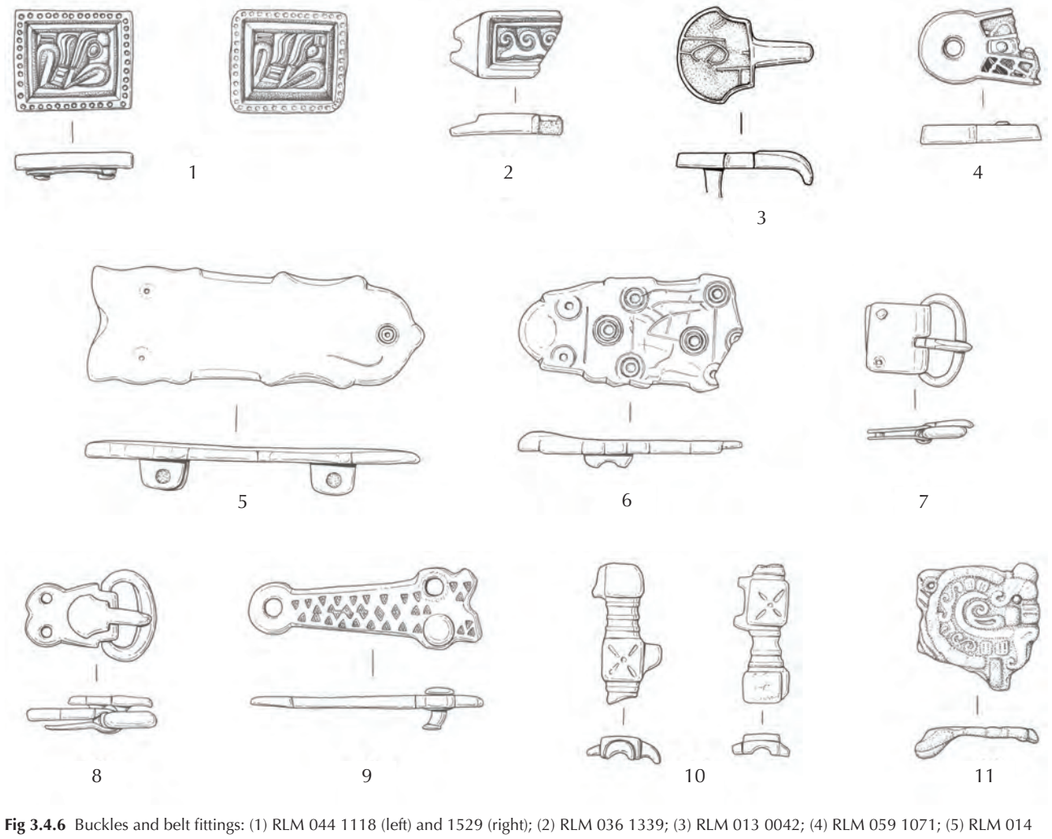


Fig 3.4.6 Buckles and belt fittings: (1) RLM 044 1118 (left) and 1529 (right); (2) RLM 036 1339; (3) RLM 013 0042; (4) RLM 059 1071; (5) RLM 014 1053; (6) RLM 042 1145; (7) RLM 044 1599; Garter buckles: (8) RLM 036 1275; (9) RLM 036 1337; Wrist clasps: (10) possible clasp pair RLM 044 1317 (left) and RLM 044 1566 (right); (11) RLM 036 1244. Scale 1:1. *Donna Wreathall; © Suffolk County Council*

3.4.1.3 Buckles and belt fittings (Figs 3.4.6–7)

There are 172 buckles or elements from buckles (loop, tongue, plate), and twenty-four belt or strap fittings (Tables 3.4.8–9). Buckles and buckle elements include four fragments from the same item, eight failed or unfinished castings of buckle loops, and part of a lead model for a buckle loop; belt fittings include an unfinished item in gold. There is one silver buckle plate and one gold shoe-shaped stud; all other items, apart from the lead model, are copper alloy. The possibility that some late Roman belt fittings may have seen post-Roman re-use, or derive from fifth-century burials, has been noted above (2.4.5).

Buckles and associated fittings are classified according to Marzinzik (2003), Høilund Nielsen (2013, 136–47) and Legoux *et al* (2009). These studies all focus on belt buckles as costume fittings, but many of the smaller buckles from Rendlesham may be from purses, satchels or garters (Geake 1997, 65–6, 79; Marzinzik 2003, 51;

Fig 3.4.7 Buckles and gold belt fitting: (1) RLM 036 1301; (2) RLM 059 1162; (3) RLM 013 0141; (4) RLM 044 1595. Scale 1:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

Blackmore *et al* 2019, 128–31), and sword belts and horse harness might also be represented. The Snartemo-Sjörup buckle represented by fragments from RLM 044 was very likely from a sword belt and is discussed below (3.4.4.2) with other weapon fittings.

There are two type I.8 buckles with bean- or kidney-shaped loops (EKE 019 1063 and RLM 044 1138), dated predominantly to the middle and later fifth century on the Continent (Marzinzik 2003, 27–8; Müssemeier *et al* 2003; Legoux *et al* 2009, type 105; Soulat 2018, 136). RLM 036 1301, a tongue with a rectangular garnet setting, is a Merovingian type of MA1–MA2 (Legoux *et al* 2009, type 142; Soulat 2018, 216–18). There are two characteristic tongues from shield-tongue I.2 buckles, both in white metal, and the two heavier I.5 loops (EKE 019 1139 and RLM 036 1236) are probably also from this type which occurs in AS-MB and AS-FB in England and on the Continent in burials of MA2–MA3 and Rhineland phase 4 (Hines and Bayliss 2013; Müssemeier *et al* 2003; Legoux *et al* 2009, type 118; Soulat 2018, 203–6). The square buckle of type I.6a is contemporary, as is the plate fragment from a buckle of II.15a (Legoux *et al* 2009; Hines and Bayliss 2013, 143–4; Soulat 2018, 211).

EKE 021 1190 is a belt mount from a II.6 buckle-set of

Table 3.4.8 Summary of early medieval buckles by type (after Marzinzik 2003; Høilund Nielsen 2013; Legoux *et al* 2009)

Marzinzik type	Høilund Nielsen type	Legoux *et al* type	Other	
I.2	BU2-d	118		2
I.5		112–118		4
I.6a		123		1
I.8		105		2
I.9	BU8			26
I.10a-ii	BU8			2
I.10d	BU8			1
I.10d-ii	BU8			64
I.11a-ii	BU8			4
II.15a	BU4	163		1
II.19b				2
II.22a				2
II.23	BU3			2
II.23.b-ii	BU3-c			4
II.24a	BU7			13
II.24b-i	BU7			2
II.24b-ii	BU7			13
		142		1
		130–138	Garter	22
			Snartemo-Sjörup	4
Total				**172**

Table 3.4.9 Summary of early medieval belt fittings (after Marzinzik 2003; Høilund Nielsen 2013; Legoux *et al* 2009)

Marzinzik type	Høilund Nielsen type	Legoux *et al* type	Other	
?II.6				1
II.14.b	BU5			4
	BU2-h			4
II.22b-i	BU3-f	180		2
?II.23b-i	BU3a/b			1
			Triangular	2
			Small trapezoidal	4
			Small elongated	1
			Other	5
Total				**24**

the later fifth or earlier sixth century (Marzinzik 2003, 37–8, pl 79). There are four mounts from II.14b belt-sets, two of which (RLM 044 1118 and 1529) are near-identical and clearly from the same belt: this type occurs in AS-MB (Hines and Bayliss 2013). Also likely to be from belts of the early- to mid-sixth century are an 'S'-shaped zoomorphic mount (RLM 013 0143) and a gilded cruciform mount with a swastika motif (RLM 036 1065). Two shoe-shaped mounts (BU2-h) in white metal probably accompanied I.2 buckles.

RLM 036 1339, probably part of a copper-alloy belt mount, has a central rectangular panel with chip-carved running spirals. Running spirals are used on cast saucer brooches as late as the early to middle sixth century but their use on a rectangular belt mount suggests that it pre-dates Style I. A date in the mid-fifth century is therefore likely but manufacture as late as the early sixth century cannot be ruled out.

The remainder of the readily datable items are later sixth- and seventh-century and include twenty-eight examples of II.24/BU7, a type-fossil of the final century of furnished inhumation (Geake 1997, 79; Hines and Bayliss 2013). Triangular-plated II.23 forms are represented by distinctive buckle tongues, one with cloisonné remains (RLM 013 0042), a plate fragment with cloisonné garnets backed by hatched gold foils (RLM 059 1071), and the lead model for a loop of distinctive size and shape (RLM 059 1090). There are two counterplates from Continental belt-suites of the middle to late seventh century (RLM 014 1053 and RLM 042 1145), rare in England but known from Continental-style grave assemblages at Ipswich and Southampton (Scull 2011b; Legoux *et al* 2009, type 180; Müssemeier *et al* 2003). Mount RLM 036 1160 is from a belt suite of this date, and mounts RLM 013 0529 and 0889 are also probably contemporary.

The outsize unfinished gold shoe-shaped stud (RLM 059 1162) is a unique piece that must have been intended for an elite belt suite. Smaller copper-alloy examples are assigned to AS-MB and AS-FB in England, but in northern France the form persists to the turn of seventh century (Legoux *et al* 2009, type 194; Soulat 2018 229–33). Given the date of other gold dress accessories and weapon fittings from Rendlesham, and of the other direct evidence for non-ferrous metalworking, a date in the last third of the sixth or at the very beginning of the seventh appears most likely.

Of the buckle loops, 101 are simple forms for which no close dating has been established (Marzinzik 2003, tab 8; Hines and Bayliss 2013, 146). However, it seems likely that a very high proportion of the small oval or D-shaped loops of types I.9 and I.10, which were being manufactured at Rendlesham and are the loop types used in II.24/BU7 buckles, are also to be dated to the late sixth and seventh centuries.

Twenty-two miniature buckles, equivalent to Legoux *et al* types 130–8, are garter buckles which helped to secure footwear (Blackmore *et al* 2019, 128–31; Legoux *et al* 2009). None can accommodate a strap wider than 18mm and most had straps 5mm–9mm wide. They have triangular or tongue-shaped plates; most plates are integrally cast with attachment lugs on the underside, a feature of some larger triangular-plated buckles and associated fittings; there are also five miniature counterplates or strap fittings with this feature. RLM 044 1595, a fixed-plate buckle, has engraved opposed bird heads at the end of the plate; RLM 036 1275 has an articulated plate and a shield-tongue of the form seen on full-size triangular-plated buckles; RLM 036 1337 is a triangular buckle plate with a white metal surface and stamped decoration of Legoux *et al* type 138 and may be a Continental piece. Type 130–8 buckles are dated in France to MA3–MR2 (Legoux *et al* 2009). In England, garter buckles first occur in Kentish inhumations of the later sixth century and appear to represent a costume innovation adopted from the Merovingian Continent. A number of the small II.24 (BU7) buckles, especially those which could only accommodate a strap thinner than 10mm, may also be garter buckles, as could smaller I.9 and I.10d-ii loops. Buckles attached to footwear would be more easily lost in everyday use than belt or purse buckles, which might explain why there are so many in the Rendlesham assemblage.

No buckles in the assemblage are dated to the eighth to eleventh centuries. It is possible that some of the plain oval or D-shaped buckle loops are this late, and likely that types dated by their occurrence in seventh-century burials continued in use after the abandonment of furnished inhumation *c* 680: there is, for example, a II.24a buckle from a late eighth-century context at York, and an example of II.22a from a context of the late seventh to middle ninth centuries at Flixborough (Marzinzik 2003, 51; Evans and Loveluck 2009, 22, fig 1.9). Overall, however, excavated eighth- to tenth-century assemblages from materially rich rural sites such as Brandon and Flixborough, and from the *emporia*, have very few buckles, especially when compared with the numbers of pins, suggesting that the pattern at Rendlesham is genuine (Tester *et al* 2014, 224–5; Evans and Loveluck 2009, 22–6; Hinton 1996, 6–8; Cowie and Blackmore 2012, 194).

3.4.1.4 Wrist clasps (Fig 3.4.6)

Two of the forty wrist clasp elements (hook-piece, catch-piece, or bar) are silver, the rest copper alloy. Eight, all from RLM 044, appear to have been damaged by cremation. There are also two silver gusset plates. They have been classified according to Hines (1984; 1993; Table 3.4.10).

Wrist clasps are securely dated to the later fifth and first half of the sixth century, occurring in East Anglia in burials of FA1–2b but not FB, and absent from the national sample of burials of AS-FB and later (Penn and Brugmann 2007, 28–9, 58–74; Hines and Bayliss 2013).

RLM 044 1066 is a silver class A clasp, damaged by cremation. This, and the single examples of B1i and B4, are types representing direct cultural contact between eastern England and Scandinavia, particularly western Norway, in the later fifth century (Hines 1984; 1993). The other types at Rendlesham represent Insular development of clasp forms.

The majority of clasps from Rendlesham are forms B7–20. There is only one example of B7, which is the most numerous nationally, but this is consistent with the known distribution. Only three of the B7 clasps from Suffolk listed by Hines are from the south-east of the county, with the rest from sites in the Lark valley (Hines 1993, 116–19, fig 79), and a PAS database search in 2019 returned only two examples of B7 out of 140 clasps from Suffolk, both from the Lakenheath area.

B12 is the most common form at Rendlesham. RLM 059 1072 is a gilded example of Hines' Morningthorpe type, represented in his corpus by a single example (Hines 1993, 49, fig 93). Hook-piece RLM 044 1317 and catch-piece RLM 044 1566 are very similar in size, form and decoration, with stamped quatrefoils on the central square boss that appear to have been made with the same tool. They were found just under 10m apart and are probably matching elements from a single clasp.

RLM 037 1341 is the rare form B19. Like examples from Coddenham and West Stow, it is decorated with stamped annulets (Hines 1993, 62–3). RLM 046 1077, a damaged B20 hook- or catch-piece, shows evidence of a repair to the now missing hook or catch element.

Four of the five class C examples are C1 and C3 forms which are found only in England. One, RLM 036 1244, is silver, the others gilded copper alloy.

There are two gilded silver fragments that are probably from gusset plates. RLM 037 1048 has Style I decoration and may have been similar to examples from Mildenhall (West 1998, fig 116.3), Eye (PAS SF-10193) and Cavenham (PAS SF-9DCAB2). RLM 044 1825 has a human mask, similar to examples from Playford, Suffolk (Hines 1993, 74, fig 143c, e) and Hillington, Norfolk (PAS NMS-95A793). It has been deliberately broken by scoring a deep groove and then snapping the metal, suggesting that it was intended for recycling.

Table 3.4.10 Early medieval wrist clasps (after Hines 1993)

Hines class, form and type	
A	1
B1i	1
B4	1
B7	1
B12	16
B13a, B14a or B17a	5
B18	3
B19	1
B20	6
C1 Mildenhall type	2
C1 Saxonbury-Bidford type	1
C1 misc	1
C3	1
Total	**40**

3.4.1.5 Beads and pendants

Beads (Fig 3.4.8)

Five beads were recovered, one glass, one silver, two gold and one gold-and-garnet. The glass bead is Koch type 34 (Koch 1977, 71–2, Farbtaf 2; 1997), a Continental form introduced to England in AS-FB; this sub-type (Høilund

Fig 3.4.8 Gold beads: (1) RLM 013 0394; (2) RLM 059 1132; (3) RLM 013 0754. Scale 2:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

Nielsen BE1-Koch341) is known from burials of AS-FB to AS-FE (Brugmann 2004, 38, 52–70; Hines and Bayliss 2013, 207, 379–83). RLM 013 0128 is a half of a gilded silver bell-shaped bead of Høilund Nielsen type BE2-c, dated to phases AS-FB to AS-FE (Høilund Nielsen 2013, 209, 485).

There are two biconical gold spacer beads. RLM 013 0394 is of coiled wire (Høilund Nielsen BE2-a) and paralleled in the gold-and-garnet necklace from Desborough, Northamptonshire (Baker 1880, pl 34; Webster and Backhouse 1991, 28, fig 13). RLM 059 1132 is made of two truncated cones of sheet metal (Høilund Nielsen BE2-b) and is paralleled in silver from Boss Hall, Ipswich, grave 93 (Scull 2009a, 44, fig 2.21, 23–4). Both are from elite jewellery of AS-FE (Hines and Bayliss 2013).

RLM 013 0754 is an eight-sided biconical gold bead with sixty-four cloisonné garnets, each backed by a cross-hatched gold foil. This has no parallel in England, but half of a gold-and-garnet bead of similar form to RLM 059 1132 is known from near Eye, Suffolk (PAS SF4139). The use of all-over gold-and-garnet cloisonné, and the stepped cells, indicate manufacture in the first half of the seventh century.

Gold bracteates (Fig 3.4.9)

Bracteates are impressed circular medallions of sheet metal, almost always gold, looped for suspension. Originating in the fifth century in south Scandinavia as imitations of Imperial Roman medallions and gold coins, they became widely adopted and distributed around the North Sea coastal territories in the later fifth and earlier sixth centuries. They are elite items which carried a strong symbolic charge (Mackeprang 1952; Hines 1984; Behr 2010; Heizmann and Axboe 2011).

Both of the gold bracteates from Rendlesham show ploughzone damage. RLM 059 1133 and RLM 059 1164 are joining fragments of a B-bracteate, depicting a warrior fighting a beast. It is very similar, and possibly die-identical, to three B-bracteates found as part of a hoard at Binham, Norfolk, deposited in the first half of the sixth century (Behr and Pestell 2014). RLM 036 1242 is a D-bracteate, depicting a ribbon-like Style I animal. It was struck from the same die as a bracteate from Northbourne, Kent (DCMS 2008, 91, no. 267).

B-bracteates are not common. The closest figurative parallels for the Rendlesham and Binham examples are a group of seven die-identical bracteates probably from Schleswig-Holstein (Behr and Pestell 2014, 54–5), and it is an open question as to whether the Rendlesham example was made in England or on the Continent. D-bracteates are the commonest type in England, with the main concentration in Kent, and Insular manufacture is more likely in this case: most gold D-bracteates in Kent appear to be local variants, and D-bracteates from Anglian England appear to be derived from Kentish prototypes (Hines 1984, 216). It is argued that bracteates were manufactured at elite residences, within social and cognitive networks that facilitated the widespread sharing and emulation of designs (Pesch 2007, 674–8).

The two B-bracteate fragments were found 38m apart in RLM 059, an area of post-medieval woodland which was not cleared for arable until after 1958. The D-bracteate was found 110m away in another field, RLM 036, still separated from RLM 059 by a woodland belt. While not conclusive, this suggests very strongly that they were not from a hoard subsequently dispersed by ploughing. D-bracteates are known from female inhumations of the first half of the sixth century in Kent and Anglian England (Hawkes and Pollard 1981; Hines 1984, 215–16; Behr 2010), and so the Rendlesham examples might be from burials. A further possibility is that both were material held for recycling.

Fig 3.4.9 (1) D-bracteate: RLM 036 1242; (2) adjoining fragments of B-bracteate RLM 059 1133 and RLM 059 1164. Scale 1:1.5. *Line drawings by Donna Wreathall; © Suffolk County Council*

Pendants (Fig 3.4.10; Table 3.4.11)

By far the greatest number of items made, or adapted for use, as pendants are pierced Roman copper-alloy coins. All are worn *nummi* or radiates of the late third and fourth centuries except RLM 044 1792, a *sestertius* of Antoninus Pius, and RLM 038 1267, an *as* or *dupondius*. Some of these may have been pierced and worn in the third and fourth centuries, but late third- and fourth-century copper-alloy issues re-used as pendants are a feature of fifth- to seventh-century furnished inhumations and contemporary settlement assemblages (King 1988; White 1990; Geake 1997; Hines and Bayliss 2013, 213). Twenty of the Rendlesham examples come from RLM 036 and 044 where there is evidence for

Fig 3.4.10 Looped gold coin pendants: (1) RLM 013 0188; (2) RLM 043 1040; Gold pendant with cabochon garnet: (3) RLM 013 0892; Gold bucket-shaped pendant: (4) RLM 013 0027. Scale 2:1. *© Suffolk County Council*

Table 3.4.11 Early medieval pendants by material

Type	Material	
Pierced Roman coin	copper alloy	31
Pierced early medieval coin	gold	3
Early medieval coin with attached loop or rivet	gold	3
Bucket pendant	gold	1
Bracteate	gold	3
Oval with garnet (Høilund Nielsen type PE9-b)	gold	1
Disc, filigree (Høilund Nielsen type PE1)	gold	2
Cross-shaped (Høilund Nielsen type PE5)	silver	1
	copper alloy	1
Scutiform (Høilund Nielsen type PE2-b)	copper alloy	1
Thor's hammer	copper alloy	1
Total		**48**

significant fifth- to seventh-century activity including burials, and in all thirty-one from across the survey area have been identified as likely to derive from early medieval activity.

There are six early medieval coins re-used as pendants, pierced or looped above the bust. RLM 013 0148 and RLM 042 1159, both Frankish *tremisses* from Dorestad, and RLM 038 1318, a pale gold shilling, are pierced for suspension. Two *tremisses*, RLM 013 0188 and RLM 043 1040, have attached gold loops. RLM 044 1657, a gold-plated copy of a *tremissis*, is riveted and therefore also presumably modified for display. The positions of the piercings and loops indicate an awareness of the imagery of the coins. They are discussed further below (3.7.3; Ch 5.4).

RLM 044 1242 and 1243 are adjoining pieces of a gold filigree pendant with garnet settings; this is Høilund Nielsen PE1, AS-FE, with local parallels from Boss Hall, Ipswich, grave 93 (Scull 2009a, 43, 99, fig 2.20). RLM 013 0892 is a gold pendant with a cabochon garnet (Høilund Nielsen PE9-b, AS-FD–E). Both are from high-status jewellery. RLM 013 0556 is a silver cross pendant (Høilund Nielsen PE5) of AS-FE. It originally had a circular central mount, which may have been like the gold and garnet settings on RLM 013 0361, probably also a cruciform pendant. These two items are to be seen as Christian symbols. The copper-alloy scutiform pendant, RLM 036 1154, is a type known from burials of the late fifth to the late seventh century (Hines 1984, 233–5; Geake 1997, 37–9, fig 4.4; Penn and Brugmann 2007; Hines and Bayliss 2013).

RLM 013 0027, made from ribbed gold sheet with a soldered base and lugs, appears to be a bucket-shaped pendant. Bucket pendants of copper-alloy sheet with curved 'handle' rather than lugs occur in female graves of AS-FA, and are assumed to have an amuletic significance (Meaney 1981, 166–8; Hines 1984, 13, 306; Dickinson 1993, 51). Two items from burials of AS-FD–E at Eastry, Kent, grave 15 and Lechlade, Gloucestershire, grave 14, have been identified as bucket pendants (Welch 2008, 33), but these are cylindrical mountings suspended on a wire ring and, like the example from Bloodmoor Hill, Suffolk, grave 15, probably held organic pendants (Scull 2009b, 395, fig 7.15). If it is a pendant then RLM 013 0027, like the shoe-shaped stud RLM 059 1162, would appear to be an elaborate elite version in gold of what was normally a plainer item.

RLM 013 0520 is of the Viking-period group thought to represent Mjolnir, the hammer of the Norse god Thor. It is unusual in being copper alloy and having a long shaft and small head. Twelve hammer pendants are known from East Anglia, ten from Norfolk (Pestell 2019, 38–9, fig 19).

3.4.1.6 Strap ends (Table 3.4.12)

Of the thirty-two copper-alloy strap ends, eight can be dated to the fifth to seventh centuries with differing degrees of confidence and twenty-three are types of the middle eighth to eleventh centuries (Thomas 2003; 2004).

Tongue-shaped strap ends with simple incised decoration (RLM 013 0288 and RLM 036 1201) are found in East Anglia in female inhumations of AS-FA–B, as, for example, at Spong Hill, Norfolk, graves 24 and 39, and Morningthorpe, Norfolk, graves 249, 384, and 393 (Hills *et al* 1984; Green *et al* 1987; Penn and Brugmann 2007; Hines and Bayliss 2013). Simple folded-sheet strap ends are not closely datable, but RLM 013 0114 is more likely than not to be early medieval, and the repoussé dots, which are also seen on sheet metal objects such as form B7 wrist clasps and scutiform pendants, may indicate a date in the fifth to seventh centuries.

There are five strap ends of Legoux *et al* type 198 or Høilund Nielsen type BU4-e, all with a single rivet and flat head giving way to a median ridge and bevelled cross-section (Legoux *et al* 2009; Hines and Bayliss 2013, 144). One has a white metal coating (RLM 036 1307) and this and RLM 037 1426 are both larger terminal fragments which appear likely to have had the leaf-shaped profile of BU4-e, dated in England to AS-FB. One has incised decoration (RLM 088 1001). RLM 036 1296 and RLM 059 1009 are slender and straight-sided and can be considered type 198, dated to MA1.

Strap ends of Thomas class A, with a split attachment end, convex sides and zoomorphic terminals, are dated to the ninth century, with a distribution concentrating in East Anglia, Lincolnshire and the Humber region (Evans and Loveluck 2009, 8). RLM 038 1232 and RLM 044 1458, both with niello inlay, are type 1, characterised by Trewhiddle-style decoration. RLM 013 0208 and RLM 013 0396 are type 2, belonging to a diverse group decorated with geometric patterns and perhaps represent the cheaper end of the market (Thomas 2003, 2). RLM 013 0208, also type 2, has a cross-hatched panel with surviving niello similar to an example from Flixborough (Evans and Loveluck 2009, 11, fig 1.4, no. 58). Eight of the remaining class A examples are type 5, which have niello inlaid with silver wire scrolls (Thomas 2003, 4), and four cannot be classified more precisely. Type 5 has a very focused distribution in East Anglia and this decorative style, also found on hooked tags, may represent an East Anglian fashion (Evans and Loveluck 2009, 8).

Class B, parallel-sided with zoomorphic terminals, is represented by a single example of type 1 (RLM 042 1004), in use from the later eighth to eleventh century and mainly in south and south-east England (Thomas 2003, 4). There are two examples of class C, with split ends and narrow shafts, of the mid-eighth to ninth centuries (ibid, 6). RLM 013 0149 is the one class D example, with a waisted split attachment end and a convex shaft. Most class D strap ends come from Lincolnshire and stratified examples from Flixborough suggest that the form was current in the ninth and tenth centuries (ibid, 6).

Class E, tongue-shaped strap ends, were popular on the Carolingian Continent and in Scandinavia during the ninth and tenth centuries and are found throughout tenth- and eleventh-century England (Thomas 2004, 1). EKE 022 1107 is type 1, of Winchester style with a vertical rib flanked by plant scrolls. EKE 020 1047, with two silver rivets and white metal coating, is type 4.

Table 3.4.12 Summary of early medieval strap ends (after Høilund Nielsen 2013; Legoux *et al* 2009; Thomas 2003; 2004)

Form	Høilund Nielsen type	Legoux *et al* type	Thomas class	
Folded sheet				1
Tongue-shaped		199		3
Leaf-shaped / Bevelled	BU4-e	198		5
			Class A	17
			Class B	1
			Class C	2
			Class D	1
			Class E	2
Total				**32**

3.4.1.7 Hooked tags

Hooked tags, in use from the seventh to eleventh century, are common finds with a widespread distribution in central, southern and eastern England comparable to that of contemporary strap ends (Evans and Loveluck 2009, 17). Twenty-eight of the seventy-five hooked tags from Rendlesham are complete. All are copper alloy except for four lead – probably models – and one silver.

Table 3.4.13 Summary of early medieval hooked tags by attachment plate form and material

Form	Copper alloy	Silver	Lead alloy	Total
Sub-triangular	35	–	–	35
Sub-circular	34	1	4	39
Lozenge	1	–	–	1
Total	**70**	**1**	**4**	**75**

Hooked tags can be grouped by the shape of the attachment plate: sub-circular and sub-triangular; at Rendlesham, only one with a lozenge-shaped plate falls outside these groups (Table 3.4.13). Sub-triangular forms occur from the seventh to eighth century, sub-circular from the later eighth century. Both continue in use until the eleventh century but the sub-circular forms appear to be especially popular in the tenth and eleventh centuries (Evans and Loveluck 2009, 17). Sixty-six of the Rendlesham hooked tags can also be classified according to Read (2008, 5–37). This does not refine the dating but does show how examples with simple sub-triangular and sub-circular plates dominate and defines variations on these forms (Table 3.4.14). The main decorative features are incised or stamped decoration and white metal coating.

Five examples of Read class A type 1, including RLM 044 1666 with incised cross-hatched decoration, have a rectangular slot rather than sewing holes. Class D type 1 includes RLM 013 1318, an incomplete example which has a central sun-like motif with niello inlay similar to examples from Norfolk (PAS NMS-6FEB42) and Flixborough (Evans and Loveluck 2009, 20, fig 1.7, no. 104). RLM 043 1051 (class E type 1) has a panel of niello inlaid with silver wire scrolls, a feature of class A type 5 strap ends (above, 3.4.1.6) indicating contemporaneity. RLM 014 1014 (class I) is the only silver example, and has incised interlace with traces of niello inlay that indicate a later ninth-century date.

Four of the Read class D type 1 tags are lead; these are probably models and are further discussed below (3.4.6) and in Chapter 5.3. They have tapering sub-circular plates with pierced protruding knops and all have the same trefoil motif. RLM 014 1034 has a slot on the back as though to accommodate a separate hook. There are post-medieval lead tags with copper-alloy hooks (Read 2008, 53, no. 166, 62, no. 196) but no early medieval examples

Table 3.4.14 Summary of early medieval hooked tags (after Read 2008)

Read class and type	
Class A type 1 (sub-triangular plate)	22
Class A type 2 (sub-circular plate)	27
Class B type 1 (as class A type 1 but collar between the plate and the hook)	3
Class B type 2 (as class A type 2 but collar between the plate and the hook)	2
Class B type 3 (sub-circular but heart-shaped plate)	1
Class D type 1 (sub-circular plates with protruding knops drilled for attachment)	8
Class D type 3 (lozenge-shaped plate and two pierced protruding attachment knops)	1
Class E type 1 (sub-circular plate, pierced protruding attachment knops and a Y-shaped collar between the plate and hook)	1
Class I (cast with protruding pierced attachment knobs and having a decorative silver dome-headed rivet though the centre of the plate)	1
Other	9
Total	**75**

are known, and the most complete example, RLM 013 0094, has an integral lead hook. Similar lead hooked tags have been found at Barham (PAS SF-7FDB11) and Coddenham (West 1998, 23, 138, fig 22).

Nine tags cannot be allocated to a Read type. Seven have large perforations through the plate, including six with sub-triangular plates with one single large triangular perforation, one of which (RLM 044 1828) has ring-and-dot decoration. There is a triangular-headed tag with a single triangular perforation, decorated with punched dots, from Castledyke South, Barton-on-Humber, a female inhumation of AS-FD (Drinkall and Foreman 1998, fig 114; Hines and Bayliss 2013, 228, e-fig 7.3), and similar examples from Coddenham (West 1998, 138, fig 22) and Lincolnshire (PAS LIN-8ED275; LIN-569E37). EKE 021 1197 has a sub-circular plate with a square perforation and RLM 013 1000 a sub-circular plate with a circular perforation. RLM 044 1547 has a triangular-shaped plate with a D-shaped loop projecting from its upper edge for which no parallel could be found.

3.4.1.8 Finger-rings

Fifteen of the eighteen finger-rings are copper alloy and three silver; eight are complete. RLM 059 1120 is a copper-alloy wire spiral ring which could be Roman or fifth- to seventh-century (Crummy 1983, 48, fig 50, 1759; MacGregor and Bolick 1993, 169–71). The rest can be dated to the mid-ninth to eleventh centuries.

Eleven, all copper alloy, are simple penannular hoops with circular or oval cross-sections, the terminals of which taper to a point and overlap. Similar examples are known from East Anglia at Fressingfield (PAS SF-10850 and SF-2B1A88), Freckenham (see SF-2AFE75), Elveden (West 1998, 140, fig 24) and Thetford (Rogerson and Dallas 1984, 69, 71, fig 110).

Six examples, three silver and three copper-alloy, are sheet hoops with tapering knotted terminals and expanded lozenge-shaped decorated bezels. The three copper-alloy rings have punched ring-and-dot decoration. RLM 013 0123, a silver ring, is represented by four joining fragments which include a knotted terminal and an ovoid bezel with rows of punched annulets. The fragments are distorted and the largest one appears to have been folded several times, suggesting scrap for recycling. There are similar finger-rings from Beachamwell, Norfolk (DCMS 2007, 67, no. 86) and York, where they are dated to the later ninth and early tenth centuries (Mainman and Rogers 2000, 2585–6, no. 10517).

3.4.1.9 Slipknot wire rings

Wire rings with slipknot terminals are found as necklet components in seventh-century inhumations but had a range of functions and a long currency. The small gold ring RLM 013 1361 (Høilund Nielsen WR1-a) may be from a necklet or may have been intended as part of a toilet set or pendant – the gold cross pendant from Newball, Lincolnshire (PAS LIN-75FD54) hangs from a similar ring – but it is in very fresh condition and may not have been used. RLM 036 1135 is a larger copper-alloy ring (Høilund Nielsen WR1-c). These occur in burials of AS-FD–E but there are examples from Anglo-Scandinavian contexts and the knotting of ends is a common feature of Viking-period rings (Hines and Bayliss 2013; Mainman and Rogers 2000, 2584, fig 1277).

3.4.1.10 Spangles

Ten triangles of copper-alloy sheet, seven of which are pierced, are interpreted as spangles, which occur as necklace components, or attached to pinheads, in burials

of the later fifth to later seventh centuries (Meaney 1981, 189–90; MacGregor and Bolick 1993, 244–6).

3.4.1.11 Jewellery components (Fig 3.4.11)

Nine objects, eight gold and one silver, are recognisably components of larger composite pieces of jewellery, buckles or belt fittings, or weapon fittings. All can be dated to the later sixth or the early to middle seventh century. RLM 013 0187 and RLM 044 1244 are sheet gold panels with filigree Style II, the former incomplete, the latter complete but bent and with a beaded wire border; RLM 059 1163 is part of a plain gold sheet inset with a beaded wire border. EKE 019 1203 is the frame of a gold setting, possibly from a cabochon pendant; EKE 020 1049 and RLM 013 1360 are circular gold settings with beaded wire collars; RLM 013 0130 is a pierced domed rivet head with a beaded wire collar; RLM 059 1129 is a gold beaded wire ring in pristine condition which appears not to have been used and was therefore probably manufactured here. The only silver item is RLM 013 0894, a circular setting with a beaded wire rim. Apart from RLM 059 1129, all items are fragmentary or damaged. Some of this may have been sustained in the ploughsoil but overall the nature of the damage, in particular the way in which EKE 019 1203 has been squeezed out of shape, strongly suggests that these are from objects broken down for recycling.

Fig 3.4.11 Jewellery components: (1) EKE 019 1203; (2) EKE 020 1049; (3) RLM 013 0130; (4) RLM 059 1163; (5) RLM 013 0187; (6) RLM 059 1129; (7) RLM 013 1360; (8) RLM 044 1244. Scale 2:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

3.4.2 Personal possessions (Table 3.4.15)

The objects assigned to this category are predominantly of the middle fifth to seventh centuries. Fifty-two are from RLM 044 and a number of these are likely to come from disturbed burials.

Table 3.4.15 Early medieval personal possessions quantified by type

Type		Notes
Bag catch or fitting	35	37 including unfinished examples
Decorative mount or plaque	30	
Girdle hanger	23	
Tweezers	20	
Figure-of-eight link	17	
Strap loop/fitting	17	
Girdle ring	3	
Knives and chape	3	
Toilet implement	2	
Key	1	
Spoon	1	
Total	**152**	

3.4.2.1 Girdle hangers (Table 3.4.16)

Girdle hangers – copper-alloy key imitations – occur in female burials of AS-FA in Anglian England. Penn and Brugmann (2007, 30) defined three types based on terminal shape. Felder (2014, 68–72, 87–94) has subsequently proposed a primary distinction between A-type 'open' terminals and B-type 'closed' terminals and a secondary classification scheme using the shank neck,

Table 3.4.16 Early medieval girdle hangers (after Felder 2014; Penn and Brugmann 2007)

Felder type	Penn and Brugmann type	
Terminal type A2a	gh1	1
Terminal type A2b	gh1	2
Terminal type A2f	gh2	1
Terminal type A2		1
Shank neck type I		2
Shank neck type II		1
Shank neck type III		2
Shank neck type V		2
Unassigned		11
Total		**23**

which allows some fragments to be assigned types. Four of the twenty-three fragments from Rendlesham can be assigned to a Penn and Brugmann type and twelve to a Felder type.

The classified terminal fragments are all Felder type A2 (open T-shaped terminals). Earlier types, including A2a and A2b, are focused in East Anglia, with A2a identified as an East Anglian form; type A2f is more common and longer-lived, with a wider distribution (Felder 2014, 116–17, 296, map 5.15). No type B terminals are identified but these are less common in East Anglia than in Lincolnshire and the east Midlands (ibid, 269). The shank neck fragments are types with a wide distribution in East Anglia, Lincolnshire and the east Midlands (ibid, 269–70).

3.4.2.2 Girdle rings

There are three fragments of cast copper-alloy rings with lobed mouldings, usually found at the waist and associated with girdle assemblages in female inhumations of AS-FA as at Bergh Apton, Norfolk, grave 9, and Morningthorpe, Norfolk, grave 397 (Green and Rogerson 1978, 13, fig 71; Green *et al* 1987, 155, fig 451).

3.4.2.3 Toilet implements and tweezers

There are two copper-alloy toilet implements: a scoop (RLM 042 1140) and a pick (RLM 013 0179); similar examples are known from burials of the fifth to seventh centuries and settlement contexts of the fifth to ninth centuries (MacGregor and Bolick 1993, 216–20; Hills and Lucy 2013, 64–8; Evans and Loveluck 2009, 30; Tester *et al* 2014, 246). Two pairs of miniature tweezers (RLM 0621; RLM 044 1324), which are most commonly found as cremation grave goods, are likely to be fifth- or sixth-century (Hills and Lucy 2013, 62–3, 217–32, tab 3.13).

Only five of the eighteen full-size copper-alloy tweezers are complete. Eight have straight or gently flaring arms, sometimes with incised decoration or side bevelling, a type known from both Roman and fifth- to seventh-century contexts (MacGregor and Bolick 1993, 220–5; Hills and Lucy 2013, 62–4). Eight have expanded triangular tips with inturned edges, a seventh- to ninth-century type (Hinton 1996, 44–6; Evans and Loveluck 2009, 30; Tester *et al* 2014, 244–5). RLM 051 1001 is unusual, with flaring and centrally waisted terminals similar to examples from Norfolk (PAS NMS-6B9322; NLM-251B88; NMS-A1F497). RLM 044 1224 has a suspension loop and solid rectangular-sectioned stem before it splits into arms and is similar to an unstratified example from Flixborough (Evans and Loveluck 2009, 30–2, fig 1.12, no. 223).

3.4.2.4 Bag catches and fittings (Fig 3.4.12)

Thirty-five copper-alloy catches, fourteen of which are complete, and two further unfinished examples (RLM 014 1055; RLM 013 0726), show that they were being manufactured at Rendlesham (3.4.6, below; Ch 5.3).

These occur in female burials of AS-FD–E and have been interpreted as box fittings (Lethbridge 1931, 48; West 1998, 22), but recurrent association with bag groups and leather or textile remains indicates that they are from bags or satchels (Geake 1997, 80–1, fig 4.29; Hawkes and

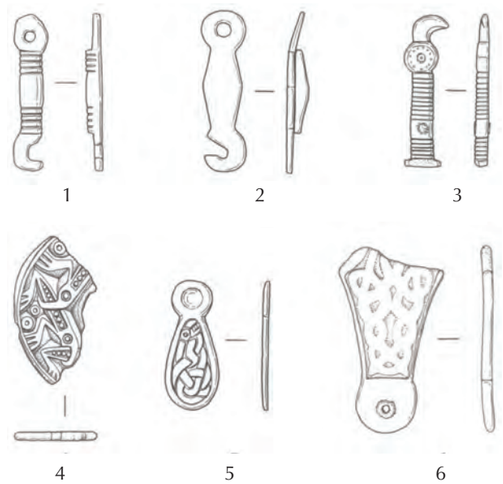


Fig 3.4.12 Bag catches: (1) RLM 044 1094; (2) RLM 013 0591; (3) RLM 036 1227; Mounts: (4) RLM 044 1662; (5) RLM 038 1196; (6) RLM 044 1694. Scale 1:1. *Donna Wreathall; © Suffolk County Council*

Grainger 2006, 62, 250, fig 2.88; Penn 2011, 118, fig 98). They are not found in earlier burials, nor are they represented in eighth- to ninth-century settlement assemblages at Brandon, Flixborough, London, Southampton or Ipswich, but they do occur in the metal-detecting assemblages from Barham and Coddenham (West 1998, figs 6, 21; Ch 9.1–2). Their provision in late well-furnished inhumations suggests that the bags they were attached to were status-linked items.

The Rendlesham bag catches are of two main types. Nineteen have a lozenge-shaped bar with a projecting keel with one perforated circular terminal and one hooked terminal. Twelve have a rectangular bar with a rectangular or D-shaped section, sometimes decorated, with one perforated circular and one hooked terminal. Two examples (RLM 036 1227 and RLM 044 1693) have rectangular bars with transverse ridges and hooked terminals in the form of stylised birds' heads; RLM 036 1227 has an iron rivet through the end of the shaft rather than a pierced terminal.

RLM 013 1013 and RLM 013 0048 are similar to the catches but have loops at both ends of a narrow bar instead of a loop at one end and a hook at the other. There are hooked catches of this form from a bag or case at Burwell, Cambridgeshire, grave 83 (Lethbridge 1931, 62–6) and the Rendlesham examples also seem likely to have been bag fittings.

3.4.2.5 Figure-of-eight links

There are seventeen cast copper-alloy figure-of-eight links, all but two complete. These could have had a range of functions, but similar links comprise the connecting chains of work-boxes or relic containers, and sometimes occur as chatelaine components, in female burials of AS-FD–E (Meaney 1981, 181–9; Geake 1997, figs 4.2, 4.16; Hines and Bayliss 2013). Most of those from Rendlesham have corroded iron adhering, and one (RLM 013 0384) a partial iron link. Four are decorated, two with punched annulets, one with ring-and-dot and one with grooves.

3.4.2.6 Strap loops and strap fittings

There are fourteen copper-alloy strap loops, eight complete. Most are undecorated but a few have V-shaped notches, linear or ring-and-dot decoration. Such strap loops had a range of functions and a long date-range continuing, often with more decoration, into the medieval period. Examples from sixth- and seventh-century inhumations come from Morningthorpe, Norfolk grave 225 and Coddenham, Suffolk, grave 30 (Green *et al* 1987, 273, fig 370; Penn 2011, 118, fig 98). Examples from Flixborough include two from early to middle ninth-century contexts (Evans and Loveluck 2009, 24–5, fig 1.10).

There are three copper-alloy strap fittings. RLM 044 1596 was made to resemble a miniature triangular-plated buckle and can be considered contemporary with that buckle form. RLM 044 1774 is a three-way strap distributor, probably of the fifth to seventh centuries (cf Penn 2011, fig 98; Carver 2005, fig 114 29a; Hines and Bayliss 2013, 200). RLM 042 1135 may be a strap-junction of later early medieval date (cf PAS BH-9BC397; WILT-9F4BA2; Griffiths *et al* 2007, 169, no. 2089).

3.4.2.7 Knives

RLM 013 0599 is a complete whittle tang knife of Evison type 6 and Ottaway form C (Evison 1987, 113; Ottaway 1992, 559); blade fragment RLM 059 1048 is also of this form but is missing the tang. Evison's type 6 is found in burials of the late sixth and seventh centuries, Ottaway's form C from contexts of the eighth to tenth centuries (Parfitt and Anderson 2012, 164–71; Evans and Loveluck 2009, 203–4; Tester *et al* 2014, 267–8); the distinction in date arises from Evison's typology being based on material from furnished inhumations and Ottaway's on material from later settlement contexts.

RLM 038 1299 is a fragment of a tenth-century chape, probably from a knife sheath, of openwork design depicting a horse and rider (cf PAS LIN-E5C477; WAW-03F886; SF-0E88A2).

3.4.2.8 Decorative mounts, plaques and fittings (Figs 3.4.12–13)

There are thirty mounts or plaques. Most are cast copper alloy; of these, twelve have integral rivet shanks on the back. RLM 013 0218 is an unfinished or failed copper-alloy casting with Style II decoration (3.4.6, below).

This is a group of high-status material of the late sixth or seventh centuries. RLM 013 0284, a gilded fragment with three-strand interlace and RLM 044 1195, also with three-strand interlace, are possibly from roundels (cf Speake 1980, pls 15–16; MacGregor and Bolick 1993, 238–9). RLM 044 1662, a gilded copper-alloy circular mount with a frieze of Style II animals, is very similar to a repoussé silver mount from Caenby, Lincolnshire (Speake 1980, fig 15). There are five small mounts in the form of Style II birds of prey, very like larger shield mounts, four of copper alloy and one silver. RLM 013 0555, a rectangular piece of gold sheet with filigree border and decoration, was originally attached by a rivet in each corner but appears to have been forcibly removed, perhaps for recycling. The copper-alloy fitting RLM 013

Fig 3.4.13 Mounts: (1) RLM 013 0555; (2) RLM 013 0131; (3) RLM 013 0362. Scale 1:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

0346 has Style II bird heads with a Y-shaped groove down the centre of the beak, a rare feature otherwise seen on metalwork from Sutton Hoo Mound 1 and considered a trait of the craftsman or workshop responsible for the great gold buckle, purse lid, and hanging-bowl repair (Speake 1980, 42). RLM 013 0131, a tongue-shaped gold fitting with rivet hole at end, also looks damaged and may represent recycling.

Three small copper-alloy mounts with late seventh-century zoomorphic interlace are probably box or casket fittings. RLM 013 0362 may be part of a small casket hinge like the silver example from Desborough, Northamptonshire, an elite female burial of AS-FE (Baker 1880, pl 34). RLM 044 1694 is a triangular fitting with a rounded end attached by a pin through a terminal circular lug. RLM 038 1196 appears to be a drop-shaped example of the same thing but the lug has not been pierced, indicating that it was unused and possibly unfinished.

RLM 013 0366 is a cast gilded copper-alloy plaque or mount in a figure-of-eight form; it is the same size as the figure-of-eight links (above, 3.4.2.5), but clearly decorative.

3.4.2.9 Key (Fig 3.4.14)

RLM 043 1036 is a discarded casting of a copper-alloy key for a mounted lock, probably a box or casket. It has a plain rectangular bit and solid disc-shaped bow, to which the casting sprue is still attached. If contemporary with other failed castings from Rendlesham, this is to be dated to the late sixth or seventh century. Keys for mounted locks are known from furnished inhumations of AS-FE in Kent at Kingston Down, grave 222, Chartham Down, grave 16, and Bridge, grave 1 (Faussett 1856, 81, 171, pl 12; Wilkinson 2008). There is a copper-alloy casket key of similar size and shape from Brandon (Tester *et al* 2014, 182–3) and a metal-detected example from Eye, Suffolk (PAS SF-5FA2A5).

Fig 3.4.14 Key: (1) RLM 043 1036; Vessel mount: (2) RLM 043 1017. Scale 1:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

3.4.2.10 Spoon

EKE 019 1117, an incomplete copper-alloy spoon, is similar to examples in bone, copper alloy and silver from settlement contexts of the eighth and ninth centuries (Hinton 1996, 55–7; Tester *et al* 2014, 17–80).

3.4.3 Household objects (Table 3.4.17)

The ninety objects within this category are all from vessels. Most are pottery sherds, but there are copper-alloy bucket mounts, a single fragment from a glass vessel, and fittings and fragments from metal vessels including hanging bowls, trivet-footed bowls and east Mediterranean basins ('Coptic bowls'). These imported metal vessels are part of the material expression of elite identity in late sixth- and seventh-century England. They are all fragmentary and, apart from a few pieces from RLM 044, potentially derive from pieces broken for recycling.

Table 3.4.17 Summary of early medieval household items by material

Material	
Pottery	63
Copper alloy	24
Silver	(adjoining fragments) 2
Glass	1
Total	**90**

Table 3.4.18 Summary of early medieval pottery (sherd count)

Type	Body	Rim	Base	Decorated	Total
Hand-made (410–720)	24	1	1	6	26
Ipswich ware (700–850)	6	13	1	–	20
Thetford ware (850–1100)	4	9	3	–	16
Ipswich-Thetford ware (850–1100)	1	0	0	1	1
Total					**63**

3.4.3.1 Pottery and glass (Table 3.4.18)

Eighteen of the hand-made sherds are from RLM 044 and of these, twelve, including five with stamped decoration, are from the known cemetery area and so are probably from cremation urns. The remainder, like the Ipswich ware and Thetford ware sherds, represent domestic activity.

RLM 044 1415 is a pale green body sherd from a glass vessel.

3.4.3.2 Buckets (Table 3.4.19)

There are ten copper-alloy fittings from stave-built wooden buckets of the late fifth to later sixth centuries (Cook 2004, 43). Eight are fragments from hoops or uprights (Cook 2004, 31–3). RLM 036 1316 is a bifurcated handle mount and RLM 013 0389 part of a simple triangular appliqué.

Table 3.4.19 Early medieval metal household items by type

Type	
Bucket mount	10
Hanging-bowl mount	9
East Mediterranean vessel footring	2
Trivet footring	2
Other vessel mount	3
Total	**26**

3.4.3.3 Hanging-bowl and other vessel mounts (Figs 3.4.14–15; Table 3.4.19)

Hanging bowls were manufactured in west and north Britain, and are found in England in contexts of the second half of the sixth and seventh centuries (Brenan 1991; Youngs 2009). There are six copper-alloy hanging-bowl mounts from Rendlesham, one represented by two pieces, probably representing five or six vessels. RLM 013 0045 and 0604 are fragments from the same circular escutcheon with enamelled spirals. RLM 057 1002 is part of a circular escutcheon with pelta motifs. RLM 037 1040, a circular mount with a swastika motif formed of four beasts filled with blue enamel, is very similar to a disc from Faversham, Kent (Brenan 1991, 209, cat nos 23–4). RLM 044 1097 is an openwork mount, and RLM 014 1061 is similar to decorative strips on the Lullingstone hanging bowl (Brenan 1991, 245, 351, 40b and 40c). RLM 044 1782 is probably an attachment terminal from a hanging-bowl mount (cf Brenan 1991, 341, 33.d). It is possible in principle that the two fragments from RLM 044 may be from disturbed burials but it appears unlikely,

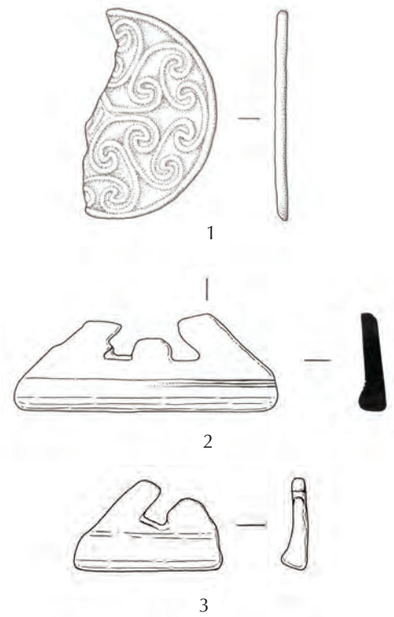


Fig 3.4.15 Hanging-bowl mount: (1) RLM 057 1002; Footring fragments from east Mediterranean basins: (2) RLM 013 0142; (3) RLM 038 1195. Scale 1:1. *Donna Wreathall;* © *Suffolk County Council*

given that they were found upslope some distance to the north and west of the known burial area.

RLM 014 1015 and 1016 are joining pieces of a unique silver-gilt vessel mount, probably from a hanging bowl or a vessel similar to that from Badley, Suffolk (West 1998, 301–2, figs 2, 157, pl 1). The downward-facing animal heads, similar to those on the footplate upper borders of great square-headed brooches, the terminal mask, punched triangles with niello inlay and parcel gilding suggest manufacture in the first half or middle of the sixth century in eastern England. It might be a replacement for a single lost mount but a piece of this quality could have been part of a set of fittings intended for refurbishment rather than repair. It implies possession of the vessel before the middle of the sixth century.

RLM 043 1017 is a gilded copper-alloy trefoil mount, with three circular enamelled panels. Traces of the copper-alloy sheet to which it was attached, probably a vessel, survive on the back. There is an identical decorative scheme on a tenth- to eleventh-century Continental disc brooch from Eyke (PAS SF-5C9509; Frick 1992, Taf 3, no. 48, Taf 9, no. 1). RLM 044 1787, a copper-alloy triangular fragment with traces of solder on the back, is probably an early medieval vessel mount but cannot be more closely dated. The face is decorated with an incised human figure, standing with arms raised. EKE 019 1098 is tentatively identified as a fragment from a copper-alloy vessel mount of ninth- or tenth-century date.

3.4.3.4 East Mediterranean basins (Fig 3.4.15; Table 3.4.19)

RLM 013 0142 and RLM 038 1195 are fragments from the openwork footrings of two cast copper-alloy basins, so-called 'Coptic bowls', of Werner's type B1 (Werner 1957). These were manufactured in the eastern Mediterranean and imported into north-west Europe; they occur in England as status items in burials of AS-MD–E (Blackmore *et al* 2019, 184–6).

3.4.3.5 Trivet-based bowl (Table 3.4.19)

RLM 044 1747 and RLM 044 1760 are very probably fragments from the cast trivet foot of a raised copper-alloy bowl like those from Coddenham graves 1 and 24, burials of AS-MF (Penn 2011, 9, 20, figs 89, 92; Hines and Bayliss 2013). The subsequent discovery nearby of a drop handle from such a vessel, too late to be included in the project database, supports this identification and suggests a disturbed inhumation. These vessels are considered sixth-century Rhineland products, but examples with unlooped footrings, like those from Coddenham and Rendlesham, are known from seventh-century burials at Kingston Down, Kent, grave 205, Castledyke South, Barton-on-Humber, grave 1 and Uncleby, East Yorkshire, grave 31 (Richards 1980, 19–20; Geake 1997, 87–8; Penn 2011, 77–8).

3.4.4 Weapons (Table 3.4.20)

All but one of the examples recovered from Rendlesham are dated to the fifth to seventh centuries. Most are simple shield studs but there are also sword and scabbard fittings and a single spearhead. The character of this material suggests the presence of a military elite in the middle to late fifth century and the late sixth to seventh centuries.

Table 3.4.20 Summary of early medieval weapons and weapon fittings

Type	Material	
Shield fitting	Copper alloy; iron	44
Scabbard mouthband	Silver; copper alloy	3
Pyramid mount	Copper alloy; silver; gold	3
Pommel fittings	Copper alloy; silver	4
Scabbard mount	Silver	1
Scabbard chape	Copper alloy	1
Spearhead	Iron	1
Total		**57**

3.4.4.1 Shield fittings

A group of copper-alloy studs with flat circular heads and integral shanks are interpreted as shield board fittings of Dickinson and Härke's type a, of the fifth to seventh centuries (Dickinson and Härke 1992, 27–8, fig 18). The heads are 10mm–20mm in diameter, with most examples towards the higher end of the range, and most have a white metal coating. In two cases fragments of iron corrosion on the shanks probably represent the retaining washer. RLM 037 1275 is a more elaborate example, with a gilded face in garbled Style I. Nineteen of these are from RLM 044 and a significant number could be from disturbed burials.

3.4.4.2 Sword belt and scabbard fittings (Figs 3.4.16–17)

Four gilded silver fragments (RLM 044 1250, 1435, 1509 and 1826) are from a buckle of Snartemo-Sjörup type (Rau 2010, 308–17, Abb 125, Taf 19). These have

Fig 3.4.16 Sword belt and scabbard fittings: (1) RLM 044 1250; 1435; 1509; 1826; (2) RLM 044 1434; (3) RLM 036 1186; (4) RLM 036 1047; (5) RLM 036 1343; (6) RLM 036 1137. Scale 1:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

Fig 3.4.17 Buckles of Snartemo-Sjörup type from Scandinavia and England. (1) Snartemo (Norway) Grave 5; (2) Sjörup (Denmark); (3) Nydam IV (Denmark); (4) Denmark (unknown findspot); (5) Lakenheath (Suffolk); (6) Finnestorp (Sweden). Scale 1:1. *(1)–(4) after Rau 2010, Abb 125; (5) © Suffolk County Council; (6) © With courtesy of Stiftelsen Offerplats Finnestorp*

composite plates with a circular frame, often with a beaded rim, housing a decorative inset which is typically a cast roundel with geometric decoration. The Rendlesham fragments are pieces of the frame and inset. This is a southern Scandinavian type, becoming more widely recognised through metal-detecting finds, especially at focal or central places (A Rau, pers comm, 2015). A metal-detecting find from Lakenheath, Suffolk (PAS SF-0D63A6) is a cast silver-gilt copy of this type.

Such buckles were a part of sword suspension, and associated with high-quality scabbards with silver-gilt mouthbands and chapes. Silver-gilt fragment RLM 044 1434 is probably from just such a scabbard mouthband. Although only a fragment, the very high-quality geometric chip-carving is closely paralleled on scabbard fittings from Finnestorp, Västergötland, Sweden (Nordqvist 2013; Bertram *et al* 2019, 37–42, 171–5, Abb 171). Together, these fragments appear to represent an elite south Scandinavian scabbard and sword belt of the middle or later fifth century, presumably with a weapon to match. The silver-gilt fitting RLM 036 1047, with chip-carved geometric decoration in Nydam style, may also be a scabbard fitting, set horizontally across the suspension of the scabbard and riveted at its edges (Rau 2010, Abb 134).

RLM 036 1137 and RLM 036 1343 are gilded copper-alloy scabbard mouthbands of Menghin type 3b and Høilund Nielsen SW-6e, dated in England to AS-MA–B (Menghin 1983, 336–7; Hines and Bayliss 2013, 187).

Scabbard chape RLM 036 1186 is similar in form to Menghin's types 3a and 3b but does not meet the strict formal criteria for either, not having a human mask between bird heads (3a) or an animal head between bird heads (3b) (Menghin 1983, 96–102; 351–3). Chapes of this broad form fall within Legoux *et al* types 89–92, dated PM–MA1, and the Rendlesham example could be middle to late fifth-century and certainly within AS-MA (Legoux *et al* 2009; Hines and Bayliss 2013). Although conventionally considered a Frankish type, with the majority of examples known from northern France and Rhineland, there is an increasing number known from metal-detecting finds in England with examples on the PAS database from Mildenhall, Suffolk (SF-2799), Greywell, Hampshire (SUR-72CF23), Newark, Nottinghamshire (DENO-061D23), Revesby, Lincolnshire (NCL-B0C444), Skirpenbeck, East Yorkshire (LVPL-917677) and Sproxton, Leicestershire (LEIC-7F2E18).

3.4.4.3 Pyramid sword buttons (Fig 3.4.18)

Pyramid buttons were part of the apparatus whereby the scabbard was attached to the sword belt in the later sixth and first half of the seventh century, AS-MD–E in England (Menghin 1983, 150–1; Hines and Bayliss 2013, 186, 488). The three Rendlesham examples show different degrees of elaboration that may reflect differences in social standing.

EKE 019 1124 is plain cast copper alloy with traces of a white metal coating, the only decoration being a rib along each edge. EKE 021 1023 is cast copper alloy in

Fig 3.4.18 Pyramid sword buttons: (1) RLM 013 0603; (2) EKE 021 1023; (3) EKE 019 1124. Scale 1:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

imitation of cloisonné. One cell still retains its cross-hatched gold backing foil, suggesting that the main insets were garnet, and a pale blue glass setting is still in place at one corner.

The final example, RLM 013 0603, is constructed with gold and garnet inlays over a silver core. There is a garnet inset, with no evidence for a backing foil, in a square cell on the top. Each of the sides is a single garnet inlay, laid directly onto the silver core, held in place at the edges with strips of gold sheet and beaded wire, and overlaid with a pierced gold filigree sheet. Combinations of filigree with garnet cloisonné and slab garnets are seen on pyramid buttons from the Staffordshire Hoard and elsewhere (Fern *et al* 2019, 56–8; 416) but there is no parallel for the application of filigree over a setting as in this example. The overall design, with a square garnet setting on top and side panels of gold filigree sheet, is however very closely paralleled on a casing for a pyramid from Tostock, Suffolk (PAS SF5196), and the sides of the sword pyramid from the princely burial at Broomfield, Essex, are single garnet inlays (Read 1894; BM 1894,1216.2).

3.4.4.4 Pommel caps and fittings (Fig 3.4.19)

There are three copper-alloy pommel caps of 'cocked hat' type (Menghin type 3; Høilund Nielsen SW1) which occur in in burials of AS-MB–C in England (Menghin 1983; Høilund Nielsen 2013, 183). Two are decorated, and so were not cores for more elaborate applied decoration. RLM 037 1135 has moulded edges to the top and traces of a white metal coating. RLM 044 1027 has concentric circles on one face and a quatrefoil in reserved metal within a sunken rectangle on the other. This quatrefoil motif, sometimes inlaid with red enamel, is known from dress accessories of AS-FA from a number of sites in north-west Suffolk and Cambridgeshire (eg West Stow, Suffolk: West 1998, fig 265.5; Little Wilbraham, Cambridgeshire, grave 171: CUMAA 48-1310) and on a wrist clasp from Coddenham (West 1998, fig 23.3). This supports a date within AS-MA for this piece, and may suggest a link with those areas or a common origin.

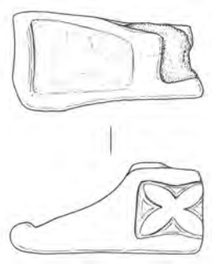


Fig 3.4.19 Pommel cap: (1) RLM 044 1027. Scale 1:1. *Donna Wreathall;* © *Suffolk County Council*

RLM 013 0808, a hand-made silver rivet 25mm long, is difficult to date precisely and could have had a number of possible functions, but is very similar to the rivets used to secure pommel caps and pommel rings and so may well come from a sword hilt (cf Hawkes 2000, fig 16; Hawkes and Grainger 2006, fig 2.147).

RLM 044 1381 is a lead model for the manufacture of a fixed pommel ring of Evison type 3, found on sword hilts of Menghin's *Zeitgruppen* C and D, and within Legoux *et al* type 93, MA2–3 (Evison 1967, 67; Menghin 1983, 63–73, 136–7; Legoux *et al* 2009). There is a silver example from the Staffordshire Hoard (Fern *et al* 2019, 40, fig 2.13, no. 82) but fittings of this type are rare in England and more common in France and Germany (Fischer *et al* 2008, 21–3). The implications of manufacture at Rendlesham are explored below (3.4.6) and in Chapter 5.3.

3.4.4.5 Spearhead or arrowhead

RLM 036 1196 is either a large arrowhead or, more probably, a small angular spearhead of Høilund Nielsen's type SP2-a2a of AS-MB–C (Høilund Nielsen 2013, 173).

3.4.5 Equestrian and transport

The twenty-eight copper-alloy objects of equestrian equipment range from the fifth to the eleventh century and include twenty harness fittings or mounts, four prick spurs and four stirrup strap mounts.

3.4.5.1 Sixth- and seventh-century harness mounts (Fig 3.4.20)

Sixteen finds representing fifteen copper-alloy harness mounts of the sixth and seventh centuries have been identified. The openwork mount RLM 057 1001 is closely paralleled by the plough-disturbed harness associated with the burial of a horse's head adjacent to Snape grave 47, a male inhumation of AS-MB–C (Filmer-Sankey and Pestell 2001, 111, 152, fig 110 xiii; Blackmore *et al* 2019, 26). Three rectangular mounts, RLM 042 1142, which is gilded, RLM 036 1001 and RLM 036 1066 all have central panels of geometric interlace suggesting a date in the later sixth century. The decoration on RLM 036 1001 is very sharp and the rivets have not been hammered, suggesting that it had not been used and may have been made at

Fig 3.4.20 Harness mounts: (1) RLM 036 1001; (2) RLM 057 1001; (3) RLM 042 1068; (4) RLM 038 1116. Scale 1:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

Rendlesham. An otherwise plain rectangular mount, RLM 036 1108, has scalloped edges. RLM 013 0647, a tongue-shaped fitting with an articulation loop at the broad end, has gilded Style II decoration. RLM 042 1068 is a gilded openwork fitting with a back plate, with interlace and Style II bird heads.

RLM 038 1116 is a large gilded circular mount with Style II zoomorphic interlace and a central white setting topped with a circular inset of garnet or red glass. This is very similar in size and decoration to a circular mount from Spelsbury, Oxfordshire (Speake 1980, pl 15), and to two harness mounts from Sutton Hoo Mound 17, a burial of AS-MD (Carver 2005, figs 111–12; Hines and Bayliss 2013, e-fig 6.6).

In addition, a number of the strap loops, including the three-way strap distributor RLM 044 1774, may be from horse harnesses (cf Filmer-Sankey and Pestell 2001, fig 110; Carver 2005, fig 114 29a; Fern 2005, figs 5.7, 5.9). RLM 044 1104 and 1105, adjoining fragments of a gilded copper-alloy mount with integral rivets, is also probably a strap end from a horse harness.

3.4.5.2 Prick spurs (Fig 3.4.21)

Four copper-alloy prick spurs, of shallow U-shaped form, are rare early medieval examples. Although they cannot be paralleled from secure dated contexts they are not late Roman (Jahn 1921; Shortt 1959; Booth *et al* 2010, 218–20, 290–1) and are quite different from Viking-period iron spurs.

RLM 038 1193 and 1127 are joining pieces of a complete spur with triangular-sectioned sides and integral central goad; the terminals are decorated, flattened and split, and may be zoomorphic. Very similar spurs from Suffolk at Pakenham and Icklingham are dated to the ninth century on the basis of the animal-head terminals (Wilson 1964, 28; 1965; Hinton 1974, 55–6), and metal-detecting has provided at least seven further examples from Norfolk and Suffolk. This form of prick spur may therefore be a ninth-century East Anglian type.

Lacking zoomorphic terminals, the other three cannot be dated in this way. RLM 013 0367 was fastened with small integral buckles at the ends of the arm and has a moulded projection, above the goad, a feature seen on prick spurs with split terminals from Norfolk at Lyng and Gooderstone, now in Norwich Castle Museum (L2003.10; 20102.10). RLM 036 1127 has flattened D-shaped terminals pierced to take iron rivets. RLM 042 1133 has split terminals with copper-alloy rivets, the remains of an iron goad, and decorative notching on the arms. Spurs are rare as grave finds, but prick spurs with short arms (Legoux *et al* type 99) are occasionally found in Merovingian-period burials of the fifth to early seventh centuries (Legoux *et al* 2009). These may all be eighth- or ninth-century, but the possibility that one or more is contemporary with the sixth- and seventh-century harness fittings should not be ruled out.

3.4.5.3 Eleventh-century fittings

There are four fragmentary stirrup strap mounts, four of Williams' class A, with one further identified as class A type 14 (Williams 1997, 75–7, fig 49), and one of class B type 2 group 1 (ibid, 75–7, 85–6, figs 49, 54). These have a wide distribution in England and class A mounts are more common.

Harness fittings are represented by two cheekpiece fragments and two harness links. The former are Williams type 1, the most common type (Williams 2007, 2–3). The latter are double-ended links with a centrally placed boss. One (RLM 013 0010) has an iron rivet through the centre which may be original, as riveted links survive, or a later modification (ibid, 4–5).

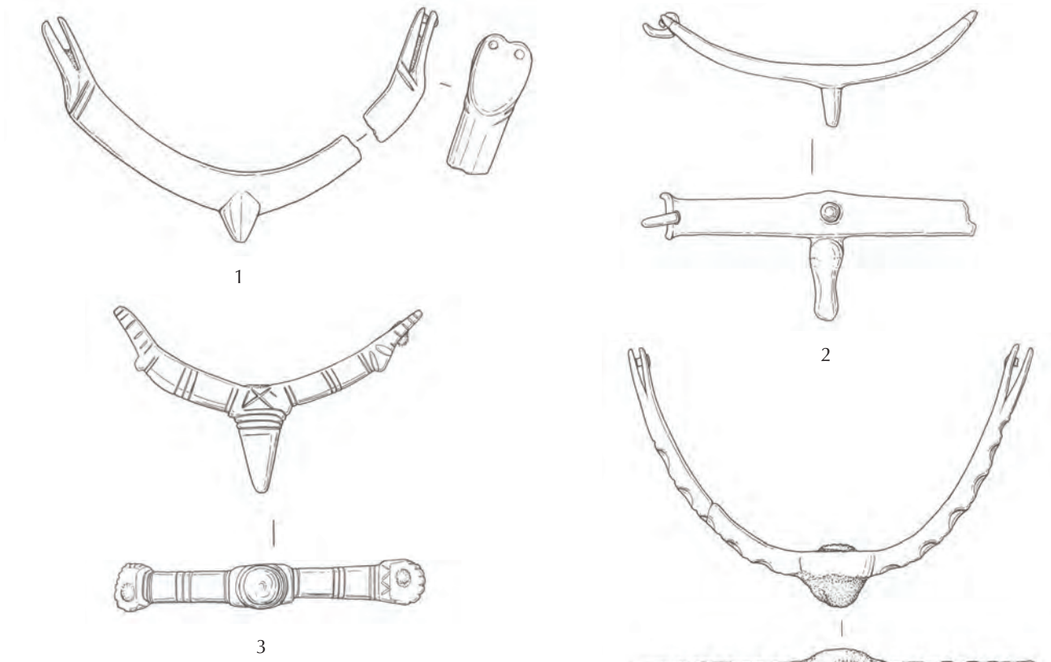


Fig 3.4.21 Prick spurs: (1) RLM 038 1193 (left) and RLM 038 1127 (right); (2) RLM 013 0367; (3) RLM 036 1127; (4) RLM 042 1133. Scale 1:1. *Donna Wreathall; © Suffolk County Council*

3.4.6 Metalworking (Fig 3.4.22; Table 3.4.21)

Apart from two pieces of possible iron slag all evidence recovered during the survey is for non-ferrous metal-working with craft work in copper alloy, silver and gold all represented. The technology and organisation of non-ferrous metalworking are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.3, e-apps 2–3, and Blakelock *et al* 2022, and the possibility that coins were minted here in Chapter 5.4; what follows summarises the evidence.

No mould or crucible fragments have been recovered but one piece of slag (RLM 043 1139) may be casting hearth waste. Otherwise, non-ferrous metalworking is represented by scrap metal, melt and other debris, sprues and sprue reservoirs discarded after casting, failed castings and unfinished items, and lead models. Among the melt are droplets of gold and silver.

The failed castings, unfinished objects and lead models provide unequivocal evidence for metalworking. Melted metal, sprues and scrap are not in themselves closely datable but in the absence of any direct evidence for earlier or later metalworking it is overwhelmingly likely that most, if not all, of this material is contemporary with the unfinished objects; this conclusion is supported by compositional analysis and technological links between casting debris and items being manufactured at Rendlesham. In addition, many of the fragments of precious metal, such as the jewellery components (above, 3.4.1.11), gold filigree mount RLM 013 0555 and hack metal piece RLM 044 1825, may well represent scrap for recycling, and this is likely to be true as well for some of the copper alloy. The ingots and coin blanks also need to be considered as potential raw material for the smith as well as being bullion with an inherent currency value.

The unfinished copper-alloy objects were cast in two-piece moulds and were discarded without trimming flashing and sprue or channel metal. There are eight unfinished buckle loops of Marzinzik (2003) types I.9 and I.10d-ii, six pins of Ross (1991) type L, two bag catches and a Style II mount, all datable to the later sixth and seventh centuries. The possibly unfinished or unused casket mount (RLM 038 1196) and harness mount (RLM 036 1001) fall within this date-range, as does the unfinished gold belt fitting (RLM 059 1162) and the

Fig 3.4.22 Metalworking: *Lead models*: (1) hooked tag, RLM 013 0094; (2) pommel ring, RLM 044 1381; (3) buckle loop, RLM 059 1090; *Finished and unfinished objects*: (4) mount, RLM 013 0218; (5) buckle loop, RLM 013 0103; (6) buckle loop, RLM 036 1194; (7) buckle, RLM 044 1171; (8) buckle, RLM 044 1273; (9) failed pin, RLM 013 0196; (10) failed pin, RLM 013 0540; (11) finished pin, RLM 013 0112; (12) failed bag catch, RLM 014 1055; (13) unfinished bag catch, RLM 013 0726; (14) finished bag catch, RLM 044 1174; *Scrap*: gold sheet: (15) RLM 014 1043; (16) RLM 036 1073; (17) RLM 043 1042; silver scrap: (18) RLM 013 0812; (19) RLM 013 0938; (20) cut fragment from silver-gilt object, RLM 044 1825; *Melt*: (21) gold droplet, RLM 013 0370; (22) gold droplet, RLM 059 1005; (23) silver melt, RLM 013 0129; (24) silver droplet, RLM 013 1312; (25) silver melt, RLM 013 0833; (26) fused early silver pennies, RLM 036 1046; (27) fused early silver pennies, RLM 044 1264; (28) copper-alloy melt, RLM 013 0867; *Sprues*: (29) RLM 013 0267; (30) RLM 013 0793; (31) RLM 013 0834; (32) RLM 013 0998. Scale 1:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

Table 3.4.21 Early medieval finds associated with metalworking

Type	Material	
Metalworking debris (melt and slag)	Copper alloy	62
	Iron	2
Sprues	Copper alloy	45
Metal droplets	Gold	3
	Silver	8
	Copper alloy	1
Scrap fragments	Gold	7
	Silver	6
	Copper alloy	1
Unfinished objects	Gold	1
	Copper alloy	21
Models	Lead	6
Total		**163**
Ingots	Gold	3
	Silver	16
	Copper alloy	3
Coin blanks	Gold	2
	Silver	1

pristine gold beaded wire ring (RLM 059 1129). The unfinished key is less closely datable, and may be eighth or ninth century. The Ross type LXX pin, if it is a failed casting rather than a damaged item, is also probably later. Some of the buckle loops have evidence that several were cast in the same mould, and one of the Ross type L pins was discarded because the two halves of the mould were misaligned (e-app 2, 19; Blakelock *et al* 2022, 353).

The lead models provide further direct evidence for metalworking. Two are of the later sixth and seventh centuries: RLM 059 1090, part of a model for a II.23/BU3 buckle loop, and RLM 044 1381, for a sword-ring, an item likely to be made of precious metal. The four lead hooked tags are unlikely to be earlier than the later eighth century.

Two groups of early pennies have been heated to the point at which they fused together but were not fully melted; enough surface detail survives to identify the top coin in each group: type B (RLM 036 1046) and type Q (RLM 044 1264). At first sight these appear to represent direct evidence for the recycling of coinage as jewellery, ingots or new coins but if this was deliberate processing it is unclear why it was halted at the brief moment before full melting obliterated all detail. It seems more likely that it was accidental – either in domestic fires or through proximity to high temperatures in a metalworking area (4.3.2.1, below).

The datable evidence at Rendlesham suggests intensive metalworking from the late sixth until the early eighth century in copper alloy, silver and gold, with later, perhaps sporadic activity into the ninth to eleventh centuries. During the earlier phase, production included both elite metalwork items in precious metal and lower value utilitarian items in copper alloy, but some of the latter – notably the bag catches – may have been fittings for more costly composite items. It is entirely possible, indeed may be considered likely, that coinage was struck here in the seventh and eighth centuries but there is no clinching proof for this. Given their proximity, and the close parallels between some objects, the possibility that some of the metalwork excavated from burials at Snape and Sutton Hoo was made at Rendlesham requires serious consideration.

3.4.7 Weights and measures (Fig 3.4.23; Table 3.4.22)

Balances and weights are known from burials in England from the second quarter of the sixth to the late seventh century. Where datable, most examples of balances and weights buried together as sets are from well-furnished male burials of AS-MB in Kent, with an outlier at Watchfield in the Upper Thames valley. There is also a set from a female burial of AS-FD–E at Barton-on-Humber, and individual balances or balance components occur in female burials of AS-MB–E. They were used to weigh coined and uncoined bullion according to the weight standards of contemporary gold coinages, and so are a proxy for currency use (Werner 1954; Steuer 1987; Scull 1990; Parfitt and Anderson 2012, 150–3).

RLM 013 0625 is a fragment of a copper-alloy balance beam with a zoomorphic terminal, also a feature of the balance from Barton-on-Humber. The Rendlesham terminal is a Style II bird head, and has the Y-shaped groove down the centre of the beak seen on mount RLM 013 0346 and considered a trait of the Sutton Hoo workshop (above, 3.4.2.8; Speake 1980, 42).

RLM 013 0470 and RLM 036 1021 are square copper-alloy weights with Byzantine denomination marks: 'N' denoting *nomisma* = *solidus* and 'H' denoting one-third of a *solidus* = *tremissis*. Weights of this type are known from balance sets in England and on the Continent (Scull 1990). Twenty-two further examples are also identified as sixth- or seventh-century coin weights on the basis of their similarity with examples from excavated weight sets; all are copper alloy except for four lead examples. Sixteen are circular, 7mm–13mm in diameter, and six are square

Fig 3.4.23 Weights and measures: *Balance beam*: (1) RLM 013 0625; *Weights with Byzantine denomination markings*: (2) RLM 013 0470; (3) RLM 036 1021; *Other probable weights*: (4) RLM 036 1040; (5) RLM 036 1311; (6) RLM 044 1789; Currency and associated objects: *Gold coin blanks*: (7) RLM 036 1351; (8) RLM 044 1004; *Gold ingots:* (9) RLM 013 0369; (10) RLM 043 1041; (11) RLM 044 1508; *Silver ingots*: (12) RLM 013 0036; (13) RLM 013 0893; (14) RLM 013 0393; (15) RLM 013 0557; *Copper-alloy ingot*: (16) RLM 013 0316. Scale 1:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

Table 3.4.22 Early medieval coin weights

Find no.	Material	Wt (g)	Shape	Markings	Notes
RLM 013 0905	Copper alloy	0.32	Sub-circular	Two tiny punched annulets on both faces	
RLM 044 1788	Copper alloy	0.44	Sub-circular	None	
RLM 013 0449	Copper alloy	0.57	Square	Single circular indentation in the centre of one face	
RLM 036 1040	Copper alloy	0.89	Sub-circular	Five punched annulets arranged in a circle on one face	
RLM 013 0906	Copper alloy	1.05	Square	Annulet in the centre and each corner of one face	
RLM 036 1264	Copper alloy	1.05	Sub-circular	None	
RLM 036 1021	Copper alloy	1.06	Square	Denomination mark 'H' on one face	
RLM 036 1312	Copper alloy	1.24	Sub-circular	None	
RLM 044 1593	Copper alloy	1.40	Sub-circular	None	
RLM 044 1789	Copper alloy	1.84	Sub-circular	Semi-circular arc of rectangular-shaped punch-marks on one face	re-used Roman coin
RLM 036 1146	Copper alloy	2.66	Sub-circular	None	
RLM 043 1089	Copper alloy	2.98	Sub-circular	One circular indentation on one face	
RLM 044 1632	Lead	3.81	Sub-circular	Tiny copper-alloy inlay on one face	
RLM 036 1311	Copper alloy	3.84	Sub-circular	Ring-and-dot motif stamped into the centre of both faces	
RLM 044 1605	Copper alloy	3.87	Sub-circular	None	
RLM 036 1152	Copper alloy	3.95	Sub-circular	Circular hole through centre	
RLM 013 0470	Copper alloy	4.20	Square	Denomination mark 'N' on one face	
RLM 044 1034	Copper alloy	5.52	Sub-circular	Two drilled circular indentations in the roughly the centre of both faces	
RLM 013 0171	Lead	5.82	Square	Annulet in each corner of one face	
RLM 036 1105	Copper alloy	9.02	Sub-circular	Worn engraved cross on one face	
RLM 036 1123	Lead	9.32	Square	None	
RLM 044 1103	Lead	10.90	Square	None	
RLM 013 0469	Copper alloy	20.95	Square	None	
RLM 044 1102	Copper alloy	–	Sub-circular	Punched annulets in vertical straight line across obverse bust	re-used Roman coin

of 8mm–17mm. Ten of the circular weights are marked and two are modified Roman coins: a *sestertius* of Marcus Aurelius with punched annulets (RLM 044 1102) and possibly a barbarous radiate with an arc of rectangular indentations (RLM 044 1789).

Some of the Rendlesham weights are very close to multiples of 1.52g (the Byzantine standard for the *tremissis*) or 1.33g (the Merovingian standard) (RLM 013 0469, RLM 036 1105, RLM 036 1152, RLM 036 1146 and RLM 036 1123) but most are not – including RLM 036 1021, marked for one *tremissis*, which at 1.06g is seriously underweight by either standard. There is, however, variability within and between excavated weight-sets, and metrological analysis is complicated by a range of factors: post-depositional changes, the possibility that both silver and gold standards are represented (Hines 2010), the possibility that there are fractional values, and the variation that would inevitably arise from individual usage in the absence of a central standardising authority. Weight standards and coinage are discussed further below (3.7.3; Ch 5.4.4).

RLM 014 1108 is a Viking-period lead weight, also for weighing bullion. It has triangular indentations on one face and a depression on the other which may originally have held a separate element. Comparable weights are known from the Viking camp site at Torksey, Lincolnshire (Blackburn 2011).

3.4.8 Currency and associated objects (Fig 3.4.23; Table 3.4.23)

In addition to the coins, balance fragment and coin weights there are three possible coin blanks, and two gold, fifteen silver and three copper-alloy ingots. The gold and silver items had a currency value as metal well as being potential raw material for the metalsmith.

RLM 036 1351 and RLM 044 1004 are plain gold discs very similar to those in the purse assemblage from Sutton Hoo Mound 1 (Bruce-Mitford 1975, 645–6). Both fall within the weight range for contemporary struck *tremisses* or shillings. RLM 036 1351, which is narrower, thicker and heavier, is the more likely to be an unstruck blank; RLM 044 1004 may be intended as a substitute. RLM 013 1351 is an incomplete silver disc that has been

Table 3.4.23 Early medieval coin blanks and ingots

Coin blanks	Material	Shape	Diameter (mm)	Wt (g)
RLM 036 1351	Gold	Disc	8.70	1.34
RLM 044 1004	Gold	Disc	13.00	1.22
RLM 013 1351	Silver	Disc	9.50	0.97
Ingots	**Material**	**Shape**	**Length (mm)**	**Wt (g)**
RLM 043 1041	Gold	Ovoid	8.20	1.77
RLM 044 1508	Gold	Polyhedral	6.20	0.90
RLM 013 0036	Silver	Polyhedral	7.90	1.15
RLM 013 0371	Silver	Rectangular/ovoid	9.15	1.51
RLM 013 0393	Silver	Rectangular/ovoid	12.60	1.84
RLM 013 0554	Silver	Rectangular/ovoid	14.40	14.75
RLM 013 0557	Silver	Rectangular/ovoid	11.75	1.74
RLM 013 0558	Silver	Rectangular/ovoid	13.07	0.86
RLM 013 0893	Silver	Polyhedral	6.62	0.61
RLM 013 0980	Silver	Rectangular/ovoid	9.64	2.72
RLM 013 1384	Silver	Rectangular/ovoid	19.10	3.85
RLM 036 1349	Silver	Rectangular/ovoid	12.75	1.45
RLM 036 1352	Silver	Rectangular/ovoid	21.91	2.75
RLM 042 1160	Silver	Rectangular/ovoid	14.68	1.09
RLM 044 1005	Silver	Polyhedral	9.46	2.56
RLM 044 1653	Silver	Polyhedral	17.07	2.83
RLM 045 1162	Silver	Rectangular/ovoid	10.45	1.38
RLM 013 0316	Copper alloy	Rectangular/ovoid	20.70	2.09
RLM 036 1068	Copper alloy	Rectangular/ovoid	27.32	4.04
RLM 038 1171	Copper alloy	Rectangular/ovoid	10.20	3.68

part melted; when complete it would have fallen within the size and weight range of early pennies ('*sceattas*': see 3.7.3.1, below) and may be a blank.

One of the gold ingots is polyhedral and two are flattened ovoids similar to that from the Sutton Hoo Mound 1 purse assemblage (Bruce-Mitford 1975, 647). Three of the silver ingots are fragmentary, one incomplete and the rest complete, four are polyhedral, the remainder are rectangular or ovoid in shape with rounded terminals, and seven have transverse hammer marks on one or both faces. This is a feature of Viking-period silver ingots (Blackburn 2010, 89) but is likely to have been a long-lived method of helping form the bar and testing the properties of the metal (e-app 3, 10). The precious metal ingots are smaller than most published Viking-period examples and given the date-range of evidence for metalworking and intensive currency use are more likely to be sixth- to eighth-century in date.

The three copper-alloy ingots, RLM 013 0316, RLM 036 1068 and RLM 038 1171, are slightly larger in size, rectangular in shape and all have transverse hammer marks across one face. Again, these are considered likely to be sixth to eighth century in date.

3.4.9 Religion and cult

RLM 036 1345 consists of five fragments which may possibly be from a copper-plated or brazed iron handbell. Such bells are known from secure contexts of the middle ninth to eleventh centuries at Brandon and Flixborough (Tester *et al* 2014, 274; Evans and Loveluck 2009, 141–2), and it is argued that they form part of a particular material culture set indicating an ecclesiastical presence (Bourke 1980; Willmott and Daubney 2020, 72–6, 79). There is, however, nothing else in the Rendlesham assemblage that need be seen as indicative of a church or monastery.

The cross pendant RLM 013 0556 and possible cross pendant RLM 013 0361 (above, 3.4.1.5) can be taken to indicate individual Christian belief.

3.4.10 Unidentified and uncertain (Fig 3.4.24)

Among material which cannot be securely identified to type and function but which is certainly early medieval, and material that cannot be securely dated but may be early medieval, there are a number of items that merit attention.

RLM 044 1626 is a cast silver-gilt fragment with opposed Style II bird heads and clearly from a piece of high-status metalwork of the late sixth or earlier seventh century. RLM 044 1436 is a silver terminal, possibly from a mount, with a rectangular garnet setting and the

1 2

Fig 3.4.24 Objects of uncertain type or function: (1) RLM 044 1626; (2) RLM 013 0119. Scale 1:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

remains of a second; RLM 013 0826 is a fragment of a cast silver semi-cylindrical object with a hollow back and high-relief decoration; no parallels for either of these have been identified.

RLM 013 0119 bears a superficial similarity to Viking-period lead weights decorated with human faces, but those are copper-alloy insets in lead weights and much more finely modelled. It may be a lead model for a mould, in which case the other evidence for non-ferrous metalworking would suggest an early medieval date, but it is difficult to parallel the treatment of the face in early medieval material culture. Other finds of cast lead faces have been interpreted as Roman amulets (PAS DENO-0E4A27; DENO-120680) and medieval trade weights (PAS NARC-D8FFD6).

RLM 013 0569, one of the rare iron finds, is undatable, but the possibility that it is an early medieval metalworker's punch cannot be ruled out (cf Lucy *et al* 2009, 250, fig 4.44). Finally, RLM 013 0091 may be a lead weight or, possibly, a gaming counter.

3.4.11 Overview

The quantity, quality and diversity of the metalwork in this assemblage datable to the period between the fifth and eighth centuries is exceptional and reflects the complex and often long-distance relationships and influences that were at play at Rendlesham. More surprising than the quantity of objects is the intriguing array of types; those characteristic of the Anglian province of material culture, such as cruciform brooches, wrist clasps and girdle hangers are strongly represented but alongside these are unusual Continental imports, including rare brooches, belt suites and scabbard fittings. The presence of people using the fashions of both the North Sea coastal areas and the Continent can clearly be seen. The low number of toilet implements and annular brooches in the assemblage may be because their forms are less susceptible to discovery by metal detectors (Ch 2.4.1). A significant proportion of fifth- to seventh-century items from RLM 036 and RLM 044 may be from burials (Ch 4.3.1.2).

Early occupation from the second quarter of the fifth century onwards is revealed and pierced Roman coins

and late Roman belt fittings may also represent curation and re-use in the fifth century. A wide social range, with rare items of precious metal and exquisite craftmanship present alongside everyday copper-alloy equivalents, can be seen in the assemblage from the late fifth century onwards and is most marked in the later sixth and seventh centuries, when there is also a high proportion of precious-metal objects (3.8, below) and evidence for metalworking and currency transactions (Ch 5.3 and 5.4). By the early eighth century, the strong elite signature is no longer apparent.

The assemblage reflects not only changes in social composition over time, but also in settlement status, in the extent and intensity of activity (Ch 4), and in female costume as represented by metal dress accessories. In the middle to later sixth century the earlier suite of dress fittings – small-long, cruciform and great square-headed brooches, and related costume accessories such as girdle hangers – give way to different types, with pins prevalent, and ansate brooches then become the predominant type from the later seventh century. We see here in a single site assemblage the long-term trends normally visible only at regional and national levels.

3.5 Medieval (1066–1500)

Faye Minter

Excluding coins (3.7.4, below), there are 689 objects, including those with date-ranges which span the late medieval and early post-medieval periods but which are discussed here within the earlier part of their date-range (Table 3.5.1). Most (85 per cent) are copper alloy with small quantities of lead, pottery and glass; only twelve objects are of precious metal, all silver.

3.5.1 Jettons and tokens

There are twenty-four copper-alloy jettons and three lead tokens. Twelve jettons are English, nine of a size and design related to the silver penny, *c* 1280–1345, and three struck after the mid-fourteenth-century reforms, *c* 1344–1400 (Mitchiner 1988, 96–122). Eleven jettons are French, including four of Charles V and Charles VI, three of Charles VII and one of Louis XII (ibid, 168, 190, 236); one (RLM 042 1013) was struck in the Low Countries *c* 1490–1550 (Mitchiner 1991, 265–7, nos 826–7).

There are two certain Boy Bishop tokens of penny size, of the late fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries (Rigold 1978, 87–100) and a worn token which may also be one.

3.5.2 Dress accessories (Table 3.5.2)

This category makes up 46 per cent of the medieval assemblage (excluding coins) and is dominated by buckles, strap ends and mounts.

3.5.2.1 Buckles

The 144 buckles and buckle elements recovered date from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries and make up 45 per cent of the dress accessories, consistent with the large numbers of buckles in all medieval metalwork assemblages (Margeson 1993, 24). All are copper alloy with cast single loops, predominantly oval or D-shaped;

Table 3.5.1 Medieval artefacts quantified by functional category

Category	
Agriculture and animal husbandry (AA)	0
Buildings and services (BS)	0
Currency: excluding coinage (CTJ)	27
Dress accessories (DA)	318
Equestrian and transport (ET)	37
Fasteners and fittings (FF)	0
Household (HO)	108
Hunting and fishing (HF)	0
Metalworking (MW)	0
Personal possessions (PP)	116
Recreation (RO)	0
Religion and cult (RC)	8
Textile production (TP)	25
Tools (T)	0
Weapons and military equipment (ME)	14
Weights and measures (WM)	9
Unknown (UN)	27
Total	**689**

Table 3.5.2 Medieval dress accessories quantified by type

Type	
Buckle	144
Strap end	62
Mount	60
Brooch	25
Strap fitting	18
Finger-ring	5
Pendant	2
Bell	2
Total	**318**

the plates include folded sheet, integral and composite examples. Most of the buckle elements are undecorated, but there are examples of loops with ornate outer edges and plates with incised decoration and traces of gilding. Buckle loop EKE 021 1024, for example, has lobed circular settings and RLM 044 1725, a folded sheet buckle plate, is decorated with a gilded lion passant regardant which is also seen on a thirteenth-century example from London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 111–12, fig 72, no. 500).

Simple buckles had a range of functions other than as dress fittings and it is very difficult to be sure what individual examples were used for (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 50). A few of the Rendlesham examples, however, are sufficiently distinctive to indicate a specific function. These include EKE 021 1063, RLM 038 1090, RLM 045 1124 and EKE 020 1205, which are similar to a complete buckle in the Ashmolean Museum, with a curved profile terminating in a hook, and to examples from London and Meols, the Wirral, and which may be from thirteenth- to fourteenth-century spurs (ibid, 78–9, fig 48, nos 320–1; Griffiths *et al* 2007, 104, no. 769).

3.5.2.2 Strap ends

The sixty-two copper-alloy strap ends, likely to have been attached to girdles or other straps or belts, are all late thirteenth to early fifteenth century in date.

Forty-three are tongue-shaped and of composite construction; thirty-six have front and back plates with sheet spacers occupying their whole width, a relatively short-lived fourteenth-century form (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 148). Seven, one of which is circular, have front and back plates and cast forked spacers and are dated to the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (ibid, 145). There are three elaborate cast examples, with rectangular hollow plates or sockets and lyre-shaped openwork terminals, of the late fourteenth or early fifteenth centuries (Ward-Perkins 1967, 270, fig 85; PAS NMS-EA9767). The cheaper end of the market is represented by five folded-sheet strap ends paralleled from late thirteenth- or fourteenth-century contexts in London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 129–30).

RLM 037 1394 and RLM 044 1196 are two-piece strap ends with a hinged plate and loop, a form known from late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century contexts in London. They may not have been worn with dress and have also been interpreted as a form of book fastener (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 155, fig 101).

3.5.2.3 Mounts and strap fittings

There are sixty mounts which are likely to have been riveted to leather or textile, probably decorated girdles and other straps (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 162). All are copper alloy except RLM 037 1047, a silver rectangular sheet mount with the letter 'r' engraved on the front face, similar to a Norfolk example (PAS NMS-19E885) and another from a late fourteenth-century context in London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 196–7, fig 123, no. 1050). There are twenty-four rectangular sheet mounts and three circular, four lozenge and two quatrefoil sheet mounts, all with separate rivets. These often have incised decoration and are late thirteenth- to mid-fifteenth-century (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 166, 184, 195–8, figs 107, 117, 123, 125).

There are three cast zoomorphic figurative mounts (Griffiths *et al* 2007, 119–21, 1129–30; pl 20) and nine bar mounts of late thirteenth- and fourteenth-century date (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 131). Three have pendant loops (ibid, 221, fig 138, nos 1190–1) and one has a suspension loop and may possibly be of slightly earlier date (ibid, 215, fig 134, no. 1167). There is also one fragmentary arched pendant loop (RLM 013 0198) which would have been suspended at either end from bar mounts (ibid, 223–4, fig 140).

Of ten copper-alloy strap loops or slides, six are ovoid and of twelfth- to fourteenth-century date. The remainder are D-shaped or trapezoidal with internal projections and are possibly slightly earlier as this type occurs from the middle eleventh century onwards (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 230–4, figs 145–9).

3.5.2.4 Brooches

The twenty-five brooches recovered include eight complete frames; the remainder are incomplete or fragmentary and include frames, pins and detached frame mounts. Twenty are copper alloy and five silver. All but one are thirteenth or fourteenth century with open frames and a constriction to accommodate a separate pin. The exception is RLM 042 1070, a copper-alloy disc brooch of the eleventh to twelfth centuries paralleled by unstratified examples from Essex and Norfolk (cf PAS NMS-1A8884, ESS-245375; Read 2008, 200, no. 731).

There are three silver annular brooches. Fragment RLM 045 1007 is gilded and inscribed AVE M [ ], the start of the 'Hail Mary full of grace' inscription (cf PAS NCL-D1AF46). RLM 045 1040, a complete example with silver pin, is similar to a brooch from Oxfordshire (cf BERK-87F712). RLM 059 1130 is incomplete but has parallels from Suffolk and Norfolk (SF-56F631, NMS-8FCB95 and NMS-98AA06).

RLM 038 1057 and RLM 038 1274 are near-identical lozenge-shaped silver mounts with flower motifs. They were recovered in different years from the same findspot and are likely to be from the same annular brooch; both have curvilinear scars on their backs where they were soldered to the brooch. Silver annular brooches with such applied decorative mounts are a late thirteenth- to fourteenth-century type (cf PAS GLO-DAC8F7 and DOR-760764).

Only three of the copper-alloy annular brooches have decorative elements, a collet and opposing protrusion (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 254, fig 164, no. 1335). RLM 038 1048 is gilded and inscribed PARCES.CPRESEHLAII. If Latin, PARCE would mean 'spare' as in 'spare me' but the rest of the inscription is unintelligible. If the lettering is French it could be trying to say PAR CES PRESEUTES meaning 'by these presents', a phase usually used in connection with a document (E Martin, pers comm).

There are three copper-alloy brooches with lozenge-shaped frames, paralleled by finds from thirteenth-century contexts in London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 257, fig 165, nos 1342–3).

EKE 022 1075 is part of the circular frame with zoomorphic projection from an unusual copper-alloy brooch or buckle; the frame has false lettering. Parallels are a brooch from London, from a context of *c* 1350–1400, and another from Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, which also has false lettering (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 61, 65, fig 39, no. 212).

3.5.2.5 Finger-rings

Five finger-rings were recovered, four copper alloy and one silver. Of the copper-alloy examples, EKE 021 1093 is a stirrup-shaped ring of a type common in England for at least three hundred years from the middle of the twelfth century (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 326, fig 215); RLM 038 1108, a decorative ring with a rounded hoop and a large hexagonal bezel now missing its setting, is a thirteenth-century type (ibid, 328, fig 216); and RLM 038 1213 is a signet ring of a form popular in the fifteenth century, its bezel engraved with the crowned Lombardic letter M (Saunders and Saunders 1991, 42–6, fig 12, nos 18–19). The silver-gilt ring fragment (RLM 043 1134) is probably fifteenth or sixteenth century (cf PAS DUR-59E6D7, SOM-E0FFB1, NMGW-0B1F12).

3.5.2.6 Pendants

Two lead cruciform pendants, which may be medieval, are similar to other examples from elsewhere in England (eg PAS GLO-6C30D5, WMID-385FA2, SF-5FC575, SOMDOR1077).

3.5.2.7 Bells

The spherical silver bell RLM 037 1133 is probably fourteenth century or later. Similar bells were sewn onto clothing as fashionable dress accessories in the fifteenth century. By the sixteenth century identical examples were also attached to hawks and falcons, and to collars for dogs and cats, as well as being used on horse furniture (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 336–9, fig 221; cf PAS KENT-CA83D8, NMS-957A13, DENO-127662, NLM-203CC3, SOM-3CE0DB).

RLM 042 1220, a copper-alloy spherical or 'rumbler' bell, has an integral stem pierced for suspension. This could be a dress accessory or from a horse harness. Such bells are dated to the twelfth to sixteenth centuries (cf PAS DEV-38A09C, BUC-B5A456, LIN-FD3808, SF-D74876).

3.5.3 Personal possessions (Table 3.5.3)

3.5.3.1 Mounts

There are forty-two copper-alloy and two silver mounts which are most probably from boxes, caskets and other items of furniture.

RLM 014 1046 is a casket or chest mount with scallop-shell terminals (Egan 1998, 69–80). A group of domed mounts with integral spikes from RLM 037 (1293, 1332, 1289, 1392, 1112) are all decorated with a lion passant right and are almost certainly from the same object. Decorated studs with mythical beasts are known from fourteenth-century London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 243, fig 155, no. 1300) and there is a lion passant on a mount from Berkshire (PAS BERK-CF7386).

The silver decorative strip (RLM 044 1656) and silver conical mount (RLM 044 1006) appear medieval or early post-medieval stylistically and are more likely to be box mounts than dress accessories.

Table 3.5.3 Medieval personal possessions quantified by type

Type	
Mount	44
Key	23
Purse	18
Seal matrix	12
Book clasp	10
Padlock	4
Swivel	3
Spoon	2
Total	**116**

3.5.3.2 Keys and locks

Twenty-three copper-alloy keys and four padlocks have been recovered. Eighteen of the keys are small, less than 45mm in length, with circular bows and simple bits and probably for casket locks. This long-lasting form was most common from the late twelfth to the late fourteenth century (Egan 1998, 111–13) but examples are also known from later fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century contexts (Margeson 1993, 162–3, fig 120, no. 1313). There are also two copper-alloy fragments from rotary keys with hollow stems (ibid, 159) and three copper-alloy padlock slide-keys of a long-lasting form known from London, Exeter and Norwich and in use from the twelfth to the sixteenth century (Egan 1998, 100).

There are three twelfth- to thirteenth-century slide-key or barrel padlocks, two (RLM 059 1183 and RLM 043 1105) with incised decoration (Egan 1998, 91–3). RLM 042 1131, the fragmentary remains of a cast probable box padlock with hinged shackle, is similar to a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century example from Norwich (Margeson 1993, 156–7, fig 115, no. 1240).

3.5.3.3 Purses

There are eighteen copper-alloy purse components including eleven frame fragments, five bar fragments and two loops. Metal purse bars and frames are characteristic of the period *c* 1450 to *c* 1550 and are not found after *c* 1600 (Williams 2018, 12). All classifiable examples are Williams class A (long bars with attached frames: ibid, 1–13), the most common form which accounts for around half of the 2000 purses recorded by the PAS to 2017 (ibid, 1). Nine examples are class A1, being decorated with a double strand lattice pattern inlaid with niello. One example (RLM 037 1312) is class A2, as it has a fragment of a niello inlaid inscription reading AV [ ], presumably part of 'Ave Maria' (ibid, 2–3).

3.5.3.4 Book clasps

Five of the ten copper-alloy book clasps are the common Howsam type A.3, consisting of two plates, one with a projecting hook at one end and a splayed attachment at the other; they are likely to date from the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries (Howsam 2016, 62) but there are examples from Norwich from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century contexts (Margeson 1993, 74–5, fig 40, nos 452–4). Two examples are Howsam type A.4, having rectangular plates with a hook at one end and a separate back plate; these were in use from the fourteenth or fifteenth century (Howsam 2016, 62–4) and there is one from a seventeenth-century context in Norwich (Margeson 1993, 74–5, fig 40, no. 455).

RLM 038 1084 is an unusual example of Howsam type A.9.2 of fourteenth- or fifteenth-century date (Howsam 2016, 79–82). It is cast in one piece with a rectangular hollow attachment end and a projecting zoomorphic terminal loop, gilded, and engraved IN, presumably a variant of the sacred monogram IHS.

3.5.3.5 Seal matrices

There are nine copper-alloy and three lead seal matrices. The latter are thirteenth-century personal seals. Two examples survive well enough for the inscriptions to be read: +S:GILBERTI:EWAN (RLM 037 1049) and S'CRISTA[ ]CERMER (RLM 037 1399).

The copper-alloy examples include three of chess pawn form, two of which are anonymous seal matrices of the fourteenth century and one a personal seal (Harvey and McGuinness 1996, 88). The latter (RLM 050 1029) reads +S'IohAN.SWEIN and could be as early as the thirteenth century (ibid, 87–8).

There are five sub-circular anonymous seal matrices of the fourteenth century (Harvey and McGuinness 1996, 89). RLM 013 0018 reads IE SUY SEL D AMUR LEL meaning 'I am the seal of loyal love'. EKE 021 1077 has a central depiction of the Lamb of God and a border inscription S: EECE AGNVS DEI, a slightly blundered version of S ECCE AGNUS DEI meaning 'behold the Lamb of God' (ibid, 89). RLM 038 1162 has a central pelican in her piety but is unusual in carrying a personal inscription, +S IOHIS CANEOLARII; anonymous inscriptions such as *SVM PELICANVS ('I am the pelican (of God)') or TIMETE DEUM ('fear God'), are more usually associated with this motif (ibid, 91, fig 85).

3.5.3.6 Swivel

The three copper-alloy swivels would have originally comprised a pair of D-shaped loops. These had a variety of functions and plainer examples are dated into the post-medieval period. Only RLM 038 1013 is complete and has typical stylised animal-head terminals. A Norman-period date is suggested for a similar example from Meols (Griffiths *et al* 2007, 183–4, pl 35, no. 2325) and other Suffolk examples are dated from the twelfth to fourteenth centuries (PAS-2F7696, SF-8DF606, SF-CA5816, SF-F0D4D8, SF-996AD5, SF-50A562).

3.5.3.7 Spoons

EKE 019 1175 is a rare silver-gilt spoon knop of the fifteenth century. It is three-dimensional and depicts a standing wildman holding a club. This spoon finial is very similar to an example on a complete fifteenth-century spoon in the Victoria and Albert Museum (VA M65-1921).

3.5.4 Household (Table 3.5.4)

3.5.4.1 Vessels

Vessels are represented by sixty-nine pottery sherds, thirty-three copper-alloy vessel fragments and a single fragment from a glass vessel.

The pottery assemblage is dominated by sixty-four sherds of medieval coarse ware, of late twelfth- to fourteenth-century date. There are also single sherds of eleventh-century St Neots ware, eleventh- to thirteenth-century early medieval sparse shelly ware and fifteenth- to sixteenth-century late medieval glazed ware; and two sherds of sixteenth-century late medieval transitional ware.

The cast copper-alloy vessel fragments include rim, handle, body and foot sherds and are dated from the fourteenth to the end of the sixteenth centuries. It is likely, from the form of the fragments, that tripod cauldrons or ewers, skillets and strainers are represented (Egan 1998, 161–75). There are six examples of sheet vessel repairs, used throughout the medieval period (ibid, 176, fig 144).

3.5.4.2 Furnishings and lighting equipment

There are three plain drape rings paralleled from fourteenth- to fifteenth-century London (Egan 1998, 62, fig 43, no. 104), and two copper-alloy lamp hangers of late fourteenth- or early fifteenth-century date (ibid, 131, fig 99, no. 357).

Table 3.5.4 Medieval household items quantified by type

Type	
Vessel	103
Drape ring	3
Lamp suspender	2
Total	**108**

3.5.5 Equestrian and transport

3.5.5.1 Harness fittings

There are twenty-nine copper-alloy harness fittings: sixteen harness pendants, nine harness pendant suspension mounts and four harness mounts.

The pendants include five that may date to between the second quarter of the twelfth and the early thirteenth centuries; they are flimsier than later examples, with engraved and stamped decoration and gilding (Ashley 2002, 5). There are also two gilded and engraved double-headed eagle pendants (RLM 013 0070 and RLM 044 1356) which are stylistically twelfth- to thirteenth-century and paralleled by more complete examples from Norfolk (PAS NMS-8F3791) and Suffolk (SF-76A207). Two double-framed examples (RLM 037 1134 and RLM 044 1713) are also likely to be thirteenth century (Emery, P 2007, 203–4, fig 5.93 SF 81 and SF 609). All other examples are likely to be thirteenth or fourteenth century and include RLM 013 0023, decorated with a gilded lion rampant left.

3.5.5.2 Spurs

There are eight fragmentary copper-alloy rowel spurs. In three cases either the rowel itself or the rowel box survive and in five cases a fragment of the spur neck or side survives; in one case two fragments of a spur side join (RLM 037 1442 and RLM 037 1467). The rowels are fairly large with many points and the spur necks are long, typical features of later fourteenth- to early sixteenth-century spurs (Clark 1995, 127–9).

3.5.6 Textile equipment

3.5.6.1 Thimbles and sewing rings

Nineteen thimbles and six sewing rings were recovered, all copper alloy. Eight of the thimbles have indentations arranged in vertical rows up the sides and horizontal rows across the tops and are to be dated to the fourteenth and fifteenth century (Egan 1998, 266–7, fig 206, no. 824); eleven have indentations arranged in a spiral and are late fifteenth or early sixteenth century (Egan 2005, 130–1, fig 126, no. 630). The sewing rings are also late fifteenth to sixteenth century (ibid, 131–2, fig 126, nos 648–50).

3.5.6.2 Spindle whorls

Seven plain lead spindle whorls are intrinsically difficult to date but are most probably medieval.

3.5.7 Weapons

There are thirteen copper-alloy chapes from the scabbards of daggers or large knives, and a fragment from a fourteenth. RLM 043 1132 and RLM 043 1131, which are openwork and in the form of a horse and rider, are early twelfth century (cf PAS SF-0E88A2, HAMP-A201E7,

KENT-56A628, WAW-03F886). RLM 045 1008 and EKE 021 1192 are cast one-piece chapes with thirteenth-century parallels from Winchester (Biddle 1990, 1082–3, fig 348, nos 4030–1), and there are two folded soldered sheet chapes of thirteenth- to fourteenth-century date (ibid, 1082–3, fig 348, no. 4033). Five cast two-piece chapes with separate back plates (ibid, 1082–3, fig 348, nos 4036–7) and two folded sheet chapes (ibid, 1082– 83, fig 348, no. 4034) are late fifteenth or sixteenth century in date.

3.5.8 Religion and cult

3.5.8.1 Ampullae and pilgrim badge

There are five incomplete pouch-shaped lead ampullae, believed to have functioned as pilgrim relics and/or holy water containers, of fourteenth- to fifteenth-century date. All have moulded designs and RLM 038 1210 and RLM 037 1340, with a crowned letter 'W' on the obverse, can be attributed to Walsingham Priory (Mitchiner 1986, 138–9, 397–8).

RLM 038 1024, a lead pilgrim badge depicting the Virgin and child, is probably of the fifteenth century (Spencer 1998, 29, 74, fig 45).

3.5.8.2 Staff terminals

The two copper-alloy staff terminals (RLM 036 1313 and RLM 036 1067) may have had an ecclesiastical use and are eleventh- or twelfth-century in date (Bailey 1994; cf PAS BUC-5F9404 and BH-B64636, LIN-D03FB1, BH-F48C72, NMS-F28FF6 and SF-A69D93).

3.5.9 Weights

There are nine coin weights or probable coin weights, all copper alloy. Two hexagonal examples are of Anglo-Gallic or French type of fifteenth- or sixteenth-century date (Withers and Withers 1995, 9, 39), and there are two circular uniface examples for ryals issued 1464–70 (ibid, 19, 68). The other five, all circular, are damaged and worn with no diagnostic features surviving.

3.6 Post-medieval (1500–1700)

Faye Minter

Excluding coins (3.7.4, below) there are 324 objects (Table 3.6.1), of which 81 per cent are copper alloy with pottery, lead, iron, silver and gold also represented.

Table 3.6.1 Post-medieval artefacts quantified by functional category

Category	
Agriculture and animal husbandry (AA)	3
Buildings and services (BS)	0
Currency: excluding coinage (CTJ)	86
Dress accessories (DA)	114
Equestrian and transport (ET)	0
Fasteners and fittings (FF)	0
Household (HO)	21
Hunting and fishing (HF)	2
Metalworking (MW)	0
Personal possessions (PP)	34
Recreation (RO)	2
Religion and cult (RC)	0
Textile production (TP)	12
Tools (T)	0
Weapons and military equipment (ME)	9
Weights and measures (WM)	28
Unknown (UN)	13
Total	**324**

Sixteen objects are made of precious metal, fifteen silver and one gold.

3.6.1 Jettons and tokens

All twenty-five copper-alloy jettons are from Nuremberg. Most are Rose and Orb type: six by anonymous masters, one of Egidius Krauwinckel (1570–1613), one of Damianus Krauwinckel (1543–81), one of Hans Krauwinckel I (1562–86), seven of Hans Krauwinckel II (1586–1635) and one of Wolf Lauffer II (1612–51) (Mitchiner 1988, 377–81, 420–1, 418, 432, 483). There are three jettons of 'ship penny' type: one of Hans Schultes I (1553–84) and two of Hans Schultes II (1586–1603) (ibid, 399, 407), one 'turbaned bust' type of Hans Schultes III (1608–12) (ibid, 413) and four anonymous stock jettons of the early sixteenth century (ibid, 355–76).

There are sixty-one tokens: fifty-five copper-alloy and six lead. The copper-alloy examples are seventeenth-century traders' tokens (Williamson 1967). Most are from Suffolk, with eighteen from nearby Woodbridge (Table 3.6.2).

3.6.2 Dress accessories

Dress accessories, mostly dress hooks, decorative mounts, buckles and buttons, make up 35 per cent of the post-medieval assemblage (Table 3.6.3).

Table 3.6.2 Post-medieval traders' tokens by place of origin (Suffolk unless shown)

Origin	
Woodbridge	18
Saxmundham	9
Framlingham	7
Ipswich	4
Melton	3
Ufford	2
Billericay (Essex)	1
Boxford	1
Duffield (Derbyshire)	1
Great Yarmouth (Norfolk)	1
Sudbury	1
Yoxford	1
Essex	1
Unknown	5
Total	**55**

Table 3.6.3 Post-medieval dress accessories quantified by type

Type	
Dress hook	32
Mount	28
Buckle	25
Button	15
Finger-ring	3
Pin	3
Bodkin	2
Cuff link	2
Hooked clasp	3
Pendant	1
Total	**114**

3.6.2.1 Dress hooks, fittings, and double-hooked clasps

Sixteenth- to seventeenth-century dress fittings are common components of post-medieval metalwork assemblages (Margeson 1993, 17, 71–5, fig 8) and there are twenty-eight copper-alloy and four silver examples from Rendlesham. Of these, EKE 021 1127 is a typical Tudor dress fitting with characteristic filigree ornament (cf PAS NMS-E1FD52) and RLM 038 1117 is a single blunt-hooked and eye clasp of Read class B2 (Read 2008, 158–9, no. 598). EKE 021 1016 is a dress fitting, possibly a hat pin (cf PAS WILT-AD5D12 and YORYM-589235).

There are also three double sharp-hooked clasps of copper-alloy wire. RLM 044 1202 is Read class D type 2, of the sixteenth century or later (Read 2008, 143, 564) and EKE 019 1078, although very worn and incomplete, appears to be Read class D type 1 (ibid, 1343, 563), a type known from early post-medieval contexts in Norwich (Margeson 1993, 18–19, fig 9, no. 82). The final example is too fragmentary to be identified to type with certainty.

3.6.2.2 Buckles and belt mounts

The twenty-five buckles are predominantly double oval-looped in form and of late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century date (Egan 2005, 35, fig 17). One is iron (RLM 037 1421) and another (RLM 013 1026) is an incomplete silver stud chape from a shoe or knee buckle, dating from *c* 1660–1720 (Whitehead 2003, 98–100). The remainder are copper alloy.

The twenty-eight late sixteenth- to seventeenth-century copper-alloy belt mounts with integral spikes are of various forms including acorns (Egan 2005, 40, fig 22, no. 136; PAS LEIC-4492E2).

3.6.2.3 Buttons and cuff links

The fifteen early post-medieval buttons are small and cast in one piece with a large perforated lug on the reverse and solid or openwork heads; one is lead alloy, three are silver fragments and the remainder are copper alloy (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 274–5, fig 178).

There are two silver cuff links, a form of sleeve fastening developed in the later seventeenth century. EKE 021 1161 is similar to other English examples (eg PAS IOW-64694F, IOW-FBD221, KENT-FAC03A, LON-427394, SUSS-F91492 and WILT-323F27). RLM 059 1165 is decorated with two raised hearts with a crown above them. This device is thought to commemorate the wedding of Charles II to Catherine of Braganza in 1662, later taking on more general connotations of love and marriage (Lewis 2013, 4).

3.6.2.4 Finger-rings

RLM 044 1511 is an unusual gold puzzle ring created from interlocking hoops, a form in use from the early seventeenth to the nineteenth century; there is a similar example in the British Museum (AF.841; Dalton 1912, no. 645). There are also two thin copper-alloy rings of probable post-medieval date.

3.6.2.5 Pins and bodkin

There are three copper-alloy pins, two of Margeson type 2, with a strip forming a head around the shaft, of

sixteenth- to seventeenth-century date, and one of Margeson type 3, with wire wound round the top of the shaft, of seventeenth-century date (Margeson 1993, 12–13, fig 5, nos 36–8 and 39–40).

RLM 037 1016 is a silver fragment of an early post-medieval headdress pin of 'bodkin' type, decorated with engraved foliate ornament and the letters DW, presumably the owner's initials (cf PAS IOW-333ABB).

3.6.2.6 Pendant

RLM 037 1278 is a complete pendant, most likely to be post-medieval, formed from hollow silver sheet.

3.6.3 Personal possessions (Table 3.6.4)

3.6.3.1 Knives

Fifteen copper-alloy knife fittings were recovered. There are eleven complete knife handle terminals or end caps, two of sheet (cf PAS NLM-9A5B84) and nine cast. The latter include zoomorphic (cf HESH-819F63, LON-F6A171, SF-484DC1) and single and double horse-hoof terminals and may be dated to the sixteenth century (Egan 2005, 92–3, fig 78, no. 398).

There are four disc bolsters, placed between the knife blade and handle, an innovation of the sixteenth century and in widespread use by the seventeenth (Margeson 1993, 130–1, fig 96, no. 867).

3.6.3.2 Mounts

The seven copper-alloy mounts, most likely to be box or furniture fittings, include RLM 045 1041 in the form of a lion's head.

Table 3.6.4 Post-medieval personal possessions quantified by type

Type	
Knife fittings	15
Mount	7
Seal matrix	4
Toilet article	2
Spoon	2
Dividers or callipers	1
Hook	1
Pipe tamper	1
Box hinge	1
Total	**34**

3.6.3.3 Seal matrices

The four personal seal matrices include an incomplete silver example of the seventeenth or early eighteenth century (RLM 013 0807); an eighteenth-century copper-alloy double revolving seal (RLM 037 1232); and a copper-alloy example of the mid-seventeenth to eighteenth century with a central motif of two joint flaming hearts around which is inscribed D'AMOVR . NOUS. NIS meaning 'of love we are born' (RLM 059 1196).

3.6.3.4 Toilet articles

There are two toilet articles. RLM 037 1325 is a silver toothpick and ear-scoop in the form of a bird's talon (cf PAS YORYM-5874B1). RLM 037 1485 is a copper-alloy ear scoop (cf BH-E61D84, CORN-C851A6, IOW-36F656).

3.6.3.5 Spoon

RLM 059 1112 is a copper-alloy spoon with a maker's mark IG. Egan (2005, 116, fig 107, no. 570) illustrates a pewter spoon with an IG maker's mark from a seventeenth- to mid-eighteenth-century context in London.

3.6.3.6 Dividers or callipers

RLM 041 1004 is a handle of a pair of eighteenth-century dividers or callipers (cf PAS SF-41967F, SF-B4F3C8).

3.6.3.7 Pipe tamper

RLM 037 1195 is a complete copper-alloy pipe tamper in the form of a signet ring which could also have been used as a seal matrix. The bezel is oval and incised with a heart with two arrows through it. This style of pipe tamper dates from the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries and the imagery on the die resembles that on buttons and cuff links of the same date (cf PAS LON-3FBC7C, SWYOR-4BBAD6, SWYOR-6F43F2, HAMP-DE3F1E).

3.6.4 Household

3.6.4.1 Vessels

Thirteen sherds of sixteenth- to eighteenth-century glazed red earthenware were recovered, one sherd of seventeenth- or eighteenth-century stoneware and one tile fragment. There are three copper-alloy vessel mounts including RLM 038 1314, a handle escutcheon possibly from a skillet of the seventeenth or eighteenth century (Butler and Green 2003, 50, no. 10).

3.6.4.2 Candlestick

RLM 037 1390 is a fragment of a socketed cast candlestick, probably sixteenth century (Egan 2005, 80, fig 68, no. 335).

3.6.4.3 Mounts

A pair of lead-alloy star-shaped mounts (EKE 022 1146), incomplete from old damage, are sixteenth-century decorative ceiling fittings (Egan 2005, 69–70, fig 58, no. 309; cf PAS PUBLIC-CF1EB2, WAW-D18D4E).

3.6.5 Textile equipment

3.6.5.1 Sewing ring

The silver sewing ring (EKE 019 1154) is inscribed JBE and is likely to be seventeenth century (cf PAS LIN-4D6A74).

3.6.5.2 Cloth seals

Nine lead two-piece cloth seals were recovered. Such seals were widely used for marking textiles intended for commercial sale in cloth-producing areas of Europe between the thirteenth and the nineteenth centuries. Two-disc seals were the norm from the late fourteenth until the late sixteenth century (Egan 1995, 5) and the Rendlesham examples appear to be at the later end of this range. Two examples are stamped with a portcullis and two with a crown with the arms of England and E R to the sides; these are Tudor types (ibid, 2). One (RLM 043 1065) is an Augsburg seal stamped with a pine cone, the heraldic badge of the city, and an 'A'; this type of seal is the commonest of those imported into England and of sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century date (ibid, 106, fig 41, nos 308–10).

3.6.5.3 Havette

RLM 037 1292 is a cast copper-alloy shearboard hook or havette (Read 2008, 202), complete and in good condition. The central rectangular grip has an engraved saltire with lines to either side (cf ibid, 204, no. 741).

3.6.6 Weapons

There are nine probable sword belt fittings of copper alloy, including one sword-belt hanger, of sixteenth- or seventeenth-century date and paralleled from Norwich (Margeson 1993, 38–9, fig 22, nos 257–62).

3.6.7 Weights and measures

There are twenty-one copper-alloy and seven lead weights. The copper-alloy weights include twelve coin weights of types in use during the reigns of Elizabeth I, James I and Charles, three late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century examples from Antwerp (Withers and Withers 1995, 60), two brass probable apothecary weights, likely to be seventeenth century or later (Biggs 1992, 8–9) and four probable trade weights, of which EKE 019 1086 is a London weight issued under William and Mary (ibid, 50). The lead weights are less diagnostic but include at least two probable apothecary weights and five possible coin or trade weights.

3.6.8 Recreational items

There are two incomplete copper-alloy Jew's harps (RLM 013 0589 and RLM 042 1114), both seventeenth or eighteenth century in date (Biddle 1990, 724–5, fig 206, no. 2269).

3.6.9 Agriculture and animal husbandry

Three cast copper-alloy spherical bells of the late sixteenth or seventeenth centuries were recovered. One (EKE 022 1093) has a maker's mark. These may have been animal bells.

3.6.10 Hunting and fishing

There are two cast lead-alloy powder holder caps (EKE 021 1100 and RLM 037 1465) of the seventeenth century (Courtney 1988, 2). In addition, a large quantity of lead sporting ammunition of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries was found but not systematically recorded (Ch 2.4.1).

3.6.11 Overview: medieval and post-medieval

The finds show occupation and activity from the eleventh century onwards, with apparent continuity from the tenth century in some places (Ch 4.2.3). The assemblages probably derive from several small settlements, both farms and high-status residences, within the survey area (Ch 4.2.4). They are exceptional in their abundance and in the systematic manner in which they have been recorded, and document both the range of material in circulation and the range of activity in rural communities with a population predominantly engaged in farming and allied trades. There is only very limited evidence for significant social differentiation. Excluding coinage, only

2 per cent of the medieval items are precious metal, all small silver dress accessories. The figure for the post-medieval assemblage is 5 per cent, which are small dress accessories and personal items. The sixteenth-century decorative lead ceiling mounts, however, must have come from a building of some status (above, 3.6.4.3).

3.7 Coinage

The survey recovered 2,130 coins ranging in date from the Iron Age to the early modern period. All but fifty-five can be securely identified and dated to before 1700. The coin assemblage is summarised in Tables 3.7.1 and 3.7.15.

Table 3.7.1 Summary of coin finds

Period	Total
Iron Age	14
Roman	993
Early medieval (to AD 973)	278
Medieval (from AD 973)	607
Post-medieval	183
Uncertain and recent	55
Total	**2,130**

3.7.1 Iron Age coins

Judith Plouviez

There are fourteen Iron Age coins, of which four are otherwise unidentifiable. This is just under 0.7 per cent of the assemblage, a lower figure than the 1.5 per cent of coins from Suffolk recorded on the PAS database which are Iron Age.

The Iron Age coins include examples of the early phases of coin production in the Icenian area in the second half of the first century BC: a gold stater of 'Norfolk Wolf' type and an early silver unit (Bury C). These are followed by the two 'Irstead' quarter staters (Talbot 2017, BHB quarter stater) and further Icenian silver units: two boar-horse (C type), one Saham Toney type face-horse and one regular face-horse fragment. The only identifiable examples of coins produced in the Trinovantian or Catuvellaunian area are a silver unit and a bronze unit, both of Cunobelin and issued at *Camulodunum*, which can be dated to the period AD 10–40.

The south-east of Suffolk is usually regarded as falling within the area of Trinovantian control (Martin 1999b), but the presence of Icenian coin types has been noted before, for example the large hoard of gold staters from Dallinghoo (Talbot and Leins 2010). The Icenian coinage from the survey assemblage is less biased towards the later silver units than is normal further north or west in Suffolk, and there is none of the late inscribed pattern-horse types common in those areas. The pattern of coinage may therefore suggest an expansion of Trinovantian control into this area under Cunobelin after AD 10.

3.7.2 Roman coins

Judith Plouviez and Sam Moorhead

There are 993 Roman coins, 47 per cent of the total assemblage. Of these, 779 can be allocated to a period within the Reece system (Reece 1991), allowing comparison of the variations in relative numbers with the British norm and other assemblages. Coins from probable scattered hoards have been included in this analysis.

3.7.2.1 Early Roman (to AD 260)

The earliest Roman coin is a worn Republican *denarius* of 54 BC, most likely brought to Britain at or soon after AD 43. A small group of five Claudian period *asses* and *dupondii*, mostly contemporary copies (43–64), and one *as* and two *denarii* of Nero (54–68), also suggest early contacts, perhaps with the army, during the pre-Flavian period. The pattern is indicative of continuing coin use, albeit on a modest scale, without interruption from the late Iron Age.

A scattered hoard of silver *denarii* was identified in EKE 022 in 2009 and includes twenty-seven coins found up to July 2017. They range from one of Nero (64–8) to Marcus Aurelius (161–80) and were probably deposited 172–6, a period of increased hoarding in Britain (Robertson 2000, xl, Map 8). Few similar Antonine *denarii* hoards are known from Suffolk but one is recorded from Brundish (SHER BUH 017) and several are known from each of Essex, Cambridgeshire and Norfolk. A slightly later group of *denarii* is recorded from Lowestoft, probably deposited in the late 180s (Robertson 2000, 72). The composition of these hoards commonly includes a mix of first- and second-century issues.

In addition to the hoard there are fifteen *denarii* from other parts of the survey area. Bronze coinage includes twenty-five *asses*, *dupondii* and *sestertii* that were not identifiable to a Reece period, with ten *asses* or *dupondii* and twenty-two *sestertii* that were. The attributable coins up to 260 (when coin use expands dramatically in

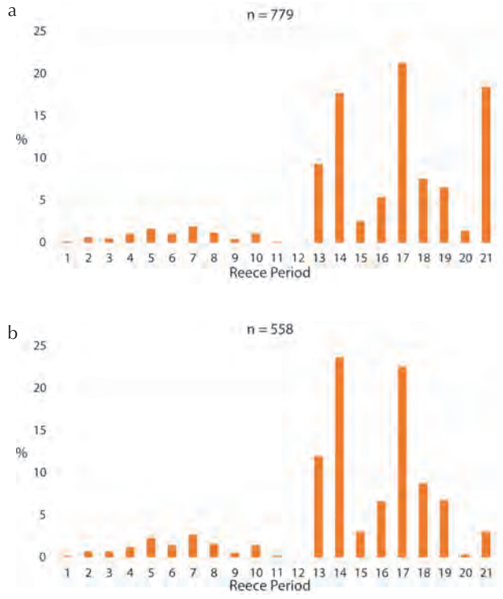


Fig 3.7.1 Coin diagrams by Reece period showing: (a) the Rendlesham assemblage; (b) the same excluding coins from RLM 013. For Reece-period dating see tab 3.7.15

Britain) include examples from all the Reece periods except 12 (238–60) (Fig 3.7.1). The number of finds to 260 does not differ significantly from the national pattern, although at around 7 per cent of the total it is low (the Reece figure is 15 per cent). This is, however, unsurprising in a rural context.

3.7.2.2 Later Roman

There are 900 coins dated after 260, of which 704 can be attributed to a Reece period. Apart from a few visibly base silver radiates of the later third century, the only silver coins are mid- to late fourth-century *siliquae*. The bronze coinage consists of radiates and *nummi*, both groups including a moderate percentage of contemporary copies.

Two dispersed hoards have been identified, in EKE 020 and RLM 013, although in both cases the presence of contemporary material in the ploughsoil complicates assigning any individual coin to the hoard with absolute certainty (Ch 2.4.2). Seven *siliquae* were found in EKE 020 up to July 2017, and six subsequently, ranging in date from the 350s to the early fifth century. All but one are clipped around the edge, ranging from CF1 (lightly) to CF4 (heavily) (Guest 2005, 111) and it is very likely that the coins were circulating and deposited after 410. There are a further seven *siliquae* from the survey area of which three are clipped and one pierced for suspension.

The second hoard is a group of Theodosian (Reece periods 20 and 21) bronze *nummi* from RLM 013, again probably deposited at the beginning of the fifth century or later. Initially it simply appeared that large numbers of small late coins were found on this field, but in 2012 the detectorists noticed that coins were being found very close together in the south of the field and identified nineteen coins as possibly part of a hoard (Ch 2.4.2). This group included one radiate of Carausius but otherwise was all small *nummi*, mostly Theodosian but with one Constantinian (335–40) of similar size. The findspots for all the Theodosian *nummi* in RLM 013 show a concentration in this area, suggesting that a high proportion of them do derive from a single deposit (Fig 2.4.5).

RLM 013 is one of the most intensively detected fields and its coin assemblage has a very unusual composition which distorts the broader picture. Almost all are fourth century (207 of 221 dated coins) and of these 136 are Theodosian (61 per cent of the total). This raises the Theodosian percentage of the survey assemblage as a whole to 20 per cent but when RLM 013 is excluded the Rendlesham assemblage shows the normal pattern of peaks in periods 13–14 and 17 seen in the Reece British diagram, and broadly similar proportions throughout to this and to the Suffolk norm (Fig 3.7.1).

However, it was observed in 1995 that there appears to be a specific trend local to south and east Suffolk in the second half of the fourth century with a sharp decline in the numbers of coins in Reece period 19 (Valentinian) and thereafter (Fig 3.7.2a; Plouviez 1995, 74–5). Coins recorded since 1999 on the PAS database now give a much larger sample, and numbers for both the whole of Suffolk and for the area of Suffolk Coastal District Council (covering the east coast from Felixstowe to Walberswick and a substantial hinterland) have been used in Fig 3.7.2b. This confirms the initial observations. In the east of Suffolk period 19 coins drop to around 5 per cent and to then to less than 1 per cent in periods 20 and 21 on both rural sites and small towns such as Hacheston (Plouviez 2004, 84–5). The Rendlesham assemblage is above the local norm in period 19 at just under 7 per cent and, even when RLM 013 is excluded, the period 20/21 coins are relatively more numerous, at over 3 per cent, than in east Suffolk and just above the Suffolk average.

Sites with exceptionally high levels of Theodosian bronze coins are commonly military or urban in character and close to the coast or major rivers, as at Richborough, Canterbury and Caerwent. It has been argued that these coins were used by officialdom, either soldiers or administrators, in the early fifth century,

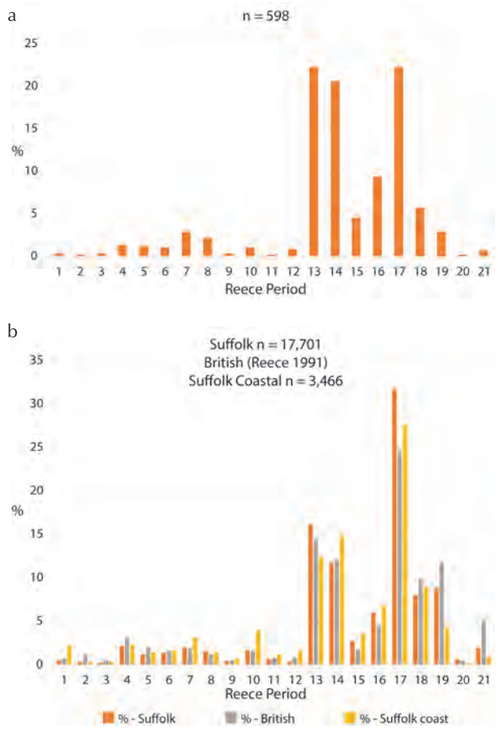


Fig 3.7.2 Coin diagrams by Reece period showing: (a) the pattern for south-east Suffolk from Plouviez 1995; (b) the national pattern and patterns for Suffolk and Suffolk Coastal district

whereas the rural population preferred to use silver *siliquae* (Moorhead and Walton 2014, 112–13). There is also recent evidence to suggest the use of these coins in early post-Roman contexts. At Eye, Suffolk (EYE 083), a site with fifth-century activity but no Roman period features, a small group of sixty-two Roman coins, forty-four of which were identifiable to Reece period, included eight period 21 *nummi* (18 per cent), whereas an adjacent site with late Roman features (EYE 094) produced no Theodosian *nummi*.

3.7.2.3 Modified coins

Various types of post-minting modifications to coins were noted during the analysis. These can be grouped as cutting and clipping, punched marks and hole piercing, all of which are potentially of interest as perhaps illustrating post-Roman activity, although this is more difficult to establish in an unstratified context.

Fifteen coins were noted as having cut marks or clipping, in addition to the nine clipped *siliquae* discussed above. This is probably not a complete list and details are not always clear. Four early bronze coins (mostly *sestertii*) were cut to a quarter or less and a couple had score marks but had not been completely cut. At least one radiate and two *nummi* had been cut to around a half; one of the *nummi* was also pierced for suspension. Two mid-fourth-century *nummi* were noted as being cut down, a common phenomenon at this time when large flan coins of the 350s were converted to several smaller ones.

Two examples of punch marks were found, both from RLM 044, one an uncertain coin with rectangular punch marks, the second a worn *sestertius* of Marcus Aurelius with a row of seven small annulets neatly punched across the middle of the obverse. The latter seems very likely to be an early post-Roman modification for use as a weight (above, 3.4.7).

The piercing of coins, mainly for suspension as ornaments or amulets, occurs during both the Roman and the early post-Roman periods in Britain. The practice is much commoner in post-Roman contexts but has been shown to span the Roman period, and pierced coins are particularly well recorded in graves at Colchester (Burnett 2005). It is not possible to be completely certain that all pierced coins represent post-Roman re-use, but the strong bias to radiates and *nummi* (with just two earlier coins) and the lack of examples from those fields that have mainly Roman rather than later finds assemblages would support this (above, 3.4.1.5).

3.7.2.4 Overview

The Roman coin assemblage is generally unremarkable, showing patterns of use and loss typical of rural sites in Britain and in Suffolk, albeit with a fairly high level of hoarding. There are, however, marked anomalies at the end of the period, particularly when viewed in the wider context of east Suffolk, which would be consistent with some official or military function and the continuing use of bronze *nummi* as well as silver *siliquae* well into the fifth century.

3.7.3 Early medieval coinage to *c* 973

Andrew Woods

3.7.3.1 Chronological framework

The early medieval coinage at Rendlesham has been identified and classified according to the terminology and dating described in *Medieval European Coinage 8* (Naismith 2017, 45–87). The discussion below also follows Naismith in describing the small, thick silver coins traditionally known as '*sceattas*' or '*sceats*' as early pennies, and English gold coins as shillings (ibid, 67–8).

Naismith's classification draws upon previous work in the field (Metcalf 1994; Rigold 1977a) but proposes a more consistent form of lettering to describe the various seventh- and eighth-century coinages.

The analysis below divides the coinage into several chronological periods, which broadly correspond with material changes in the form and/or iconography of the coinage. These are codified in Table 3.7.2, with a summary of the chronology and origins of the various coin types within each broad phase. Where types occur in more than one period they have been divided according to Naismith subcategories (Naismith 2017, 73–9). It should be stressed that the absolute dating of these periods can be considered to be somewhat fluid, with recent scientific analysis as well as numismatic re-appraisals challenging traditional dating (Hines 2013; Loveluck *et al* 2018; Naismith 2017, 79–87).

3.7.3.2 Early medieval coinage at Rendlesham

The early medieval coin finds from Rendlesham are summarised in Table 3.7.3 by period and origin. For periods EM2 and EM3, a more detailed breakdown of types can be found in Tables 3.7.5 and 3.7.6. These include two groups of early pennies fused together of which only one coin in each group is identifiable to type (above, 3.4.6). RLM 036 1046 is three coins, one of which is type B; RLM 044 1264 is two coins, one of which is type Q. These each have a single database entry but represent three coins in addition to the database total.

The 43 coins from period EM1 represent a large group of rare coinage. This is a combination of Byzantine copper denominations, gold coinage from the Continent (particularly Merovingian Francia), and the earliest English shillings. This is a chronologically lengthy phase, with the earliest coin (RLM 059 1143) produced in Burgundy between 524 and 534 for King Godomar, imitating a type of Justin I (Fig 3.7.3). The latest coins in this phase are the pale gold English shillings struck in the period up to *c* 665.

The challenges of attribution posed by many of the coins make it difficult to determine a precise chronology for much of EM1 but it is possible to define three broad sub-periods. The first (*c* 525–75) is characterised by pseudo-Imperial gold coinages; the second (*c* 575–625) by Merovingian *tremisses* and Byzantine copper coinage;

Fig 3.7.3 Burgundian *tremissis* of King Godomar (RLM 059 1143). Scale 2:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

Table 3.7.2 Summary of early medieval numismatic chronological periods

Period	Description	Dates	Continental types	English types
EM1	Gold and Byzantine copper	*c* 500–665	Imperial, pseudo-Imperial, Merovingian Royal, Mint-and-Moneyer, Frisian, Byzantine copper	Shilling
EM2	'Primary' early pennies	*c* 665–710	D, E, SC, MA	PA, VA, A, B, C, AED, F, SA, W, BZ, Z, AL, RP, VE
EM3	'Secondary' early pennies	*c* 710–60	E, IN, G, ST, X	Major Series: J, K, L, KL, N, O, Q, RQ, RS, SS, U Minor Series: AM, AR, BP, CA, FB, FC, H, JU, JM, KN, LE, LW, M, RO, S, SE, SP, T, TR, V, VC, W, VI Regal Series: Beonna, Æthelbert
EM4	Broad pennies	*c* 760–800	Continental types	Offa, Æthelred I, Eadwald, Æthelheard, Eadbert, Coenwulf
EM5	Later coins	*c* 800–973	Continental types	Various English rulers

Table 3.7.3 Summary of early medieval coin finds to AD 973

Period EM1 (*c* 500–665)		**43**
Continental gold	30	
English gold	5	
Byzantine copper	8	
Period EM2 (*c* 665–710)		**161**
South East	88	
East Anglia	11	
Northumbria	1	
Continental	60	
Uncertain	1	
Period EM3 (*c* 710–60)		**64**
South East	8	
East Anglia	27	
East Midlands	5	
Kent	1	
Wessex	1	
Continental	21	
Uncertain	1	
Period EM4 (*c* 760–800)		**5**
Offa	2	
Eadwald	1	
Coenwulf	2	
Period EM5 (*c* 800–973)		**5**
Ecgbert	2	
Beornwulf	1	
Eanred	1	
Uncertain	1	
Total		**278**

the third (*c* 625–65) by a mixture of Merovingian *tremisses* and English shillings.

Four coins can be assigned definitively to the first sub-period, with a fifth (EKE 019 1039) which is also likely to be this early – it is a cut fragment, less than a quarter, of a *solidus* with elements of a seemingly pseudo-Imperial legend visible. This group of coins represents some of the earliest post-Roman currency in East Anglia.

Other contemporary coin finds from England show a southern and coastal distribution with a particular focus upon Kent (Williams 2010). This also accords well with the evidence for late Roman coinage at Rendlesham, which shows an unusual concentration in the last years of the fourth century. The numismatic evidence suggests that the latest Roman and the earliest post-Roman coinages were both used here, although a century apart.

Belonging to the second sub-period are Merovingian gold *tremisses* and a number of Byzantine copper coins. The Merovingian coins are overwhelmingly mint-and-moneyer types, which name their place of origin and moneyer rather than featuring regal or Imperial titles. There are twenty-five examples of this type, and eight Byzantine coins. The Merovingian coins are difficult to date precisely, and many could in principle have been minted at any time between *c* 575 and *c* 665. As a way of determining a rough chronology much importance has been placed on the gradual debasement which occurred during this period as high fineness gold coinage gradually gave way to a 'pale' gold-silver alloy in the seventh century (Naismith 2017, 43–4). Scientific analysis of this group of coins from Rendlesham shows a full range of alloys, varying from the early high-purity gold to the very debased, pale gold of the sub-period after *c* 650 (e-app 3, 53–62). Seven of the Byzantine coins were struck 565–610, as shown in Table 3.7.4, with a single coin minted slightly later 615–29. It is probable that most, if not all, of the Byzantine coins arrived at Rendlesham at the same time as Merovingian issues between *c* 575 and *c* 625.

In the third sub-period Merovingian *tremisses* circulated alongside a small number of English shillings, five of which have been recovered from Rendlesham: one of Naismith type 11, one of type 26a and three of type 30 (Two Emperors) (Naismith 2017, 46–8). These represent the earliest English coinage. For the first century of early medieval coin use at Rendlesham every coin used was struck overseas, many at a great distance from the site. By the middle of the seventh century coinage was being struck in England but during this time English gold coinage was only ever a minority of the circulating currency, an important point when considering the

Table 3.7.4 Summary of Byzantine coin finds

Emperor	Date-range	*Follis*	Half *follis*	Total
Justin II	565–74	1	–	1
Maurice Tiberius	582–602	3 (1 cut fragment)	–	3
Phocas	602–10	2 (1 cut quarter)	1	3
Heraclius	610–41	–	1	1

international connections of a site such as Rendlesham (Ch 5.4 and 5.5).

In currency period EM2 (*c* 665–710) there is a dramatic increase in the number of finds. This is likely to represent a larger pool of currency, as well as greater intensity of usage, as coin went from high-value gold to lower-value silver. The forty-three coins of period EM1 represent an average loss of 0.26 coins per year whereas the 161 coins of period EM2 represent an average loss of 3.57 coins per year, more than a tenfold increase (tab 3.7.15). While this may seem dramatic, it is broadly in line with the patterns seen elsewhere in England (Blackburn 2003).

The types represented within period EM2 are summarised in Table 3.7.5. This emphasises the fairly large number of types A, B and C, which were all struck in the south-east of England. The relative importance of these types is in line with the wider regional and national pictures. Circulating alongside these English types was a significant proportion of coins from the Low Countries, types D and E, which are present in large numbers across England as well as at Rendlesham (Metcalf and Op den Velde 2009; Op den Velde and Metcalf 2003). They make up a significant element of the total throughout period EM2 but they are surpassed in number by English coinages. This period also saw the production of the first indisputably East Anglian coinages, with 10 of type RP found at Rendlesham.

The sixty-four coins from period EM3 are summarised in Table 3.7.6. The most striking feature is that there are far fewer coins than in EM2, equating to an average loss of only 1.28 coins per year, one-third of the loss rate for the preceding period. This runs counter to what might be expected, as coinage of this period is usually equally, if not slightly more, numerous than that of period EM2 (Blackburn 2003; Ch 5.4). In broad terms, this would suggest that there was a fundamental change in the scale and nature of coin supply or usage at Rendlesham within the period 710–60. Coinage went from being relatively plentiful and widely used to something much less common.

We can be confident that this change occurred before the reign of King Beonna, beginning in 749. There are no coins of Beonna from Rendlesham, and from the fact that they are relatively plentiful from other areas of East Anglia it can be argued that this establishes a robust *terminus ante quem*. The sub-types within coinage RS offer a further refinement (Table 3.7.7; Metcalf 1994, 502–23; Naismith 2017, 103–4). There is a far greater proportion of the early, good silver, sub-types *a* and *b*. Later debased sub-types are present, particularly those of moneyer Wigræd (sub-type *d*), but they are

Table 3.7.5 Summary of period EM2 (primary early penny) types

Origin	Type	
South East	PA	2
	A	18
	B	43
	C	18
	F	7
East Anglia	RP	10
	VE	1
Northumbria	AL	1
Continental	D	35
	E	25
Uncertain		1
Total		**161**

Table 3.7.6 Summary of period EM3 (secondary early penny) types

Origin	Type	
South East	AR	1
	FC	1
	KN	1
	L	2
	N	2
	O	1
East Anglia	Q	11
	RS	13
	RQ	3
East Midlands	SS	5
Kent	U	1
Wessex	W	1
Continental	E	17
	ST	1
	X	1
	Denier	2
Uncertain		1
Total		**64**

Table 3.7.7 Coins of each sub-type within type RS early pennies

Sub-type	
a	3
b	5
c	0
d	3
e	1
f	0
g	1
h	0

comparatively far fewer. Later types are more generally under-represented in period EM3: fifteen types – including KL and JM – found more widely in East Anglia are not present at Rendlesham. To some extent this may reflect the fact that these were struck only in small numbers, but it does emphasise that Rendlesham does not have many of the iconographically varied types typical of the period 725–50. It seems likely, therefore, that the change in coin use at Rendlesham happened in the middle of period EM3, perhaps in the 730s. The coins of type RQ suggest coin use continuing into the 740s but on a much diminished scale.

The origins of the coinage in use at Rendlesham in the eighth century differ from preceding periods, with a significant increase in the proportion of local issues struck within East Anglia. Coins of types Q, RS and RQ make up the largest grouping. Coins from other areas of England are present but in small numbers. Continental coins remain a significant element within the total, particularly the coins of type E which were struck at a variety of Continental mints (Metcalf and Op den Velde 2009). However, the relative proportion of non-English coinage decreased during this period, making up less than one-third of the total in period EM3. In this respect the Rendlesham assemblage mirrors broader regional and national trends (Ch 5.4).

There are only five coins of period EM4 from Rendlesham: two pennies of Offa (Chick types 18 and 20), neither of which is likely to date before *c* 780 (Chick 2010), a single coin of Eadwald of East Anglia struck in 797 or 798, and two coins of Coenwulf of Mercia, struck around 800. This serves to emphasise the fundamental shift in the nature of coin use at the site that had occurred earlier in the eighth century.

There also are five coins of period EM5, struck between 800 and the reform of the coinage under Edgar *c* 973: two coins of Ecgbert of Wessex (802–39), one of Beornwulf of Mercia (823–5), one of Eanred of Northumbria (810–41), and a fragmentary penny of tenth-century date.

3.7.4 Medieval and early modern coinage *c* 973–1700

Richard Kelleher

3.7.4.1 Introduction

Research into the everyday use of coinage in the late medieval and early modern periods has historically lagged behind its Roman and early medieval predecessors. However, thanks to the tens of thousands of single find records generated by the PAS since 1997, questions regarding coin use and monetisation, particularly in the medieval countryside of England and Wales, have now become a focus of academic research (Kelleher 2012). The Rendlesham project has generated an extraordinary total of 790 single finds dating between Edgar's reform of *c* 973 and 1700. This abundance of coins, from what was ostensibly a rural backwater, forces a reconsideration of the role and quantity of money in the English countryside over this time.

3.7.4.2 Chronology

Medieval and early modern English coins from Rendlesham are classified following North (1991; 1994) for coinage to 1662 and Spink's standard catalogue (Spink 2018) for post-1662 coinage. The issue date of most coins can be established to within a few years. The coins dating from Edgar's reform of *c* 973 to 1544 have been placed within the chronological frameworks outlined in Table 3.7.8. The phase divisions broadly correspond to fundamental changes to the administration and production of the coinage (see Allen 2012 for historical discussion; the framework used here is adapted from periodisation schemes outlined in Rigold 1977b and Kelleher 2012).

Phase A (*c* 973–1158) is characterised by regular changes of type at intervals of around two to six years. Recoinages ensured that poor-quality and foreign coins could not build up in the currency. There was no complete recoinage of older types, which presumably continued to circulate, and hoard evidence suggests that in practice coin users only changed their money to the newest type for making payments, while sometimes keeping older coins as savings (Allen 2018). To manage the data in Phase A, it has been divided into three periods (M1–M3), with cut-off dates of 1066 and 1100. Phase B (1158–1279) is divided into three periods (M4–M6), each of which saw the wholesale replacement of the previous type by a new immobilised design. In 1158 Henry II's Cross and Crosslets coinage of 1158–80 swept away all earlier coins in the circulating medium of the mid-twelfth century. A second recoinage by Henry II in 1180 replaced the previous type with the Short Cross coinage (1180–1247), and in 1247 the Long Cross coinage (1247–79) replaced the Short Cross. These systems were managed sufficiently well to ensure that almost all coins of the preceding type were replaced, usually within about three years. Phase C (1279–1544) comprises the coins of Edward I to Henry VIII. In 1351, 1411/12 and 1464/5 a series of weight reductions took the penny down to 18 grains (1.17g), 15 grains (0.97g) and 12 grains (0.78g) respectively: these reductions mark the date-ranges of periods M7 to M10. The reductions had the effect of encouraging the existing stock of circulating coins to be clipped down to conform to the new weight (Allen 2005). A methodological framework for characterising the composition of circulating currency from 1544 to the Great Recoinage of William III in 1696 has proved elusive, due to the lack of sufficient hoard evidence to determine the survival of lower denomination coins in currency over time.

Table 3.7.8 Phase and periodisation scheme for the medieval coinage (*c* 973–1544)

Phase	Period	Description	Date-range	Coins	Loss/year
A	M1	Edgar's Reform coinage to Harold II	*c* 973–1066	6	0.06
	M2	William I and II	1066–1100	3	0.08
	M3	Henry I and Stephen	1100–1158	10	0.17
B	M4	Henry II Cross and Crosslets	1158–1180	7	0.32
	M5	Short Cross coinage (Henry II–Henry III)	1180–1247	127	1.89
	M6	Long Cross coinage (Henry III–early Edward I)	1247–1279	131	4.09
C	M7	Edward I to Edward III 'Florin' coinage	1279–1351	191	2.65*
	M8	Edward III fourth coinage to Henry IV heavy coinage	1351–1411/12	37	0.62*
	M9	Henry IV light coinage to Edward IV heavy coinage	1411/12–1464/5	26	0.49*
	M10	Edward IV light coinage to Henry VIII second coinage	1464/5–1544	44	0.55*

* Coins minted in these periods could have been lost in subsequent periods

3.7.4.3 The assemblage in context

A total of 607 of the coins date to between *c* 973 and 1544 (Table 3.7.9). Three foreign coins have issue dates incompatible with the period structure. These are immobilised feudal *deniers* of Penthièvre in the name of Stephen (1093–1138), and of the counts of Maguelonne (twelfth to thirteenth centuries). A *petit denier* from the Low Countries dates from periods M4 or M5. It has been suggested that these coins were used in small numbers as farthing equivalents (Cook 1999, 246).

Table 3.7.9 Breakdown of the assemblage (*c* 973–1544) by period and denomination

Period	Penny	Halfpenny*	Farthing*	Groat	Halfgroat	Gold	Foreign	Total
M1	3	2	1	–	–	–	0	6
M2	0	2	1	–	–	–	0	3
M3	8	1(1)**	1	–	–	–	0	10
M4	1	4	2	–	–	–	0	7
M5	27(2)	68(3)	31(3)	–	–	–	1 (Henry of Cologne *denier*)	127
M6	21(2)	64(1)	44	–	–	–	2 (John I of Brabant cut half WALT sterling; 1 counterfeit penny)	131
M7	122(9)	27(2)	33(3)	0	–	–	9 (sterling imitations; 1 *kopje* of Renaud II)	191
M8	21(1)	5	0	1	6	0	4 (AE mite of John the Fearless; France *gros au trois lis*; 2 Venetian *soldini*)	37
M9	14	6	1	1	2	0	2 (Venetian *soldini*)	26
M10	22(7)	8	0	2	10	1	1 (Philip the Good *griffon*)	44
Uncertain (1279–1544)	15	5	2	0	1	0	2 (1 Venetian *soldino*; 1 counterfeit penny)	25
Total	**254**	**192**	**116**	**4**	**19**	**1**	**21**	**607**

*Fractional denominations were cut from whole pennies in periods M1–M6
** Figures in parenthesis indicate the number of Scottish and Irish coins present in the total

Late Anglo-Saxon and Norman coins (periods M1–M3)

Of the nineteen coins in Phase A, six date to period M1: a cut halfpenny and farthing of Æthelred II and three pennies and a cut halfpenny of Edward the Confessor. Two cut halfpennies and a cut farthing of William I make up the small period M2 assemblage and the ten coins from period M3 were all minted during Stephen's reign (1135–54) and notably do not include his last coinage, the 'Awbridge' type (dated 1153/4–58). In other datasets, such as that generated by the PAS, this type is better represented and accounts for around 10.6 per cent of Stephen's coins (Kelleher 2012, 287). One of the ten coins was a Scottish border piece struck for Prince Henry (1139–52), possibly at Bamburgh. These sometimes occur as finds, and are the most prolific single source of irregular coins struck during Stephen's reign. The low number of finds at Rendlesham in this early phase is indicative of the limited extent of monetisation in rural areas of England at this period in general. Only at urban centres with a developed commercial, administrative or royal function, like London or Winchester, are late Anglo-Saxon and Norman coins encountered with any frequency, and even in these contexts they are still relatively scarce (Kelleher and Leins 2008).

Cross and Crosslets (period M4)

Despite a comprehensive recoinage in 1158, finds of the Cross and Crosslets type (1158–80) are limited to just seven coins – an average of 0.32 losses per year (1.2 per cent of the overall assemblage). This low level of coin use and loss is consistent with other data. Analysis of medieval metal-detecting finds from England and Wales shows a similar dearth of material in period M4, with Cross and Crosslets coins accounting for 1.36 per cent of the national assemblage and 1.43 per cent of the Suffolk finds dating to 1066–1544 (Fig 3.7.4; Kelleher 2012, 85–7, 282).

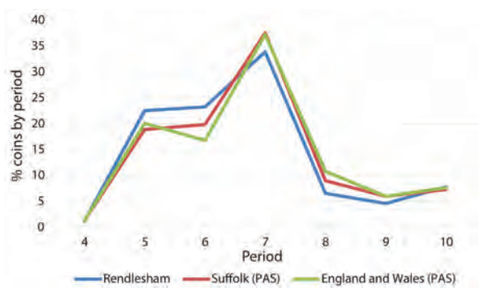


Fig 3.7.4 Rendlesham coin finds of periods M4–M10 compared with PAS finds for Suffolk and for England and Wales

Short Cross (period M5)

The 127 period M5 coins at Rendlesham represent an eighteenfold increase over the preceding period. A significant surge in coin use and loss was made possible by growing silver supplies from mines at Freiberg in Germany's Erzgebirge (Saxony) (Spufford 1988, 112). This increase is seen in the PAS material at both county and national level (Fig 3.7.4), and among site-finds from Vintry, South Ferriby, and Dunwich (Kelleher and Leins 2008; Cook *et al* 1998; Allen and Doolan 2002) (Fig 3.7.5). At Rendlesham there are 118 English coins in period M5, along with seven Scottish, one Irish, and one contemporary German coin. Scottish and Irish coins were a functioning part of the currency alongside the English coins they imitated (Cook 1999). At Rendlesham classes 1–4 (1180–1204/5) account for 31.1 per cent of the Short Cross finds (Table 3.7.10). This compares favourably with the proportion at Dunwich (33 per cent), and places the two Suffolk sites between the commercially important Vintry site in London (46.4 per cent) and the western and northern sites at Llanfaes (23.1 per cent) and South Ferriby (21.6 per cent).

Long Cross (period M6)

The Long Cross assemblage is slightly larger than the Short Cross but with its shorter period of production and circulation (1247–79) the loss per year rate is more than twice that of the preceding period. The period profile of the Rendlesham assemblage, plotted against the Suffolk and national data in figure 3.7.4, shows that coin loss and levels of monetisation at Rendlesham were above average between *c* 1180 and 1250 when compared with the periods before and after. The Rendlesham finds (Table 3.7.11) favour the earlier classes 1–3 (53.5 per cent) over the class 5 coins. This is slightly lower than seen at the

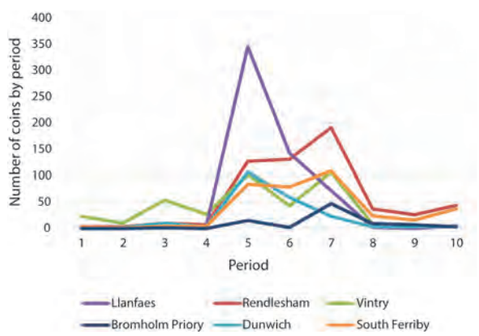


Fig 3.7.5 Frequency of medieval coin finds of periods M1–M10 from Rendlesham and other metal-detected sites

Table 3.7.10 English Short Cross coins by mint and class

Short Cross class:	1	2–3	4	5	6	7	8	Uncertain	Total
London	11		1	6	11	6		11	**46**
Canterbury			1	4	1	8		4	**18**
Exeter	1			4					**5**
Durham				3					**3**
Lincoln	2								**2**
Lynn				1					**1**
Northampton	2								**2**
Oxford	1								**1**
Winchester	1			3					**4**
York	2								**2**
Uncertain	5		1	12		2		13	**33**
Counterfeits								1	**1**
Total	**25**		**3**	**33**	**12**	**16**		**29**	**118**

Table 3.7.11 English Long Cross coins by mint and class

Long Cross class:	1	2*	3	4	5	7	Uncertain	Total
London		5	14		15		9	**43**
Canterbury			5		15		1	**21**
Bristol			2					**2**
Bury St Edmunds			1		1	1	1	**4**
Exeter			1					**1**
Gloucester			2					**2**
Hereford			1					**1**
Lincoln			3					**3**
Northampton			2				1	**3**
Norwich			2					**2**
Wilton			1					**1**
York	1		1				1	**3**
Uncertain	2		11		15		9	**37**
Counterfeits							2	**2**
Total	**8**		**46**		**46**	**1**	**24**	**125**

*Class 1b/2 mules are included with class 2 total

Vintry (57 per cent) but consistent with a similar metal-detecting assemblage at South Ferriby (53 per cent), which along with Llanfaes (43 per cent), has been suggested as a typical profile for the period (Cook 1999, 101).

Edwardian to 1351 (period M7)

Edward I's coinage reform of 1279 dramatically altered the appearance and character of the English coinage, and significantly impacted the denominations produced. The change in the administration of the coinage – moving from complete recoinages at long intervals in periods M4–M6 to a currency in which an Edward I penny of 1279 could potentially circulate into period M10 (1464/5–1544) – makes the interpretation of find numbers across periods M7 to M10 difficult. The Rendlesham assemblage in period M7 includes 113 English pennies, twenty-seven halfpennies, and thirty-three farthings (Tables 3.7.12–13), with nine Irish and Scottish pennies, as well as eight Continental imitations. The growth of overall finds numbers in period M7 at Rendlesham is noteworthy. There are more losses per year than in period M5, with a figure closer to the high watermark of period M6 than other similar datasets (Fig

Table 3.7.12 Period M7 pennies by class and mint

Class/coinage	London	Canterbury	Bristol	Bury St Edmunds	Chester	Durham	Exeter	Lincoln	Newcastle	York	Uncertain	Total
1	1											**1**
2	5					1						**6**
3	8	4	1		1	2		3		2	1	**22**
4	3	3										**6**
9	4	3	1				1			1		**10**
10ab	4	1		2								**7**
10cf	18	4				2					1	**25**
10?	1											**1**
11	5	3				1					1	**10**
12	1											**1**
13	1											**1**
15				1		1						**2**
1–15	4	1		1					1		3	**10**
Florin	6									1	1	**8**
Counterfeits											3	**3**
Total	**61**	**19**	**2**	**4**	**1**	**7**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**4**	**10**	**113**

Table 3.7.13 Period M7 halfpennies and farthings by period and class

	c 1279–94	*c* 1294–1335	Uncertain, *c* 1279–1335	*c* 1335–43	*c* 1344–51	Irish and Scottish	Total
Halfpennies	6	3	4	5	7	2	**27**
Farthings	9	15	6	0	0	3	**33**
Total	**15**	**18**	**10**	**5**	**7**	**5**	**60**

3.7.5). The loss profile of period M7 coins is, however, similar to – if slightly lower than – the PAS data for Suffolk and nationally (Fig 3.7.4). Stuart Rigold suggested that 30 per cent of coin finds minted in the periods from 1279 survived into the next period (Rigold 1977b, see also Blackburn 1989 for corrections). Based on hoard evidence Allen has produced figures for the periods in which different denominations were lost (Allen 2015, 14–19).

Late medieval (periods M8–M10)

Figures for coin losses after 1351 diminish significantly from the high levels seen between 1180 and 1351, with 107 coins dating 1351–1544 (Table 3.7.9). Pennies are the dominant denomination, followed by halfpennies and halfgroats. The lack of small value coins documented in this period is apparent in the low numbers of farthings, and the presence of five Venetian *soldini*, which circulated as unofficial halfpenny substitutes. Medieval gold coins are rare as finds and so the presence of what appears to be a cut quarter of a ryal of Edward IV is notable (Fig 3.7.6) and suggests that gold was part of the rural currency of England. The Rendlesham profile is consistent with PAS data, if slightly lower in periods M8 and M9 (Fig 3.7.4).

Fig 3.7.6 Cut quarter of a gold ryal of Edward IV (RLM 037 1123). Scale 2:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

Table 3.7.14 Breakdown of early modern coins (1544–1700) by reign and denomination

Reign	Shilling	Sixpence	Groat	Threepence	Halfgroat	Three-halfpence	Penny	Halfpenny	Farthing token AE	Trade token AE	Foreign	Uncertain	Total
1544–1553	0	1	4	1	4	–	3	1	–	–	0	0	14
Mary (1553–58)	0	0	0	0	0	–	1	0	–	–	0	0	1
Elizabeth I (1558–1603)	1	11	0	11	25	2	16	1	–	–	8th thistle merk, quarter thistle merk	2	71
James I (1603–25)	1	1(1)	–	–	7	–	4	2	5	–	0	1	21
Charles I (1625–49)	2	0	0	0	7	–	4	0	49	–	Scottish 20d	0	63
Commonwealth (1649–60)	0	0	0	–	0	–	0	0	–	–	0	0	0
Charles II (1660–85)	0	0	0	–	0	–	0	0	–	3	2 *stuiver*	0	4
James II–William and Mary (1685–1694)	0	0	0	0	0	–	0	0	–	–	0	0	0
William III (1694–1702)	0	4	0	0	0	–	0	0	–	–	0	0	4
Uncertain	1	1	1	0	1	–	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
Total	**5**	**18**	**5**	**12**	**44**	**2**	**29**	**4**	**54**	**3**	**4**	**3**	**183**

Early modern coins (1544–1700)

Single finds of coins minted after 1544 have rarely been the focus of research but have the potential to provide a corrective to the biases seen in the hoard record, which often excludes coins of lower value than sixpence. The assemblage is dominated by coins of Elizabeth I and Charles I (Table 3.7.14). Elizabeth's long reign (1558–1603) accounts for the large numbers of finds, which show the halfgroat overtake the penny as the coin most useful in daily business. Forty-nine of the sixty-three Charles I coins are base metal farthing tokens rather than royal currency. There is virtually nothing dating from after 1649, other than three local trade tokens and two Dutch coins. The latest pieces present are four sixpences of William III from after the Great Recoinage of 1696: their wear suggests that they were lost well after issue.

3.7.5 Overview

The assemblage of coinage from Rendlesham represents an unparalleled dataset within Britain. This is not a question of scale as the absolute number of coins pales in comparison to some sites, particularly those of the Roman period, where numbers of coins found can be in the thousands. It is more the combination of significant numbers of coins from every archaeological period from Roman to early modern, reflecting the landscape scale of systematic survey and recovery. The coins have all been fully identified and had their precise find location recorded. As such they offer a unique dataset within which it is possible to compare and contrast both chronologically and spatially, offering strong models for numismatic comparison with other sites and surveys. The only warning regarding potential comparison to other numismatic assemblages is that Rendlesham has an unusual early medieval signature and that the numbers and types of finds for this period are likely to be atypical.

There is enormous variation by period at Rendlesham, with the use of coinage at times typical and, at others, highly unusual. Over the *longue durée*, the peaks and troughs within the number of coin finds are likely to reflect a combination of broader monetary trends and more site-specific phenomena. In the case of the former the re-emergence of significant coin use in numismatic periods M5 and M6 mirrors known patterns from other sites. Site specific phenomena appear to be clearer in the late Roman R21, and the early medieval EM2 and EM3.

In discussions of the early medieval period and its coinage, comparing across periods can be helpful in contextualising the scale of coin loss. Table 3.7.15 summarises the number of coins from all periods. It also includes a figure for coin loss per year, arrived at by dividing the total finds for the period by the number of

Table 3.7.15 Summary of datable coin finds of all periods before AD 1700

Period		Date from	Date to	Number of coins	Loss/year
Iron Age	**Total**			**14**	
	IA			14	
Roman	**Total**	**41**	**402**	**993**	**2.75**
	R1		41	1	
	R2	41	54	5	0.38
	R3	54	69	4	0.27
	R4	69	96	8	0.30
	R5	96	117	13	0.62
	R6	117	138	8	0.38
	R7	138	161	15	0.65
	R8	161	180	9	0.47
	R9	180	193	3	0.23
	R10	193	222	8	0.28
	R11	222	238	1	0.06
	R12	238	260	0	0.00
	R13	260	275	73	4.87
	R14	275	296	138	6.57
	R15	296	317	20	0.95
	R16	317	330	42	3.23
	R17	330	348	166	9.22
	R18	348	364	59	3.69
	R19	364	378	51	3.64
	R20	378	388	11	1.10
	R21	388	402	144	10.29
Early medieval	**Total**	**500**	**973**	**278**	**0.59**
	EM1	500	665	43	0.26
	EM2	665	710	161	3.57
	EM3	710	760	64	1.28
	EM4	760	800	5	0.13
	EM5	800	973	5	0.03
Medieval	**Total**	**973**	**1544**	**607**	**1.06**
	M1	973	1066	6	0.06
	M2	1066	1100	3	0.09
	M3	1100	1158	10	0.17
	M4	1158	1180	7	0.32
	M5	1180	1247	127	1.90
	M6	1247	1279	131	4.09
	M7	1279	1351	191	2.65
	M8	1351	1412	37	0.61
	M9	1412	1465	26	0.49
	M10	1465	1544	44	0.56
	Uncert.	1279	1544	25	0.09
Post-medieval	**Total**	**1544**	**1700**	**183**	**1.17**
All periods	**Total**	**0**	**1700**	**2,075**	**1.22**

years. Caution is needed when aggregating data in this manner as the periods are dates of production rather than usage and do not account for known recoinages, very long periods of circulation, or the effects of hoarding. Nevertheless, the figures provide a useful basis for a comparative diachronic approach.

The yearly coin loss figure of 3.57 in EM2 is similar to that for most of the fourth century (R16, R18 and R19) and the high medieval (M6 and M7), periods which regionally and nationally have far higher rates of coin loss than EM2. While it is clearly impossible to correlate directly across 1,000 years, this is a useful indication of the scale of monetary transactions and, in conjunction with the regional and national norms, shows that the volume of early medieval coinage is unusually high at Rendlesham. In the long-term perspective it also emphasises the relative paucity of coinage in the early medieval period: a site with a rate of coin loss, and so a volume of transactions, that would be typical for either the Roman or medieval periods sits at the absolute apex for the early medieval period.

3.8 Summary and conclusions

The Rendlesham assemblage documents human activity over more than four millennia. The quantity and limited range constrain characterisation of earlier prehistoric activity but the material is consistent with both Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement. There is evidence for continuous settlement and activity within the survey area for more than two thousand years from the early or middle Iron Age to the present day.

The long-term signature, with the exceptions discussed below, is for the most part that of farming communities typical of their time and region. Finds are predominantly relatively common types of personal possessions, household items and dress accessories, representing the detritus of rural living, and coin profiles mostly reflect broader regional and chronological trends. There is little that is diagnostic of craft working, or that gives a better indication of the range of farming activities, and few finds indicative of marked social differentiation. There are, however, indications of religious activity in the second to fourth centuries, and evidence for contacts within East Anglia and further afield shows that at no time were these rural communities completely isolated. The evidence for integration with regional commercial networks is increasingly clear from the later medieval period, and pilgrim relics testify to individual journeys.

The only period where the range, quality and quantity of material culture items deviate from this general pattern is the late fourth to the middle eighth centuries. The unusual quantity of latest Roman coinage suggests official or military activity from *c* 380, and the material culture assemblage suggests a settlement and community of unusual size and material wealth from the early to middle fifth century until the middle of the eighth century. The proportion of the total assemblage represented by finds of the fifth to eighth centuries is more than five times greater than the background norm. The finds show a wide social range with strong elite indicators, widespread and far-reaching social and exchange contacts, craft production, and early coin use and monetisation.

The inference of material wealth and importance at this time is reinforced by the proportion of precious metal objects among non-coin metal finds from the Roman period until 1700 (Fig 3.8.1). Thirty-three of thirty-six gold items (92 per cent) and fifty-four of 101 silver items (53 per cent) are early medieval, and of these the great majority are fifth to eighth century. There are no gold objects of the Roman period, or of the period from the Norman Conquest to the end of the sixteenth century, and for these periods silver items make up 1.4 per cent and 2.0 per cent of the respective assemblages. By contrast, for the early medieval period as a whole precious metal items make up 8.3 per cent of the assemblage (gold 3.2 per cent and silver 5.2 per cent) and for the fifth to eighth centuries this figure rises to 9.5 per cent (gold 3.7 per cent and silver 5.8 per cent). During the fifth to eighth centuries the community at Rendlesham had access to precious metal on a scale seen neither before nor since, a pattern seen also in the coinage.

Aoristic analysis (Ch 4.1.1) of both the total numbers and proportions of precious metal objects (Fig 3.8.2) allows us to model this with greater precision and suggests that silver was more readily available than gold in the fifth to late sixth centuries, but that there was a significant upsurge in the availability and use of gold in the later sixth and seventh centuries. This tallies with both the coin profile of EM1 and other evidence for an 'age of gold' in late sixth- and seventh-century England (cf Fern *et al* 2019, 270) and is also seen in the composition of the status metalwork from Rendlesham. With the notable exception of the two bracteates, most status items of the fifth and sixth centuries are silver or silver-gilt whereas the majority of those dating to the late sixth and seventh centuries are gold. The eighth-century

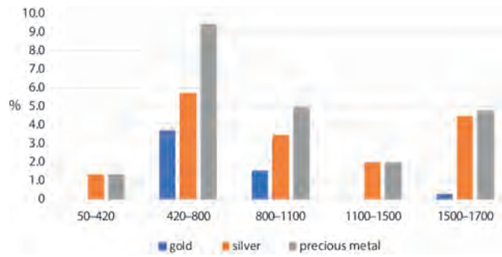


Fig 3.8.1 Rendlesham: proportions of precious metal items by period (excluding coins)

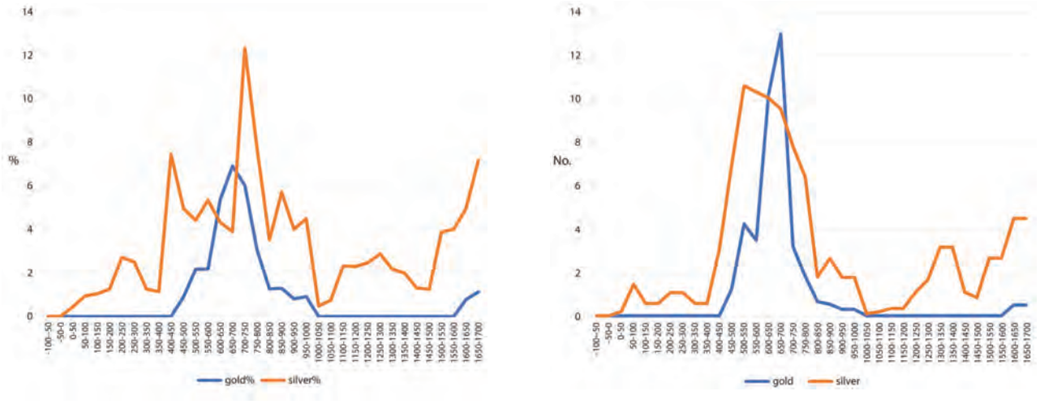


Fig 3.8.2 Left: aoristic model of gold and silver items as a proportion of the Rendlesham assemblage (excluding coins). Right: aoristic model of the numbers of gold and silver objects in the Rendlesham assemblage (excluding coins)

spike in silver usage indicated by aoristic analysis of the relative proportions of gold and silver should be seen against the rapid decline in the total numbers of precious metal items in the later eighth and earlier ninth centuries.

In so far as elements of the assemblage can be seen as indicative of regional or cultural identities it is worth noting that the Iron Age coinage may indicate that the area came under Trinovantian control in the decades immediately before the imposition of Roman rule. Most of the fifth- to eighth-century assemblage does not look out of place in East Anglia or the wider Anglian province of material culture but there are indications of long-standing and significant connections across the North Sea and Channel worlds from the early-to-middle fifth century, and in this respect the material culture suggests an unusually widely connected place.

4 Settlement sequence and settlement morphology

This chapter sets the chronological framework and reviews the changing patterns of settlement and activity across the survey area over time. It focuses in detail on the evidence for the fifth to eighth centuries AD but contextualises this within the long term by summarising earlier and later phases of activity.

4.1 Phasing and dating

4.1.1 Material culture dating and aoristic modelling

Understanding activity over time at Rendlesham rests on our ability to date the material culture items recovered from the ploughsoil. The few radiocarbon dates obtained from the evaluation in 2013 are useful in confirming the dating of specific excavated features and deposits but provide no basis for broader dating and phasing, which therefore depend upon established archaeological and numismatic chronologies for artefact types in the survey assemblage (Ch 3). Objects have been given a date-range that represents current best understanding of their likely period of manufacture, use or circulation, and loss, deposition or discard, and assigned to a particular archaeological period or periods (e-app 1). We recognise that the common recurrent use of specific dates such as AD 410 and AD 1400 to define archaeological periodisation can itself introduce bias (Oksanen and Lewis 2020), but are confident that our dating of artefacts is sufficiently robust to minimise such effects.

The retrieval strategy imposes a reliance on non-ferrous metalwork, and so a bias towards periods when this was abundant. The pottery assemblage from fieldwalking and metal-detecting is small and offers little scope for refined dating, while the period from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age is represented by only forty worked flints and fourteen metal items. As the material recovered by surface collection is unstratified, only diagnostic artefacts can be dated securely and the chronological precision available varies with type, period and preservation. The coin sequence provides the most fine-grained chronology but is irrelevant to most of prehistory and of limited value for the fifth to sixth centuries AD. Other chronologically diagnostic metalwork, such as Roman brooches and official belt fittings, and fifth- to seventh-century types for which there are fine chronologies based on closed grave finds, can be assigned a use-life to within half a century. Most finds, however, including long-lived types and damaged items that have lost typo-chronologically distinctive features, can be assigned only much broader date-ranges. Some 3 per cent of the assemblage can only be assigned to ranges spanning two or more major archaeological periods and 7 per cent is effectively undatable. There are also issues of curation and re-use which can blur the chronological distinctions on which diachronic analysis depends. In the case of Rendlesham this is a particular problem with the significant quantity of later Roman material which may have been used and lost, discarded or deposited in the fifth to seventh centuries, and with fragmentary dress accessories of the fifth and sixth centuries that might represent scrap for recycling. We

have accommodated as far as possible the likelihood that some objects had complex and lengthy biographies, but without secure stratigraphic contexts we cannot control for this comprehensively or systematically.

The effect of all this is to limit longitudinal and diachronic analysis to the comparison of broad archaeological periods, with all the potential pitfalls that this entails. A particular issue of broad periodisation is that by default it encourages models of stasis punctuated by episodes of transition, the very coarse character of the chronology masking more complex dynamics. This is especially a problem for the fifth century AD, where the framework of cultural-chronological periodisation ('Roman' to 'Saxon') can artificially constrain artefact dating (cf Gerrard 2013, 80–3; Scull 2023a). Within the broad picture it is possible to take finer-grained snapshots using coinage or other chronologically diagnostic items but we need to recognise that these represent activities that may have been socially, symbolically, functionally or spatially restricted, and are not necessarily representative proxies for the broader range of past activities. In the absence of fine chronologies for all aspects of the assemblage we need to seek ways of modelling the data that allow us to overcome these constraints.

Aoristic analysis provides a way of modelling a finer chronology for the assemblage as a whole. The technique subdivides a broad chronological span into relatively narrow uniform date-ranges (or 'bins') and then calculates aoristic sums of the probability of each individual entity – in this case objects – falling into any specific bin (Ratcliffe 2000; Johnson 2003; Crema 2012). Excluding 763 prehistoric, modern and very poorly datable finds allows us to visualise the dating of the remaining 4,438 finds (85.3 per cent of the assemblage) as aoristic sums with fifty-year date bands (Fig 4.1.1). This approach allows us to model the intensity of coin and artefact loss, and so of human activity, across the survey area as a whole over the long term. Analysis can also be undertaken by collection unit, adding a spatial dimension to the chronological model.

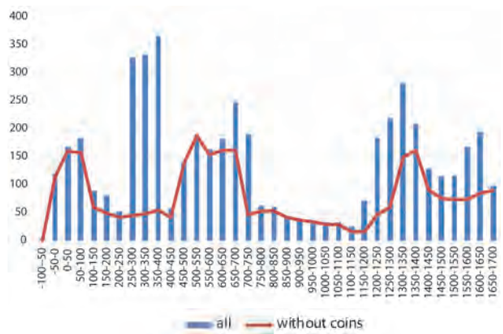


Fig 4.1.1 Aoristic sums of all artefacts and coin finds in the Rendlesham database, 100 BC to AD 1700

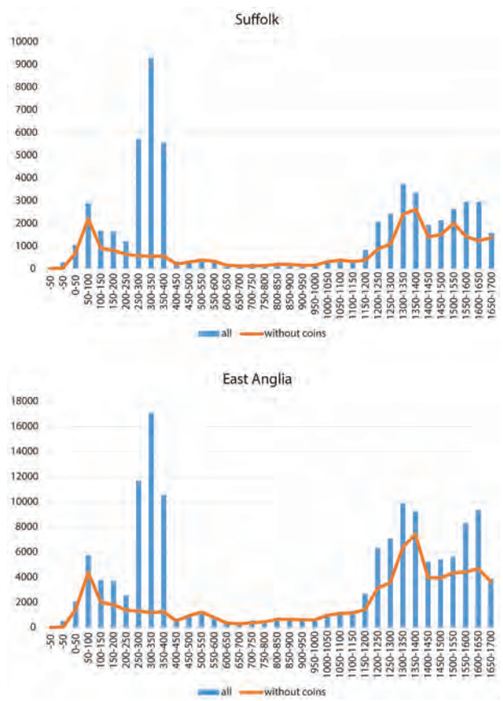


Fig 4.1.2 Aoristic sums of artefacts and coins from Suffolk and from East Anglia in the PAS database

4.1.2 Long-term and comparative trends

Aoristic modelling of the Rendlesham assemblage shows three main peaks of activity between 100 BC and AD 1700: 50 BC–AD 100 (late Iron Age and early Roman), AD 450–700 (early to middle Anglo-Saxon), and AD 1300–1400. There is a significant low in the volume of finds datable to the period AD 750–1200, with shorter reductions in the immediate post-Roman period and in the fifteenth century. The post-Roman and fifteenth-century dips are common to the wider sample of finds recorded through the PAS in Norfolk and Suffolk (Fig 4.1.2), and in the national data (Oksanen and Lewis 2020), and can be explained respectively by the end of Roman rule with its attendant social and economic dislocations and by the impact of the Black Death, which arrived in England in 1348. Also apparent in the regional and national data, as well as in the Rendlesham assemblage, are the sharp rise in the early Roman period; the fall-off in the third and fourth centuries AD, attributable to Empire-wide supply constraints and inflation which led to a huge increase in low-denomination coin use; and the increase during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, culminating in the fourteenth-century peak.

Where Rendlesham contrasts most markedly with the regional and national patterns, however, is in the early post-Roman centuries. Both the regional and the national data show very low volumes of finds, with a slight rise in the sixth century (which may be attributable in part to metal-detecting finds of grave goods from plough-disturbed burials), but at Rendlesham peaks in the volume of finds in the sixth and seventh centuries are higher than for any other period, followed by a strong fall during the course of the eighth century. This clear indication of unusual material wealth and intensity of activity is consistent with the conclusions drawn from the broader periodised quantification of the assemblage (Ch 3.4) and the early medieval coinage (Ch 3.7), but aoristic modelling allows us to date the phenomenon with a high degree of confidence to the period from the later fifth to the earlier eighth century. It is also worth noting that whereas the regional data show an increase in the volume of finds from the eleventh century, the Rendlesham assemblage shows a decline from the end of the eighth until the middle of the twelfth century, with an upturn thereafter.

Aoristic modelling with and without coins allows us to identify co-variance in coin loss and in the loss of other metalwork, and to identify periods of high or low monetary circulation in terms of the relative proportion of coins to other elements of the assemblage. Across the seventh and early eighth centuries, and from the later twelfth century, when coins make up a significant proportion of the assemblage and high levels of monetary circulation can be inferred, the chronological trend of coin loss broadly mirrors that of other artefacts. Interestingly, the comparison shows very clearly that the seventh- to early eighth-century episode of coin use follows at least a century of material wealth which saw negligible coin use, a point explored further below (Ch 5.5 and 5.6.2). The peak of late Roman coin finds conforms to the broader national pattern in massively outweighing the quantity of other contemporary metalwork. As discussed above (Ch 3.7.2), however, the Rendlesham assemblage differs from the regional pattern in showing a peak in the later fourth century.

4.1.3 Spatial patterning and chronology: choropleth mapping

Aoristic plots of the normalised assemblage from each collection unit allow us to model a finer long-term chronology for the varying intensities of artefact loss, and so of human settlement and activity, that lie behind the broader dynamics of spatial patterning identified in Chapter 2.4.3. Figure 4.1.3 presents this information for the fourteen main fields of the central and southern survey areas. It shows very clearly, for example, a long-term persistence of activity in RLM 013 and the massive fifth- to eighth-century spike concentrated in RLM 013, 036, 044 and 059. This contrasts with a more dispersed pattern and much lower artefact volumes in the early Roman period and peaks of activity in the late Roman period primarily indicated by coin losses. Although the figures are low, RLM 014 and 038 are the only fields to show an increase in activity in the eighth to tenth centuries. From the eleventh century, the data suggest an expansion and dispersal of settlement.

These aoristic analyses, like the normalised data presented in Chapter 2.4.3, operate at the scale of the collection unit but in order to investigate finer-grained spatial patterning we need to be able to handle and visualise normalised data with greater spatial precision. Since they can only deal with uncalibrated data, conventional density measures (kernel density, K and L) are inappropriate techniques to explore finds density across collection units (Conolly and Lake 2006, 170–9). Our chosen approach to visualise patterns across the survey area as a whole is therefore to calculate the number of finds that fall within 25m by 25m quadrats – the smallest area judged useful given the density of distribution and the likely degrees of movement in the ploughsoil (cf Ripley 1981, 102–29). The numbers of finds within each quadrat are then normalised using the calibration coefficient for the relevant collection unit and presented using a colour-scaled choropleth map (eg Fig 4.2.2). This provides a way of visualising normalised distributions across the survey area with good spatial precision, showing clearly where repeat surveys have identified significant and extensive concentrations of material. It does, however, have a drawback in that isolated finds in fields that have seen fewer survey episodes show as unusually high values (eg RLM 045 and 046 in Fig 4.2.4). Areas of contiguous quadrats with a range of values are therefore more likely to represent significant activity than isolated quadrats with high values, and this must be borne in mind when interpreting the plots.

Normalised choropleth maps allow diachronic investigation of spatial distributions but cannot be time-sliced by the same narrow date-ranges used for aoristic modelling. However, using the information from aoristic models to inform the interpretation of normalised choropleth mapping offers the capacity to characterise with considerable precision the spatial dynamics of settlement and activity across the survey area from prehistory until the end of the seventeenth century AD.

Fig 4.1.3 Rendlesham: normalised aoristic sums by survey unit

4.2 Settlement patterning in the survey area

4.2.1 Prehistory (Mesolithic to Iron Age *c* 10,000 BC–AD 43)

The evidence from the survey assemblage for spatial patterning of activity is sparse until the Roman period, and particularly so for periods before the use of metal, but some conclusions can be drawn (Fig 4.2.1).

Worked flints were found across the survey area but almost half – sixteen of forty items – are from RLM 044, ranging in date from Mesolithic to early Bronze Age and mainly from the western half of the field. Taken with other evidence for prehistoric activity, notably the Late Neolithic pit in the reservoir area (RLM 030), the possibly Neolithic oval enclosure and the relatively large amounts of worked flint from the 2013 excavation trenches (Ch 2.2–3), this suggests an early settlement preference for the very sandy soil and south-facing aspect of RLM 044.

Bronze Age metal objects were recovered across the survey area but the only concentration is in the south-west of EKE 019, where aerial photographs and magnetometry show traces of rectilinear enclosures. Settlement in RLM 044 does not appear to continue into later prehistory, but aerial photography and magnetometry show field systems of late Bronze Age or late Iron Age to early Roman date, and late Bronze Age or Iron Age pottery was found in the reservoir area in the north-east of the field. It is possible that the putative barrow in Hoo Hill Wood (RLM 006) and ring ditches in RLM 038 and RLM 036 are early Bronze Age funerary monuments (Ch 2.2–3).

Although sparse, the distribution of material suggests that the terrain immediately overlooking the floodplain of the Deben valley was favoured during the middle to late Iron Age, particularly EKE 021 and RLM 013 where both coins and early brooches were recovered. The pentagonal enclosure identified by magnetometry in RLM 038 and RLM 044 is considered later Iron Age on morphological grounds (Ch 2.3.3; Fig 2.3.4); finds from within it include a knobbed terret fragment and a sherd of probable hand-made Iron Age pottery.

Later Iron Age settlement activity in RLM 013 can be related to the D-shaped enclosure, whose ditch was backfilled by the middle of the first century AD (Ch 2.3). Contemporary surface material – including coins of the first century BC and first century AD, pottery and brooches – was mostly found west and north of the enclosure.

Late Iron Age coins are almost absent from the north of the survey area except for the possible iron core of a stater forgery from RLM 037. Terret fragments and late Iron Age brooches from RLM 039, RLM 046 and the north of RLM 037 suggest that the Roman focus here originated in the early first century AD.

4.2.2 Roman

The spatial distribution of finds indicates several foci of settlement and activity from the middle first to the early fifth century AD, with discrete concentrations of material in the north (adjacent areas of RLM 037, 039 and 046), east (RLM 045) and south (EKE 020) of the survey area (Fig 4.2.2). The less intense concentration of material in the southern area of RLM 013 in part reflects the probable scattered hoard of Theodosian *nummi* but the aoristic analysis shows a strong peak of activity in the first century and a slight rise in the volume of fourth-century objects as well as coins. Pottery scatters may also indicate foci of activity in EKE 019 and RLM 038. Elsewhere, less intense spreads of material probably derive from contemporary manuring. However, the assemblages from RLM 036 and 044, areas which subsequently saw early medieval settlement, have elements that suggest some continuing use or re-use of Roman material in the fifth to seventh centuries.

4.2.2.1 Dating and characterisation of settlement and activity areas

Dating rests primarily on the brooch types present for the first two centuries AD and the coins for the later Roman period. Taken with the other finds, these also give indications of status and types of activity. Table 4.2.1 summarises the range of object types by collection unit.

RLM 037, RLM 039, RLM 046

The brooches suggest continuing activity from the late Iron Age and include one third-century type. The coins show a normal pattern for rural settlements (Fig 4.2.3), starting in the early second century with a strong peak in the later third and continuing until the early fifth century (represented by a single clipped *siliqua*). One mid-fourth-century coin is pierced, centrally rather than at the edge. The artefact focus lies at the northern end of a cropmark complex of trackways and enclosures identified within RLM 037. It suggests a settlement or activity area of *c* 7ha (including a piece of unexplored

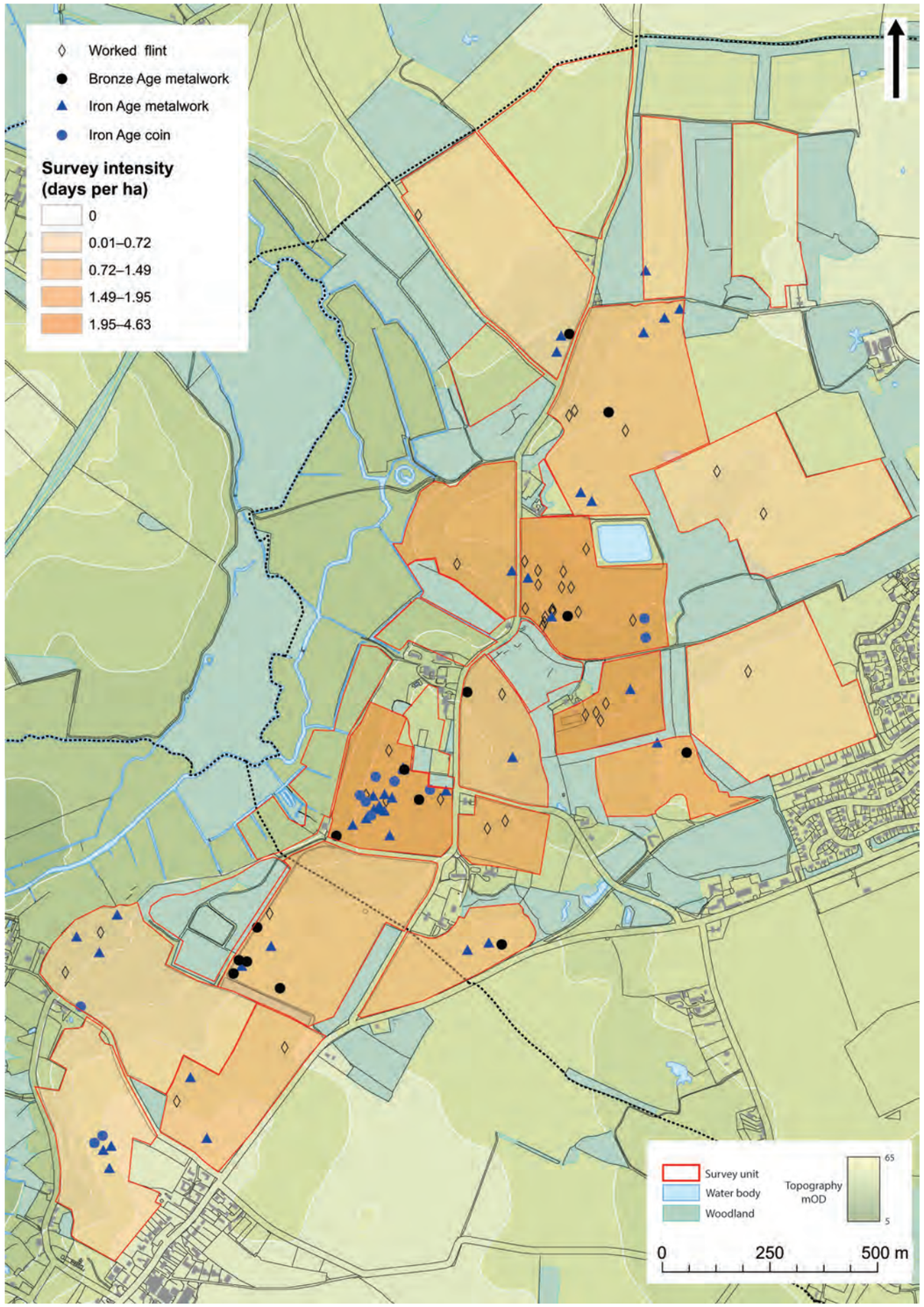
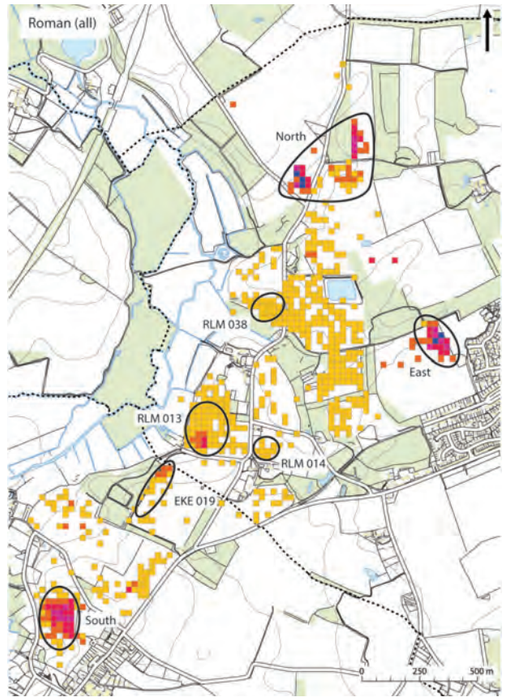


Fig 4.2.1 Distribution of prehistoric finds. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*



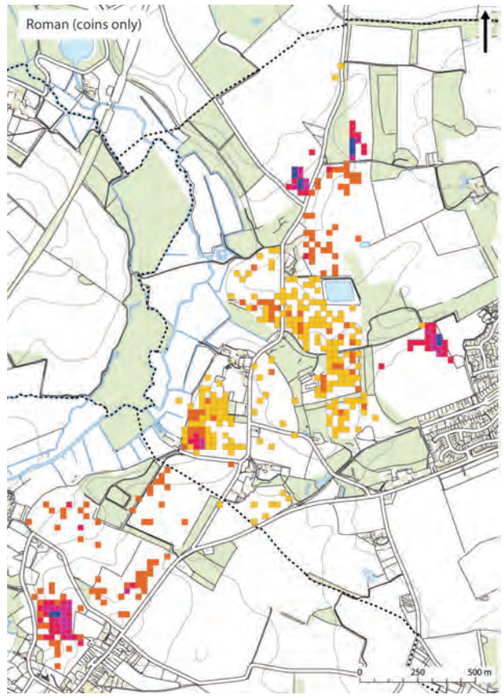


Fig 4.2.2 Distribution of Roman finds (choropleth grids) showing the main areas of activity and possible subsidiary areas: (top) all finds; (bottom) coins only. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

Table 4.2.1 Relative quantities of types of Roman finds from the main activity areas

Site	Category	Type		%
North	CTJ		90	70.3
(RLM 037 N,	DA	brooch	12	9.4
039, 046)		other	4	3.1
	HO	pottery	16	12.5
		other	1	0.8
	other		5	3.9
		Total	**128**	
East	CTJ		59	59.0
(RLM 045)	DA	brooch	2	2.0
		other	1	1.0
	HO	pottery	34	34.0
		other	0	0.0
	other		4	4.0
		Total	**100**	
South	CTJ		201	85.5
(EKE 020)	DA	brooch	15	6.4
		other	5	2.1
	HO	pottery	4	1.7
		other	5	2.1
	other		5	2.1
		Total	**235**	
Central	CTJ		280	66.7
(RLM 013)	DA	brooch	64	15.2
		other	21	5.0
	HO	pottery	36	8.6
		other	6	1.4
	other		13	3.1
Total			**420**	

woodland) within which there may have been several discrete elements, although the finds show little variation across the area. The main component is probably a modest enclosed farmstead alongside a trackway, occupied from the first to early fifth century.

RLM 045

The coins and the absence of common first-century brooch types suggest that activity here began during the second century. There are no characteristic fourth-century objects and the coin sequence ceases in the middle of the fourth century (before 360) with no silver issues and no pierced coins. The character of the small object assemblage is unusual. The relatively plentiful pottery includes table wares; the hippocamp brooch (RLM 045 1145) and griffin razor handle (RLM 045

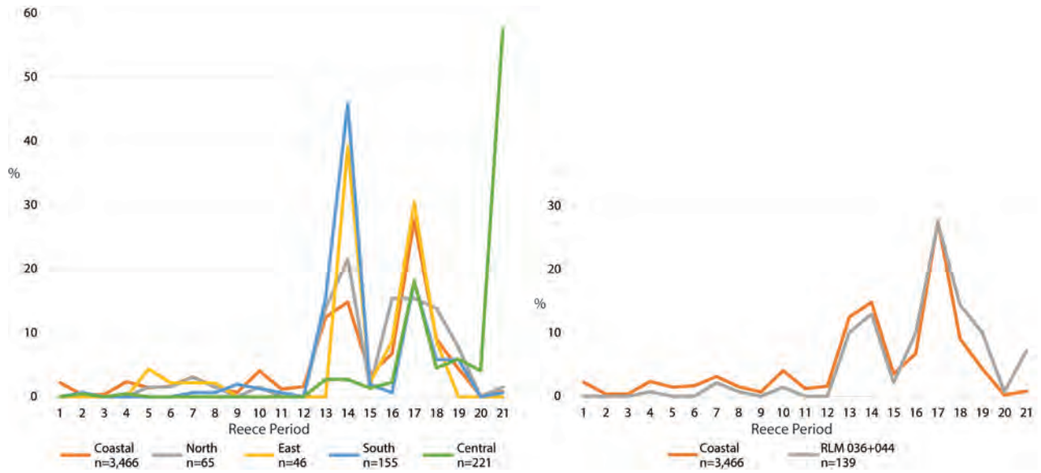


Fig 4.2.3 Left: the pattern of coin loss by Reece period in the areas of Roman activity at Rendlesham against that for Suffolk Coastal district (PAS database); Right: the pattern of coin loss by Reece period in fields RLM 036 and RLM 044 against that for Suffolk Coastal district (PAS database). For Reece period dating see tab 3.7.15

1146) are not common finds and may be votive items. Taken with the exceptional armour fragment depicting Hercules discovered in 2018, this would suggest religious activity. The artefact concentration is well defined in the north-east of the field and evaluation in 2003 revealed little activity of any date immediately to the east (Ch 2.2.2), suggesting an extent of just over 2ha. This may be a small rural shrine, in use between the middle of the second and the middle of the fourth centuries.

EKE 020

Coins and brooches indicate activity from the late Iron Age. The earliest Roman coin is a Claudian *as;* thereafter the coin sequence conforms to the normal rural pattern (Fig 4.2.3). There is a strong very late Roman element, with a hoard of clipped *siliquae* (excluded from Fig 4.2.3), belt fittings and a late nail cleaner showing that activity here continued into the early decades of the fifth century. This assemblage shows a greater variety of artefact types than those from the northern focus or from RLM 045, including copper-alloy vessel fittings, furniture-related objects and two steelyard weights. The fragmentary cropmark evidence suggests at least two phases of enclosures in the same area as the finds, which cover *c* 3ha. At present there is no indication of a villa-type building here but this was probably a fairly wealthy farmstead throughout the Roman period, perhaps with a tax collection or similar official function during the late fourth and early fifth centuries.

RLM 013

Brooches indicate activity from the late Iron Age to the later first and early second centuries but with fewer examples of second- and third-century types than elsewhere in the survey area. The number of coins before the fourth century is extremely low. The probable hoard of Theodosian *nummi* accounts for around 25 per cent of all finds here, but even if this is set aside the late third century is poorly represented and there are just two earlier coins, one of them a mid-first-century *as*. The fourth-century coins include two silver *siliquae*, one lightly clipped, and one *nummus* that has been pierced for suspension, possibly a post-Roman adaptation. Other late Roman material includes a piece of Oxford red colour-coated ware, probably deposited after the middle of the fourth century, and fifteen bracelet fragments, most of which are fourth century. In contrast to EKE 020 there are no late belt fittings but there is a belt mount from the northern edge of EKE 019, immediately adjacent to RLM 013. The material includes a steelyard weight, cosmetic objects and furniture fittings, comparable to EKE 020. Votive activity may be suggested by three zoomorphic brooches, a bracelet fragment modified to a ring and a possible miniature tripod.

This activity focus probably extended into the south-west corner of RLM 014 where fieldwalking in 1982 identified a concentration of Roman pottery (Ch 2.2.2 and 2.4.4). Most of the material recovered from this field during metal-detecting was pottery (Table 4.2.2), and food preparation may also be evidenced by a lava quern

Table 4.2.2 Relative quantities of types of Roman finds from areas with pottery concentrations

Site	Category	Type		%
RLM 014	CTJ		3	14.30
	DA	brooch	0	0.00
		other	1	4.80
	HO	pottery	14	66.70
		other	1	4.80
	other		2	9.50
		Total	**21**	
EKE 019	CTJ		12	33.30
(west)	DA	brooch	12	33.30
		other	1	2.80
	HO	pottery	7	19.40
		other	2	5.60
	other		2	5.60
		Total	**36**	
RLM 038	CTJ		42	71.19
	DA	brooch	4	6.78
		other	3	5.08
	HO	pottery	8	13.56
		other	0	0.00
	other		2	3.39
Total			**59**	

fragment although this might be post-Roman. There are no brooches and the few coins include a silver *denarius* of Trajan.

The rectilinear enclosure system known from magnetometry and aerial photography in RLM 013 is most likely Roman or immediately post-Roman; enclosures identified by magnetometry in RLM 014 most likely relate to the medieval green edge. The finds distribution suggests activity over *c* 7ha including the north-east corner of EKE 019 and south-west corner of RLM 014. It seems likely that there was a substantial late Iron Age and early Roman farmstead that declined and maybe disappeared during the second and third centuries. Fourth-century and later Roman activity seems to have been focused in the north and west of RLM 013; it is difficult to characterise but the late *nummi* hoard suggests official or military contacts (Ch 3.7.2.2).

EKE 019 and RLM 038

Although recovered during metal-detecting the assemblages discussed above, with the exception of EKE 020, have a significant pottery component: 8 to 34 per cent of the total assemblage and 25 to 83 per cent of the non-coin assemblage. Two other groupings of material, in the west of EKE 019 and the south of RLM 038, have a high proportion of pottery that may therefore suggest something more than manuring. The assemblages are relatively small (tab 4.2.2) but both coincide with possibly late Iron Age or Roman features known from aerial photography and magnetometry. The majority of the EKE 019 finds are early Roman, with over 40 per cent of the small coin assemblage pre-dating 260 and a large proportion of first-century brooches; late Roman material includes one propeller-shaped belt mount. The RLM 038 group is mostly later, with small quantities of first-century coins and brooches and a normal coin bias to the late third and fourth centuries. A couple of the pottery sherds are late shell-gritted ware, and a bracelet and a buckle are also fourth century.

4.2.2.2 Post-Roman use or re-use: RLM 036 and RLM 044

As noted above (Chs 2.4.5 and 3.4.1.5), there is a question as to whether some of the Roman material from Rendlesham represents use or re-use, and deposition, in the early post-Roman period. This is particularly relevant to RLM 036 and RLM 044, where there is a strong concentration of early medieval metalwork, and unequivocal evidence for contemporary settlement and burial, but where the normalised density and distribution of Roman finds would suggest manuring rather than settlement. Both the deposition of Roman material in fifth- to seventh-century furnished burials and its circulation and loss in settlement contexts are well-documented (Drury and Wickenden 1982, 20–3; West 1985, 76–85; White 1988; Lucy and Evans 2016, 229–40).

Coins are the most common Roman metal items from early medieval contexts and a high proportion are pierced for suspension as ornaments. Around 37 per cent of the coins listed by White (1988, 62–98) from early medieval furnished burials are pierced, and King (1988, 225) suggests a figure nearer 60 per cent for burials outside Kent. Of the 289 Roman coins from the fifth- to eighth-century settlement at West Stow, Suffolk, 35 (12 per cent) are pierced, indicating that Roman coins were used and valued in more ways than simply as pendants (West 1985, 76–81).

Table 4.2.3 shows that RLM 036 and RLM 044 have 13 and 9 per cent pierced coins respectively, not dissimilar to West Stow; there is also a *sestertius* modified with punched annulets on one face for use as a weight (RLM 044 1102). This suggests that a significant proportion of the coin assemblage may represent post-Roman use and

Table 4.2.3 Percentages of pierced Roman coins from all fields

	Total	Pierced	%
RLM 036	69	9	13.04
RLM 043	10	1	10.00
RLM 044	107	10	9.35
RLM 059	27	2	7.41
EKE 021	16	1	6.25
RLM 038	42	2	4.76
RLM 037	44	2	4.55
RLM 013	280	1	0.36
Total	595	28	4.71

loss. The pattern of coin loss in both fields is broadly similar to the local norm with a few coins pre-dating 260 and peaks in the later third century and in the fourth century (Fig 4.2.3). Comparison with the other sites shows that the third-century peak is weaker than all except RLM 013. There is a relatively strong presence in the final Theodosian period, though far lower than in RLM 013, and this includes at least one clipped *siliqua* and a pierced *siliqua*.

The range of non-coin object types and functional categories from these fields is also broadly similar to the main foci (Table 4.2.4), and so consistent with manuring, but the over-representation of some late types suggests again that a proportion of the material may represent post-Roman use and loss. The dress accessories include seven late bracelets and eight belt fittings, the latter including six fragments of buckles with zoomorphic elements from the total of eight in the whole survey assemblage. These buckle and bracelet types occur in fifth- and sixth-century furnished burials, and there are over thirty late bracelet fragments from the West Stow settlement. Similarly, the only two penannular brooches (Fowler types A4 and C) in the entire survey assemblage are from RLM 036; penannular brooches are known from fifth- and sixth-century furnished burials, as at Morningthorpe, Norfolk (Mackreth 1987), and seem to have been selected for retention. Finally, the small assemblage of personal possessions includes two examples of knife handles with openwork hare-and-hounds design. These are the only examples from Rendlesham of this fairly common and distinctive type, which has been recorded from fifth- or sixth-century grave assemblages elsewhere in England (White 1988, 141–2), and they may have been retained or re-used because of their visual appeal after their production in the third or fourth century.

Table 4.2.4 Relative quantities of types of Roman finds from RLM 036 and RLM 044

Category	Type	RLM 036	RLM 044	combined	combined %
CTJ		69	107	176	69.8
DA	brooch	11	18	29	11.5
	other	6	16	22	8.7
HO	pottery	2	8	10	4.0
	other	2	3	5	2.0
Other		3	7	10	4.0
Total		**93**	**159**	**252**	

4.2.2.3 Summary and overview

By the middle of the first century there were at least four settlements along the Deben valley at intervals of between 600m and 1km, all presumably farmsteads (EKE 020, RLM 013, RLM 038, RLM 037/039/046). There is no indication of discontinuity at the start of Roman control in AD 43, nor the disruption of the Boudican revolt in 60/61, but the presence of Claudian bronze coins (including examples at EKE 020, RLM 013 and RLM 038) suggests some contact with the army, perhaps even some veteran settlement from Colchester.

The strongest evidence for discontinuity during the Roman period is at RLM 013, where a large area of early finds, probably including some votive activity and the pottery scatter in RLM 014, seems to have been abandoned during the second and third centuries. During this time a new site, probably a rural shrine, was established at RLM 045, 700m east of RLM 038 on heavier and higher land. This site was abandoned by the 360s.

None of the farmsteads has evidence for villa-type buildings but these are rare in east Suffolk. The northern complex (RLM 037/039/046) seems more impoverished than RLM 013 or EKE 020 throughout the period but is difficult to compare with the smaller assemblages that perhaps represent minor or subsidiary farms at EKE 019 and RLM 038. The southern focus, EKE 020, shows the most consistent signs of wealth, particularly if the late second-century *denarii* hoard, concealed some 320m to the north-east, is associated.

There is a remarkable amount of evidence for activity after 360 compared with most sites in the east of Suffolk as illustrated by patterns of coin loss. Only RLM 045 was definitely abandoned before the end of the fourth century. Both EKE 020 and RLM 013 potentially have connections with late Roman official or military personnel and may continue as settlements through the early decades of the fifth century.

4.2.3 Early medieval

Detailed analysis of the morphology and spatial development of the fifth- to eighth-century settlement complex is presented in 4.3 below. This overview sets the evidence for fifth- to eleventh-century settlement and activity within the survey area in its long-term context.

4.2.3.1 Fifth to eighth centuries

The main feature of the fifth to eighth centuries is the concentration of settlement activity across an area of 50ha–60ha in the centre of the survey area, encompassing but extending beyond the areas of early medieval settlement features and burials known from magnetometry, aerial photography and trial excavation (Fig 4.2.4). The concentration of finds is densest in RLM 013, 036, 044 and 059 but there is also a significant amount of material from RLM 014, 038 and 043 and the

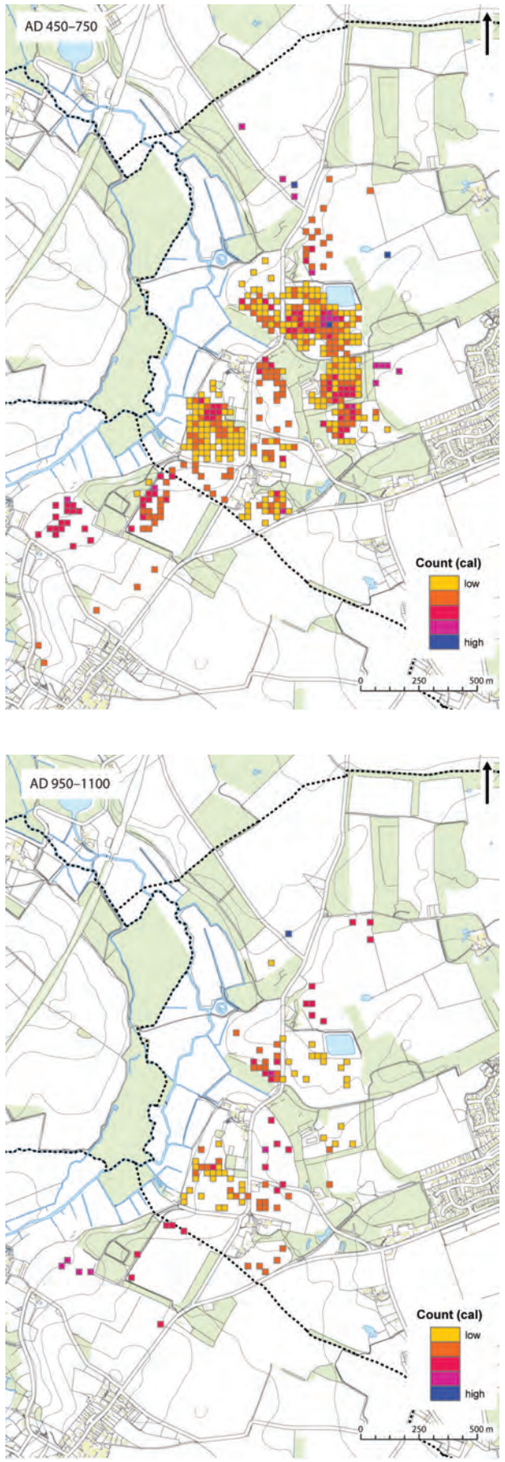


Fig 4.2.4 Normalised distribution by choropleth of finds dated AD 450–750, AD 750–950, and AD 950–1100. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

northern part of 042. Within this central area, RLM 044, 036 and 059 appear to have been the strongest foci of activity in the fifth and sixth centuries while the activity signature in RLM 013 intensifies from the later sixth century.

The discrete cluster of material in EKE 021 includes a high proportion of later fifth- and sixth-century dress accessories (seventeen of twenty-eight early medieval finds) which strongly indicate furnished inhumations and suggest a settlement close by; these include the Merovingian horse-and-rider brooch (EKE 021 1126). A sword pyramid (EKE 021 1023) and buckle (EKE 021 1201) are consistent with burial continuing into the seventh century, and two early pennies and other finds suggest continuing settlement activity (4.3, below). The concentration of material in the western side of EKE 019 is predominantly seventh- and eighth-century and includes a high proportion of early pennies. This may represent an area of assembly and exchange rather than permanent occupation, quite possibly along a southern approach to the main settlement complex. The scatter of finds northwards in RLM 037, 039 broadly corresponds with the lines of the present-day Ash Road and its early modern predecessor and also suggests the course of a routeway. The small group of dress accessories from RLM 046 includes two pieces that were probably made on the Continent (radiate-headed brooch fragment RLM 046 1054 and disc brooch RLM 046 1049) and may indicate burials at the south-west edge of the field.

This shift in the pattern of settlement and activity within the survey area was a consequence of developments during the first half of the fifth century. There is no evidence that the settlement area in RLM 037 (north), 039 and 046 or the Roman settlement focus in EKE 020 saw significant activity later than the earlier fifth century. The evidence from RLM 013 is consistent with continuing activity, but less intense in the fifth and sixth centuries than in RLM 036, 044 and 059. The apparent late Roman activity signature in RLM 036 and 044 is largely made up of coins, bracelets and belt fittings which may well derive from settlement and burial contexts of the fifth and sixth centuries (above, 4.2.2.2). This looks like the establishment of settlement and burial areas on new sites, their location perhaps influenced by the possible late Roman settlement focus in RLM 038 and continuing activity in RLM 013. The resulting agglomeration of settlement and activity over a considerable area contrasts strongly with the preceding pattern of dispersed smaller settlements. It is worth noting that prior to the fifth century AD there is little evidence for occupation of the slopes in RLM 044, 036 and 059 since the Neolithic or Bronze Age.

4.2.3.2 Eighth to eleventh centuries

From the second quarter of the eighth century both the density of finds and the area of settlement activity decrease (Fig 4.2.4). Two silver pennies, two Ipswich ware sherds and dress accessories of the eighth to eleventh centuries suggest continuing or renewed settlement in EKE 021, but activity is otherwise mainly concentrated in RLM 013, 014, 043 and the northern half of 042, with a discrete settlement focus apparent in the south of RLM 038 and a small concentration of material in the south-west of RLM 059. By this time material in RLM 044 and 036 appears to derive mainly from cultivation rather than settlement activity and the scatter of finds southwards in EKE 019 and northwards in RLM 037 probably indicates the continued use of routeways.

In the tenth and eleventh centuries this trend becomes more marked (Fig 4.2.4), with indications of settlement activity clustering in RLM 038 and around the site of the parish church and the edges of Rendlesham Green in RLM 013, 014, 043 and the north of 042. A trackway with a Y-shaped terminal identified by magnetometry in RLM 013 has been dated by excavation to the tenth century and suggests the movement of livestock to and from areas of pasture lying to the south.

4.2.3.3 Settlement and topography

The distribution of early medieval material is confined to the tractable soils of the Newport 2 association and the free-draining slopes of Burlingham 3 soils (Ch 2.1). The focus of activity in EKE 021 is on a west-facing slope overlooking the floodplain. The main settlement complex forms a distinct topographic unit around the shallow valley of the minor tributary feeding into the Deben immediately north of Naunton Hall. To the south and west of the stream (RLM 013, 014, 043 and 051) the terrain forms a low promontory at 10m–11m OD, with a steep drop to the floodplain. The level top of the promontory, now occupied by RLM 013 and the present Naunton Hall, has clear views up and down the Deben valley and is a prominent place in the landscape when viewed or approached from the north, south and west. To the north and east of the stream (RLM 038, 044, 036 and 059) are south- and west-facing slopes rising to the interfluve. Together, they form a shallow bowl looking towards the promontory and intervisible with it across the tributary valley. Between RLM 044 and 036 is a gentle depression along which a track now runs from Ash Road towards the modern village of Rendlesham.

A higher density of finds from all phases of the early medieval period has been recovered from the top of the promontory in RLM 013 than from its eastern side in

RLM 014 and RLM 042; material was especially thin where these fields slope down to the tributary stream. Almost all of RLM 043, like RLM 013, occupies soils mapped as Newport 2 by the Soil Survey, while most of RLM 014 lies on sloping Burlingham 3 soils, but the metal detectorists report that the terrain, especially closer to the stream course, is noticeably sticky and difficult to traverse. Very localised variations in soils and topography appear to be in play here, with the slightly higher and drier locations favoured for settlement. It should also be noted that the western side of RLM 043 lies within the extent of Rendlesham Green as shown on Kirby's maps and that there are few finds of any period from this area.

The other main trend across the fifth to eleventh centuries is the absence of finds from the west of RLM 042, the east of EKE 019, and EKE 022. These are flat expanses of heavier Burlingham 3 soils and the near-total absence of evidence for activity or cultivation suggests that they were long-term areas of woodland or wood pasture.

4.2.4 Medieval and post-medieval

Three large and distinct concentrations of medieval metalwork were recovered within the study area, in RLM 037, 038 and 042, producing 228, 132 and 126 finds respectively (Fig 4.2.5). In addition, a number of smaller, less dense or less distinct concentrations are apparent in RLM 013, 014, 036, 043, 044 and 059, and in EKE 019, 020, 021 and 022. The three major concentrations have also produced significant quantities of post-medieval material, as have most of the smaller and less distinct concentrations: the only exception is that in EKE 019, which has sixty-five medieval finds but only eleven post-medieval. The distribution of all this material can, unlike that from earlier periods, be related to some extent to the settlements and land-use areas described in documents or depicted on early maps. The smaller or less well-defined concentrations, while sometimes close to farms or cottages existing today or shown on early maps, can lie at a greater distance. The large cluster of finds in RLM 042 lies immediately to the south of the site of the rectory and east of the rectory farm and associated cottages, while that in RLM 037 lies immediately adjacent to High House, a post-medieval elite residence and almost certainly the site of the main medieval manor in the parish, 'Rendlesham als Naunton Hall' (Ch 2.1.3).

The present Naunton Hall is identified as the site of the medieval Colvilles manor and was also a post-medieval gentry residence. It and 'Rendlesham als Naunton Hall' originated, as we have seen, as the two

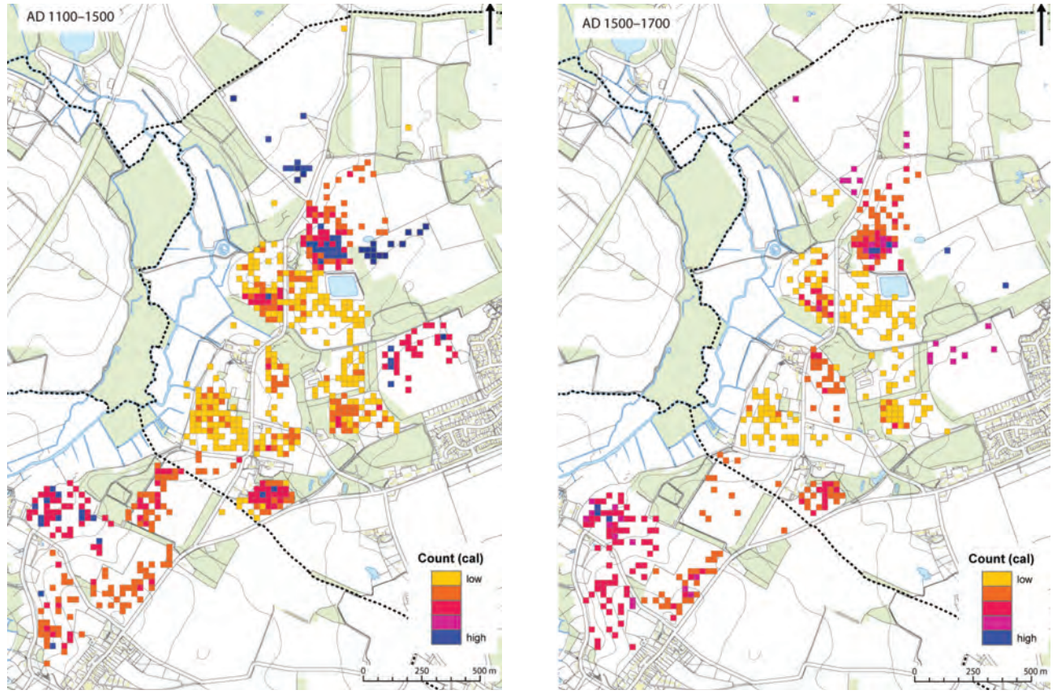


Fig 4.2.5 Normalised distribution by choropleth of finds dated AD 1100–1500, and AD 1500–1700. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

main Domesday manors but, while the 1982 excavation in RLM 012 immediately north of Naunton Hall suggested occupation dating from the seventh century through to the twelfth, there is very little material of the eleventh century or earlier from the concentration beside High House. The only secure eleventh-century finds are an Anglo-Scandinavian harness link and stirrup strap mount which may have been lost during travel. It is possible that evidence is obscured by buildings and gardens, or has been destroyed by the digging of the particularly large crag pit lying in the area immediately to the north, but it is more plausible that the Domesday manor is represented by the third major cluster of metalwork finds, which lies some 250m to the south-west in RLM 038. This has produced metalwork of seventh- to eleventh-century date and ten sherds of Thetford ware. The majority of the medieval coins from RLM 038, which constitute around 49 per cent of the material, date from the first half of Phase C (1279–1544) and other finds include two detached silver mounts from a fourteenth-century annular brooch, an inscribed brooch and two book clasps. RLM 037 also produced signs of wealth and status: a silver mount and bell of the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries and three thirteenth-century lead personal seal matrices. But here in RLM 037, while most of the coins recovered similarly fall into early Phase C, there are more dating to the later and final phases. The pottery includes a sherd of 'transitional' ware and there is more post-medieval metalwork (107 items, as opposed to sixty-three from RLM 038). This is as would be expected given the known status of High House in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and would be consistent with the manorial hall moving from RLM 038 to a new site in RLM 037, away from associated dwellings, during the course of the twelfth to fifteenth centuries.

The other major concentration of metalwork, in RLM 042, does not appear to be associated with a manorial site but rather with the rectory. The field was certainly glebe in the post-medieval period (SRO HD 427/1) and, to judge from the 1387 extent (SRO HB 416/B4/1/30), was very probably so in the medieval. The artefact scatter is strongly focused towards the northern edge of the field, close to the present rectory which stands *c* 80m away. Coins constitute 60 per cent of the metalwork but unlike RLM 037 and 038 there are no objects of precious metal.

Otherwise, most fields in the survey area contain smaller quantities of medieval and post-medieval material. Some of this may be associated with the sites of former farms or cottages, and a proportion must represent losses during everyday activity including fieldwork, but most probably derives from manuring – a conclusion supported by the almost complete absence of finds from the former area of Rendlesham Green which remained as unploughed pasture until its enclosure in the early nineteenth century.

There is a broad contrast in the distribution of this material to the north and south of the parish boundary between Rendlesham and Eyke. In Eyke, both medieval and post-medieval coins and metalwork tend to form small, moderately dense but discrete scatters. In Rendlesham, the large, dense concentrations of material just described are separated by more continuous but lower-density spreads. It is possible that this contrast reflects differences in settlement, social structure and agricultural organisation. The surviving extents suggest that even in the fourteenth century a high proportion of the land in Rendlesham was cultivated as part of large manorial demesnes, much of which comprised enclosed fields. By the post-medieval period these manorial cores had developed into a small number of large, ring-fence farms like Naunton Hall and High House and – except in the hamlet of Friday Street, outside the study area – there were few small farms and cottages. At least three of the large farms appear to have been occupied by resident gentry in the late seventeenth century. Eyke, in contrast, is subsumed within the Domesday entry for Staverton and by the thirteenth century contained just two manors – Eyke and Staverton – both of which were acquired in the sixteenth century by the Stanhope family: Norden's map of 1601 shows that Eyke lay on the edge of their extensive estate (Copinger 1909, 259–62; SRO EE5/11/1). The same source suggests that the parish had a more complex settlement pattern than Rendlesham, with a nucleated village around the church but also – in the part of the parish which extends into the survey area especially – numerous outlying farmhouses and cottages. Here, within EKE 019, 020, 021 and 022, the land was held by more than a dozen farmers. Not surprisingly, there appear to be significantly more sixteenth- and seventeenth-century probate inventories for yeomen and husbandmen from Eyke than from Rendlesham. There were some individuals living in the parish in the sixteenth and seventeenth century who described themselves as gentry in wills proved in the Prerogative Court at Canterbury but they were few in number – just two, compared with eleven for Rendlesham. Even *c* 1840, when most of the land in the two parishes had been acquired by the Thellussons, some echoes of these old differences persisted. The tithe maps show that the whole of the metal-detected area to the north of the parish boundary, in Rendlesham, lay within just two farms – Naunton Hall (tenanted by Fenn Shearing) and High House (tenanted by George Cooper) – with the exception of RLM 042, which was glebe (TNA, PRO IR 30/33/334).

That part of the survey area lying to the south of the parish boundary, although less than a third of the size of that lying to the north, was divided between four tenant farms (TNA, PRO IR 30/33/152).

The pattern in Rendlesham is consistent with large medieval demesnes, developing into still larger capitalist farms (often with resident gentry) in the post-medieval period, each of which was worked by a substantial labour force. Extensive and dense clusters of metalwork are set in a fairly continuous, lower-density matrix of material, dropped by workers or spread in manure. In other words, the metalwork may represent the archaeological signature of agricultural labour inputs. In Eyke, smaller farms, with a smaller workforce, each undertook less manuring and other labour-intensive activities across their limited acres. The fields from which more than one medieval item of precious metal has been recovered are all in Rendlesham (RLM 037, 044, 038 and 045) and all the precious metal finds come from Rendlesham with the exception of a single item from EKE 019. The distribution of post-medieval finds displays a similar pattern, with the exception of EKE 021 which produced four of the sixteen precious-metal items from the survey area (three sixteenth-century silver dress hooks and one silver cuff link of the seventeenth century or later).

The dominance of agriculture in Rendlesham by a few large agricultural units may have had another impact on the character of the archaeological record. It is probable that, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, there had been rather more settlement sites in Rendlesham than existed by the time the earliest maps were surveyed but that many had comprised cottages or very small farms within a landscape already dominated by large demesne farms. The comparative poverty of such places, the small proportion of land directly farmed by them and the fact that much of it lay dispersed in open fields may mean that their archaeological presence (in terms of metalwork finds) is effectively masked by the sheer mass of material – incorporated within manure or dropped by members of a large labour force – pouring out of places like Naunton Hall or High House. The situation around the former green at Rendlesham is relevant here. In the south of RLM 014 a significant concentration of medieval pottery, including some Thetford ware, was recovered by fieldwalking in 1982, and would normally be interpreted as a settlement site. In the detecting survey, 19.5 per cent of the medieval finds recovered from RLM 014 were pottery sherds, compared with less than 9 per cent in all other fields. However, the putative site does not present as a cluster of metalwork finds, the field instead being covered – like 013 to the west – by a relatively even and low-density spread of medieval material, much of it probably deriving from Naunton Hall. In RLM 013 itself there are hints in the pottery distribution of another farm or cottage fronting on the western side of the green, a possibility supported by the presence of an isolated barn just to the north in the eighteenth century (SRO HD 427/1) and by the results of excavations in 2014.

Some aspects of patterning, however, remain difficult to explain. In particular, EKE 019 produced sixty-three medieval items, strongly clustered towards the western side of the field, but only eleven of post-medieval date, more widely scattered. This would suggest a medieval farm site abandoned by the sixteenth century but Norden's 1601 map (SRO EE5/11/1) indicates this was an area of open-field arable which had been much reduced by piecemeal enclosure. Given that there is no evidence, from anywhere in England, for the laying out of new areas of open field after *c* 1400 the concentration of medieval material cannot possibly represent settlement and must have been created by some other process or processes. But what these may have been, and why they changed or ceased at the end of the medieval period, remains unclear.

For the most part the stories told by the medieval and post-medieval metalwork finds are unremarkable, because in most ways Rendlesham had by now become an unremarkable place. The chronology of the medieval coin finds is broadly in line with that from other sites in eastern England, confirming, unsurprisingly, that coin use was widespread at peasant level. Yet while at one level there was no real continuity between the early medieval central place and the more rural landscape that succeeded it, there are hints that in important ways the former had an influence on the latter. In particular, the two main manors appear to have emerged from settlements originating as early as the seventh and eighth centuries, with the wider medieval settlement pattern developing as later (and often post-Conquest) additions were made to these ancient 'cores' – a phenomenon that can be seen elsewhere in England and which has implications for our understanding of the origins of manorialism itself (Williamson 2013a, 162–5). This is explored further in Chapter 7.

4.3 The early medieval settlement complex: morphological and spatial development

The distribution of material culture items identifies the extent of the fifth- to eighth-century settlement and associated activity, and some differential distributions

suggest activity zoning. Household items – most closely linked to the physical infrastructure of dwelling places – are predominantly, although not exclusively, concentrated in RLM 013 and RLM 044, both of which can be identified confidently as foci of occupation. Other functional categories, however, notably dress accessories and personal possessions, show a wide distribution across the settlement and activity area. This is not surprising given the range of types, the chronological range, and the variety of taphonomic pathways they represent. It is possible, however, by identifying specific object types as proxies for specific activities and integrating this with the evidence of magnetometry, aerial photography and excavation, to investigate both the spatial structure of the settlement area and aspects of activity zoning within it.

4.3.1 Settlement and burial

The assemblage includes a high proportion of objects which are common in furnished inhumations of the fifth to seventh centuries, in particular dress accessories and girdle hangers of the later fifth to mid-sixth centuries. When recovered as ploughzone finds in any quantity at a single location these are usually assumed to derive from disturbed burials (Chester-Kadwell 2009, 80–2) but they also occur in excavated settlement assemblages and indeed a small-long brooch was recovered from a *Grubenhaus* in RLM 044 during excavations in 2013. The challenge is to distinguish between material likely to come from burials and that which is a residue of occupation and other activity.

Most of the material belonging to types commonly found in furnished burials comes from RLM 044, 036 and 059. This is particularly clear in the distribution of fifth- and sixth-century dress accessories, girdle hangers and weapon fittings (Fig 4.3.1) and there is a strong concentration of likely inhumation grave goods, and fragments of decorated pottery and heat-damaged dress accessories likely to come from cremations, over an area of 1.13ha in the north of RLM 044 where excavation has demonstrated the presence of cremations (Fig 4.3.2). It is likely that most if not all of the normal funerary types from this area are derived from disturbed burials – both inhumations and cremations – and that a proportion of material more widely dispersed across RLM 044 also derives from burials as well as from occupation and other activity. The situation is less clear-cut in RLM 036 and 059 but a similar concentration of material over an area of 1.06ha suggests burial in the centre and south-east of the field, perhaps extending into the north-east corner of RLM 059. At the northern edge of the burial area an annular ditch with a central feature identified by magnetometry may represent an early medieval inhumation.

As an heuristic, therefore, we interpret funerary types within these areas as deriving from burials; the remaining elements of the assemblage are likely to represent settlement activity, with the likelihood of any item coming from a burial decreasing with distance from the burial area.

The putative burial assemblages from RLM 036 and 044 (Tables 4.3.1–2) are skewed towards copper-alloy feminine dress items. Distinctive masculine items, such as shield studs and sword fittings, make up only a small proportion but this is unquestionably because the distinctive material markers of masculine burial – weapons – were iron. This exercise allows us to identify types that are more or less likely to be indicative of burial. The clustering of cruciform brooches, wrist clasps and girdle hangers suggests that these are strong burial proxies but the distributions of other contemporary dress accessories, such as small-long brooches, are less strongly linked to the burial areas and a range of material including vessel fittings and buckles seems as likely to come from occupation or other activity as from burials. Two late Roman buckles and a bracelet fragment were found within the cemetery area in RLM 044, and a possible bracelet fragment and four pierced coins within the burial area in RLM 036. These may well be from burials but the overall distribution of Roman material likely to have been curated or re-used suggests that although some other late belt fittings may derive from burials in RLM 044 a high proportion of coins – pierced and unpierced – and bracelet fragments are more likely to be from settlement contexts (Fig 4.3.3). Defining the likely extent of the burial areas and comparing the assemblages which probably derive from disturbed burials with those from excavated cemeteries allows us to model – albeit within broad margins of uncertainty – the chronology of burial, and to make an estimate of the minimum numbers of burials represented.

4.3.1.1 Occupation

The distribution of non-funerary material suggests occupation and related activities over *c* 60ha across the fifth to mid-eighth centuries and remote sensing and excavation have identified contemporary settlement features (Ch 2.3).

The results of excavation in 2013 suggest that the majority of macular features identified by magnetometry in RLM 044 are likely to be settlement features – pits or *Grubenhäuser*. At least some of the macular features in RLM 036 also likely to be *Grubenhäuser* or pits, and groups

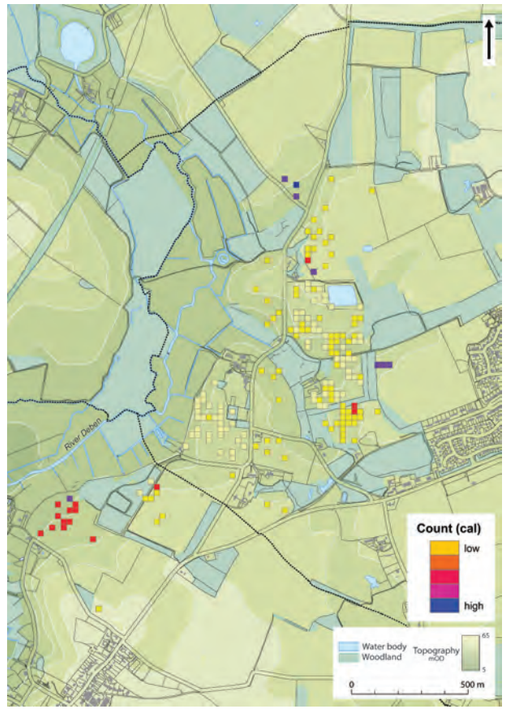


Fig 4.3.1 Normalised distribution by choropleth of fifth- to sixth-century dress accessories, girdle hangers and weapon fittings. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

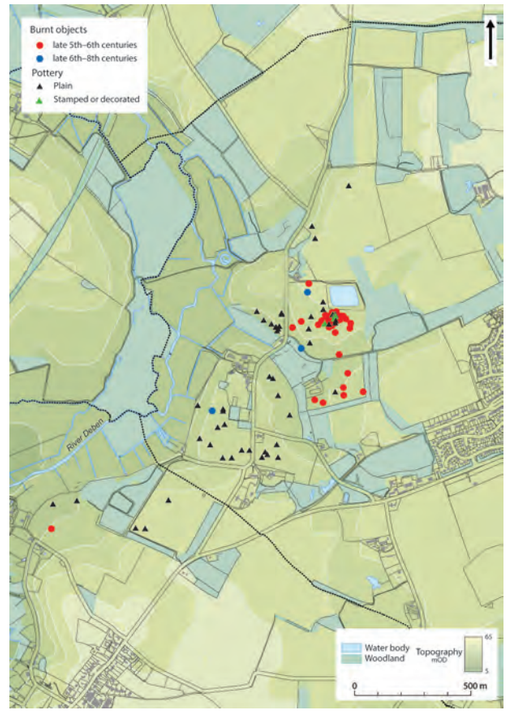


Fig 4.3.2 Distribution of hand-made pottery and heat-damaged dress accessories. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

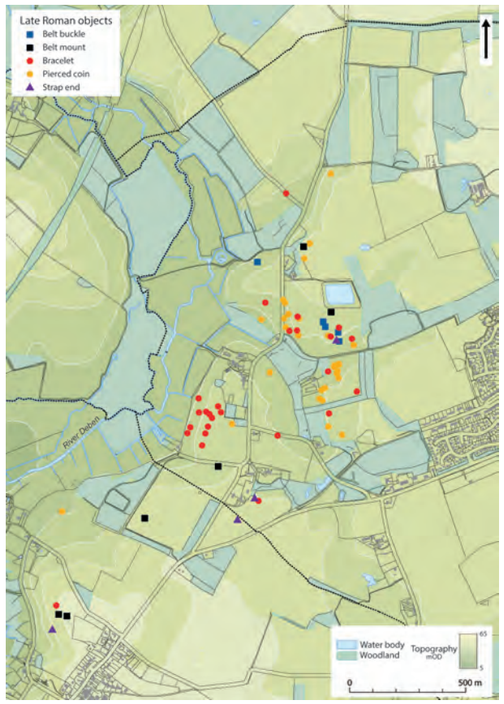


Fig 4.3.3 Distribution of pierced Roman coins, late Roman belt fittings and late Roman bracelet fragments. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

of sub-rectangular features in RLM 059 known from aerial photographs may also be *Grubenhäuser*. Taken with the distribution of metal finds and pottery this suggests occupation across an area of between 9ha and 18ha on the south- and west-facing slopes looking across the tributary stream towards the promontory. The distribution of material in RLM 044, 036 and 059 and the positioning of the probable *Grubenhäuser* in RLM 044 indicate that occupation was restricted to the slopes below the 19m OD contour. *Grubenhäuser* are almost invariably associated with ground-level timber buildings whose foundation features – especially individual postholes – are unlikely to be identified by remote sensing and limited excavation. The ratio of *Grubenhäuser* to ground-level structures at Mucking and West Stow is 4:1 and 5:1 respectively (Tipper 2004, 24–5). Between eighty and one hundred possible *Grubenhäuser* can be identified from magnetometry in RLM 044, suggesting twenty to twenty-five ground-level timber buildings. There is no evidence of enclosures or other internal structuring arrangements.

Table 4.3.1 RLM 036: summary of finds from within the cemetery area that are interpreted as from disturbed burials

			Material	Quantity
Fifth- and sixth-century				
Inhumation	Dress accessories	Annular brooch	copper alloy	1
		Cruciform brooch	copper alloy	9
		Equal-armed brooch	silver	1
		Radiate-headed brooch	copper alloy	1
		Radiate-headed brooch	silver	1
		Small-long brooch	copper alloy	6
		Supporting-arm brooch	copper alloy	3
		Bow brooch	copper alloy	1
		Spangle	copper alloy	1
		Wrist clasp	copper alloy	6
	Personal possessions	Girdle hanger	copper alloy	1
		Mount	copper alloy	1
		Mount	silver	1
	Weapon fittings	Shield stud	copper alloy	8
		Scabbard chape	copper alloy	1
		Scabbard mouthband	copper alloy	1
	Vessels	Bucket mount	copper alloy	1
?Cremation	Dress accessories	?Brooch	copper alloy	1
Late sixth- and seventh-century				
Inhumation	Dress accessories	Buckle	copper alloy	4
	Personal possessions	Link	copper alloy	1

The *Grubenhäuser* and pit excavated in RLM 044 date to the late fifth or sixth century but the non-funerary material and coin assemblage shows activity from the fifth century to the middle of the eighth (Fig 4.1.3). The spatial patterning of the material culture assemblage indicates activity across the full area over the fifth to seventh centuries, although within it we would anticipate changes of focus, layout, intensity of activity and use of space. This suggests periodic rebuilding within a broadly stable settlement area rather than shifts of settlement location across the landscape over time (Hamerow 2012, 65–71). The material assemblage suggests that the settlement area was largely abandoned from the second quarter or middle of the eighth century with a new focus of settlement activity established in the south-east of RLM 038.

Settlement on the promontory was of a very different physical character from that on the slopes to the north and east and, as noted above, the flatter, dryer top of the promontory was favoured for occupation over the heavier, damper soils sloping to the tributary stream. Magnetometry has identified some macular features within RLM 013 and the northern part of EKE 019 that might be *Grubenhäuser* but there is nothing like the density of such features seen in RLM 044. The principal settlement features here are a major rectangular building, linear ditches, dump deposits and a system of rectilinear enclosures that may be early medieval. The distribution of material culture items and the magnetometry suggest occupation over 13ha to 16ha in RLM 013, the north of EKE 019, the west of RLM 014 and east of RLM 042.

The major structure identified from aerial photographs in the north-west of RLM 013, just east of the crest of slope, appeared to be the foundation trench of a rectangular building, 23m by 9.5m, aligned just west of south–north, with suggestions at the northern end of an annexe or more than one phase of building. As noted above (Ch 2.3.4), this interpretation was confirmed by excavation in the summer of 2022. Structures of this size and form are characteristic of great hall complexes and dated to the period from the late sixth to the early eighth centuries (Hamerow 2012, 102–9; Blair 2018, 103–25). The Rendlesham hall is comparable in size with those known from aerial photography and excavation at Yeavering (Northumberland) and Sutton Courtney / Drayton (Oxfordshire) (Hope-Taylor 1977; Hamerow *et*

Table 4.3.2 RLM 044: summary of finds from within the cemetery area that are interpreted as from disturbed burials

			Material	Quantity
Fifth- and sixth-century				
Inhumation	Dress accessories	Annular brooch	copper alloy	1
		Cruciform brooch	copper alloy	24
		Small-long brooch	copper alloy	2
		Small square-headed brooch	silver	1
		Bow brooch	copper alloy	4
		Brooch (unident)	copper alloy	1
		Buckle	copper alloy	2
		Belt mount	copper alloy	2
		Wrist clasp	copper alloy	6
	Personal possessions	Girdle hanger	copper alloy	5
		Mount	copper alloy	2
		Purse ring	copper alloy	2
	Weapon fittings	Shield stud	copper alloy	12
		Sword buckle	silver	1
		Pommel cap	copper alloy	2
		Scabbard mouthband	silver	1
Cremation	Dress accessories	Cruciform brooch	copper alloy	9
		Small-long brooch	copper alloy	1
		Bow brooch	copper alloy	7
		Brooch (unident)	silver	1
		Wrist clasp	copper alloy	1
	Vessels	Sherds	pottery	16
Late sixth- and seventh-century				
Inhumation	Dress accessories	Buckle	copper alloy	6
	Personal possessions	Bag catch	copper alloy	6
		Strap fitting	copper alloy	1
	Vessels	Trivet footring	copper alloy	1

al 2007; Brennan and Hamerow 2015), excavated at Lyminge (Kent) (Thomas 2018) and identified on aerial photographs at Milfield (Northumberland), Atcham (Shropshire) and Hatton Rock (Warwickshire) (Gates and O'Brien 1988; St Joseph 1975; Rahtz 1970). The material culture items from the northern part of RLM 013, and the dating of the excavated ditch section, are consistent with a later sixth- to earlier eighth-century date.

The probability is that this building formed one element in a larger array of similar structures, and analogy with other great hall complexes suggests that these would have been arranged axially and aligned broadly north–south and west–east (Hamerow 2012, 102–5; Blair 2018, 116–25). There are a number of possible reasons why its foundations were not detected by magnetometry. By their nature they would have been backfilled shortly after excavation – unlike ditches or *Grubenhäuser* – and so would present a low magnetic response: at Lyminge, for example, magnetometry identified *Grubenhäuser* but not the large timber halls with substantial foundation trenches (Thomas and Knox 2013). It is also likely that other elements of the hall array – if this inference is justified – extend north and east under the current Naunton Hall and its gardens, which occupy the highest point of the promontory.

As detailed above (Ch 2.3.7), the eastern of the two major north–south ditches had two cuts, the eastern perhaps holding a timber palisade. The ditch was backfilled and sealed with undifferentiated refuse deposits which give a *terminus ante quem* in the first half – and probably second quarter – of the eighth century for backfill but do not indicate when the it was cut or for how long it remained open. This feature demarcates the western boundary of the settlement at the top of the slope to the floodplain. Any palisade may have been backed by an accumulation of dump material – deliberately banked,

accumulated over time, or a bit of both. The homogeneity of the fill and the overlying deposits indicate that the ditch was kept clean and was backfilled in a single episode, suggesting that the ditch and any palisade were levelled together as a deliberate act linked to a remodelling of the settlement space.

The west–east ditches excavated in 1982 suggest a trackway and possibly a boundary at the north edge of the promontory (Ch 2.2.2), and the ditch lines identified by magnetometry in RLM 014 and 043 may indicate an early medieval boundary along the east of the promontory (Ch 2.3.3), but as yet no such feature has been identified to the south. It is worth noting that a palisade at the crest of the slope above the river would have been as much a visual feature as a physical barrier, and that it may have been felt necessary to demarcate the boundary of the settlement area to the west, where it overlooked the valley, more emphatically and visibly than to the east, where it was intervisible with the occupation area in RLM 044, 036 and 059.

The dump levels contain domestic debris that probably represents accumulation and redeposition from the fifth to the eighth centuries. They are detectable on the surface as an area of dark soil that runs along the line of the ditch for *c* 125m, suggesting either that there was a long-standing rubbish disposal area along the line of the ditch or that earth containing rubbish deposits from a wider area was heaped up against a palisade and that the bank was subsequently used for refuse disposal. Elsewhere in Suffolk, substantial surface dumps have been identified in the proximity of buildings at the sixth- to eighth-century settlement at Bloodmoor Hill, Carlton Colville (Lucy *et al* 2009, 116–21), the seventh- to ninth-century settlement at Staunch Meadow, Brandon (Tester *et al* 2014, 106–8) and at Barham (Ch 9.2.1). At Flixborough, Lincolnshire, refuse was dumped immediately outside buildings during the seventh and eighth centuries (Loveluck and Atkinson 2007, 39–48). At Wicken Bonhunt, Essex, the earlier – probably seventh- to eighth-century – phase of the settlement had buildings aligned along a major north–south boundary ditch whose backfill contained very large quantities of animal bone (Wade 1980, 96–8). Whatever the taphonomy, the dump deposits in RLM 013 indicate long-term occupation which generated very substantial quantities of provisioning and consumption waste.

The date of the rectilinear enclosures, interpreted as either Roman or early medieval, and their relationship to the ditch is an unresolved question. The northern section of the ditch runs on the same alignment, suggesting that it deliberately followed the line of earlier relict features, or that these were repurposed, or that the ditch and enclosure system are contemporary. Only excavation will resolve this, but it is worth noting that the enclosure and subdivision of settlement space is a feature of great hall complexes but not of lower order rural settlements of the fifth to seventh centuries (Hamerow 2012, 102–5; Blair 2018, 116–25).

The material culture assemblage suggests that the promontory saw its most intense period of settlement activity later than the area to the north and east of the tributary valley. Aoristic modelling of the non-coin material shows a strong activity signature in RLM 044, 036 and 059 from the first half of the fifth century, peaking in the second half of the sixth century, whereas RLM 013 shows a less marked activity signature in the fifth and sixth centuries but a peak in the seventh (Fig 4.1.3); these trends hold good even when allowances are made for funerary material. The material representing this phase of intense occupation in RLM 013 includes a range of types in use from 570/80, suggesting a change in character of settlement here in the last two or three decades of the sixth century.

As well as differences in the chronology of the two settlement areas there are contrasts in the social dimensions of the material culture assemblages and consumption profiles. A high proportion of status or prestige metalwork items are from the promontory and the majority belong to the later sixth and seventh centuries. These include one of the two fragments from east Mediterranean cast copper-alloy vessels, four of seven hanging-bowl fittings, the gold zoomorphic-headed pin and gold-and-garnet bead, and the gold-and-garnet sword pyramid (Chs 3.4 and 5.6.2). Also from the promontory are five of nine precious-metal jewellery components, very probably to be associated with the other indications of fine metalworking here (4.3.2.1, below). The faunal assemblage from the dump layers and ditch fill shows conspicuous consumption of meat and has indicators of equestrianism, hunting, wild-fowling and falconry (Ch 5.1.2; Scull 2014). Taken together, the evidence suggests that the promontory, in particular the northern area of RLM 013 and probably that now under Naunton Hall, was a focus of elite occupation and activity from some time in the last two decades of the sixth century. The different trajectories and characters of occupation and activity within the broader settlement complex are explored further below.

4.3.1.2 Burial

The two zones of burial activity identified in RLM 036 and 044 are similar in area at just over 1ha. This is rather greater than the norm for the small number of fifth- to seventh-century flat-grave or cremation cemeteries whose extent is known or can be estimated with confidence. For example, at Spong Hill, North Elmham, Norfolk, where the cemetery area was fully excavated, there were 2,383 cremations over *c* 0.6ha and fifty-three late fifth- and sixth-century inhumations over *c* 0.2ha (Hills and Lucy 2013); at Eriswell, Suffolk, site 104, 261 inhumations were recorded over an area of *c* 1.8ha (Caruth and Anderson 2005); at Mucking, Essex, the fully excavated Cemetery II with 276 inhumations and 463 cremations extended over an area of *c* 0.6ha (Hirst and Clark 2009); and at Butler's Field, Lechlade, Gloucestershire, where the larger part of an inhumation cemetery in use from the mid-fifth to late seventh century was excavated, 200 inhumations and at least forty-two cremations were recorded over 0.35ha with the great majority within an area of *c* 0.25ha (Boyle *et al* 1998). These examples would suggest that the spatial expression of burial in the ploughzone assemblage at Rendlesham is more extensive than the actual burial area because of the lateral movement of material in the ploughsoil. As noted above, some objects from elsewhere in the fields may derive from burials; for example, RLM 044 1066 – a silver wrist clasp damaged by heat – is very probably from a cremation but was found outside and downslope of the burial concentration. Other possibilities, however, need to be considered. There may have been discrete but proximate burial foci, and the greater the contributing population and the longer the period of use then the greater the number of burials and the greater the area that might be taken for burial. The extensive settlement complex at Rendlesham saw occupation for some 300 years, during which time cremation and furnished inhumation were abandoned and unfurnished inhumation was adopted as the exclusive burial practice in England, and so it would not be surprising if the major burial areas were larger and showed a more complex pattern of development than those associated with shorter-lived, smaller or lower order settlements.

The date-ranges of the artefacts from both funerary assemblages indicate burial from the second quarter or middle of the fifth century, and possibly earlier, until the abandonment of furnished inhumation in the later seventh century (and the late Roman buckles in RLM 044 raise the possibility – no more – of late fourth- or early fifth-century Roman inhumations). Burial may well have continued after this but without grave goods it would not leave a material culture signature. Aoristic modelling of the assemblages (Fig 4.3.4) generates a picture consistent with the broader pattern of the provision of inhumation grave goods across England in the fifth to seventh centuries, with a peak in the period between 460/80 and 540/60 followed by a sharp decline and a much lower incidence of provision (Hines and Bayliss 2013, 476–9). This suggests that the chronological structure of the assemblage reflects the pattern of grave goods provision rather than significant changes in the numbers of burials, although the slight upturn after *c* 600 might suggest a larger contributing population from this time.

The size of the funerary assemblages would suggest either that there were more inhumations in RLM 044 than RLM 036 or that they have suffered greater disturbance. The smaller number of heat-damaged dress accessories indicate cremation burial in RLM 044 until the middle of the sixth century and includes two cruciform brooches of Martin's group 1 which may suggest that cremation here began slightly earlier than inhumation. The two supporting-arm brooches of Typ Perlberg from RLM 036 would be consistent with burial in the first half of the fifth century and may suggest that inhumation at RLM 036 began slightly earlier that at RLM 044. There is only one object with heat damage from the burial zone in RLM 036, a melted copper-alloy item that may have been a brooch (RLM 036 1165), suggesting that the burials here were exclusively or predominantly inhumations.

It is difficult to assess with any precision the numbers of burials originally present and represented by material recovered from the ploughsoil. If we posit burial over areas of *c* 0.5ha, from which material has subsequently been dispersed, then comparative examples would suggest

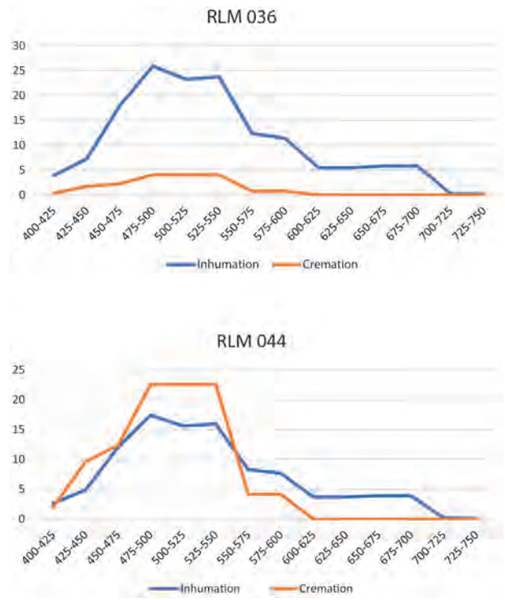


Fig 4.3.4 Aoristic models of the assemblages from the burial areas in RLM 036 and RLM 044

hundreds of inhumations at both locations and possibly a thousand or more cremations in RLM 044. At Spong Hill, 120 brooches were recovered from 108 cremations or 4.5 per cent of the excavated sample (Hills and Lucy 2013, 28–9) and there were similar ratios of brooches to urned cremations at Lackford (Suffolk) and Illington (Norfolk) (Lethbridge 1951; Davison *et al* 1993). The heat-damaged pieces from RLM 044 represent perhaps eleven to eighteen brooches which, assuming the same levels of provision as at Spong Hill, would represent ten to sixteen cremations, a figure which would in turn imply the disturbance or destruction of between 220 and 350 cremations.

There is even greater uncertainty when estimating from likely inhumation burial goods, not least because although heat-damaged items are very probably from cremations there is a higher possibility that unburned items are from non-funerary contexts. Comparing the incidence of the main funerary types from RLM 036 and 044 across excavated inhumation groups in East Anglia shows a wide range of provision (Table 4.3.3). Particularly striking at Rendlesham among the fifth- and sixth-century material is the high proportion of cruciform brooches and the small number of annular brooches. To some extent this might be explained by the high proportion of fragments (especially cruciform knobs and feet), which may represent fewer brooches, but even so the quantity of dress accessories from RLM 036 compares with the numbers from excavated groups from other sites of thirty to over 100 inhumations (both masculine and feminine), while the number of cruciform brooches and brooch elements from RLM 044 would imply a larger number of disturbed inhumations. The smaller quantity of late sixth- to late seventh-century grave goods could also represent quite substantial numbers of inhumations. Despite the survival of some plough-damaged cremations at the base of the modern ploughsoil in RLM 044, and presumably of inhumations deeper than this, there appears to have been serious disturbance to the two burial zones.

There are both masculine and feminine status items from both cemetery areas. In RLM 044 the fifth-century

Table 4.3.3 Summary of non-ferrous metal grave goods from cemetery areas in RLM 036 and RLM 044 and the incidence of the same types from excavated inhumation cemeteries in Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk (types known from Rendlesham but not from the comparative sample are omitted)

	RLM 036	RLM 044	Bergh Apton	Morningthorpe	Spong Hill	Westgarth Gardens, Bury St Edmunds	Fixton II	Boss Hall, Ipswich	Holywell Row	Snape	Burwell	Shudy Camps	Harford Farm, Caistor St Edmund	Shrub Hall Quarry, Coddenham	Buttermarket, Ipswich
No. of burials	**?**	**?**	**63**	**353**	**57**	**65**	**68**	**34**	**100**	**47**	**126**	**143**	**48**	**50**	**71**
Fifth- and sixth-century															
Annular brooch	1	1	27	136	28	6	21	6	21	11	–	–	–	–	–
Cruciform brooch	9	24	6	34	13	5	2	4	16	5	–	–	–	–	–
Equal-armed brooch	1	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Small-long brooch	6	2	2	24	6	7	1	3	13	3	–	–	–	–	–
Buckle	–	2	4	111	4	2	1	4	3	5	–	–	–	–	–
Wrist clasp	6	6	28	106	26	15	11	7	21	8	–	–	–	–	–
Girdle hanger	1	5	3	15	4	1	–	2	5	–	–	–	–	–	–
Pommel cap	–	2	–	1	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Scabbard mouthband	1	1	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Late sixth- and seventh-century															
Buckle	4	6	1	2	–	1	–	–	6	4	9	5	4	13	7
Bag catch	–	6	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	4	1	2	3	–
Trivet footring	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–

silver-gilt fragments of a sword buckle and scabbard mouthpiece are probably from an inhumation, two pommel caps suggest sword burials and there is a fragment of a silver small square-headed brooch. Cremated material includes a silver brooch fragment, and the silver wrist clasp of Hines class A – although found downslope 120m south-east of the cemetery area – is also probably from a cremation. The footring fragment from a Frankish trivet-based bowl may be from a high-status seventh-century burial as at Coddenham graves 1 and 24 (Penn 2011); other late sixth- and seventh-century status material outside the burial area in RLM 044 that may have come from inhumations includes a fragment of a keystone garnet disc brooch (RLM 044 1246) and a gold filigree pendant (RLM 044 1242–3). Status material from the burial area in RLM 036 includes fragments of a silver equal-armed brooch and a silver radiate-headed brooch, while a scabbard chape and mouthband suggest a sword burial. The gold D-bracteate (RLM 036 1242), although outside the burial zone, could come from an inhumation. It is also possible that a very few of the gold coins or earliest silver pennies from RLM 036 and 044 are from burials but the numbers involved would be insignificant against the size of the total coin assemblage.

Both burial sites lie at similar elevations on higher ground on the eastern margins of the settlement complex, overlooking the occupation areas. In RLM 044 the situation is the prominent hill-crest position favoured for early medieval cemeteries (Williams, H 1999; Brookes 2007b). The burial site in RLM 036 lies on the slope slightly below the crest. They are intervisible with each other and with the occupation area on the promontory.

The evidence from RLM 036 and RLM 044 thus indicates two extensive and long-lived foci of burial *c* 300m apart, but this is not unusual or problematic. At Eriswell, excavation has identified three separate foci of burial across an area of *c* 300m by 120m (Caruth and Hines 2024), and at Flixton, Suffolk, two contemporary cemeteries, *c* 150m apart, served the same settlement (Boulter and Walton Rogers 2012). At Harford Farm, Caistor St Edmund, two contemporary seventh-century cemeteries lay 200m apart, and at Bloodmoor Hill, Carlton Colville, Suffolk, a small cemetery was established within the settlement area in the seventh century (Lucy *et al* 2009). At Buckland, Dover, Kent, excavation has revealed multiple foci of inhumation over an area of *c* 250m by 145m (Parfitt and Anderson 2012). No other concentrations of material have been identified that might indicate extensive formal burial areas, but the possibility that there were other burials or burial groups within the main settlement complex cannot be ruled out. The fragment of an east Mediterranean cast copper-alloy bowl and the harness fitting from RLM 038, which could be from an inhumation, raise the possibility of a high-status burial on the high ground here overlooking the river valley. There is also the question of the cremations unearthed in the early nineteenth century (Ch 2.2.1). Given that Basil Brown found no trace of cremations in the former glebe strip in RLM 050, and that RLM 044 is adjacent to the possible barrow at Hoo Hill, the possibility that they were in fact from RLM 044 has to be considered. However, although extraction features were identified on the site of the agricultural reservoir (Ch 2.2.2) and there is a large extraction pit of unknown date in the south of RLM 044, these are well away from the known burial area and so cannot be used to support a rejection or qualification of Davy's specific location of the nineteenth-century finds.

4.3.1.3 Routeways and settlement space

We are able to define occupation and burial areas but the internal configuration of the settlement complex, and the experience of those who lived there, would have been defined by a range of differentiated uses of space which would have constrained movement and access. One key element would be routeways and lines of movement within and through the settlement area. We also need to consider whether there were paddocks or other areas for livestock, and garden plots or other cultivated areas, and the balance between common space and areas to which access may have been restricted.

Topography suggests that the settlement complex was approached from the south by a route through EKE 019, close to or west of the line of the modern A1152 (The Street) from Eyke and Ash Road which runs north to St Gregory's church and beyond. The scatters of material in EKE 019 and RLM 037 may therefore represent respectively monetary activity along a southern approach and losses along a route to the north. Within the main area of settlement activity topography, drainage and the evidence for occupation and burial areas would suggest that the main line of movement along the promontory and between the two main areas of settlement is likely to have been close to the line of Rendlesham Green and the modern road. Branching east from this, north of the tributary stream, is a trackway running along the shallow depression between RLM 044 and RLM 036 where there is a thinning out of the density of finds. On Kirby's map this is shown as a field boundary but it joins a more significant route – no longer extant – running north–south along the eastern boundary of RLM 044, RLM 036 and RLM 059 whose alignment is preserved to the south of the study area as Hollesley Road. A scatter of early medieval finds

along the line of the road here, reported through the PAS, may suggest that it fossilises an ancient routeway.

The only possible evidence for internal divisions of settlement space is the linear enclosure system in RLM 013 – if this is early medieval – and the evidence does not allow us to say whether this had a function relating to livestock control, or a role in the structuring of access to elite settlement space, or elements of both. Interestingly, in the south of RLM 013 there is a significantly lower density of early medieval material from within the area of the Iron Age enclosure, suggesting that this may still have been visible as a relict feature and affecting the use of space. The low density of finds from the eastern parts of RLM 014 and 043, and the absence of settlement features on the magnetometry, argues that these areas were not occupied and were perhaps cultivated land or pasture.

There is no evidence of formal boundaries or internal subdivisions within RLM 044, 036 and 059. There must have been spatial structuring, and this is hinted at by the apparent grouping of possible *Grubenhäuser* identified by aerial photography in RLM 059, but it did not require ditches. One implication is that there was a significant element of common space here throughout the lifetime of occupation whereas there was a concern to demarcate – and to control access to – the elite settlement area on the promontory.

4.3.1.4 Rubbish disposal, manuring and fields

How the settlement complex sat within the broader farming and resource landscape is considered in Chapter 5.1, but the question of whether elements of the metalwork distribution represent manuring, and so might indicate fields, has a bearing both on the morphology of the settlement complex and on what can or cannot be inferred about activity zoning from the distribution of metalwork types.

Material belonging to the household items functional category, including domestic pottery, is largely concentrated in the occupation areas RLM 013 and RLM 044, where it is likely to represent loss or discard in a domestic context. Dress accessories and other portable personal possessions and fittings, where not identified as likely to derive from burials, also cluster in the occupation areas but show a wider distribution across and beyond the settlement complex – which their distribution helps define.

There is evidence from the Roman and medieval material that domestic pottery represents occupation or manuring but that metalwork finds have more complex patterns of deposition and re-working (Ch 2.4.4). Different types of metal artefact will also have had different, if sometimes entangled, taphonomic pathways. Fragments of domestic items found at a distance from an occupation area are most plausibly explained by the dumping of refuse or manuring but dress accessories, portable possessions usually carried on the person, and weapons and harness fittings, are more likely to have been lost during wear or use. They were mostly lost in occupation areas because this is where people spent a high proportion of their time, and was where these objects were put on, taken off, stored when not in use, repaired and – in some cases – manufactured. They might therefore become incorporated and redistributed in refuse or midden material but their wider occurrence can also be explained by casual loss occurring more generally across the landscape.

Excavation shows that refuse was disposed of within the occupation areas, in pits and abandoned *Grubenhäuser* in RLM 044 and surface dumps in RLM 013. The pit and *Grubenhaus* fills almost certainly derived from surface dumps from which material might also be spread on fields and garden plots (Tipper 2004, 157–9), and material from the surface dumps in RLM 013 might also have been used for manuring. Any ploughsoil material deriving from garden plots near to buildings within a settlement area would, of course, be spatially indistinguishable from the broader settlement assemblage. However, the excavated refuse contexts in RLM 013 and 044 were not rich in copper-alloy finds. Of fifteen items, thirteen of which are from dump layers in RLM 013, all but a handful are small undiagnostic fragments, mostly of sheet metal, from contexts immediately below the modern ploughsoil which have been disturbed by subsoiling, and are likely to be intrusive. Only the small-long brooch from a *Grubenhaus* in RLM 044, and a strap-loop and a re-used late Roman bracelet from dump layers in RLM 013, would be dated with confidence if found while metal-detecting. It is worth noting, too, that the clustered distribution of chronologically diagnostic metalworking debris shows that this was not widely dispersed through manuring (4.3.2.1, below).

The soil morphology, ceramic assemblage, animal bone, plant macrofossils and radiocarbon dates from the dump layers and ditch fills in RLM 013 are consistent with the accumulation of domestic refuse over a considerable period. Manuring fields on any scale, however, would depend upon the regular turnover of stable and byre waste. It is possible that livestock manure as a resource and domestic refuse as waste were handled differently, and that there was spatial differentiation between the elite residence and farming operations. If open grazing was the main regime for livestock, horses

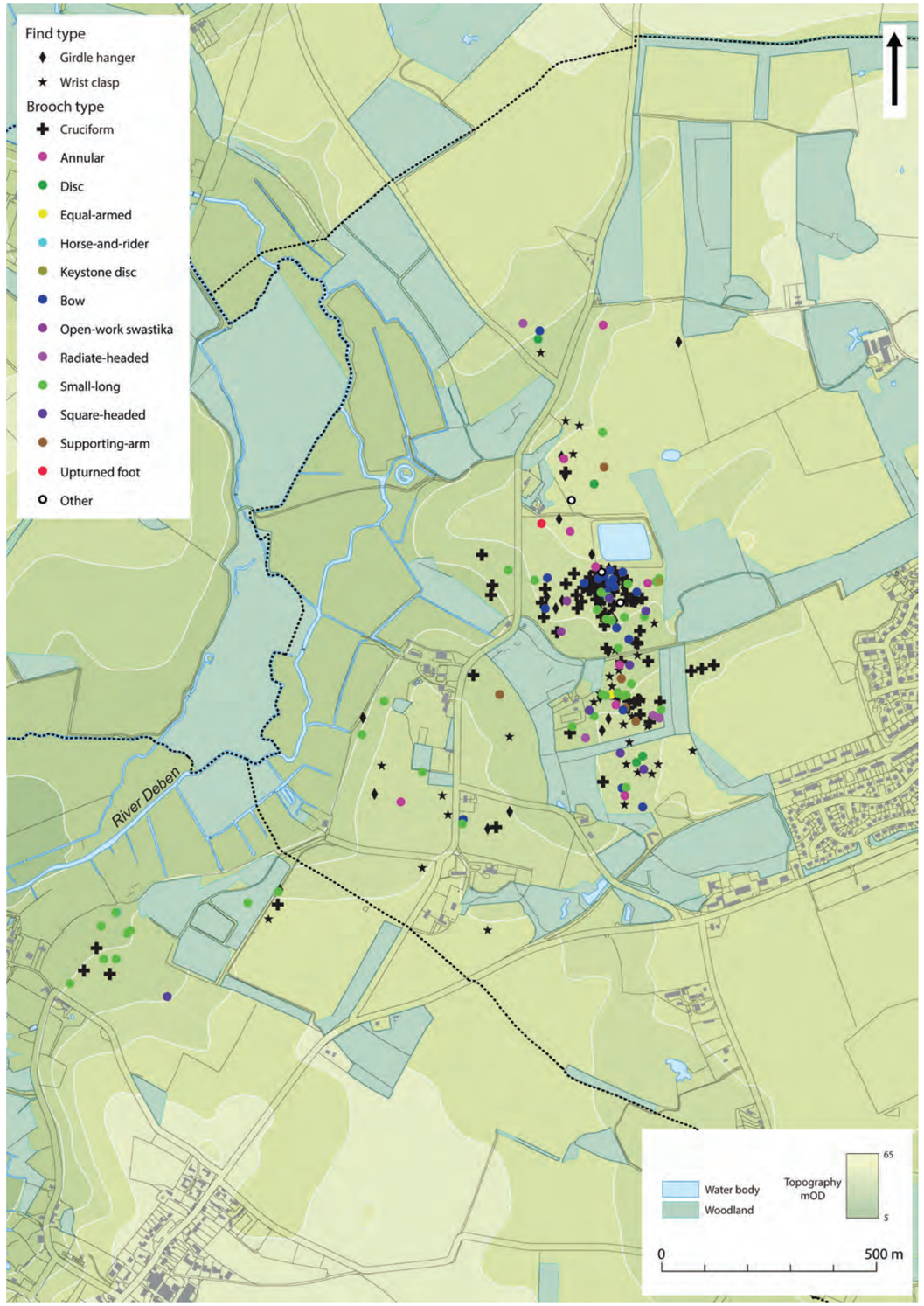


Fig 4.3.5 The distribution of dress accessories of the fifth to late sixth centuries. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

for riding were paddocked rather than stabled, fields were manured directly by grazing animals after harvest, and the need for sheltered over-wintering reduced by the annual autumn slaughter, then spreading muck from settlement space to arable fields would be minimised.

Harness fittings show a strong correlation with occupation areas, with the single example in RLM 038 explicable either as a loss or from a burial. Only two weapon fittings, a pommel cap (RLM 037 1135) and sword pyramid (EKE 019 1124), are known outside occupation or funerary areas and their locations suggest casual loss. Fifth- and sixth-century dress accessories and fittings are concentrated in the northern occupation focus, with scatters outside of this in RLM 038, RLM 037 and the very northern edge of RLM 044, along with a scatter of material across the promontory. Within this, the distributions of the contemporary types are broadly the same. The rather different distribution of later sixth- to eighth-century material, by contrast, shows some marked differences between contemporary types (Figs 4.3.5–6). This is most striking in the case of pins, which are very largely confined to the promontory and EKE 019 to the south. Garter buckles occur predominantly in the northern settlement focus rather than the promontory, with some examples from RLM 038, but buckles as whole occur across both settlement foci, with examples also in EKE 019 and RLM 038. The distribution of bag catches is similar to that of garter buckles but there appears to be a distinction between intact and incomplete examples, the former occurring mainly in RLM 038 and the west of RLM 044.

Such differences in the distribution of contemporary types that might have been worn and used together – seen most clearly with bag catches, garter buckles and Ross type L pins – confirm the complexity of both past behaviours and subsequent taphonomic pathways. Although challenging to explain, they are less likely to be the result of manuring, which we would expect to generate an undifferentiated distribution, and more likely to be the result of patterned behaviour immediately before loss. One implication of this would be that the more uniform distribution of fifth- and sixth-century dress accessories beyond the occupation areas might be considered more consistent with a manuring element than that of the later sixth- to eighth-century material. It is also important to note that the broad distribution of later sixth- to eighth-century fittings and portable items correlates with coinage of EM1 and EM2 and their co-occurrence in RLM 038 and EKE 019 outside the main occupation foci suggests that in these places the portable items and coinage are the residue of the same or linked activities (4.3.2.3, below).

On balance, it seems unlikely that manuring was the main mechanism for the dispersal of these portable items beyond the settlement space and that most are to be explained as losses from the person. There may, however, be a chronological element to this, and allowing that some of these objects as well as household items and domestic pottery were distributed by muck-spreading would suggest that some fifth- and sixth-century material in RLM 043, 037, 038 and the north of RLM 044, along with some later sixth- to eighth-century material in EKE 019, RLM 043 and RLM 038, might derive from manuring. This would place arable fields to the north and south of the settlement complex, and on the east side of the promontory, on the tractable soils nearest the main occupation foci.

However, identifying which dress accessories and fittings were dropped near where they were found and which redeposited is near impossible. Fragmentary material might be settlement debris or a dropped item which has been eroded in the ploughsoil; an intact or substantially intact item might have been dropped where it was found or lost in a domestic context, incorporated in refuse, and redeposited during manuring. We also need to bear in mind that areas immediately adjacent to the settlement and along the major northern and southern approaches are exactly those where a scatter of losses might be expected to accumulate. As noted above, the linear north–south distribution of material in RLM 037 would be consistent with losses along a routeway, and the scatter of coins and metalwork in the south of RLM 038 is interesting in view of the evidence for a ninth- to eleventh-century settlement focus here.

4.3.2 Activity zoning

4.3.2.1 Non-ferrous metalworking

The evidence for non-ferrous metalworking suggests a main period of activity in the later sixth and seventh centuries with some sporadic later activity (Ch 3.4.6). Undiagnostic pieces of melted copper alloy, which could be of any period, are found widely distributed across the survey area but the distribution of models and unfinished items – the material that can be closely dated and directly tied to manufacture – shows a striking concentration in RLM 013 and indications of significant activity in RLM 044 and 059 (Fig 4.3.7). In RLM 059 the small group of metalworking material includes the lead model for a buckle loop, the unfinished gold shoe-shaped stud, and the unused gold beaded wire collar. In RLM 044 the metalworking assemblage includes the lead sword-ring model and

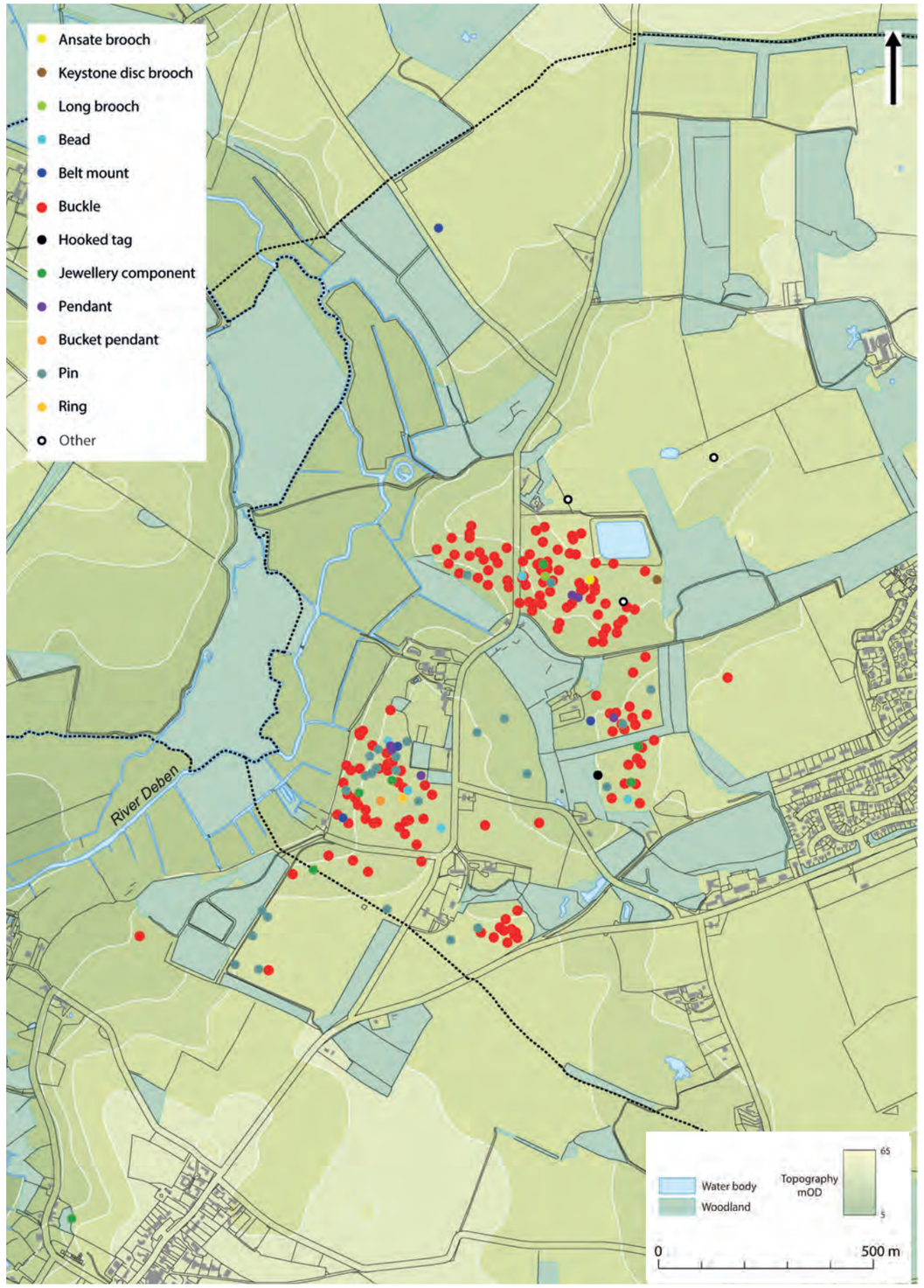


Fig 4.3.6 The distribution of dress accessories and fittings of the later sixth to early eighth centuries. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

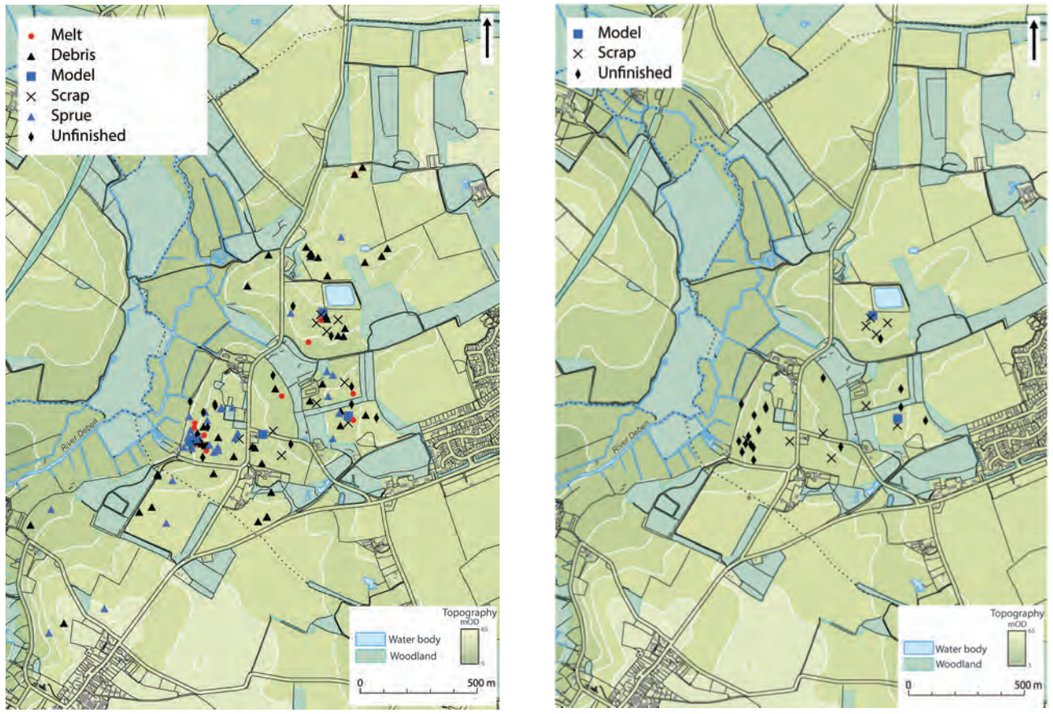


Fig 4.3.7 The distribution of items indicative of non-ferrous metalworking: (left) all material; (right) material of the later sixth and seventh centuries.
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precious-metal scrap. These patterns are reinforced by the distribution of precious metal jewellery components and precious-metal scrap, and the distribution of copper-alloy sprues also shows a marked concentration in RLM 013. There was metalworking in copper alloy, gold and silver in RLM 044 and 059 from the later sixth century but the main focus of activity was in RLM 013; the concentration of material in the south-west of the field indicates a production area or workshop here.

It is likely that coinage was produced at Rendlesham during the seventh and eighth centuries by goldsmiths whose skills were as well suited to coin production as to the manufacture of jewellery. Of the three possible coin blanks, the silver example (RLM 013 1351) is from the western side of RLM 013, close to the strongest concentration of metalworking debris. The gold blank RLM 036 1351 is from the southern edge of the field and could be related to the metalworking evidence from RLM 059. The gold disc RLM 044 1004 was found *c* 200m from metalworking indicators.

It is unclear whether the two groups of fused early pennies directly represent recycling of silver coinage (Ch 3.4.6) but it may be significant that both were found in close proximity to other metalworking indicators in RLM 044 and on the southern edge of RLM 036.

4.3.2.2 Currency use

The spatial distribution of coins of EM1–EM3 suggests that they were used, and lost, across the settlement complex (Fig 4.3.8). There is no clustering that would suggest dispersed hoards and although it is possible that a very few coins from RLM 044 and 036 are from seventh-century burials the number this might represent is negligible when set against the size of the assemblage as a whole.

The densest concentration of EM1 coin finds is on the promontory, with sixteen of forty-three examples from RLM 013, suggesting a strong but not exclusive link between the handling of gold coinage and the elite settlement area. Coins of EM2 (early pennies) were recovered in greater numbers over a slightly larger area than those of EM1 and the scatter along the west side of EKE 019 may indicate an area where transactions took place along the southern approaches to the settlement. The smaller number of coins of EM3 suggest a

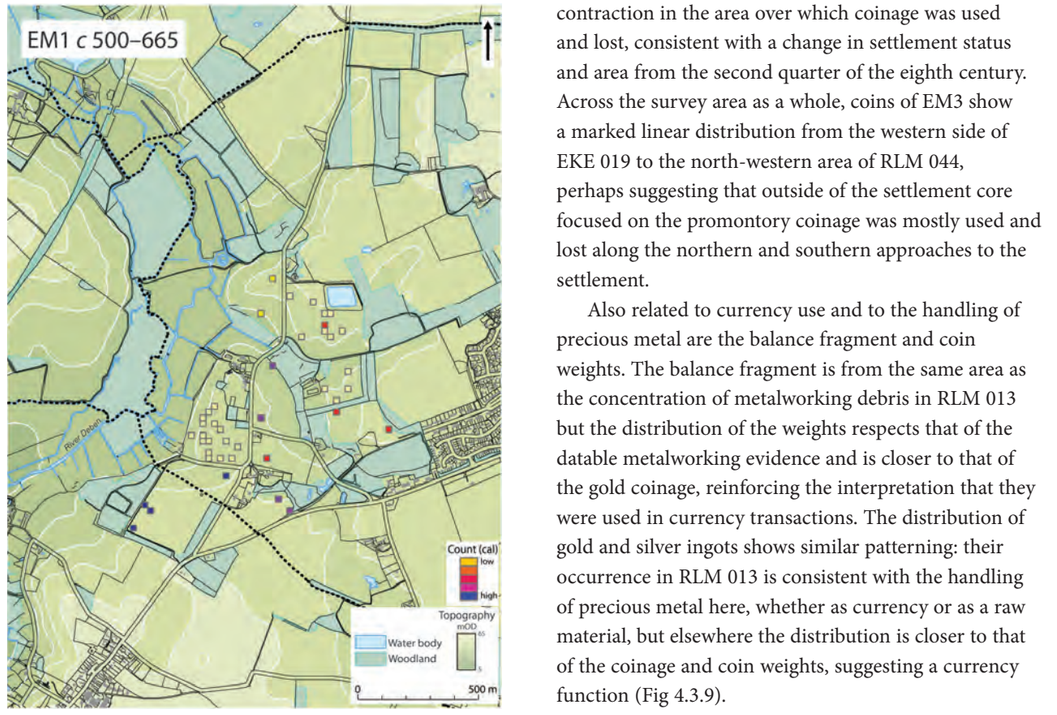

Fig 4.3.8 Normalised distribution by choropleth of coinage of periods EM1–EM3. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

contraction in the area over which coinage was used and lost, consistent with a change in settlement status and area from the second quarter of the eighth century. Across the survey area as a whole, coins of EM3 show a marked linear distribution from the western side of EKE 019 to the north-western area of RLM 044, perhaps suggesting that outside of the settlement core focused on the promontory coinage was mostly used and lost along the northern and southern approaches to the settlement.

Also related to currency use and to the handling of precious metal are the balance fragment and coin weights. The balance fragment is from the same area as the concentration of metalworking debris in RLM 013 but the distribution of the weights respects that of the datable metalworking evidence and is closer to that of the gold coinage, reinforcing the interpretation that they were used in currency transactions. The distribution of gold and silver ingots shows similar patterning: their occurrence in RLM 013 is consistent with the handling of precious metal here, whether as currency or as a raw material, but elsewhere the distribution is closer to that of the coinage and coin weights, suggesting a currency function (Fig 4.3.9).

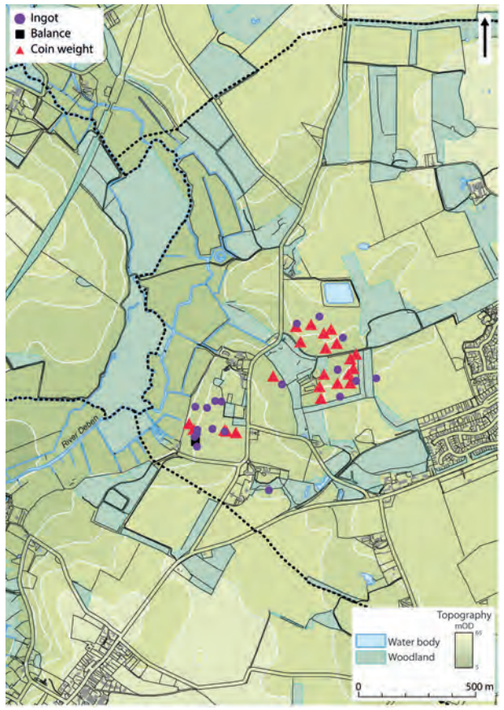

Fig 4.3.9 The distribution of balance fragments, probable coin weights, and precious metal ingots. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

4.3.2.3 Daily life, gatherings and assemblies

It is argued above that finds of dress accessories, possessions carried on the person and weapon and harness fittings, unless from a funerary context, mostly represent loss while worn or used; and that the co-occurrence of late sixth- to early eighth-century items with contemporary coinage outside the main occupation foci suggests that they derive from the same activities.

Just as the coins represent the loss from multiple transactions over a century or more, so the associated dress accessories and fittings represent the aggregate loss from years of human presence and activity. Their distribution points to broader zones of activity from the later sixth century around, and including, the occupation foci which, from the same time if not before, also saw monetary transactions. This is unlikely to represent routine daily activity by the permanent inhabitants of the settlement complex and suggests intermittent or periodic activity by larger numbers. The wider distribution of coinage and late sixth- to eighth-century metal fittings is therefore likely to represent the accumulated losses from periodic gatherings – such as assemblies for rulership and jurisdiction, and periodic fairs or markets – that utilised space across and around the settlement complex as well as the main occupation and domestic areas. The additional population could have been housed in tents and temporary structures. Tents may also have accommodated elements of a peripatetic elite household and retinue when in residence.

The material from EKE 019, which includes a cut quarter of a Roman or pseudo-Imperial *solidus* and two Byzantine *folles*, indicates monetary transactions from the later sixth century until the middle of the eighth century and suggests a long-lived meeting place along the southern approach to the promontory. The very small quantity of fifth- to eighth-century metalwork and Ipswich ware from RLM 043 plausibly represent manuring but the cluster of coinage – mainly EM2–EM3 but including a Byzantine half *follis* – suggests gatherings in the northern part of the field near to the probable early medieval crossing of the tributary stream. The sparse scatter of fifth- and sixth-century metalwork in RLM 038 would be consistent with manuring but the much stronger concentration of dress accessories and fittings of the later sixth to eighth centuries, two coins of EM1 and a stronger peak of coin loss in EM2, would be consistent with gatherings on the western edge of the northern occupation focus close to the northern approaches to the settlement – perhaps overlooked by a barrow burial.

Finally, it is worth considering in more detail some of the ways in which dress fittings and personal accoutrements might have been lost or deposited in occupation areas and domestic space. While most were lost or deliberately discarded the incidence of intrinsically valuable items, which one would expect to be missed and recovered, suggests that some may have been deliberately deposited. Small stores of wealth or items of personal significance may have been cached in buildings and, for whatever reason, not recovered. We should also allow the possibility of personal votive deposits, sealing an undertaking or an appeal to the gods. Items dropped inside major buildings might be difficult to find if not missed immediately, especially given low levels of interior lighting (daylight or artificial), and might be thrown out when rushes or other vegetation strewn on the floors were renewed. The packing and transportation of tents, furnishings and equipment by a peripatetic household is another plausible context in which small items might be mislaid and never recovered.

4.3.3 Spatial development

Settlement was established on a new site or sites in RLM 044, 036 and 059 in the first half of the fifth century with

contemporary burial sites in RLM 044 and 036. The slopes below 19m OD were favoured for occupation with the cemeteries located on the edge of, and overlooking, the settlement area.

There was clearly activity on the promontory in the fifth and sixth centuries, very possibly continuously from the late fourth century, but the material culture distribution suggests that it was not as intense as in the northern settlement focus and the evidence is that any settlement was of a very different physical character. There are very few features identified from magnetometry and aerial photography that might be *Grubenhäuser* or pits and it is possible that any buildings here were ground-level structures with posthole foundations which do not show on aerial photographs or remote sensing. One or both of the western boundary ditches may have been cut, and elements of the rectilinear enclosure system have been in use or established, at any time during this period, and there is evidence from the surface dumps and ditch fills for the accumulation of domestic refuse. Another possibility, not mutually exclusive, is that there was only limited settlement on the promontory which was otherwise open ground – perhaps field or paddock – and a focus for communal gatherings or assemblies. The unique silver hanging-bowl mount (RLM 014 1015–16) would be consistent with a high-status or special purpose presence here in the sixth century but may have been lost in the later sixth or seventh. It might also be argued that the fifth-century elite individual buried with silver-gilt sword accoutrements lived on the promontory but most fifth- and sixth-century status items, including the two gold bracteates and nearly all the items with Style I ornament, are from the northern occupation focus. The overall density of metal finds indicates that RLM 044, 036 and 059 were the main occupation site and the distribution of status markers reveals a community with a high-status element (Figs 4.3.10–12).

This is reinforced by the distribution of dress accessories and other portable items and fittings that can be taken as a proxy for footfall or human presence. As noted above, characteristic fifth- and sixth-century types show activity and movement predominantly within and around the northern occupation focus, with evidence for some activity on the promontory. Particularly striking is the spread of material along the likely approaches or routeway to the north and the absence of material to the south. The footprint of activity and movement suggests

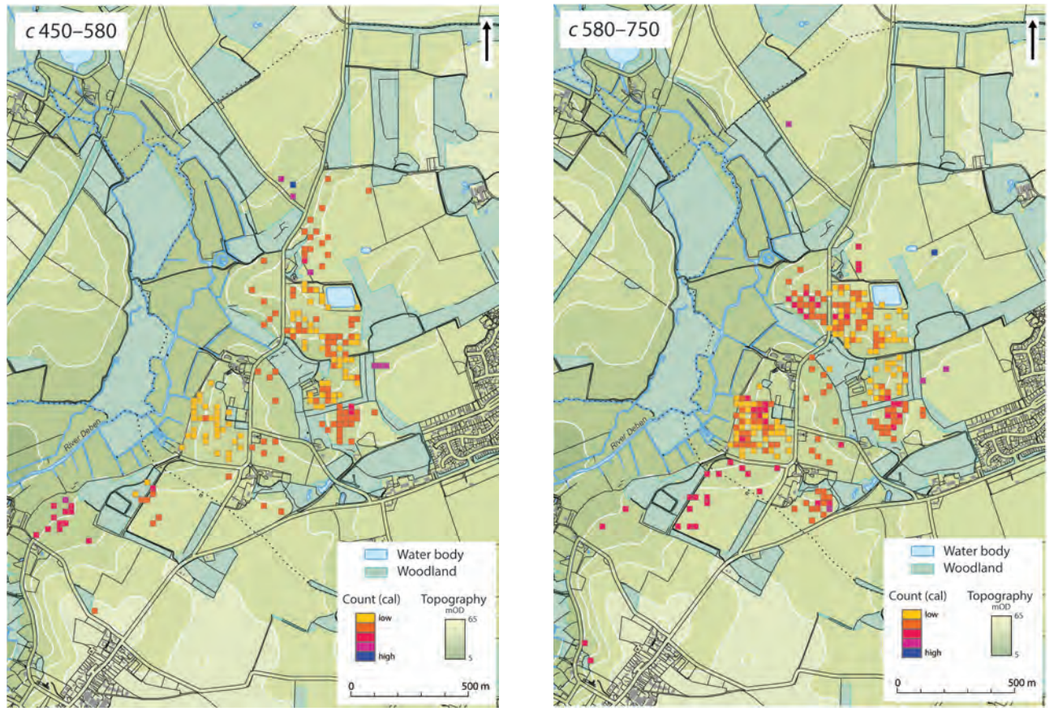

Fig 4.3.10 Normalised distribution by choropleth of settlement finds excluding coinage: (left) *c* 450–580; (right) *c* 580–750. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

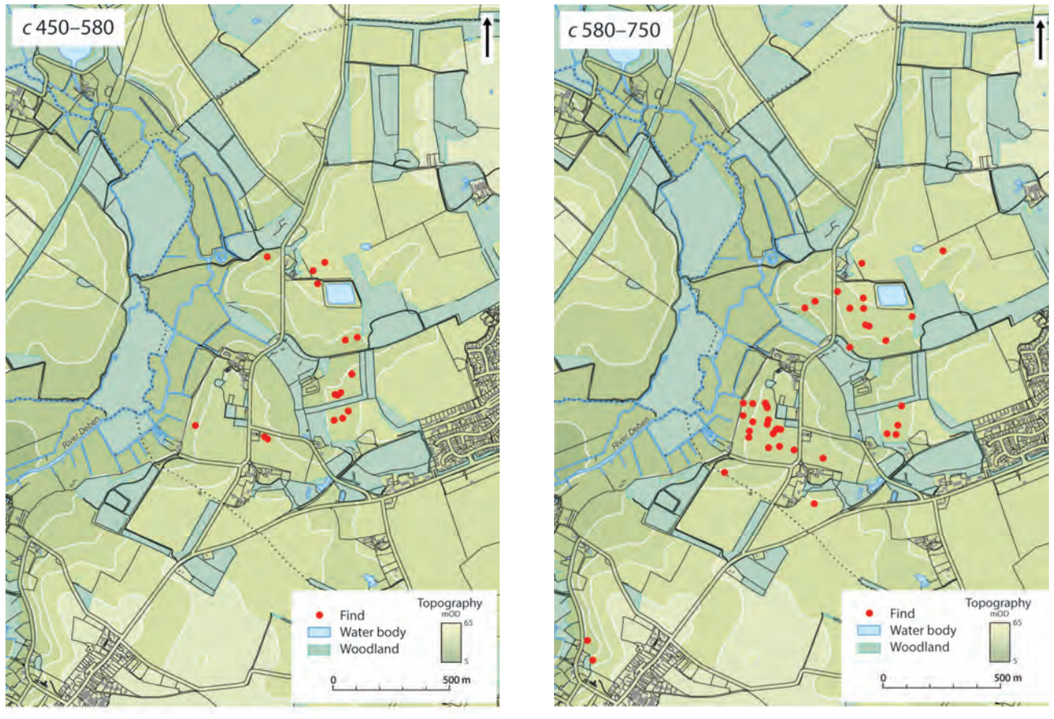

Fig 4.3.11 The distribution of elite material: (left) *c* 450–580; (right) *c* 580–750. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

Fig 4.3.12 The distribution of items with Style I (left) and Style II (right). *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

very strongly that this community looked northwards along the Deben valley rather than to the south.

The picture changes radically, however, in the last two or three decades of the sixth century. The distribution of material culture items and coinage indicates intense activity across both the northern settlement focus and the promontory, with a corresponding shift in the activity footprint to the south. This is seen most strikingly in the complementary distributions of brooches and pins, the former mostly pre-dating and the latter post-dating 570/580, but there is a similar pattern in the distributions of elite items (Ch 5.6.2), and items decorated with Style I and Style II, elite markers respectively of the late fifth to middle sixth centuries and later sixth to middle seventh centuries (figs 4.3.11–12).

The spatial expansion and intensification of activity coincides with major changes in key elements of the material culture assemblage. Gold begins to circulate at Rendlesham on an unprecedented scale. Coin weights and precious metal ingots might indicate earlier bullion currency transactions but from the late sixth century coinage becomes a major part of the material culture assemblage. There are coins and other imports from the Mediterranean and direct evidence for metalworking in copper alloys, silver and gold. Elite metalwork and status indicators cluster on the promontory, where there is also evidence for a major contemporary building and visually emphatic boundary features, and where refuse deposits include evidence for conspicuous consumption and the keeping of animals and birds indicative of elite lifestyles.

The sequence indicates a settlement and community of some size and importance here in the fifth and sixth centuries which undergoes change of status, and social and economic character, in the later sixth century. Before this, the main settlement focus was in the north, perhaps with fields to the north and west, and perhaps with some social or communal focus on the promontory. After this, the evidence is consistent with a great hall complex on the promontory, new levels of wealth, social differentiation and economic activity, and inter-regional connections with greater range and reach. This suggests the deliberate establishment of a residential, economic and administrative centre at a place of existing importance (Fig 4.3.13). The broader implications of this are discussed below in Chapters 6 and 7.

The northern settlement focus saw continuing activity through the seventh century and the cemeteries on RLM 044 and 036 continued to receive inhumations. There is evidence for currency transactions and fine

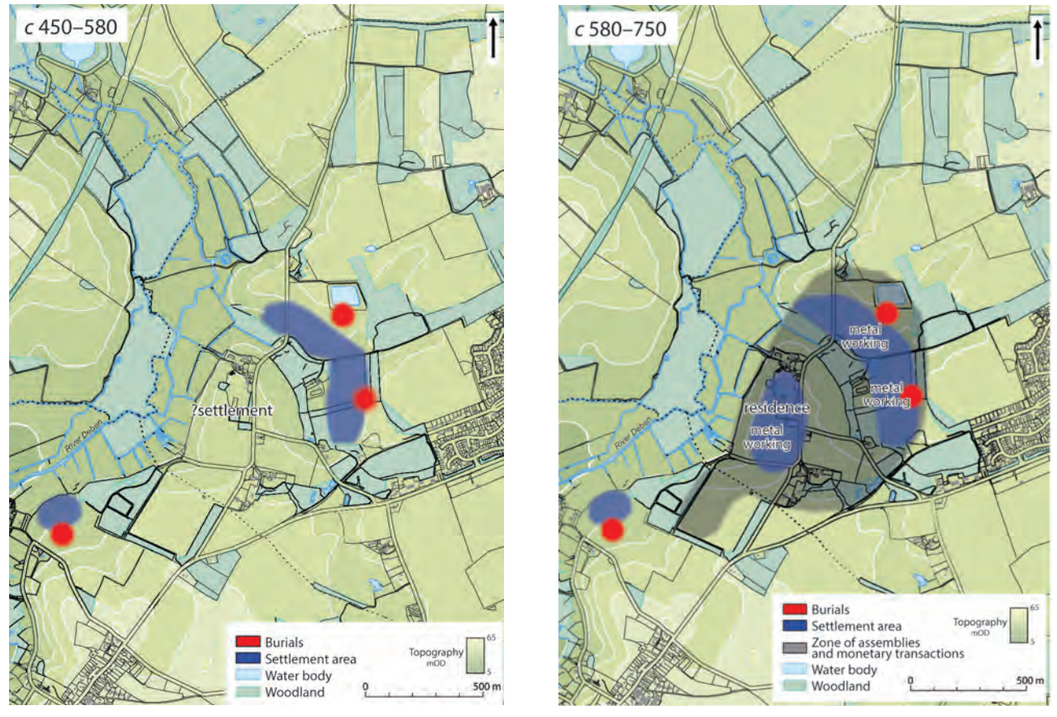

Fig 4.3.13 Models of settlement morphology: (left) *c* 450–580; (right) *c* 580–750. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

metalworking, and finds of status items as well as everyday objects. It is possible, though, that the physical character or layout of the occupation area changed during the seventh and early eighth centuries and that the material assemblage is in part the residue of gatherings and assemblies. The distribution of garter buckles, harness fittings and bag catches might suggest congregations of people and activity here away from the elite residence on the promontory, and there is a marked concentration of EM2 coinage in the west of RLM 044 that might indicate a shift in the focus of activity in the later seventh and earlier eighth centuries.

The shrinking of the settlement area from the middle of the eighth century coincides with a marked change in social and economic character. From this time there is little if anything about the extent of the settlement, its material culture signature and its coin profile, to distinguish it from other contemporary rural settlements. The coin profile suggests a change in monetary character in the second quarter of the eighth century, perhaps *c* 730 (Ch 3.7.3). Pottery from the ditch fills in RLM 013 suggests backfill not long after the inception of Ipswich ware, and so probably in the second quarter of the eighth century. Although this evidence is limited, it does suggest that there may have been a major episode of remodelling in the second quarter of the eighth century, linked to the change in status and character of settlement, which involved the deliberate levelling of structures and features on the promontory. Coins and metalwork of the middle eighth to middle tenth centuries show a much more linear distribution along the promontory and its approaches from the north and south, a shift in the spatial patterning of activity that would be consistent with a change in settlement character from a central or focal place to one on the route to somewhere else.

Finally, there is the question of whether the medieval and modern parish church of St Gregory is on the site of an early medieval predecessor (Williamson 2008, 99–100; Scull *et al* 2016, 1609). It is a strong possibility that there was a church at Rendlesham by the 650s (Ch 7.1) and what we know of the social and economic status of Rendlesham would suggest that any foundation is likely to date to before the middle of the eighth century or to the tenth century or later. Both its potentially early dedication and its location – on the promontory and within the seventh- to eight-century settlement area indicated by the material culture distribution – would be consistent with an early predecessor or predecessors on the site of the present church. The churchyard, moreover, is a truncated ovoid in shape, with roads appearing to divert around it and a significant scarp on its eastern and north-eastern sides. East Anglian churchyards are almost invariably rectangular or sub-rectangular, and conformable with the surrounding boundary pattern. It is thus possible that the original church at Rendlesham was placed within an earlier enclosure (similar to but smaller than the late prehistoric example in Park Field, some 140m to the north-west), perhaps with a ritual significance. Without direct physical evidence, however, all this remains speculative. There may not have been a church at the *vicus regius* and if there was then the current parish church may or may not be on that site.

5 Social and economic character of the fifth- to eighth-century settlement complex

5.1 The farming economy and environment

The direct archaeological evidence for farming at Rendlesham in the fifth to eighth centuries is limited, comprising plant macrofossils and animal bones recovered during trial excavation in 2013 and targeted stable isotope analysis of the latter (Fryer 2015; Scull 2014). Securely stratified material was recovered from the fills of the two *Grubenhäuser* and the rubbish pit in Trenches 2 and 4 (RLM 044) and from the surface dumps and ditch fills in Trench 6 (RLM 013). The material from RLM 044 is thus from late fifth- and sixth-century contexts while that from RLM 013 probably represents late sixth- to early eighth-century activity at the elite establishment. This was small-scale excavation and the sample, which is tiny when seen against the extent of the archaeology as a whole, can only be considered indicative. None the less, the evidence can be combined with a more general consideration of the soils in the immediate vicinity to provide some overall impression of the agricultural base of the settlement complex and the resources and environments on which it drew.

5.1.1 Arable and plant resources

Valerie Fryer and Tom Williamson

The plant remains recovered, which comprised charred grains, chaff, seeds of common weeds and wetland plants, and tree/shrub macrofossils, were not present in sufficient quantities for statistical analysis but do allow some general observations.

In the late fifth- and sixth-century samples barley (*Hordeum* sp.) was better represented amongst the identifiable grains than wheat (*Triticum* sp.) and six-row barley (*H. vulgare*) was also present in the Trench 2 *Grubenhaus*. Oat grains (*Avena* sp.) are also present but probably as a weed contaminant rather than a crop. There were cotyledon fragments of large pulses (Fabaceae), of probable pea/bean type, and the remains of fat hen (*Chenopodium album*) may indicate its use as a food source: these crops may represent garden rather than field-scale cultivation.

The plant macrofossil assemblage from the later sixth- to early eighth-century contexts in RLM 013 is smaller despite the larger volume of deposits excavated and the very much greater quantity of animal bone recovered. Barley, wheat and large pulses are present and there was also a single grain of rye (*Secale cereale*). Oat grains are again probably a weed contaminant. Micromorphological analysis of dump layers identified fused ash, possibly indicative of cereal processing.

The predominance of barley calls for some comment, given that in East Anglia, as elsewhere in the south and east of England, wheat generally became the most important grain crop over the course of the first millennium AD. Barley was the dominant crop on the kind of light soils found around Rendlesham in the medieval and early post-medieval periods, as it is today, but wheat was usually of equal importance, the two being grown in rotation. To some extent the dominance of barley in the excavated samples may reflect the fact that it

was consumed as grain, in pottages and stews or used for brewing, while wheat was mainly ground into flour, but its prevalence is consistent with the broader pattern observed for East Anglia in the fifth to seventh centuries (van der Veen 2022, 316–20, fig 7). On balance, all that can be said with confidence is that arable husbandry was based on the cultivation of both crops and that other grains were of negligible importance.

Small numbers of seeds from plants like brome (*Bromus* sp.), small legumes (Fabaceae), black bindweed (*Fallopia convolvulus*), medick/clover/trefoil (*Medicago/Trifolium/Lotus* sp.), grasses (Poaceae), wild radish (*Raphanus raphanistrum*) and dock (*Rumex* sp.) were also present in the samples analysed. All are principally found as arable weeds and may have been transported to the site with harvested crops. Most of these plants will tolerate a wide range of soils but wild radish is particularly common on the more acidic soils of the kind found in the immediate vicinity of the settlement. A sloe (*Prunus spinosa*) fruit stone from the Trench 2 *Grubenhaus* may be food waste but also suggests a mainly open arable landscape in the immediate area, sloe being a plant of scrub rather than woodland. Against this, fragments of hazel (*Corylus avellana*) nutshell, present in the assemblages from all three trenches, indicate woodland with some hazel understorey at no great distance.

The plant remains indicate a largely arable environment in the immediate vicinity of the settlement. Taken with the distribution of surface finds, some of which represent manuring and losses during fieldwork, they suggest cultivation of the lighter and better-drained soils of the valley slopes with the higher land – mainly level clay uplands but with some areas of particularly acid, sandy drift – occupied by pasture and woodland.

5.1.2 Animal resources

Charlotte Scull and Tom Williamson

The small animal bone assemblage from fifth- and sixth-century contexts in RLM 044 represents food and processing waste and is dominated by cattle with much smaller quantities of sheep and pig; domestic goose, red and roe deer are also present.

The assemblage from ditch fills and surface dumps in RLM 013 is very much larger, although only a tiny sample of the total that remains unexcavated, and a greater range of species is represented (Table 5.1.1). It is predominantly butchery and food waste but there are also elements that derive from the disposal of some non-food carcasses. The three main domesticates – cattle, pigs and sheep – dominate, and the most striking feature is the marked

Table 5.1.1 Number of identified specimens (NISP), excluding unidentified fragments, from RLM 013 and RLM 044

	RLM 013		RLM 044	
	NISP	%	NISP	%
Mammals				
Cattle (*Bos taurus*)	710	70.0	42	80.0
Sheep/Goat (*Ovis/Capra*)	97	9.5	4	8.0
Pig (*Sus scrofa*)	198	19.0	1	2.0
Horse (*Equus caballus*)	5	0.4	0	0.0
Dog (*Canis familiaris*)	5	0.4	0	0.0
Cat (*Felis silvestris*)	2	0.2	0	0.0
Red deer (*Cervus elaphus*)	2	0.2	4	8.0
Roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*)	1	0.1	1	2.0
Hare (*Lepus europaeus*)	1	0.1	0	0.0
Subtotal	1,021	100.0	52	100.0
Birds and Fish				
Domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*)	19	56.0	0	0.0
Domestic goose (*Anser anser*)	7	20.0	1	100.0
Partridge (*Perdix perdix*)	1	3.0	0	0.0
Teal (*Anas crecca*)	1	3.0	0	0.0
Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*)	2	6.0	0	0.0
Wader sp.	1	3.0	0	0.0
Cod (*Gadus*)	1	3.0	0	0.0
Unident fish	2	6.0	0	0.0
Subtotal	34	100.0	1	100.0
Total NISP	**1,055**		**53**	

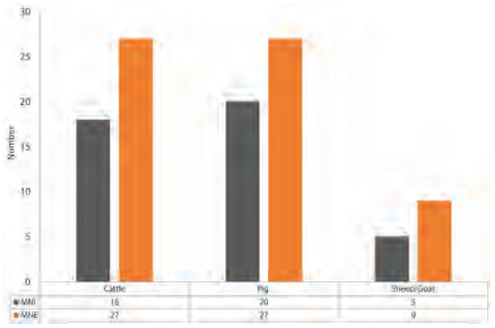

Fig 5.1.1 Trench 6, RLM 013: proportions of cattle, pig and sheep/goat by minimum number of individuals (MNI) and minimum number of elements (MNE)

preponderance of cattle and pigs over sheep (Fig 5.1.1). This is broadly consistent with the pattern observed at other contemporary high-status sites across England but is atypical for early medieval East Anglia, where sheep husbandry is normally held to define the region (Crabtree 2010, 127; Hamerow 2012, 157). Sheep were not

economically insignificant at Rendlesham but were kept primarily for wool and milk in a livestock economy otherwise focused on breeding cattle and pigs for status and consumption, with the meat and eggs of domestic fowl and goose also supplementing diet. Despite Rendlesham's location close to a major river and its estuary, fish are represented only by a single cod bone and two unidentified fragments. However, this is not unusual: prior to *c* 1000 fish are infrequent even at riverine and coastal sites in England (Barrett *et al* 2004; Holmes 2014, 51).

The prevalence of cattle and pigs may also be explained in part by the local environment. As already described (Ch 2.1), the lighter soils with which the settlement is associated form a relatively narrow band within the valley of the river Deben and are flanked by more extensive drift-covered uplands. Within the area of the medieval parish of Rendlesham, 4 per cent of the land is floodplain, presumably used in the fifth to eighth centuries for grazing and perhaps meadow; around 23 per cent is occupied by sandy loams or sloping clays which were apparently exploited as arable; but around 73 per cent comprises poorly draining clays with some areas of acid sands occupied by tracts of woodland and rough grazing.

In medieval and early post-medieval East Anglia, as elsewhere, there was a strong correlation between soil type and the character of livestock husbandry. Sheep tended to be more numerous on light, well-drained soils, cattle on heavier land. In part this is because sheep required less water than cattle and thus had less need for nearby ponds and streams; in part it was because they suffered from foot-rot where soils were prone to seasonal waterlogging; and in part it was because cattle thrive on coarse, lush vegetation but do not relish the sparser sward often associated with well-drained land and arable fallows. The incidence of pigs may reflect similar environmental factors and the presence of stands of woodland on the higher ground which could be exploited as swine-pastures, and the results of stable isotope analysis are consistent with seasonal pannage (Scull 2014, 71–2). That said, isotopic analysis of a single sheep/goat specimen from Trench 6 shows particularly elevated carbon and nitrogen levels that might indicate an animal brought to the site from a region with a different isotopic baseline, perhaps one which was seasonally grazed on saltmarsh (Britton *et al* 2008).

The evidence is that the domesticates butchered and eaten at Rendlesham were slaughtered at the site, and came either from the settlement's own herds and flocks or arrived on the hoof as renders from dependent farms located within topographies similarly dominated by heavy clays, pasture and woodland. Some of the Rendlesham cattle are among the largest known from early medieval England, comparable to those from Flixborough (Dobney *et al* 2007, 148–65), and there is also a high proportion of young calves, unusual in early medieval England (O'Connor 2011). Both factors are consistent with a husbandry culture in which cattle were carefully bred but in which they could be consumed in a wasteful manner – as we might expect of an establishment serving the needs of an elite and with large amounts of woodland grazing in its catchment. The kill pattern for cattle points to those not slaughtered for meat as calves being retained for breeding, dairying and traction. The majority of pigs and sheep at the site were also slaughtered young, probably for the consumption of the most tender meat.

Wild mammals are minimally represented and so if extensive tracts of woodland grazing encouraged a focus on pigs and cattle these environments do not – on present evidence – appear to have been seriously exploited for game. Deer were hunted, and the bones of sparrowhawk, teal and partridge suggest wild-fowling and falconry in areas of wetland and open ground, but these do not represent significant contributions to provisioning, suggesting that such activities were of primarily social importance and/or geared to acquiring elements of a status diet (Sykes 2004; 2010; Scull 2020, 145–7). It is possible that the sheer scale of cattle and pig grazing in the upland woods provided poor conditions for deer, generally timid animals, and that the inhabitants of Rendlesham went further afield for their hunting, consuming what they had killed away from the main settlement.

Most of the Rendlesham herbivores analysed have a $\delta^{15}N$ value above 6 (‰), which is comparatively elevated for the region and can be attributed to heavily worked soils (Bogaard *et al* 2007; Fraser *et al* 2011; Szpak 2014). There are also incidences of periodontal disease in both the cattle and caprines that are typically associated with over-grazing. Together, these indicators strongly suggest that the establishment of the elite centre in the later sixth century may have been associated with an intensification of livestock farming.

As well as domestic and wild species used as food sources and for traction, bones from the carcasses of non-food species offer insights into other human–animal relationships. Horse bones probably represent animals for riding. Domestic dogs and cats are also present. The dogs were large and robust wolf-like animals who, as isotope analysis shows, enjoyed a protein-rich diet, suggesting that they were valued hunting, guarding or companion animals. However valued in life, though, both dogs and horses appear to have been disposed of on rubbish dumps when dead. The domestic fowl also show carbon and

nitrogen values which suggest they were fed on food scraps from a protein-rich human diet.

5.1.3 Summary

The evidence for farming practice is limited but the broad picture is reasonably clear. Arable farming, perhaps with an equal emphasis on barley and wheat, was concentrated in the areas close to the settlement, very probably with garden plots adjacent to or within occupation areas. Cultivation was restricted to the light, acid loams of the Newport 2 Association, and to a lesser extent the clays of the Burlingham Association where these occupied sloping ground. Sheep were perhaps grazed here, on fallows or on the harvest aftermath, and also perhaps, as in later centuries, to 'tiller' the young barley, but most livestock husbandry was probably focused on the less tractable and more extensive upland soils where pigs and cattle were grazed in woods and on pastures. Isotopic analysis of the major domesticates is consistent with this but also suggests some seasonal saltmarsh grazing of sheep – likely to have been no closer than the head of the tidal estuary some 4.5km downstream of the settlement (Ch 6.2.1.1). There is also isotopic and pathological evidence pointing to some intensification of farming and stock rearing from the later sixth century.

These same environments afforded other resources – wood, timber, nuts – but do not seem to have been significantly exploited for game, possibly because of the disturbance caused by large herds of domestic livestock. None the less, there is evidence that both red and roe deer were hunted across the lifetime of the settlement.

5.2 Craft activity

Both the survey assemblage and the excavated archaeology imply a range of craft skills and activities which draw on a variety of resources and inter-linked skills and technologies including carpentry and building construction, pottery, and working in hide or leather. The only craft activity for which there is direct evidence from the survey assemblage is metalworking in copper alloys and precious metals, discussed in 5.3, below. There, is, however, some evidence from excavation for textile production and iron smithing.

5.2.1 Textiles

Fibre processing is represented by a possible iron woolcomb tooth from the ploughsoil of Trench 4 in RLM 044, and spinning by two spindle whorls from dump layers in RLM 013 Trench 6. In RLM 044, loom weights and loom-weight fragments from the fill of the *Grubenhaus* in Trench 2, dated to the later fifth or earlier sixth century, and from the ploughsoil of Trench 4, provide direct evidence for weaving.

5.2.2 Ironworking

Lynne Keys

In RLM 044 small amounts of undiagnostic slag were recovered from the *Grubenhäuser* and a tiny quantity of hammerscale and iron fragments from the top fill of the pit in Trench 4. Larger quantities of ironworking debris, including hammerscale and fragments of smithing hearth bottom, were recovered from the ploughsoil in the south-west corner of Trench 3.

In RLM 013 hammerscale flakes and spheres, iron flakes and iron-rich undiagnostic slag from the upper fill of the enclosure ditch in Trench 5 suggest iron smithing in this area during the late Iron Age. This is, however, close to the concentration of early medieval non-ferrous metalworking waste and the possibility that some of it is intrusive must be considered. Some more substantial debris including smithing hearth bottoms and hammerscale flakes was recovered from the dump layers and ditch fills in Trench 6, indicating iron smithing on the promontory during the fifth to eighth centuries. It is possible, though, that some of this is residual, deriving from late Iron Age or Roman activity.

5.3 Non-ferrous metalworking

Eleanor Blakelock, Zofia Stos-Gale and Marcos Martinón-Torres

Analysis of the metalworking evidence from the Rendlesham assemblage (Ch 3.4.6) offers an opportunity to investigate metal supply, technology and the organisation of production. It is also possible to compare similarities in alloys with data from other sites in Britain. The main results are presented here in synthesis, with full methodological and interpretative discussion, and analytical results, presented in online appendices (e-apps 2–3; e-tabs 1–4).

Optical microscopy on whole objects and metallographic sections, X-ray fluorescence (XRF), scanning electron microscopy with energy-dispersive X-ray (SEM-EDX) analysis and inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (ICP-MS) were used to characterise the composition and manufacturing techniques of the metalwork. Analysis of the copper alloys by SEM-EDX and silver alloys by XRF was carried out on small areas prepared to expose the core metal, to avoid contamination by surface corrosion products. Surface treatment of the gold objects, previously identified during the Staffordshire Hoard project (Blakelock *et al* 2016), was determined by comparison between the surface and subsurface small prepared areas by SEM-EDX. A comparative dataset was compiled of previous analyses of early medieval copper-alloy, silver and gold objects.

In total 145 copper alloys were examined optically and by SEM-EDX following a screening study of 313 copper-alloy objects by XRF (e-app 2). The sample targeted objects contemporary with the evidence for metalworking on site and those likely to be of local manufacture. All the early medieval silver (n=69) and gold objects (n=38), all but one of the unmounted gold coins (n=28) and a sample of the silver coinage (n=55) were examined by XRF; all the gold objects and twenty-one of the gold coins were also analysed by SEM-EDX (e-app 3).

Samples from forty-eight objects were analysed for their lead isotope compositions using multicollector inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (MC-ICP-MS) for comparison with the database of ore deposits in Europe (Gale and Stos-Gale 2000; Artioli *et al* 2020).

5.3.1 Materials: composition and metal supply

5.3.1.1 Copper alloys

Most early medieval assemblages from England show a wide range of copper alloys including bronze, gunmetal and brass (Caple 1986; Mortimer *et al* 1986; Mortimer 1988; 1990; Baker 2013; Nicholas 2015, 304–428; Pollard *et al* 2015). There is a predominance of gunmetal in the fifth to seventh centuries. By the seventh to eleventh centuries purer bronze and brass start to become more frequent and there are fewer gunmetal objects (Blades 1995; Pollard *et al* 2015). It is generally accepted that recycling was the main source of metal in the fifth to seventh centuries (Blades 1995; Pollard *et al* 2015) and that the frequency of gunmetals was a legacy of later Roman-period alloys that made up much of the metal supply (Dungworth 1997).

The copper-alloy assemblage from Rendlesham shows a close fit with fifth- to seventh-century alloys, including gunmetals, with only a small number closer to characteristically later compositions. When well-dated objects are plotted against contemporaneous comparative data there is a broad agreement (Fig 5.3.1). There are mostly leaded gunmetals present in the fifth to seventh centuries whereas some of the compositions of later objects

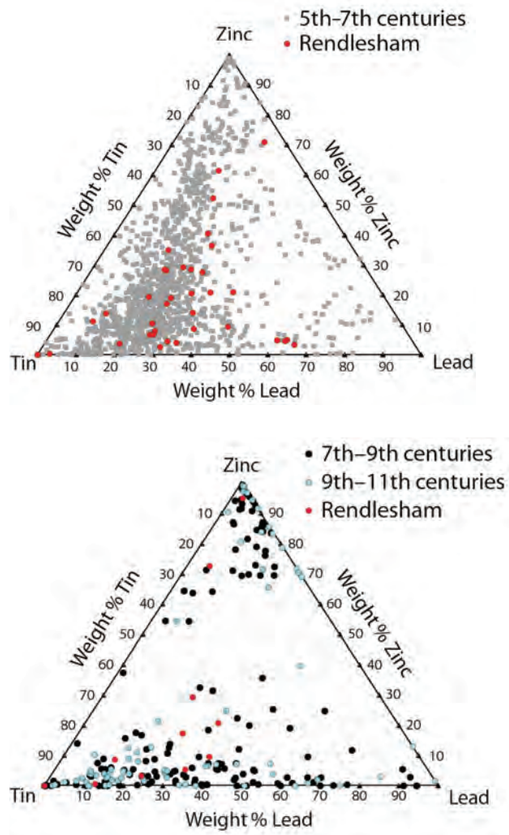

Fig 5.3.1 Ternary Zn-Sn-Pb diagrams showing Rendlesham alloys of the fifth to seventh centuries and the seventh to eleventh centuries against the comparative data from England. *Eleanor Blakelock*

fall within the bronze or brass groups of the comparative dataset. This would appear to represent an influx of new alloys, particularly brasses, in the period of the seventh to ninth centuries (Blades 1995; Pollard *et al* 2015). It has been suggested that this fresh metal supply was a brass with 11 per cent zinc (Pollard *et al* 2015) but the brasses from Rendlesham are 14–16 per cent zinc with none of 10–12 per cent zinc in the sample examined.

The overall composition of the copper alloys from Rendlesham is broadly consistent with the wider pattern across England. There are no clear groupings that would indicate a favoured recipe or that workshops in different regions favoured specific alloys, suggesting that metalsmiths across England had access to a shared metal economy.

There is little patterning to suggest specific alloy choices for specific object types at Rendlesham, with the possible exception of pins which are gunmetals ranging from 6–10 per cent tin, 3–5 per cent zinc and 2–5 per cent lead. These compositions correspond relatively

closely with the wider sample of pins with only a few outliers in the data.

At Rendlesham a large quantity of metalworking debris was recovered, alongside unfinished objects. It is mostly bronze and gunmetal, lacking the purer brass and bronze alloys seen in comparative assemblages of the seventh century and later (above; Fig 5.3.2). Taken with the date-range of the unfinished objects (Ch 3.4.6), this would appear to confirm that the main period of metalworking activity at Rendlesham was in the late sixth to early eighth centuries, prior to the influx of new alloys.

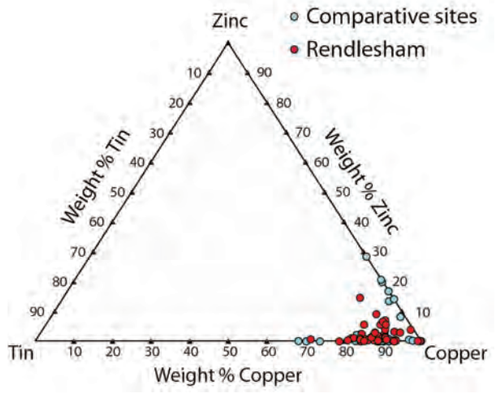

Fig 5.3.2 Ternary diagram Zn-Sn-Cu showing the metalworking waste from Rendlesham against that from other sites of the seventh to eleventh centuries. The comparative material plots on the line between tin-copper (indicating a bronze) or zinc-copper (indicating a brass); the Rendlesham metalworking waste plots on the tin-copper or between both lines (indicating a mixed gunmetal). *Eleanor Blakelock*

In Europe, ore deposits containing copper and lead were mostly formed between 50 and 600 million years ago (Blichert-Toft *et al* 2016). The age of the ores is reflected in their lead isotope compositions and this provides a tool for identifying the possible geographical origins of metals (Figs 5.3.3–4). The metals from Rendlesham have lead contents that are mostly higher than 1–2 per cent, which might indicate a multi-metallic ore source or the addition of lead to older copper alloy. In these cases the lead isotope compositions indicate only the source of lead, not copper. Additionally, recycling and mixing of metals may distort their isotopic and elemental signatures – a likely phenomenon here given the frequency of gunmetals with both zinc and tin, possibly resulting from the mixture of brasses and bronzes.

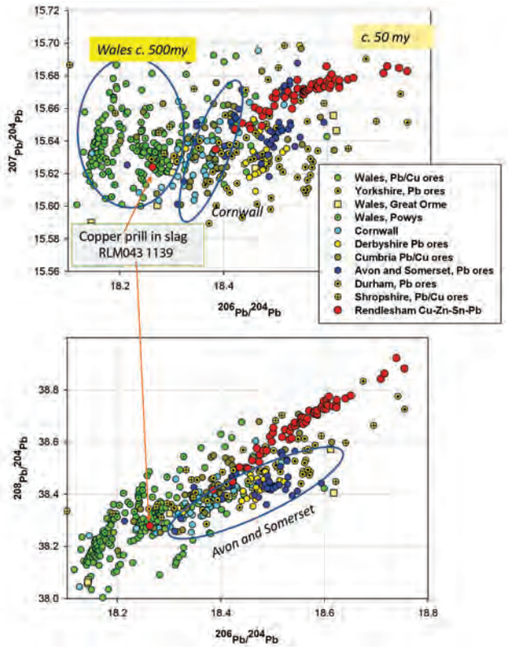

Fig 5.3.3 Plot of the lead isotope ratios of the lead/copper ores from the British Isles and the metals from Rendlesham: the lead in the Rendlesham metals is clearly younger than most of these ores. *Eleanor Blakelock*

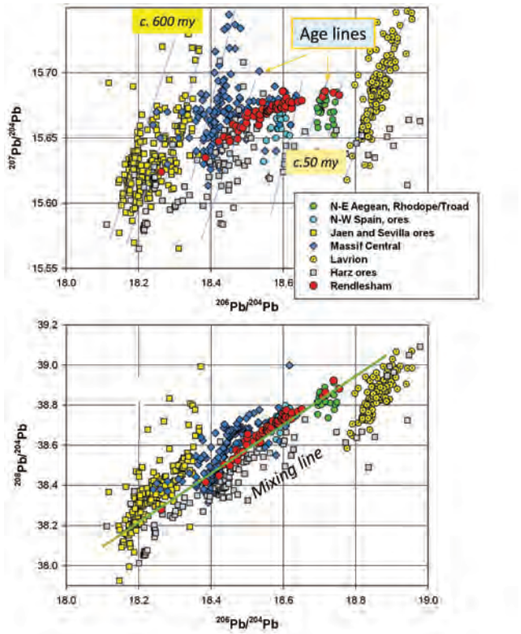

Fig 5.3.4 Comparison of the Rendlesham lead isotope ratios with those of ores from Continental Europe. The main group falls on the mixing line of ores from Germany and France; the four high-zinc metals are fully consistent with the ores from the north-east Aegean; the copper prill trapped within a piece of slag (RLM 043 1139) is also consistent with ores from the mining region of Jaen and Seville in southern Spain. *Eleanor Blakelock*

With these caveats, the isotopic and trace elemental study of the forty-eight objects from Rendlesham, as well as a further ten from Hoxne and two from Coddenham, show that with one exception none of these copper alloys contains lead from the British Isles (Fig 5.3.3). The younger copper/lead ores that were exploited from prehistory are found across Continental Europe from Spain to Greece (Fig 5.3.4). The position of data points for metals from Rendlesham on this lead isotope plot indicates that they might be a result of re-melting metals containing lead from the Harz mountains in Germany and the Massif Central in south-west France and, possibly, from north-west Spain (Brevart *et al* 1982; Marcoux *et al* 1988; Le Guen *et al* 1991). Three objects from Rendlesham (bag catch RLM 044 1474, casting sprue RLM 013 649 and pin RLM 013 112) and a piece of metalworking debris from Coddenham contain a consistently high proportion of zinc (13.8–15.9 per cent) and represent even younger ores such as are found in the northern Aegean. Only one sample yielded lead isotope ratios that might be consistent with lead/copper ores from the British Isles (Wales) and this was from the copper attached to a refining slag (RLM 043 1139) which unfortunately cannot be securely dated.

Very few isotope studies have been carried out on material later than the Bronze Age, and none on early medieval material, so comparative data is limited. However, the composition and lead isotope ratios of the analysed copper alloys from Rendlesham show similarities with the metals used in the late Roman period. Isotopic analysis of second- to fifth-century AD bronzes from a settlement in Jakuszowice in Poland is remarkably similar to the results obtained from the Rendlesham material (Stos-Gale 1993), with an isotopic signature consistent with the ores from the Massif Central suggesting a practice of continuous recycling over many centuries.

The trace elemental analysis of the objects from Rendlesham displayed a correspondence between the arsenic and nickel content, and also a potential correlation between nickel and the lead isotope ratios. Blades' analysis of early medieval copper alloys identified high nickel and arsenic – volatile elements that are depleted by re-melting – in some objects (Blades 1995, 194–7). He suggested that this might be explained by either a consistent fresh supply of copper from a specific source entering Britain throughout the fifth to eleventh centuries or by mixing two sources of metal (one with high arsenic and nickel and one with low arsenic and nickel) which would produce alloys with a wide range of nickel and arsenic values. Given the types of alloys present and the correlation between arsenic, nickel and lead isotope ratios seen at Rendlesham it is likely that more than one type of copper alloy was entering the early medieval metal economy.

5.3.1.2 Silver

The principal source of silver in fifth- to seventh-century England was recycled and imported metal (Hinton 2011, 427). Silver was typically alloyed with copper, added to lower the melting temperature and make the alloy harder and more durable (Grimwade 2009), but typically with a high silver content, often greater than 80 per cent. A small quantity of gold is often found in silver alloy; this may have entered with the silver if auriferous ores were used or, perhaps more likely, during mixing and recycling of silver objects that were gilded or contained other gold parts (Blakelock and Fern 2019). Six silver objects in the Rendlesham assemblage have a high gold content (over 10 per cent) but most are alloyed with copper. Alloying with copper introduced other elements such as tin, zinc and lead as well as traces of metals like bismuth. Some of these, like bismuth, derive from the ore source but others are being deliberately or accidentally incorporated during mixing or recycling.

Analysis of the Rendlesham silver objects shows compositions similar to silver objects from the Staffordshire Hoard. There appear to be no differences in composition to suggest regional variations and there is no evidence that specific alloys were chosen for different object types, with the possible exception of weapon fittings from the Staffordshire Hoard and elsewhere which are generally richer in copper (Fig 5.3.5). When the silver metalworking waste is compared to finished silver objects it correlates with most object types, with the exception of weapon fittings.

5.3.1.3 Gold

Gold arrived in fifth- to seventh-century England as imported coins or items that had themselves been alloyed from coins (Nicolay 2014, 210–15). Silver and small quantities of copper occur naturally in gold deposits, but these metals could also be added by the crafter to alter the colour or other properties of alloys. There is generally an inverse correlation between the gold and silver alloy content: when gold is lower silver is correspondingly higher but the copper content of the alloy is consistently low at 0.5–4.5 per cent (Blakelock *et al* 2016; Blakelock and Fern 2019). This supports the suggestion that gold was recycled but it might be expected that copper would increase proportionately with silver to economise on the gold used whilst retaining the golden colour.

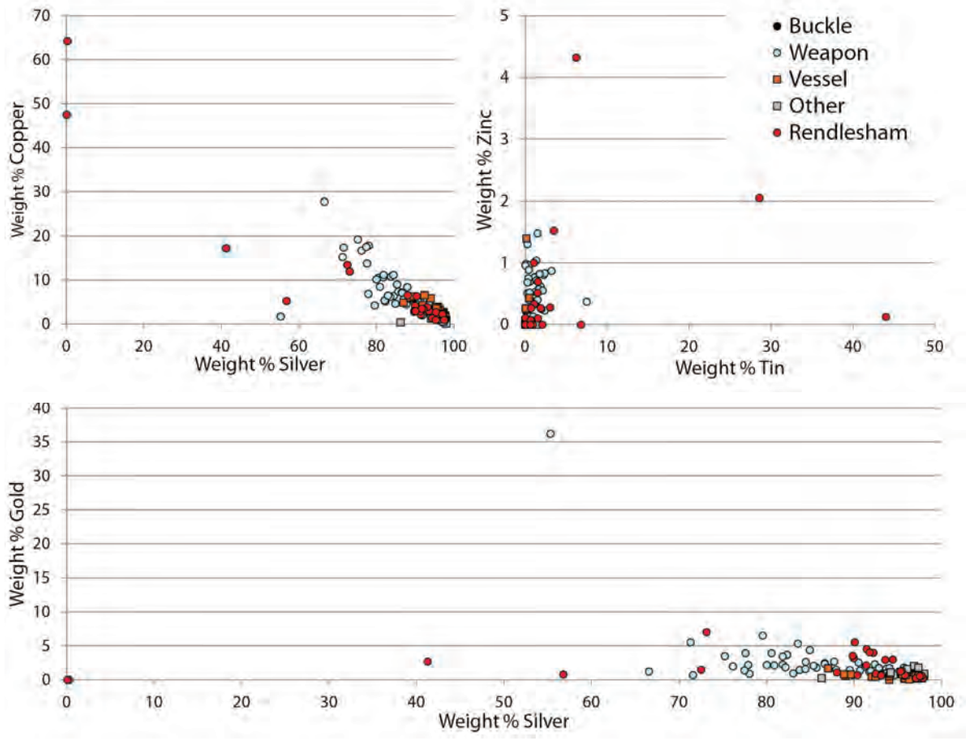

Fig 5.3.5 Binary plots of Cu-Ag, Zn-Sn and Au-Ag showing the composition of silver objects from Rendlesham against different object types from the comparative dataset. *Eleanor Blakelock*

The compositional range of the Rendlesham objects is very similar to that of the comparative dataset (Fig 5.3.6). As with the Staffordshire Hoard, there were no regional differences to indicate workshop-specific alloy recipes or differences in the alloys chosen for object types (Blakelock *et al* 2016; Blakelock and Fern 2019).

Comparison of coins and contemporary non-coin objects show clear differences in both the Rendlesham assemblage (Fig 5.3.7) and the wider comparative dataset (Fig 5.3.8). The gold coinage generally has a wider range

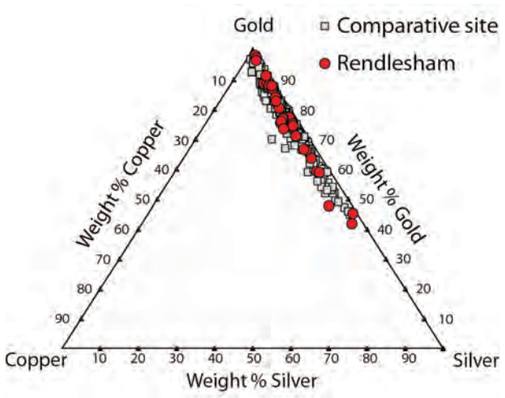

Fig 5.3.6 Ternary Au-Ag-Cu diagram showing the composition of gold objects (excluding coins) from Rendlesham against the comparative dataset for the fifth to seventh centuries. *Eleanor Blakelock*

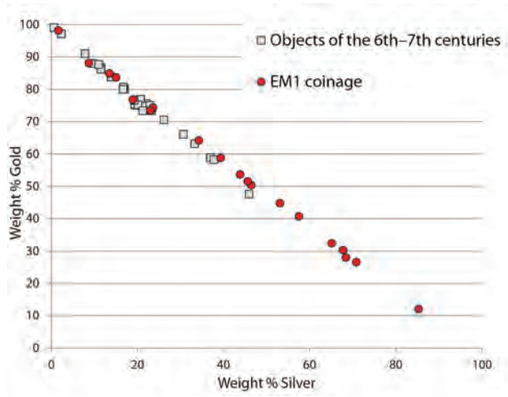

Fig 5.3.7 Binary plot of Au-Ag showing Rendlesham gold objects of the sixth and seventh centuries against Rendlesham coinage of EM1: the spread of coin compositions reflects progressive debasement with silver. *Eleanor Blakelock*

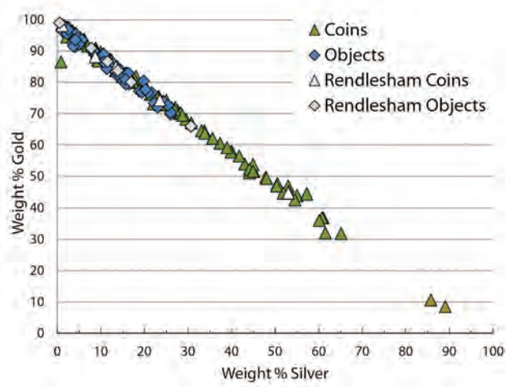

Fig 5.3.8 Binary plot of Au-Ag comparing fifth- to seventh-century gold coinage to objects from East Anglia; the Rendlesham coins and objects are highlighted separately. This shows that generally non-coin objects had a higher gold content than the coinage. *Eleanor Blakelock*

of compositions than contemporary non-coin objects, which also tend to have higher gold contents: in other words, the progressive debasement of gold coinage is not mirrored in contemporary gold artefacts. This suggests that gold objects were being recycled and/or that finer coinage was reserved or selected from the pool in circulation as a raw material for the jeweller.

Comparison of the gold metalworking waste, including the droplet, pieces of sheet and ingots, from Rendlesham with the gold objects from Sutton Hoo shows some correlation (Fig 5.3.9). In particular, one piece of the metalworking waste from Rendlesham (RLM 036 1073) has a very similar composition to the Sutton Hoo shoulder clasps although the spread of compositions at Sutton Hoo means it is impossible to be certain that they originated from Rendlesham.

5.3.2 The metal economy

The results from chemical analysis of the Rendlesham metalwork are consistent with previous research more generally on copper alloys (Blades 1995; Pollard *et al* 2015) and precious metals (Coatsworth and Pinder 2002; Blakelock 2017), confirming a heavy reliance on the recycling of metals.

The copper alloys at Rendlesham are similar in composition to those of the late Roman period, with a high proportion of gunmetals suggesting recycling. In particular, the metalworking debris, sprues and unfinished objects are generally low in zinc, with no fresh brasses identified. The lead isotope and trace elemental analyses confirm the similarity to late Roman objects that also appear consistent with the lead ores from the Massif

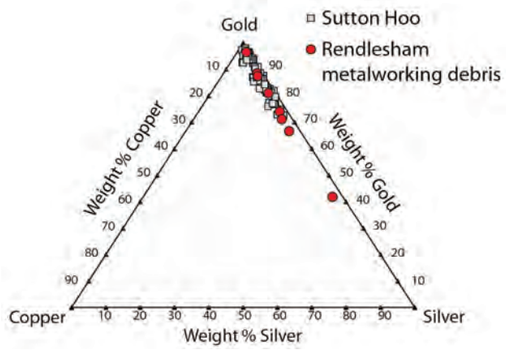

Fig 5.3.9 Ternary Au-Ag-Cu diagram (SEM-EDX) showing the composition of gold objects (excluding coins) from Sutton Hoo against the Rendlesham metalworking debris, including ingots, scrap sheet, coin blank and gold droplet. *Eleanor Blakelock*

Central. The Roman alloys, however, tend to have lower lead contents than the Rendlesham material and other fifth- to seventh-century objects, suggesting that lead was being added to the recycled alloys.

Analysis of the precious metals again suggests recycling, with similarities in composition between different regions and object types. However, the differences between the gold coinage and contemporary objects suggest selective rather than indiscriminate recycling, preserving high gold content for objects as the coinage became debased. Comparison between the Rendlesham and Staffordshire Hoard silver reveals that different silver alloys were being used to manufacture weapon fittings compared to other object types.

5.3.3 Manufacture

5.3.3.1 Lead models

Two lead models are related to the production of status objects of the later sixth and seventh centuries: the loop for a triangular-plated buckle (RLM 059 1090) and a fixed sword-ring for attachment to a sword pommel (RLM 044 1381). Either could have been used to create piece moulds for casting in copper alloy, silver or gold. If so, casting in copper alloy or silver seems more likely in view of the evidence that gold objects were more commonly constructed from sheet than cast (5.3.3.3, below). It is possible that the moulds made from these models were used to cast cores for objects made from gold sheet, in order to provide weight and strength, or even that they were themselves intended as lead cores. A further possibility is that they were used as formers when working gold sheet.

5.3.3.2 Copper alloys

No crucibles or mould fragments were recovered but the assemblage does include sprues and unfinished objects from which conclusions can be drawn about the technology used to make them (Blakelock *et al* 2022). There is direct evidence in the form of unfinished items or discarded castings for the manufacture of pins, small buckles, bag catches and decorative mounts and it can be assumed that other types of object were also made. The lead model for a large buckle loop (RLM 059 1090) might have been used to prepare moulds for casting in copper alloy or precious metal.

It is clear from flashing and misaligned pieces that all the unfinished copper-alloy objects were cast in piece moulds. There is also clear evidence that at least some moulds accommodated two or more simultaneous castings, in parallel or in chains (Fig 5.3.10). This method of casting offered the advantage that the model could be re-used multiple times, pressed into the mould material to create an impression with some detail retained (Bayley 1991). In addition, the mould itself may occasionally have survived well enough to re-cast, especially if there was no fine decoration.

An unusual aspect of the Rendlesham assemblage is the presence of at least thirty-eight sprues, most (twenty-eight) from RLM 013. Sprues do not appear to have been recovered from excavated early medieval sites in England with other evidence for non-ferrous metalworking (cf Bayley 1991; 1992; Biddle 1990; Hinton 1996; Evans and Loveluck 2009; Lucy *et al* 2009) but a small number were found with other metalworking waste at Helgö, Sweden (Clarke and Lamm 2017, 27). There are also sprues among the early medieval metal-detecting assemblages from Hoxne and Coddenham, although in much smaller quantities.

There are a number of different sprue shapes and sizes represented in the assemblage, which might indicate different craftworkers' preferences or the requirements of the objects being cast. Nineteen have rounded rather than cut ends, suggesting that they are whole rather than broken and thus indicate failed casting attempts, the metal solidifying before it filled the mould cavity.

These sprues contain 242g of metal, enough to make 201 bag catches or the loops, pins and plates for 161 buckles. Normally one would expect sprues like these to have been added to the crucible for the next round of casting, removing them from the archaeological record. One possibility is that they were from failed castings and that the craftworkers, suspicious of the metal, decided not to recycle them. However, there are no significant differences in composition between the sprues with rounded ends that clearly failed and those that were cut from castings, nor between the sprues and the other metalworking waste and finished objects. Either way, the apparent lack of concern to recycle sprues would suggest that the workshop had a good supply of metal. As well as the sprues, the assemblage includes two copper-alloy ingots, small bars weighing 2g and 4g, casting waste and three pieces of slag relating to copper refining or smelting.

A range of different metalworking techniques can be identified, including copper forging of plates for buckles; forming a wire and then using tongs or pliers to loop it around the buckle loop to form a tongue; drilling or punching holes; various methods of filing and polishing; gilding; and the application of stamped decoration. Sequences of manufacture for the buckles, pins and bag

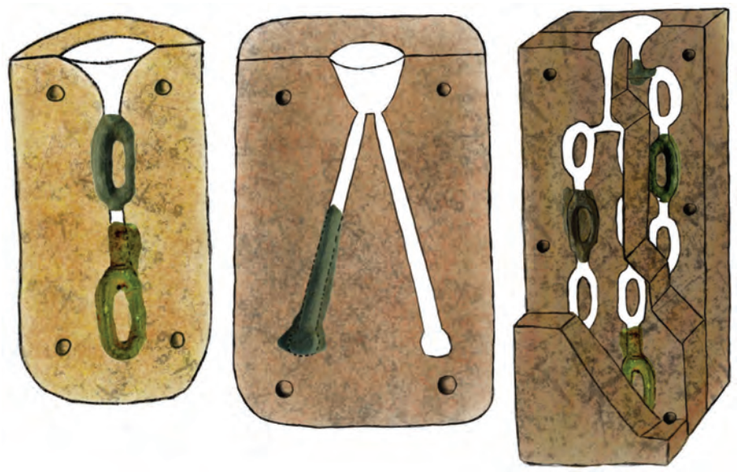

Fig 5.3.10 Proposed simple piece moulds for the Rendlesham buckles (left) and pins (centre) based on the evidence of sprues and failed castings; it is possible that pins were also cast individually. The model on the right shows how the T-junction casting waste might be combined with double sprues and other evidence to indicate a more complex mould for casting multiple chains. *Eleanor Blakelock*

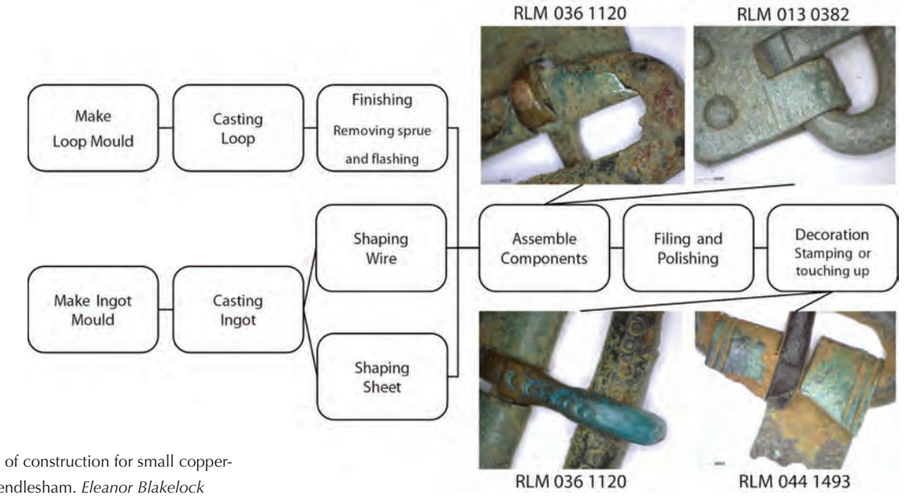

Fig 5.3.11 Sequence of construction for small copper-alloy buckles from Rendlesham. *Eleanor Blakelock*

catches made at Rendlesham can be reconstructed. There are similarities between them but the production of buckles required a greater range of skills and processes (Figs 5.3.11–12).

5.3.3.3 Gold and silver

The gold and silver melt and scrap are clear evidence of gold and silver working but the precious metal assemblage does not include sprues or unfinished castings. These would have been too valuable to waste and were therefore recycled, but it is also the case that casting appears to have been less predominant in the manufacture of gold items than of those in silver and copper alloy. Although there is no direct evidence from unfinished items, pristine gold components such as the beaded wire collar (RLM 059 1129) and slipknot ring (RLM 013 1361) were probably made here, and the lead models provide evidence for the manufacture of status items – weapon fittings and belt furniture – of types that would be fabricated in, or incorporate, precious metals. As with the copper alloys, it can be assumed that a wider range of items was manufactured, including some of the precious metal jewellery recovered from the site. Two possible coin blanks (RLM 013 1351 and RLM 044 1655) may also suggest the minting of coinage, but compositional analysis does not positively confirm this.

The silver objects are predominantly cast, with gilding, stamped decoration, and niello as additional techniques. By contrast, the gold objects are mostly constructed from sheet and wire, soldered together, and show a range of techniques illustrating the technical repertoire of the late sixth- and seventh-century goldsmith including filigree, garnet cloisonné and cabochon settings. Most of the cloisonné garnets are set over hatched gold foils but some are not, notably on sword pyramid RLM 013 0603 and the central boss on RLM 013 0361. Two objects – the filigree scrap fragment RLM 013 0187 and pendant RLM 044 1242 – show scratched lines that appear to have been made to guide the filigree work. Comparison of surface and subsurface compositions shows that some gold sheet, and some gold coins, had been subject to a surface treatment similar to that identified on pieces from the Staffordshire Hoard, which removed silver from the surface in order to give a stronger gold colour (Blakelock *et al* 2016; e-app 3, 67).

Close examination of the manufacturing details has allowed sequences of manufacture to be reconstructed for some items (Figs 5.3.13–15). Different skill levels are apparent in the assemblage. The filigree work on RLM 013 0187 and RLM 013 0555, for example, is better than that on RLM 044 1242, although in these cases the higher-quality pieces are scrap for recycling from items that could have been made elsewhere and so the differences in

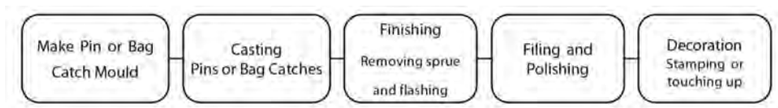

Fig 5.3.12 Sequence of construction for simple copper-alloy objects, including bag catches and pins, from Rendlesham. *Eleanor Blakelock*

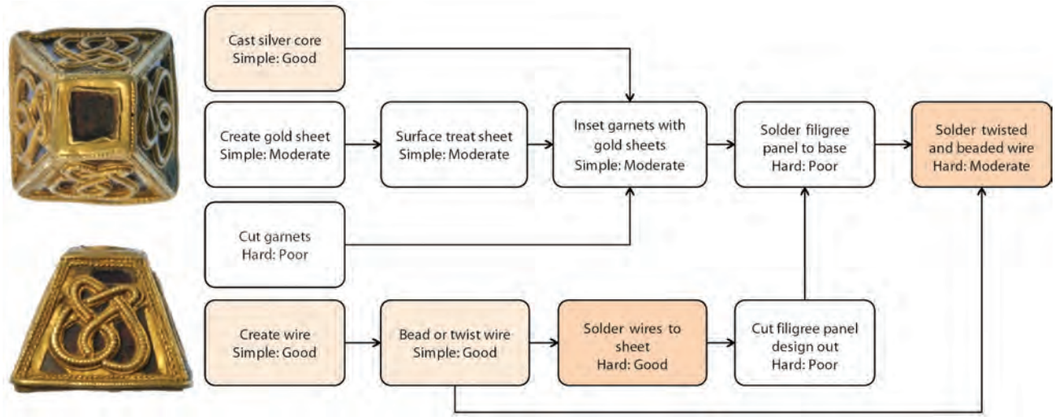

Fig 5.3.13 Sequence of construction for the Rendlesham sword pyramid (RLM 013 0603) with an assessment of the technical quality of each step. *Eleanor Blakelock*

Fig 5.3.14 Close-ups of sword pyramid (RLM 013 0603) showing the roughly cut and soldered filigree decoration. *Eleanor Blakelock*

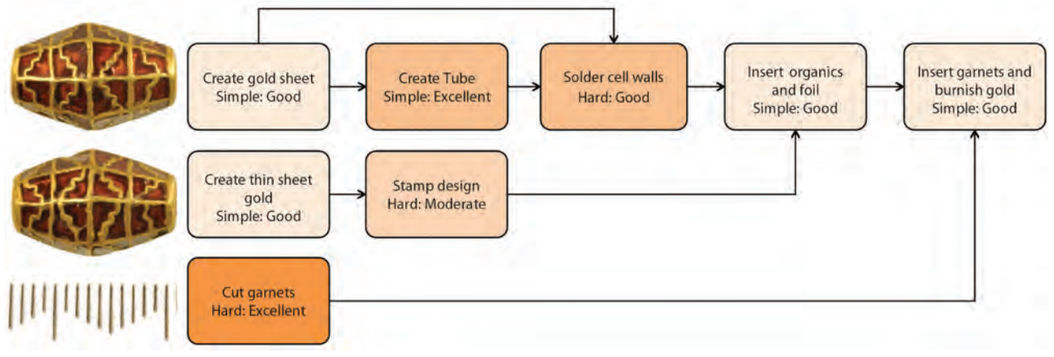

Fig 5.3.15 Sequence of construction for the Rendlesham cloisonné bead (RLM 013 0754) with an assessment of the technical quality of each step. *Eleanor Blakelock*

quality might be explained by different workshop origins. However, differences in quality between items that might have been made at Rendlesham suggest a range of skills within the workshop: the cloisonné work on bead RLM 013 0754, for example, is excellent but sword pyramid RLM 013 0603 is more crudely manufactured (Fig 5.3.14).

Differences in quality between pieces in the same assemblage have also been identified in the Staffordshire Hoard, with examples of both master crafter's work and apprentice pieces identified (Blakelock and Fern 2019). None of the gold-and-garnet pieces from Rendlesham is as well-constructed as the cloisonné master pieces from the Mound 1 burial at Sutton Hoo but this does not rule out the possibility that the Sutton Hoo pieces were made at Rendlesham.

The silver objects had simpler sequences of manufacture, being cast, finished and gilded, with stamped decoration applied after gilding. Consequently, silver status items are generally more consistent in the quality of workmanship than their more elaborately constructed gold counterparts.

5.3.4 Conclusions: non-ferrous metalworking at Rendlesham

The broader social and economic contexts of production are considered below (5.5) but the character of the assemblage allows some inferences about the scale and practice of non-ferrous metalworking at Rendlesham.

There is later evidence for small-scale production, and it is probable that there was metalworking here from the fifth century, but the datable evidence belongs overwhelmingly to the later sixth and seventh centuries, suggesting that this period saw more intensive activity on a larger scale than before or afterwards. There is direct evidence for the manufacture of items across the social range, from weapon fittings and precious metal jewellery for elite patrons to everyday utilitarian items such as copper-alloy pins, but some of the simpler copper-alloy objects, particularly small buckles and bag catches, were probably elements of more complex items. The weight of discarded metal in the copper-alloy sprues alone represents very many more small buckles, pins or bag catches than have been recovered from the site and the scale of production this implies would suggest a permanent or regular periodic presence rather than one or two individual casting sessions.

There is no excavated evidence for physical workshop space but the range of techniques exhibited in the Rendlesham material implies two working zones. An enclosed hearth would be needed to allow metalworkers to observe the subtle changes in colour needed to determine the temperature essential for processes such as casting, soldering, heat-treating, gilding and applying niello (Coatsworth and Pinder 2002, 21–9; Aufderhaar 2012). Detailed work such as shaping, finishing, stamping and beading wire would have required as much natural light as possible and may have been carried out in the open air (Coatsworth and Pinder 2002, 41–63).

Craft working in copper alloy and precious metals was taking place in the same areas of the settlement complex (Ch 4.3.2.1), suggesting a group of craft workers who between them handled the full range of materials and manufactured items. This is also suggested by the use of very similar stamps on silver and copper-alloy items (e-app 3), and on items such as RLM 013 0361 and RLM 059 1071 which have both copper-alloy and gold components. This would, however, require a range of skills and skill levels – manifested within the metalwork assemblage itself – which would in turn suggest workshop groupings with a master crafter or crafters aided by assistants with different levels of skill and experience, and apprentices. It is possible to envisage master crafters working on complex precious metal items, some of which included lapidary elements, while others handled simpler items in lower value materials.

Whether all or some of the metalworkers were permanently resident at Rendlesham is considered below along with other aspects of the organisation of production (5.5, below), but it is important to emphasise the extent to which their activities were embedded within networks of supply and other complementary craft skills. In addition to the raw materials of metal, garnet and glass, mercury – obtainable only through long-distance exchange networks – was needed for gilding, charcoal for all high-temperature work, and wax from bee-keeping for lost wax casting (Blakelock and Fern 2019). Similarly, the production of fittings for scabbards, belts, and bags or satchels pre-supposes skills in weapon smithing and in wood and leather working.

5.4 Currency, coinage and monetisation

Andrew Woods

The growing number of finds available for study has prompted a significant reappraisal of coin use and production in the sixth to eighth centuries (eg Williams, G 2006; 2010; Naylor 2007; Metcalf 2014a; Naismith 2014). These studies have typically addressed the evidence on a regional or national scale, clarifying and analysing frameworks of production and patterns of circulation. The relative scarcity of seventh-century coinage has hindered detailed studies of the coinage from single sites, although there have been some notable exceptions (eg Newman 2003; Pestell 2014). The large number of well-recorded coins from Rendlesham thus

presents the best opportunity to test and refine ideas regarding early medieval coinage generated through regional or national studies.

For numismatic period EM1, Gareth Williams has traced the changing historiography regarding the nature of gold coin usage in the sixth and seventh centuries (Williams, G 2006; 2010). This had emphasised a limited circulation and specific set of functions (Grierson 1959) but these ideas have been increasingly challenged. The growing number of finds, particularly from non-burial contexts, is altering perceptions of the nature of coin use in the period (Williams, G 2006). Increasingly, a wider range of uses, including commercial exchange, are being suggested, with Naismith arguing that English gold coinage was used for rent, compensation, gifts, savings and higher-level commerce (Naismith 2014, 302). The ways in which these coins were produced remains unclear although the raw materials used in their striking are better understood than ever (Hook and Williams 2013). What is known about production on the Merovingian Continent suggests that elites were the ultimate authority for production, although there is a strong possibility that the moneyers were the driving force behind it. Production was probably centred on rural elite power centres and the variety of English types struck in gold in the seventh century suggests tens of different minting places (cf Metcalf 1994, 30). Very few issues name or unambiguously depict their issuing authority, leaving open the possibility of royal, ecclesiastical or artisanal production (Naismith 2017, 60).

In periods EM2 and EM3, the sheer number of coins struck, used and found has led to an emphasis on their economic and commercial usage. This is coinage which has been found in significant quantities across eastern England; indeed, it is the most common coin find between the fifth and twelfth centuries (Naismith 2013b; Metcalf 2014a). The large numbers produced and extensive distribution are taken to be indicative of widespread use in a variety of spheres, which might be broadly defined as social, official and commercial in nature (Naismith 2017, 108). The coinage is likely to have served a number of social functions, including a role within burial (Scull and Naylor 2016), and official functions linked to secular and religious elites (Naismith 2017, 107–8), as well as being a crucial element in burgeoning commercial exchange (Sawyer 2013; Metcalf 2014a).

The large numbers of coins produced in periods EM2 and EM3 have led to interpretations of their use which stress broad similarities but there are differences of production in the coinages of the two periods. In EM2 (*c* 665–710), English coins were produced largely in elite centres in a fundamentally similar manner to EM1, albeit in much greater volumes. While coinages are known from English *emporia* the number of coins found in these areas is low (Naylor 2012, 241–5). The increase in total output can be connected with a large increase in silver supply from elsewhere in Europe (Loveluck e*t al* 2018). However, the extent to which the silver supply increased coin production or increased production drove the exploitation of the mines remains an open question.

While the total number of coins in circulation increased, these were struck using a relatively small number of designs during period EM2. The iconographic homogeneity of this period fundamentally altered in EM3, with tens of different types struck across England. This is likely to represent expansion of coin production in new parts of England. In the second half of EM3 the major coin types of the *emporia* emerge, including type RS from Ipswich. This represented a reorganisation of coinage with some of the diversity of the early eighth century replaced by a smaller number of types struck in major centres.

5.4.1 The nature of monetary use at Rendlesham

The early medieval coins at Rendlesham are widely distributed, with finds coming from an area in excess of 70ha, including the entirety of the areas identified as settlement (Ch 4.3). Early medieval coins are not confined to specific settlement areas and have a wide distribution beyond the main foci of occupation, nor do they cluster in association with other evidence for specific activities. The suggestion that there was seasonal or occasional use of this wider space, perhaps for assemblies and fairs or markets (Ch 4.3.2.3), would provide a ready context for such a pattern. The wide spatial distribution of coinage at Rendlesham has implications both for who was using it and for what purposes.

This is not to say that the spatial patterning remains the same through the late sixth to eighth centuries. In EM1 there are coin finds from nine fields, the majority from the main areas of settlement north and east of the stream (RLM 036, 044 and 059) and on the promontory (RLM 013, 014 and 042 and the northern part of EKE 019) with a scatter from the wider area. The chronology and types of coinage in the two areas of settlement, as well as the broader scatter, are all fundamentally similar. There are no clear differences in chronology or type that might suggest, for example, that coinage was first used in one or other of the main occupation areas and subsequently across the broader area. Rather, it appears that coinage was used in all areas from its first arrival at Rendlesham.

In EM2, the spatial distribution of coinage reaches its maximum extent. As in EM1 the greatest density of finds is in the two main occupation areas but there is a relatively large number of coins in a halo around these areas as in EKE 022, RLM 038 and RLM 042. Again, there are no clear patterns which would differentiate the types of coinage from any of these areas. It appears that there was a pool of currency used across the entirety of the site, which would support the view that this period saw a well-utilised rapidly circulating currency. The main difference in spatial distribution from EM1 is the scatter of finds from EKE 021 and 022 and the south-west of EKE 019, interpreted as deriving from activity along the southern approaches to the settlement complex (Ch 4.3.2.2).

EM3 sees the most significant change in the spatial distribution of coin finds. While there are still concentrations in RLM 013 and RLM 044 there is a noticeably more linear distribution of finds along a broadly north–south axis. There are fewer coins from RLM 036 and RLM 038 and none at all from RLM 014 or RLM 042 but still a scatter in EKE 019, 021 and 022. This is consistent with the wider pattern of artefact distribution which suggests a shrinkage of the settlement area and a focus on the north–south routeway (Ch 4.3.3). This change in the spatial distribution of the coinage can be dated *c* 710–30. It immediately pre-dates the decline in coin use at Rendlesham, suggesting that these are interconnected phenomena and pinpointing the second quarter of the eighth century as a period of major change.

5.4.2 Chronology of coin use

The scale of coin use at Rendlesham altered dramatically in the seventh and eighth centuries (Ch 3.7.3). Figure 5.4.1a plots the relative proportions of the assemblage from each of the four early medieval numismatic phases, following the approach pioneered by Richard Reece for Roman coins and used in many subsequent numismatic studies (Reece 1991; Naylor 2007). Visualising in this way allows comparisons between sites with differing levels of recovery and reporting.

The large increase in coinage in the late seventh century and decline in the eighth century is a widely recognised pattern which has been explored by a number of scholars following Mark Blackburn's pioneering work (Blackburn 2003). However, the atypical nature of Rendlesham's coin assemblage is highlighted when it is compared to the more general patterns of East Anglian coinage (Fig 5.4.1b). Rendlesham has a fundamentally early coin signature, with higher proportions of EM1 and EM2 coinage and a very much lower proportion of EM3 coins.

When Rendlesham is compared to the other cases studies (Chs 9 and 10), the only site which has an unambiguously similar chronological profile is Coddenham. The small sample of coinage from Hoxne may also be similar but the size of the assemblage prevents too firm a conclusion from being drawn. The early numismatic signatures of Rendlesham and Coddenham are not products of recovery bias but genuinely reflect a position as very early adopters of coinage within East Anglia. The huge increase in the volume of coin in use in period EM2 is common to Rendlesham and much of the rest of the region. It suggests that Rendlesham was in the vanguard of the adoption of coinage as well as playing a role in its more widespread acceptance in period EM2, in the later part of the seventh century. As such, Rendlesham is likely to have played a crucial role in encouraging, or enforcing, the use of money across south-east Suffolk (5.4.7, below).

The major decrease in coinage that is clear in Rendlesham in EM3 coincides with changes in the nature of coinage, with more coins struck at a smaller range of mints. For southern East Anglia the major mint of EM3 was at Ipswich, striking coins of type RS. As such, it is important to note that the chronological signature of coin finds at both Rendlesham and Coddenham is directly inverse to that of Ipswich (Chs 9.1.2.3, 9.3.2.3 and 9.6). At Ipswich, the tiny proportions of coinage from EM1 and EM2 are dwarfed by the coinage of EM3. The point of transition appears to be with type RSb, often referred to as type 8, a substantial issue within type RS. Rendlesham

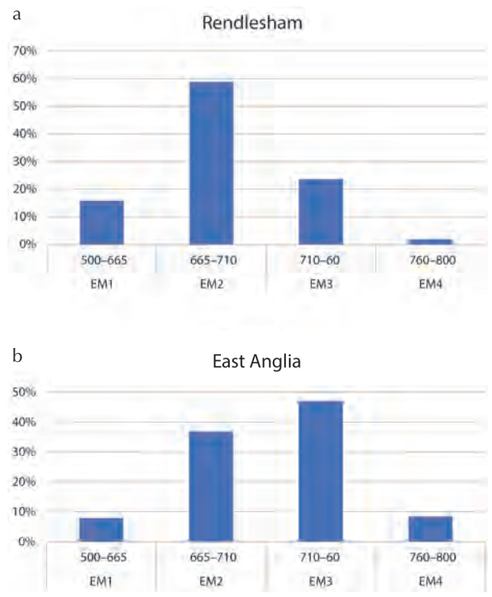

Fig 5.4.1 Proportions of coin finds by numismatic period from (a) Rendlesham and (b) East Anglia excluding Rendlesham

has a number of these coins alongside a range of earlier sub-types; Ipswich has many type RSb as well as a number of the subsequent types. In neither case is it entirely clear-cut – there are a few odd later sub-types at Rendlesham and earlier at Ipswich – but the pattern is one which broadly holds and is supported by the average weight of issues from the two sites. RSb and later types were struck on a standard around 0.7g, down from a standard in excess of 1.0g (Metcalf 1994, 507–16): the weight of whole coins of type RS from Rendlesham averages 0.88g (median also 0.88g) while those from Ipswich average only 0.60g (median 0.68g).

This strongly suggests that the monetary activity which saw an abnormally large amount of currency being used and lost at Rendlesham shifted to Ipswich in the period when RSb began to be produced, perhaps *c* 730. That such a change should be connected to this coinage would be unsurprising in view of the suggestion that the striking of type RSb saw a significant alteration in weight and fineness and also likely a recoinage of older types (Metcalf 1994, 515). The reorientation of coin use to Ipswich is a pattern which is also replicated across other areas of south-east Suffolk (Woods 2021).

5.4.3 Networks of exchange

The early medieval coinage found at Rendlesham was struck at a huge variety of different of mints across Europe. The shifts in the origins of coinage at Rendlesham indicate changing monetary and exchange networks as well as increasing control over the type of coinage. Table 5.4.1 summarises the origins of the coinage by numismatic period.

In EM1 the coinage was overwhelmingly struck outside of England. The small number of English shillings are from the very end of this period, representing the beginning of English early medieval coin production. Most coins were struck in the Merovingian kingdoms and where the mint can be identified it is shown in Fig 5.4.2a. Approximate locations are included for the coin from the Visigothic kingdom and the probable Lombardic coin.

The coinage from Rendlesham is drawn from a diverse range of mints across the Merovingian kingdoms. Most mints are represented by only a single coin, the exceptions being Dorestad, Quentovic and Mairy. The wide dispersal of mint sites is to be expected given the hundreds of mints that were in operation and the absence of any pronounced clustering from a single region suggests that the coinage lost at Rendlesham is likely to have circulated widely, changing hands as part of a pool of currency.

When the origins of coins from East Anglia as a whole are compared to those from Rendlesham (Fig 5.4.2b) it is possible to draw a number of conclusions about the currency pool. The origin mints of coinage from East Anglia show a similarly wide distribution to those from Rendlesham and so suggest the same pool of well-circulated currency. It is likely that the currency had

Table 5.4.1 Origins of the coinage found at Rendlesham

		EM1 *c* 500–665	EM2 *c* 665–710	EM3 *c* 710–60
Overseas	Byzantium	8	0	0
	Visigothic Kingdom	1	0	0
	Francia	29	60	20
	(incl. Burgundy)	*1*	*0*	*0*
	(incl. Lombardy)	*1?*	*0*	*0*
	(incl. Rhine mouths)	*3*	*60*	*17*
	Ribe	0	0	1
	Overseas total	38 (88%)	60 (38%)	21 (33%)
England	South East	5	88	8
	East Anglia	0	11	27
	Wessex	0	0	1
	Kent	0	0	1
	Northumbria	0	1	0
	East Midlands	0	0	5
	England total	5 (12%)	100 (62%)	42 (67%)
	Total	**43**	**160**	**63**

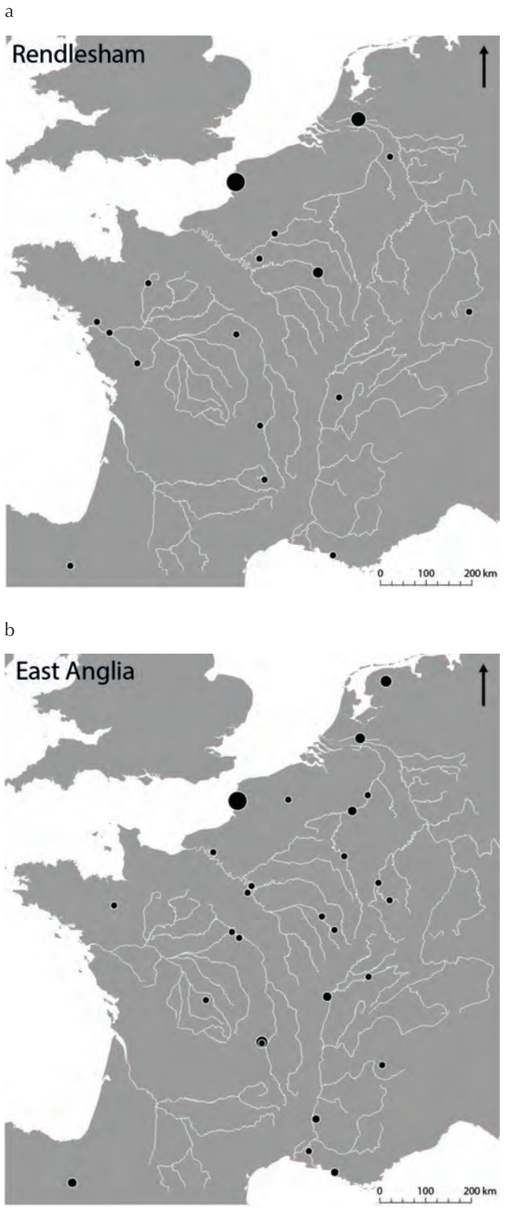

Fig 5.4.2 (a) Origins of Continental gold coinage from Rendlesham; (b) origins of Continental gold coinage found in East Anglia. (Circle size dictated by number of coin finds)

circulated both before and after its arrival into England: if it came from specific mints or regions for specific reasons then it might be expected to show greater geographic patterning. Within this pattern of diversity, however, Quentovic and Dorestad stand out as the mints with the highest numbers of finds. Given their status as major trading centres on the near Continent this is perhaps unsurprising but it is worth highlighting nonetheless. This was not coinage coming to Rendlesham from obscure royal and ecclesiastical mints but from the major trading ports of the period.

The major difference between the two patterns of origin is that Rendlesham has a higher proportion of coinage from western mints. It is argued that there were two major pathways for coinage from the Continent to England (Williams 2013, 127; Nicolay 2014, 220). The first was a western route focused on southern and western France with routeways along the rivers Rhône, Seine, Loire and Garonne; the second was more easterly, centred on northern France and the Low Countries with routeways along the rivers Meuse and Rhine in particular. It has been suggested that the western route was the more important in the period up to *c* 625, and the eastern the more important thereafter (Nicolay 2014, 220).

Rendlesham provides enough coinage to be able to trace the shifting routeways. In Fig 5.4.3, the mint origins of coinage are compared to the percentage of gold in the Rendlesham coins with western and eastern riverine routes in white and black respectively. The fineness provides a reasonable proxy for chronology in Francia (Blet-Lemarquand *et al* 2010) and as such the Rendlesham coinage has been divided into three groups (>80%, 50–80% and <50% gold) which roughly approximate to chronological groupings. The maps make it apparent that currency was arriving at Rendlesham via an early, western routeway with connections through to the Visigothic kingdom of northern Spain. The Rendlesham assemblage thus appears to have a relatively high proportion of early coins, with the use of gold coins subsequently increasing over the course of the seventh century as networks of acquisition and exchange shifted from western Francia and the Visigothic kingdom towards the North Sea. The network ultimately narrowed further in the 650s and 660s to the Low Countries and the North Sea.

This would tally with Sam Moorhead's interpretation of the Byzantine copper coinage from Rendlesham in their wider British context (Moorhead forthcoming). The Rendlesham finds form a chronologically coherent group of the period 565–602 with a smaller number of the period 602–68, the latest issue from the site dating to 615–29. Finds in Britain of Byzantine coinage of the period 565–602 are clustered in the vicinity of Rendlesham, suggesting that the site and the area around it are highly unusual and it is most plausible that the coinage arrived through direct contact with Mediterranean middlemen (cf Scull *et al* 2016, 1603–4). This connection with regions well-versed in the use of

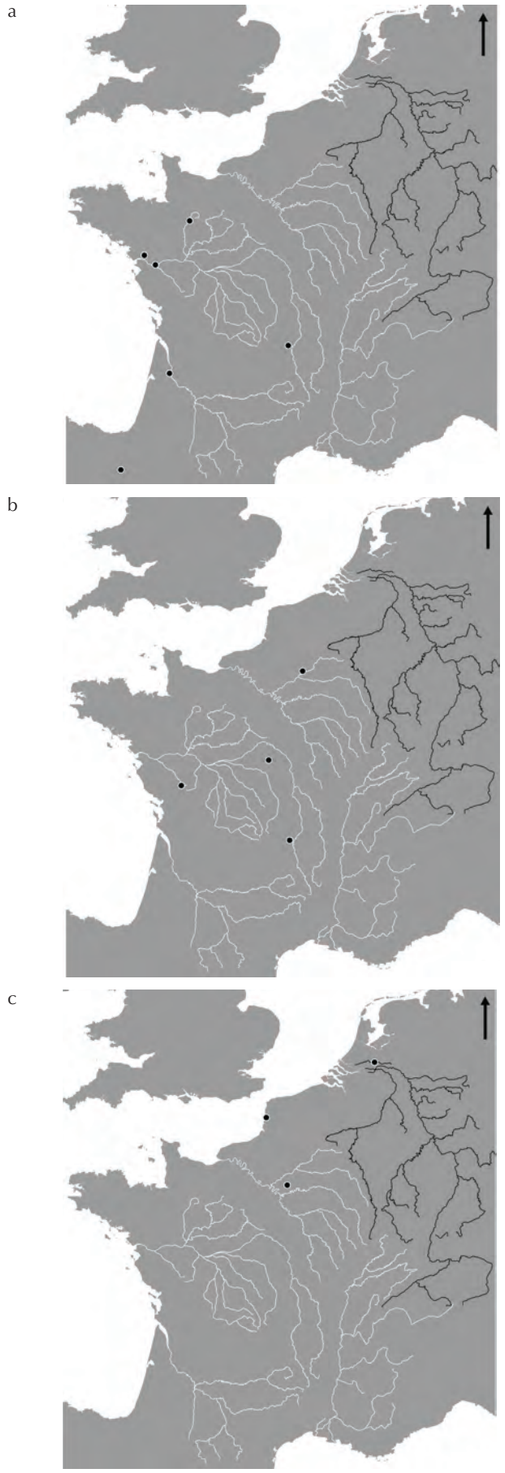

Fig 5.4.3 Mints of gold coinage found at Rendlesham by gold fineness: (a) >80%; (b) 50–80%; (c) <50%

coinage and its symbolic and administrative potential is likely to have played a role in the early adoption of coinage at Rendlesham.

When the coinage from Sutton Hoo is similarly considered a contrast with Rendlesham is apparent (Fig 5.4.4: data from Kent 1975 modified following discussion in Stahl 1992). It is important to bear in mind that the Sutton Hoo parcel is a hoard buried at a moment in time rather than a sample of coinage used and lost over the best part of a century. While the date of the parcel remains the subject of some disagreement, it can be confidently assigned to the period AD 610–40 and – with less confidence – to the 620s (Kent 1975; Williams 2013, 128–9; Naismith 2017, 44). A deposition date in the 620s would explain why there are no coins of Dorestad and only one of Quentovic at Sutton Hoo despite their prevalence at Rendlesham and across East Anglia. These coinages were struck from the 630s onwards, usually with a gold fineness of less than 50 per cent, and thus the Sutton Hoo parcel was likely deposited before they became widespread (Blackburn and Grierson 1986, 134–8). This is not to say that the geographic focus was entirely elsewhere: there are a number of coins from both Meuse and Rhine valley mints in the Sutton Hoo parcel but none from Dorestad itself.

The major difference between the Sutton Hoo parcel and the Rendlesham assemblage is in the relative proportion of coins from the Rhône valley in southern France, which is higher in the Sutton Hoo coins. This may be due in part to difficulties of attribution within the Sutton Hoo parcel (cf discussion in Stahl 1992) or the small comparative sample sizes but if the distinction is genuine then it can be seen as reflecting the changing geographical emphasis of the monetary networks through which coin came to Rendlesham. Sutton Hoo might thus represent a brief period when monetary networks in south-east Suffolk were more closely connected to Provence than was the case for most of the period, a middle point in the shift from the early western networks to the more easterly ones which ultimately culminated in a northern focus centred upon Dorestad and Quentovic.

The pattern of acquisition and exchange in EM2 is in some ways similar to the latter part of EM1. Where coinage was coming from overseas it originated in the Low Countries. However, the large number of Merovingian mints which had produced gold coinage that circulated in England were no longer making a meaningful contribution to its currency. Instead, these were replaced by a far smaller number of mints in England itself. Within two generations of its inception, English coinage had become the majority coinage at

Rendlesham, although there remained a significant minority of coinage from Frisia and the Rhine mouth. As the volume of currency was dramatically increasing, the network of mints from which it originated was shrinking. This was also the period when East Anglian issues came to represent a sizeable proportion of the Rendlesham coinage. The origins of currency in EM2 are more regionally focused than previously but the majority of coinage was still from beyond the East Anglian kingdom with origins around the North Sea, indicating the continuing importance of international contacts at Rendlesham.

During the course of the eighth century the localising trend continues, with East Anglia being the most significant area of origin for coins in circulation in EM3. This is true across the entire region with the locally made types, largely types Q and RS, accounting for 54 per cent of coin finds of this period from East Anglia. This is a proportion that is even greater in the second half of EM3 than the first with the striking of the debased type RSb and others (Woods 2021). It seems likely that such a high proportion of locally made coins can only have been achieved by some form of enforced recoinage into local types. This would be consistent with the increasing debasement of eighth-century coinage, the value of which may have stemmed in part from elite guarantee rather than intrinsic metal value. Such a scenario would explain the increasingly local circulation of coin types in EM3 (ibid), which circulated primarily within the kingdom in

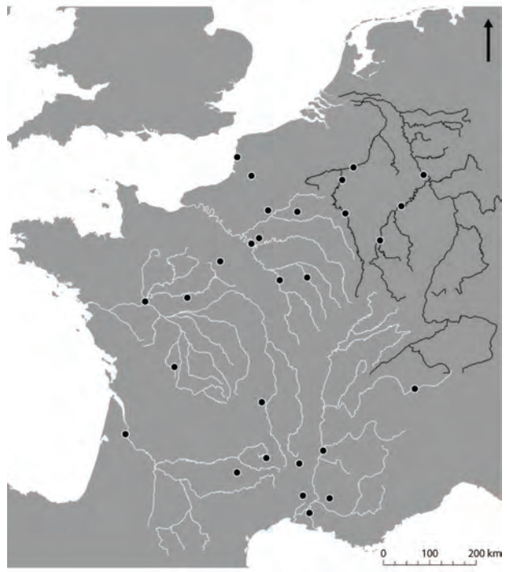

Fig 5.4.4 Origins of coinage in the assemblage from Sutton Hoo Mound 1

which they were struck and where their value was most strongly guaranteed.

If some level of recoinage of non-local types into official elite-sanctioned coinage was enforced then this has important implications for our understandings of royal power and administration, and the iconography of coinage. It implies an elite who wished, and were able, to direct elements of the production of coinage and had the capacity to enforce some degree of recoinage. The precise mechanisms are uncertain but regulation, taxation and tithe probably all played a part (Naismith 2019). It would also require widespread recognition of the local currency with many people able to distinguish between, if not fully understand, coin iconography. Clearly, enforced reminting was less comprehensive than in later periods when almost all coinage was of the official, local type (Allen 2012, 39), but it none the less represents considerable jurisdictional ambition less than a century after the first English coins were struck, and considerable administrative capacity.

With this in mind, it is important to note that the Rendlesham assemblage has a low proportion of East Anglian coinage, with only 43 per cent of its EM3 coins struck in the region, in contrast to Ipswich, where 75 per cent of EM3 coins were struck in East Anglia. If the higher proportion of locally made coins can be taken as a proxy for elite control over coinage, then this would suggest that the shift in monetary activity from Rendlesham and Coddenham to Ipswich coincided with an increase in regulation, with the types of coinage increasingly being dictated or imposed. This would mirror wider patterns which suggest a degree of centralisation in the production of coinage with larger amounts of coinage being produced in a smaller number of places (Naismith 2017, 108–10).

Rendlesham's shifting monetary networks suggest continuous and dynamic change across the sixth to eighth centuries. Connections to southern Europe are clearest in the early coinage with the geographic range of monetary networks becoming increasingly restricted thereafter, culminating in a coinage mostly minted in the East Anglian kingdom. Throughout the whole of the period, international connections remain key to the coinage with a significant proportion of Rendlesham's currency struck overseas. While the geographic range of this network shrunk the intensity of currency flow increased, with greater volumes indicative of frequent regular contact. The only period when all of the coinage is English, EM4, coincides with a marked drop off in the economic significance of the site.

These international connections brought not only coinage and the precious metal from which it was made

to Rendlesham, but also a coin-using mentality. Connections to economies – Byzantine, Visigothic and Merovingian – where coin use was more common are likely to have played a significant role in encouraging the adoption of coinage, both its use and production. As a result, Rendlesham was one of the earliest places where coinage was used in East Anglia. In turn, it is likely to have played a significant role in encouraging, or enforcing, the more widespread use of coinage within the region.

The increasing prominence of locally struck coinage is also significant. Initially English, and ultimately East Anglian, coinage came to be the dominant currency of Rendlesham and the region. The scale of this coinage, and the fact that it forms a majority of coinage at a number of East Anglian sites, suggests the reminting of other coinages into local types. This was never completely effective as a significant minority of non-local coinage continued to circulate but the fact that it was attempted with a degree of success suggests an elite with the capacity to exercise relatively sophisticated control over this element of the economy.

5.4.4 Metal-weight mentality

During Period EM1, when gold coins circulated at Rendlesham, there was also a metal-weight mentality whereby precious metals were valued according to their bullion component. This has left visible evidence in the form of fragmented and adjusted coinage and can also be inferred from the presence of weights (Chs 3.4.7 and 4.3.2.2) and the corresponding weight distribution of the coin finds. This metal-weight mentality is clearest in period EM1 but there are coins produced earlier which may have been utilised in a similar manner (Ch 3.7.2).

The mean weight of unaltered coinage in EM1 is 1.25g with the weights clustering around 1.2g–1.3g (Fig 5.4.5), suggesting that this represents a weight standard for gold coinage at Rendlesham. As well as the gold coins there are also two coin blanks, with weights of 1.23g and 1.34g. These can be interpreted in a fundamentally similar manner, functioning as a standardised form of gold bullion. A weight standard of around 1.3g for these coins corresponds with that suggested for sixth- and seventh-century coin weights in England (Scull 1990). The two heavy outliers are both pseudo-Imperial coins, with weights of 1.42g and 1.50g. These are the earliest post-Roman coins from Rendlesham (both have a fineness in excess of 91 per cent gold) and pre-date the change in weight standards in north-western Europe from an earlier standard at *c* 1.5g to one at *c* 1.3g in the third quarter of the sixth century (Blackburn and Grierson 1986, 107; Scull 1990; Williams 2014, 41).

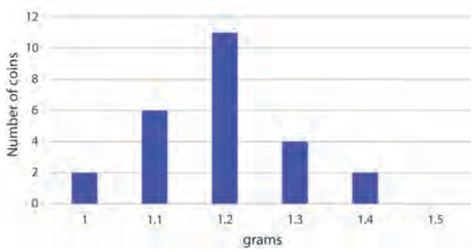

Fig 5.4.5 Weight distribution of unmodified EM1 coinage from Rendlesham

The metal-weight mentality apparent in EM1 at Rendlesham is closely mirrored by other contemporary evidence (Scull 1990; Williams 2013, 127–8; 2014, 41–2). The mixed media are paralleled in the Sutton Hoo and Crondall hoards. Both contained coins and blanks, while Sutton Hoo also included two ingots, and in each the weight of the coins averages *c* 1.3g. The mixture of bullion elements and coins of a specific weight standard suggests a metal-weight mentality like that seen at contemporary Rendlesham.

Two EM1 coins from Rendlesham have been altered by the addition of pieces of gold (Fig 5.4.6). In one case (RLM 044 1086) a small piece of gold was added before it was struck while the other (RLM 044 1252) has had a small piece of another coin added to its obverse after striking. With the addition of these two pieces, the coins weigh 1.31g and 1.23g respectively. The small additional pieces thus bring them up into line with the average weight of coins at Rendlesham. The purpose of the additions, particularly in the case of RLM 044 1252, seems to be to raise the bullion value of the coin into line with others in contemporary circulation. This phenomenon is very unusual in early medieval England and there are few ready parallels. The only other examples that the author has been able to trace are from Beachamwell, Norfolk and Sutton, Kent (Fig 5.4.6) where, with the additional pieces, the weights of the two modified coins are respectively 1.30g and 1.27g. In each case the weight of the coin has been increased to a broadly consistent level, using additional pieces of a variety of sizes, suggesting that there was a target weight in mind.

A number of coins from Rendlesham were also adjusted through cutting. In EM1 two gold coins were cut down to form smaller units. The larger piece (RLM 042 1121) is slightly larger than a cut half, weighing 0.84g, while the smaller (EKE 019 1039) is a cut fragment of an early *solidus* weighing 0.38g. Alongside the gold, there are

Fig 5.4.6 Coins altered by the addition of pieces of gold. Top: Rendlesham. Bottom: Beachamwell, Norfolk (PAS NMS-9E71B5) and Sutton, Kent (PAS KENT-585A3A). Scale 2:1. *Rendlesham © Suffolk County Council; Beachamwell and Sutton © The Portable Antiquities Scheme / The Trustees of the British Museum under CC BY 3.0*

also two fragments of Byzantine copper coinage (RLM 013 859 and RLM 036 1124). Both have been irregularly cut with weights of 4.54g and 2.35g. From EM2 there is also a cut type Bd silver early penny. This phenomenon is paralleled in a small number of East Anglian examples. There are three regularly cut gold coins: two half shillings from Foxley (EMC 2005.0228) and Beachamwell (EMC 2007.0305) and one quarter *tremissis* from Coddenham. There is also an irregularly shaped piece from Banham (EMC 2009.0015). To these gold coins can be added an irregularly cut Byzantine copper coin from Thelnetham (EMC 1993.135) and a straight-cut silver type SE (EMC 2006.0262) from 'near Ipswich'.

The evidence from Rendlesham thus mirrors that from the rest of East Anglia, suggesting that the cutting of coins into smaller units was a regular, if uncommon, aspect of their economic usage. This was most common with gold coins of EM1 but Byzantine copper coins and eighth-century silver early pennies were also cut. It must be stressed, however, that in all periods most coins were whole and unaltered. While a mentality which valued coinage according to its weight was probably widespread throughout the period, this manifested itself in the alteration of coinage for the most part in EM1, probably reflecting the high value of these coins.

There must have been a value to coinage above and beyond its bullion component or we would expect a greater proportion of cut or fragmentary material. Most probably, the consistently maintained weight of the coinage provided a practical and useful means of exchange, the value of which would have been widely and mutually understood. This point is perhaps emphasised when the debasement of the alloy is considered. Gold content dropped dramatically during the course of period EM1, with the alloy becoming majority silver by the middle seventh century, but there was no corresponding drop in the weight of the coinage. The coin weights and adjusted coins attest to the importance accorded to consistent weight standards by the users of coinage at Rendlesham.

The presence of both bullion and coinage, and the use of both within display contexts, has similarities to the ways in which precious metals were handled in the Viking Age. On the basis of a much larger volume of Viking Age material, fluidity between media has been stressed in recent scholarship with clear delineations between 'bullion', 'coin' and 'display' economies increasingly broken down (Williams 2011). There are important differences between the sixth to seventh and ninth centuries, most notably that bullion is a much more prominent part of the Viking Age economy, but the crucial understanding that coin and bullion use could and did function alongside one another simultaneously is the crucial point.

5.4.5 Coin production

Early medieval coinage was generally minted in centres of economic and political power (Naismith 2019). Rendlesham is an obvious candidate for a site where coinage was struck on the basis of its social and economic character as well as the large numbers of coins found here. There is some circumstantial evidence for the production of coinage but no unambiguous evidence in the form of the coin dies and trial pieces that have occasionally been found elsewhere and used to argue for coin production (Pirie 1986, 33–45; Malmer *et al* 1991;

Fig 5.4.7 Reverse die-duplicates of type C from Rendlesham. Scale 2:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

Fig 5.4.8 Die-duplicate coins imitating type C from Rendlesham. Scale 2:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

Malcolm *et al* 2003, 60; Pol 2011). In attempting to determine whether coinage was made at Rendlesham it is necessary to rely upon other approaches, particularly the presence of die-duplication.

Several coins from Rendlesham were struck using the same dies. In EM2 there are three type C coins struck using the same reverse die (EKE 019 1104, RLM 036 1074 and RLM 038 1115; Fig 5.4.7). There are also two coins which are die-duplicates and imitative of type C coinage (RLM 013 0047 and RLM 044 1764; Fig 5.4.8). Die-linked coins are frequently found in hoards but at Rendlesham the linked coins were from different fields and so the likelihood that they come from a small hoard or hoards disturbed by ploughing or other post-depositional activities is vanishingly small (Ch 2.4.2).

The presence of die duplicates at the same site, but not immediately adjacent, would suggest that they travelled together from mint to the site of their deposition. Where there are concentrations of die-linked coins this can often suggest a proximity to the area of production. The impression that these coins may be indicative of coin production is strengthened when compared with the number of other coins struck using the same dies. There are a number of other coins struck from the same reverse die as the three coins from Rendlesham: two in the Aldborough hoard (PAS NMS-6DA535) and individual coins from Parham, West Sussex (PAS HAMP-805138), Shalfleet (PAS IOW-EE6C12) and Freshwater (PAS IOW-5C5753) on the Isle of Wight. There are also two other known examples of die duplicates of the Rendlesham imitative coins, from West Berkshire (EMC 2009.0032) and Tilbury, Essex (EMC 2008.0317). The die-linked coins from Rendlesham make up five from a total of eighteen coins of type C from the site. This compares to seven other die-links from these dies amongst the 132 coins of similar types recorded on the EMC and PAS databases.

The origins of type C are subject to debate, with both Kent and East Anglia suggested (Blackburn and Grierson 1986, 166; Metcalf 1994, 114–16; 2004). It represents something of a middle point between the earlier type A, whose origin can be traced to Kent, and the later type RS, which is East Anglian in origin as can be seen by its distribution pattern (cf Metcalf 1994). There is, however, no clear patterning to the distribution of type C coinage: if anything it favours an origin south of the Thames in Kent (Metcalf 2004) but unpicking the various sub-types within this coinage is very difficult. The spatial patterning of the coins die-linked to those at Rendlesham is also reasonably widespread.

With these caveats it can none the less be argued that the number of die-linked coins at Rendlesham indicates that some coinage was struck here. This is supported by the fact that coins struck using the same dies are otherwise relatively unusual in England at this time. If this is not accepted, and Kent seen as the area of production, then the only other explanation is that a fairly substantial parcel of currency came to Rendlesham where it was exchanged resulting in a number of losses over a wide area.

The evidence for metalworking in both silver and gold at Rendlesham in the late sixth to eighth centuries is also suggestive (above, 5.3; Ch 3.4.6). There is nothing which can tie this to coin production but the skills needed to create coinage – adjusting metal alloys, cupellation, engraving of dies and others – overlap with those of the goldsmith. In seventh-century Gaul both Eligius and the master to whom he was originally apprenticed, Abbo, were goldsmiths and moneyers (James 1988, 196–8; Wood 1994a, 150–1) and in the late

medieval period there was often a significant overlap between goldsmiths and moneyers (Allen 2012, 101). The presence of a silver blank (RLM 013 1351) the size and weight of a coin in an area with evidence for metalworking might strengthen the argument.

It is also possible to examine the issue from a landscape perspective, which helps to clarify the origins of a number of the issues (Woods 2021). When the coinage from all of East Anglia is considered it strongly suggests that south-east Suffolk was the epicentre for East Anglian coin production in the seventh century. There are clusters of certain types which suggest coinage was probably struck at Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne. However, although it is highly likely that some coinage was struck at Rendlesham it should not be characterised as a 'mint' – a term that suggests a level of formality to the practice, and a level of permanent physical infrastructure, which is unlikely to have been the case at this early period (Naismith 2019).

5.4.6 The social functions of coinage

In addition to its importance in official and commercial transactions coinage also had a significance in the social sphere. This includes within burial contexts where gold, often transformed into jewellery, and silver coins were occasionally utilised (Scull and Naylor 2016). At Rendlesham there may be some evidence for this in the recovery of a small number of coins from burial areas (Ch 4.3.1.2).

The decorative aspect of the coin iconography was clearly important to the use of coins in jewellery. Two gold *tremisses* (RLM 013 0188 and RLM 043 1040) and a gold-plated copy (RLM 044 1657) have had suspension loops attached and there are also two Dorestad *tremisses* (RLM 042 1159 and RLM 013 0148) which have been pierced for suspension. In each case the suspension arrangements preserve the upright orientation of the iconography, indicating that this was significant in the use of the coins as pendants. The obverse is the focus of the looped coins and the piercing has been placed to orient correctly the reverse of the coins which depicts the central cross on steps. There is also a pierced coin (RLM 038 1318) of type PA, which can be dated to the 660s, the earliest years of EM2.

These six coins demonstrate the inter-relationship between gold coinage as currency and its use in social contexts as display jewellery of intrinsic value. However, it is important to note that the symbolic connotations of the coin iconography may have varied, depending upon context and chronology. The Rendlesham examples certainly suggest as much, with Christian symbolism emphasised on the later, Dorestad examples, whereas the emphasis of the earlier examples appears to be on the royal or Imperial iconography. From the middle of the seventh century onwards, as the medium was transformed from gold to silver, the symbolic function of coinage fundamentally shifted with little evidence for the display of coinage in this manner. This is consistent with the wider picture, pierced coins being known from only a small number of eighth-century or later burial contexts in England (Scull and Naylor 2016).

Later evidence from Rendlesham for the use of coinage in jewellery is from EM2, a silver early penny of type Ec struck in the Rhine mouths area (RLM 044 1253). Across one surface – the reverse depicting a 'standard' – there is evidence for gilding. There is no evidence for mounting as a pendant or other ways of displaying, but it might be interpreted in a similar manner to eleventh-century coin brooches for which the gilded coin is often the only element that survives (Williams 2001).

5.4.7 Conclusions

Rendlesham was in the vanguard of coin use in East Anglia and England. Its early coin signature is highly unusual and means that it stands apart from almost all other known sites in East Anglia, with the notable exception of Coddenham. It is probably appropriate to view the early arrival of coinage at Rendlesham within the context of the other Continental and Mediterranean high-status metalwork from the site as a product of long-distance social and exchange contacts (5.5–6, below). As such, early adoption of coinage can be connected to international contacts with coin-using areas beyond England. Access to coinage from Byzantium and Francia is crucial to explaining the beginnings of coin use at Rendlesham. The royal or Imperial resonances, economic potential and exotic connotations of the coinage may all help to explain its adoption and sustained usage. It is also likely that this coin-using mentality evolved from earlier metal-weight systems. Balances and coin weights from burials of *c* 525–75 in south-east England and the Upper Thames valley indicate a metal-weight economy in which both coined and uncoined bullion circulated as money from at least the second quarter of the sixth century (Scull 1990; 2012).

Following the early adoption there appears to have been a period where coinage fulfilled a range of functions. In EM1 coinage was used on occasion as an object for display, pierced or mounted. Coinage also functioned as bullion at times, with some fragmented to

form smaller units. There was a greater degree of homogeneity in EM2 and EM3 with evidence for fragmenting or display of coinage almost completely absent after *c* 670. However, it is important to note that even in EM1 most coinage was whole and unaltered. Although it had intermeshed social and special functions, coinage appears to have functioned primarily as currency at Rendlesham from the outset.

During the course of the seventh century the nature of coin use at Rendlesham underwent dramatic change in response to wider macro-economic and monetary developments. The first saw the reconfiguring of international networks with an emphasis on a localising trajectory and coinage increasingly drawn from northern Francia and the mints of the North Sea. The second saw the emergence of English gold coinage, which began to form a sizeable minority of the coinage in circulation from the middle of the seventh century. The third saw the striking of silver coins from the 660s onwards and with it the growing dominance of English coinage within the circulating currency at Rendlesham. In each case, the pattern at Rendlesham mirrors that of sites elsewhere. These are changes which would have fundamentally altered the experience of those using coinage at Rendlesham but are common to many sites across southern and eastern England.

The localising trajectory continued into the eighth century with East Anglian coinage becoming a more significant part of the circulating currency. It seems likely that this was achieved through some form of elite enforcement. The production of coinage at Rendlesham can be read in a similar way, with royal power increasingly exercised over the coinage in circulation. Those at Rendlesham were early in adopting coinage but coin use at the site also declines noticeably early. This is probably the result of a change in the status and character of the Rendlesham settlement, with the focus of long-distance exchange switching to Ipswich where there is the near simultaneous upsurge in coin use. This decline is very unusual and is not replicated at other sites in East Anglia with the exception of Coddenham and Hoxne (Chs 9.1, 9.3 and 10.1). East Anglian coins formed most of the currency in circulation in Ipswich, implying far greater levels of elite control over the nature of coin use than had been achieved at Rendlesham. This change occurred around the time of a recoinage within East Anglian type RS, suggestive of expanding elite control over the currency.

The early medieval coinage recovered from Rendlesham suggests that monetary activity was neither irregular nor unusual here. It was not confined to any one area of the settlement or associated only with specific activities. From the late sixth century onwards, and increasingly so thereafter until *c* 730, coinage was used routinely. The volume of coinage greatly expanded with the move from gold to silver in the seventh century. It seems likely that gold coinage was being exchanged in a fundamentally similar manner to the silver which followed it (cf Naismith 2014). However, it should be noted that this places Rendlesham, and Coddenham, at odds with much of the rest of East Anglia where pale gold, silver and ultimately highly debased silver coinages saw the coin use expand both into new areas and in volume (Ch 11.1.7.1; Woods 2021). It seems likely that it was the presence of an elite group at Rendlesham with Continental connections that encouraged the use of coinage from an early date. As a general model the evidence suggests that coinage was initially used primarily at centres such as Rendlesham, perhaps for public transactions involving or connected with elites, before gradually expanding to other spaces and involving other people in private exchange.

5.5 Production, exchange and consumption

The assemblage from Rendlesham is the residue of complex patterns of acquisition, manufacture and consumption. Although heavily biased towards non-ferrous metal objects and coins there is some useful information from pottery and faunal and plant remains. It is therefore possible to model, albeit at differing levels of confidence, some key elements of the economic and consumption profiles of the settlement and the reach and scale of its networks of acquisition and exchange, and to explore how these might have been organised. The overall picture embodies patterns of behaviour operating at different social levels and changing over time. It has to be borne in mind, however, that entire material categories and classes of objects – glass vessels, objects of bone, horn or antler, and iron artefacts – are unrepresented or only minimally represented in the Rendlesham assemblage.

There is only limited evidence for arable farming practice and crop processing, and that mainly from late fifth- and sixth-century contexts in RLM 044. Nothing in this sample, nor the associated animal bone, suggests that agricultural produce or livestock was travelling any distance to Rendlesham at this time, indicating that farms were cultivating nearby fields and exploiting local grazing and wild resources. The animal bone from the dump

layers on the promontory, however, suggest something different. The quantity of material from the very small sample of deposits that was excavated, together with the high proportion of young animals slaughtered, indicate butchery and processing on a substantial scale and conspicuous consumption of meat, consistent with periodic feasting. These animals may all have been from the herds of the Rendlesham settlement complex but given the apparent scale of consumption it is entirely plausible that they also represent livestock renders from the wider territory and subordinate establishments. On this basis, we can propose as a model that the major change in patterns of exploitation and consumption in the rural economy across the course of the fifth to early eighth centuries at Rendlesham was the centralised collection, from the second half of the sixth century, of a landed surplus to serve an elite regime. To what extent this involved renders of arable and dairying produce, and its impacts – if any – on farming regimes both at Rendlesham and in its hinterland is unclear. These questions can be addressed directly only through further excavation geared to the recovery of larger and more representative samples of animal bone and plant remains. There is evidence, however, for the continuing low-level exploitation of wild resources including game and occasional sea fish.

Although there is no direct evidence for them, the archaeology at Rendlesham implies a wide range of resources and skills. Timber for building, woodworking and fuel, and charcoal for iron smithing and non-ferrous metalworking, imply managed woodland. The construction of the major halls, in particular, would have involved master crafters working in an elite building tradition and the co-ordinated management of resources, skills and manpower on a considerable scale (Thomas and Scull 2021). Iron smithing required metal, probably brought to site as ingots from extraction and smelting sites elsewhere (cf Blackmore *et al* 2019, 316). Hides and leather, honey and beeswax – to name but a few – might all have been produced at Rendlesham but also brought in through renders. Wool and locally grown vegetable fibres provided the raw materials for yarn, textiles and clothing; household production could encompass high levels of skill and there is evidence for specialist workshops associated with elite households (Walton Rogers 2005, 262; Harrington 2019, 272). Cloth may also have been acquired by the elite establishment through exactions or dues, and status textiles through gift-exchange and inter-regional trade. Equestrian culture would entail grooms, stabling, tack and fodder; falconry would also require skilled specialists and equipment. The fifth- and sixth-century settlement implies a skilfully managed farming and extractive landscape with access to wider networks of procurement and exchange. The scale and range of settlement and activity from the later sixth century implies a dependence upon complex meshes of materials, craft skills and resource management, with networks of procurement exploiting both the hinterland and inter-regional exchange networks. It should be emphasised that in all these spheres of activity we are dealing with socially embedded and long-standing communities of practice within which knowledge, skills and expertise were transmitted across generations.

Rendlesham appears rich in non-ferrous metal. To some extent this is the product of retrieval bias but the quantity of metal discarded during casting in the later sixth and seventh centuries suggests abundant supplies of copper alloy. This was acquired through the broader recycling metal economy that had operated in Britain from the fourth century if not earlier but metalworkers practising at Rendlesham may have had favourable or preferential access. This certainly appears to have been the case with precious metals. As noted above (Ch 3.8) there is a clear chronological trend, with gold rare and silver the predominant precious metal before the late sixth century and gold becoming predominant after *c* 570. Before the opening of major sources of new metal in Francia in the middle of the seventh century, the main source of silver was recycled metal from Roman or Byzantine coinage and plate (Loveluck *et al* 2018; Hinton 2011, 427). The predominance of gold broadly coincides with the appearance of Merovingian gold *tremisses* at Rendlesham and coinage was almost certainly the main source of gold for metalwork, although it is clear that there was management of the gold fineness of metal for jewellery, which does not reflect the progressive debasement of the gold coinage. It is contemporary too with the material evidence for exchange contacts with the Mediterranean world in the form of east Mediterranean cast copper-alloy basins and Byzantine copper coinage.

The spread and reach of regional and inter-regional links is seen in imported components of Insular high-status metalwork and in imported status items, as well as coinage. The hanging-bowl fittings are from vessels manufactured in, and acquired from, elite social contexts in northern and western Britain (Youngs 2009). Mercury for gilding was acquired ultimately from Spain or southern Austria (Drauschke 2007, 54; Hinton 2011, 427), and garnet from the Indian subcontinent or Sri Lanka (Calligaro *et al* 2006–7; Calligaro and Périn 2013). The Continental gold coinage and fragments from hanging bowls and Mediterranean copper-alloy basins show that in the later sixth and earlier seventh centuries

people at Rendlesham were acquiring the inter-regional imports that made up part of the contemporary elite cultural package: with these, and the gold-and-garnet jewellery, we see in the settlement context at Rendlesham elements of the suite of elite markers that were selected for burial at Sutton Hoo. Byzantine material in England is usually explained as the product of socially embedded gift-exchange (Richards 1980; Harris 2003, 64–9, 164–7; Drauschke 2007) but the Byzantine copper coinage found at Rendlesham – low value issues which did not circulate in contemporary English society and so are most plausibly interpreted as arriving with individuals from the Byzantine world – suggests some more direct commercial contact. This in turn implies that material acquired from, and via, the Mediterranean was arriving in south-east England through commercial channels as well as gift-exchange. Any long-distance trade in high-value items would be directed at elites or their agents, and trade contacts may have had a diplomatic dimension, and Rendlesham would appear to have been a focus for such transactions. The reach and complexity of elite-focused networks implied by this material chimes with the broader picture derived from written sources in, for example, accounts of fosterage, dynastic marriage and political exile (eg Härke 1997, 126; Yorke 1990, 77–8). It is likely, but at present undemonstrable, that the exchange represented by gold coinage and Mediterranean vessels also encompassed perishable luxuries such as wine, spices and status textiles.

The changes in the material currency of elite identity at Rendlesham thus coincide with, and are dependent upon, an expansion in the range and reach of inter-regional exchange contacts. This, of course, is entirely consistent with the emergence of a regional elite exercising new levels of lordship and surplus extraction. These developments also come in the wake of the middle-sixth-century reconfiguration of Mediterranean trade routes to western Britain, with the Continental axis shifting from north-west Spain to south-west Gaul and Bordeaux (Campbell 2007, 126–39; Duggan 2018, 156–9). It is tempting to suggest that this may in part have been a response to the increasing economic power of emergent regional elites in south-east England counterbalancing trade to the Atlantic west. The pattern of coin supply to Rendlesham reflects the subsequent northward shifts in the axis of exchange contacts with the Continent (above, 5.4).

There is evidence from Rendlesham both for fine metalworking for elite patrons and for the manufacture on a considerable scale of low-value utilitarian items. The latter of course might be components of more complex items but the quantities imply manufacture for a wider population than that of a single elite household or even the wider settlement complex. This also raises the question of whether a single workshop – in the sense of a master craftsman and assistants – undertook the full range of work required to produce the items represented. If so, and if attached to a peripatetic elite household, this would afford elite patrons access to their skills at all times, and a local population access when the household was in residence. In the elite sphere controlling access to craft skills, and so to the material trappings of elite identity, could be seen to reinforce the relationships of service and reward fundamental to personal lordship (Hedeager 2011, 145–7; Wright 2019). Material from Coddenham indicates the contemporary manufacture of a range of low-value copper-alloy items similar enough to those from Rendlesham to suggest close links or even the possibility that some of the same crafters worked at both places (Ch 9.1.4). This might be taken to support the idea of a peripatetic workshop, or groups of metalworkers working at or from elite centres. The picture suggests some centralisation of craft production at these places, serving the wider rural population.

Economy and consumption at Rendlesham in the fifth to late sixth centuries was based on farming households, with the range of skills and materials that this implies, some of which had access to inter-regional social and exchange networks. Between the later sixth and earlier eighth centuries this essentially domestic farming economy was overlain by the functions of an elite establishment which collected exactions and renders from a wider region and was a focal place for long-distance exchange. The networks of acquisition and production focused on Rendlesham were at the peak of their reach and complexity at this time, and the consumption signature at its most lavish and intense. There is some evidence to suggest centralising craft production geared to the population of the rural hinterland and the pattern of coin loss, especially in EM2 and EM3, is consistent with periodic markets or fairs. What was given in exchange for Frankish gold, Mediterranean vessels and perishable luxuries is an open question. Slaves and politico-military affiliation may both have been part of the equation, but the ability of new elites to deploy and dispose of a landed and productive surplus on an unprecedented scale must also be considered.

The picture changes dramatically in the second quarter of the eighth century – around AD 730 according to the coin sequence (above, 5.4.2). Thereafter, Rendlesham was connected to the networks through which Ipswich and then Thetford wares circulated but was no longer a centre of inter-regional exchange or conspicuous consumption, and its material signature suggests a farming settlement exploiting its immediate surroundings. The relationship between Rendlesham, Ipswich and other centres in south-east Suffolk is considered below (Ch 9.7) but a comparison with seventh-century Ipswich is instructive: Rendlesham has little or no imported pottery, and Ipswich lacks the early coinage, material wealth and elite metalwork that is found at Rendlesham. This suggests that by the late sixth or early seventh century, and probably well before, there was a centralising of economic functions and control at major rural magnate centres. Seventh-century Ipswich may therefore have been less a port than a staging post or foreign traders' enclave, with the real business of trade in high-value goods directed to agents of the social elite at centres like Rendlesham. The dramatic change in Rendlesham's economic character and reach coincides with the physical expansion and upsurge of coin use at Ipswich, implying some switch of economic and monetary activity between the two places, and may therefore be explained in part by elite-focused exchange becoming subsumed within the expanding volume of international commerce around the North Sea which was increasingly handled at coastal ports.

5.6 Social signatures and cultural connections

The Rendlesham assemblage provides evidence for aspects of social identity, cultural affiliation and socio-economic differentiation amongst those living at or visiting the site, and allows us to identify how the expression of identities through material culture changed over time.

5.6.1 Cultural identities and connections

The earliest post-Roman dress accessories point to overseas connections with the North Sea coastal regions of what are now northern France and Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and south Scandinavia (Böhme 1974; 1986; Martin 2015). Two of the early cruciform brooches may have been made in north Germany, the Netherlands or south Scandinavia, and the supporting-arm brooches of Typ Perlberg and the silver equal-armed brooch may also be Continental pieces. The single-lugged supporting-arm brooches of Perlberg form and the later, more elaborate supporting-arm brooch represent the Insular take-up and development of these traditions. Böhme (1986, 519–22) would see copper-alloy brooches of Typ Glaston as an Insular form of the bow-brooches with upturned foot that have a wide Continental distribution both within and without the former Roman provinces, and argues that they were more commonly elements of male and military costume than female dress. Otherwise, the only early masculine items suggesting clear cultural affinities are the fragmentary silver-gilt sword buckle and scabbard mouthband, probably from south Scandinavia.

Contemporary with the appearance of these types in the archaeological record at Rendlesham is the practice of urned cremation accompanied by grave goods of the same cultural traditions. Together, they represent a material culture and cultural practices introduced by people from Continental societies and are strong evidence – like the similar material found more widely across East Anglia and eastern England – for substantial migration in the first half and middle of the fifth century. This does not, however, imply population replacement and it is important to note, in the light of the clear affinities with the Anglian province of material culture that are evident in the material of the later fifth and sixth centuries, that the early dress accessories include types that would conventionally be considered 'Saxon' (such as supporting-arm and equal-armed brooches) as well as 'Anglian' (cruciform brooches). The migration of people to Britain is likely to have been an episodic and drawn-out element of a complex web of contacts around and across the North Sea that will have included movements along the Continental North Sea coast and coasts of Britain, movements to Britain from the Continent and back again, and the maintenance of contacts along the routes of migration (Scull 1995, 75–7; 2023b; Hills and Lucy 2013, 328–31). By the middle and third quarter of the fifth century the material signature of communities at Rendlesham was nested within, and characteristic of, this wider North Sea cultural province.

From the third quarter of the fifth century until the third quarter of the sixth, the material culture identity expressed in the Rendlesham assemblage is overwhelmingly that of the Anglian province, representing the further Insular development of types and traditions of Continental origin and the adoption and adaptation of dress traditions introduced from western Scandinavia by the end of the fifth century (Hines 1984; 2013). A particular feature of the Rendlesham assemblage is the preponderance of cruciform brooches among the dress accessories and the apparent under-representation of annular brooches (Chs 3.4.1.1 and 4.3.1.2). This may be partly explained by the number of cruciform brooch fragments, especially detached knobs, and the possibility that annular brooches, particularly in a fragmentary state, are less susceptible to metal-detecting. None the less, it is

significant in that cruciform brooches are seen as strongly symbolic of an eastern English female identity (Martin 2015, 231) and that brooch types considered typical of Insular Saxon areas – notably saucer brooches – are almost entirely absent. There is also a significant number of wrist clasp elements. The Insular identities expressed in female costume from the third quarter of the fifth century link Rendlesham with north and north-west Suffolk and Norfolk, and more broadly with Anglian eastern England and the east Midlands, rather than with Essex and the Thames valley.

From the later sixth century to the later seventh century the assemblage shows an Insular material culture signature common to most of eastern and southern England. There is little or nothing about the range of types that can be considered representative of regional costume traditions and identities in the same way as the earlier dress kit. In the late seventh century the introduction of a new Continental type, the ansate brooch, should be seen in the context of enhanced levels of cultural connectivity and transmission across and around the southern North Sea and Channel rooted in burgeoning commercial networks.

The general pattern of cultural identities signalled in the Rendlesham assemblage, and the main changes in their expression over time, are thus consistent with the broader patterns within East Anglia and eastern England. The early and middle years of the fifth century were a period of direct and intense cultural interactions across and around the North Sea which included migration from the Continent to eastern Britain. This was followed from the third quarter of the fifth century by the construction and materialisation of Insular Anglian identities, giving way in turn in the later sixth century to a more pan-English material culture which looked increasingly towards the Merovingian Continent and the Mediterranean world (Geake 1997, 129–36; Hines 2013, 38–43). The evidence clearly indicates that people from the Continent and south Scandinavia were present at Rendlesham in the early to middle years of the fifth century and that some of them – and in all likelihood their descendants – wielded power. The local population across the fifth to eighth centuries, however, was almost certainly made up of individuals of native, Continental and mixed descent whose cultural identities, and their material expression, were the products of complex dynamics of inheritance, appropriation, affiliation, distinction and renegotiation.

Beyond what it tells us about the character of local populations – their probable ethnicity, identities and cultural affiliations – the material also provides evidence for long-distance social and cultural contacts from the later fifth century. The presence of two gold bracteates indicates access to the elite networks around the North Sea and Scandinavia within which such objects circulated and were commissioned. Other material indicates contacts with the Merovingian Continent, probably articulated via coastal and maritime connections with Kent. Three of the radiate-headed brooches, the heavy shield-tongue buckles with shoe-shaped studs, the bean- or kidney-shaped buckles and the buckle tongue with rectangular garnet setting are all types with a wide distribution on the Continent and which are also known from Kent and south-east England. Whether of Insular or Continental manufacture, and however acquired, they indicate social networks with access to Continental exemplars, and local groups who were concerned at some level to signal affiliation with Continental and Kentish identities. A very few dress accessories probably made on the Continent may have travelled to Rendlesham with individuals from abroad and might represent evidence for marriage connections. These include the radiate-headed brooch fragment of Typ Troyes (RLM 046 1054), the disc brooch of Legoux *et al* type 209 (RLM 046 1049) and the silver-gilt horse-and-rider brooch (EKE 021 1126). Interestingly, however, these are not from the main settlement complex but from the cemetery to the south in EKE 021 and the possible burial site to the north in RLM 046.

From the later sixth century, the garter buckles represent a costume innovation adopted from Kent and the Merovingian Continent and the small buckle plate RLM 036 1337 might well be a Continental piece. There are two counterplates from Continental belt-suites of the middle to late seventh century (RLM 014 1053 and RLM 042 1145) and, as noted above, the appearance of ansate brooches in the assemblage from the later seventh century should be seen in the context of burgeoning exchange networks around the North Sea. Otherwise, the evidence for inter-regional cultural connections in the late sixth and seventh centuries comes from items circulating in elite social and exchange networks: gold coinage and bullion, hanging bowls from northern and western Britain, and cast copper-alloy vessels from the eastern Mediterranean. Whether direct or indirect, the geographical reach of Rendlesham's social, economic and cultural connections was greater at this period that at any previous time.

5.6.2 Social differentiation

The assemblage from Rendlesham is broadly representative of the range of material from excavated contexts – in particular that from furnished burials of the

fifth to seventh centuries – on which current models of social identity and social differentiation in early medieval England are based (eg Härke 1997; Stoodley 1999; Hinton 2005; Scull 2011a: Nicolay 2014; Blackmore *et al* 2019, 325–40). It is possible, therefore, to apply existing ideas about social and symbolic value to assess the range of social identities represented in the ploughsoil assemblage. Here we draw a distinction between elite status – broadly defined to embody disproportionate control over social and economic resources as well as the power that flows from this – and other axes of inequality which include gendered or age-related identities as well as degrees of rank in social hierarchies (Wickham 2011; Salverda and Abbink 2013). The power and reach of elite groups will vary with time and the scale of the power structures that supported them but will be most clearly manifested in differential access to sought-after skills and intrinsically valuable materials and items, often if not usually unobtainable except through inter-regional exchange networks. We therefore take as elite indicators items of precious metal – other than coins and ingots – and items that incorporate precious metal other than as a surface treatment; items with garnet; metal vessels from northern or western Britain, the Continent or the Mediterranean; and elaborate horse, harness or weapon fittings. As discussed above, also relevant are direct evidence for the manufacture of status items, and evidence from faunal remains for conspicuous consumption and the keeping of animals and birds closely linked to elite lifestyles.

There is already evidence for marked social differentiation among the population at Rendlesham from the early to middle fifth century. The silver-gilt fragments from a scabbard mouthband and a Snartemo-Sjörup buckle would suggest the presence of a warrior elite with south Scandinavian connections. The silver fitting RLM 036 1047 and the fragment of a silver Typ Wehden equal-armed brooch also suggest an elite milieu.

Material of the later fifth to later sixth centuries includes lower-order status items such as gilded copper-alloy florid cruciform and great square-headed brooches. Alongside these feminine dress accessories, copper-alloy pommel caps, scabbard fittings and shield studs indicate male weapon-bearers, with one silver rivet possibly a sword hilt fitting. The only clear examples of typical Anglian material culture types in precious metal are two silver wrist clasps (RLM 036 1244 and RLM 044 1066) and two fragments of possible silver gusset plates (RLM 037 1048 and RLM 044 1825); the gold bucket pendant (RLM 013 0027) can be assigned to an Anglian tradition but is a unique piece. RLM 037 1301 is a gilded copper-alloy disc brooch with a central garnet setting. Other elite dress accessories are Merovingian types or show Kentish or Continental affinities, notably the gilded copper-alloy buckle tongue with a rectangular garnet setting (RLM 036 1301), the fragmentary silver radiate-headed brooch (RLM 036 1043) and small square-headed brooch (RLM 044 1012), and the silver-gilt horse-and-rider brooch (EKE 021 1126). A number of other fragmentary silver items, now unidentifiable, can also be dated to this period. Some have been deliberately cut and may be scrap intended for recycling but none the less they indicate the ownership of valuable items and materials. The clearest evidence for the presence of people with connections to elite inter-regional networks is provided by the two gold bracteates, but the lead model for a sword-ring and the gold shoe-shaped belt stud – both of which have Continental affinities – are evidence of fine metalworking for elite patrons at some time between the second quarter of the sixth century and the first decades of the seventh. The unique silver hanging-bowl mount must also have been produced in an English elite milieu.

The elite signature is most marked in the material assemblage from the later sixth through to the end of the seventh century and is seen most strongly in the gold-and-garnet bead and sword pyramid, the gold coin pendants and gold filigree pendants, the gold cabochon garnet pendant, gold spacer beads and gold pin. The gold-and-garnet items belong to the earlier part of the period, probably the first half of the seventh century. The spacer beads, cabochon pendant and filigree pendants are of middle and later seventh-century date and the latest unequivocally elite items are the gold bird-headed pin of the late seventh or early eighth century and the silver-gilt possible pinhead fragment of eighth-century date. The six hanging-bowl mounts from northern or western Britain or Ireland, the two east Mediterranean basins, and the circular Style II harness fitting belong to the later sixth or first half of the seventh century. Taken together with the gold-and-garnet pieces, they represent the material vocabulary of elite identity seen in contemporary princely burials. Jewellery components and gold scrap for recycling again point to fine metalworking for elite patrons.

For this same period the assemblage also provides evidence for more finely grained gradations of status. The silver-gilt fragment of a keystone garnet disc brooch, for example, is from an item which, while clearly indicative of status, is not on the same social level as the gold-and-garnet jewellery. As well as the gold-and-garnet sword pyramid there is one of copper alloy with gold foils and garnet inlays and one of plain copper alloy. The triangular buckle plate with garnet cloison settings and gold backing foils is a further example of a copper-alloy item incorporating more valuable materials. The Style II

mounts and casket fittings in copper alloy are elements of more complex objects belonging to a high-status milieu.

The majority of precious-metal elite items of the fifth and early to middle sixth centuries are silver, with gold mostly used for gilding. From the later sixth through to the beginning of the eighth century, however, the majority of elite items are gold – a change in the currency of elite status that coincides with the inception of the Merovingian mint-and-moneyer coinage. The circulation of Continental gold currency is itself an indication of the presence of elites or their agents at Rendlesham and – like the east Mediterranean vessels and Byzantine coinage – of inter-regional social and exchange contacts. A major axis of social differentiation was the ability of elite groups to establish and maintain access to extensive peer-networks. Affiliation with inter-regional peer groups emphasised distance from followers and retainers, and the elite material culture through which this was symbolised was evidently emulated by high-status but subordinate social groups. This can be seen across the fifth to seventh centuries at Rendlesham in the range of materials from which status items were made, and in the deployment of animal Styles I and II – internationally shared status markers which are seen at their most sophisticated on elite metalwork (Haseloff 1981; Høilund Nielsen 1998; 2008; Nicolay 2014, 364–5).

Elite items make up 7.5 per cent of the fifth- to eighth-century assemblage and around 13 per cent of the late sixth- to early eighth-century assemblage but the overwhelming majority of objects are of utilitarian copper alloy. Contemporary with the elite gold-and-garnet jewellery and fittings, for example, are plain copper pins of Ross type L and bag fittings – both types that were made at Rendlesham. It would appear that craftworkers were producing items for people across the social range and there are hints here at possible aspects of patronage, levels of lordship and the social relations of production. If, for example, hilt-rings were gifted as a sign of favour or status then it would seem likely that they were made for, or at the behest of, the lord who was giving rather than the retainer who was receiving. Access to such material trappings of elite identity may therefore have been socially controlled through the relationship of patron and crafter while the ability to acquire less socially charged items or low-value utilitarian fittings was not socially constrained.

The establishment of a great hall complex was in itself a monumentalising statement of elite identity and authority, requiring the mobilisation of labour, resources and specialist skills. The faunal assemblage from the refuse dumps in RLM 013 indicate further aspects of elite lifestyle (above, 5.1.2). High levels of meat consumption, especially involving young animals, is consistent with conspicuous feasting and hospitality. The remains of horses of riding age, large well-fed dogs and a sparrowhawk suggest equestrianism, hunting and falconry. Both dogs and domestic fowl, fed on human food scraps, show isotopic signatures that in humans would be taken as high-status signatures and so stand as proxies for high-status human diet.

5.6.3 Social structure: settlement and community

There is direct evidence throughout the lifetime of the settlement not only for the presence of an elite but for the existence of complex social gradations and by implication for a diversity of social roles and skills. However, the materialisation of cultural and elite identities was dynamic, shifting as social relations, structures of power and peer-affiliations developed and changed.

The earliest materialisation of elite identities shows links to the Continental North Sea coastal zone and south Scandinavia and probably indicates local power held by a group with Continental ancestry. The two gold bracteates provide evidence for the maintenance of elite links with these areas into the late fifth and earlier sixth centuries but from the third quarter of the fifth century the material suggests that the highest ranks of society were defining their identity in part by signalling an affiliation with Kent and Merovingian Gaul. There is a more marked expression of elite identity from the later sixth century that coincides with an expansion and realignment of settlement space and activity, and with wider archaeological and historical evidence for new levels of social hierarchy and regional rulership. This poses questions about the social make-up and structure of the community both before and after this threshold.

We have seen (Ch 1.6.1) that there is a contrast in the wider archaeology of the fifth and sixth centuries between the evidence for social ranking in burials and the lack of differentiation within and between excavated settlement sites, indicating a society of internally ranked descent groups within which the basic socio-economic unit was the ancestral farm or holding. Together, the spread of *Grubenhäuser* in RLM 044 and the funerary material from RLM 036 and 044 would be entirely consistent with this model of settlement structure and social ranking. We therefore interpret the northern occupation area as a grouping of ancestral farmsteads, each consisting of halls and ancillary buildings, rights to which were embodied in a central family but which was worked and occupied by a household which might include extended family, more distant kin, and a range of unfree dependents (Scull 1993, 72–3; Hamerow 2012, 70–2). The material culture assemblage indicates, from the middle of the fifth century, the presence of individuals holding high rank with inter-regional contacts and it is probable, but not certain, that these represent several generations of the same prominent lineage or kindred – exactly the people who would contest leadership in the process of peer-competition that led to regional hegemonies. It is entirely possible that some of the other farmsteads were held by junior branches of the dominant kindred (cf Scull 1993, 77–9).

The establishment of a great hall complex would imply a different order of social differentiation and organisation. Servicing and maintaining a periodic residence would require at least a skeleton presence over and above any farming population, while the capacity to host a peripatetic magnate household with its followers and retainers, let alone larger gatherings, would require a sophisticated organisational infrastructure. If, as is likely, this was also a permanent centre for administration and surplus extraction then it would have required officers with devolved authority as stewards and administrators.

At one level this can be seen as a scaling-up of the social relations and responsibilities that would characterise the household of a magnate or chieftain farm, commensurate with a transition from local to regional leadership, a greater number and range of lord : client relationships and greater degrees of distance and differentiation within the social hierarchy. We cannot know for certain whether the hall complex was established by those previously exercising power at Rendlesham, or by another potentate whose overlordship they acknowledged, but wider contextual and circumstantial evidence suggests the former (Chs 9.7 and 11.2). In any event, unless we envisage decapitation of the local elite or a forceful appropriation of rights they are likely to have retained some authority and status: if as regional overlords then with Rendlesham as their ancestral landed base; if as clients, then as a locally powerful kindred. It is impossible to judge without extensive excavation but it seems likely that the individual farm establishments in the northern occupation area – and the households that worked and benefitted from them – continued through to the eighth century alongside the elite establishment on the promontory.

6 Rendlesham and the Deben Valley

6.1 Landscape and territory

Tom Williamson and Eleanor Rye

We have shown (Ch 2.1.1) that finds of early medieval artefacts from the Rendlesham survey area are almost entirely restricted to the loamy Newport 2 soils, and to areas of sloping clay soils of the Burlingham 3 Association. In contrast, the more level areas of the latter soils, on the higher ground, are largely devoid of finds, and documentary references and minor place-names suggest that these remained partly wooded well into the Middle Ages. These observations can be applied more generally when examining Rendlesham's wider setting, although this involves a consideration of a wider range of environmental contexts.

The corridor of Newport 2 soils beside the Deben extends to both the north and south of Rendlesham, flanked by Burlingham 3 soils. Some 7km south-west of the site another ribbon of Newport 2 soils branches to the west, away from the Deben, following the valley of its tributary, the river Fynn, again with patches of Burlingham soils on the rising ground (Fig 6.1.1). On the high ground to the north and west of these valleys lie extensive tracts of land characterised by clay soils heavier and more intractable than those of the Burlingham 3 Association, forming the south-eastern margins of the boulder clay plateau of central Suffolk. Where the land here is undulating, soils of the Hanslope Association occur, fertile and calcareous but generally stiff and poorly draining, overlying deposits of clayey drift significantly thicker than those associated with the Burlingham 3 Association. The higher, more level ground is occupied by soils of the Beccles 1 and Ragdale Associations, poorly draining stagnogleys and pelo-stagnogleys respectively (Hodge *et al* 1984). Given the evidence from Rendlesham, suggesting that the more level areas of Burlingham 3 soils were occupied by woodland and pasture in the early medieval period, we might reasonably assume that the same was true of the heavier clay soils. Indeed, we might speculate that they may have been *more* densely wooded.

This suggestion is, to an extent, borne out by the evidence for settlement and land use from more recent centuries, and by place-names. Areas of ancient, semi-natural woodland are closely associated with these heavier soils, as are the locations of deer parks thought to have been established before the fourteenth century (Hoppitt 2020). Also important are the major Old English place-names indicating the existence of tracts of woodland here in the early medieval period (Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016). Regardless of whether OE *lēah* was used specifically for wood pasture (Hooke 2008), or for areas that were relatively free of trees compared with adjacent land (Wager 2017), the place-names Martley (Hall) ('marten *lēah*'; *Martele* 1086) and Otley ('Otta's *lēah*'; *Oteleia, Otelega* 1086) clearly indicate the presence of woodland of some kind. Further afield, Pettaugh (either '*Pēota's enclosed woodland' or 'enclosed woodland at/with a pit'; *Petehaga* 1086), together with the lost *Horswold* in Crowfield ('horse forest'; *horswalda* 1086) are also noteworthy.

The distribution of these place-names, moreover, overlaps with that of examples containing the final element *feld*. OE *feld* seems to have meant 'open land' before its sense developed, first to 'pasture land' and then to 'arable land', the latest sense having developed by the tenth century (OED 2020, sv field, n.1). The locations of settlements bearing *feld*-names, together with the kinds of elements with which *feld* is frequently combined (which include more wild than domesticated animals and never refer to crops), suggest that it is the two earlier senses that are most relevant in settlement nomenclature (Gelling and Cole 2000, 269–78). OE *feld* is not, then, indicative of woodland *per se*, but it is suggestive of land that was not under cultivation at the time the names were coined.

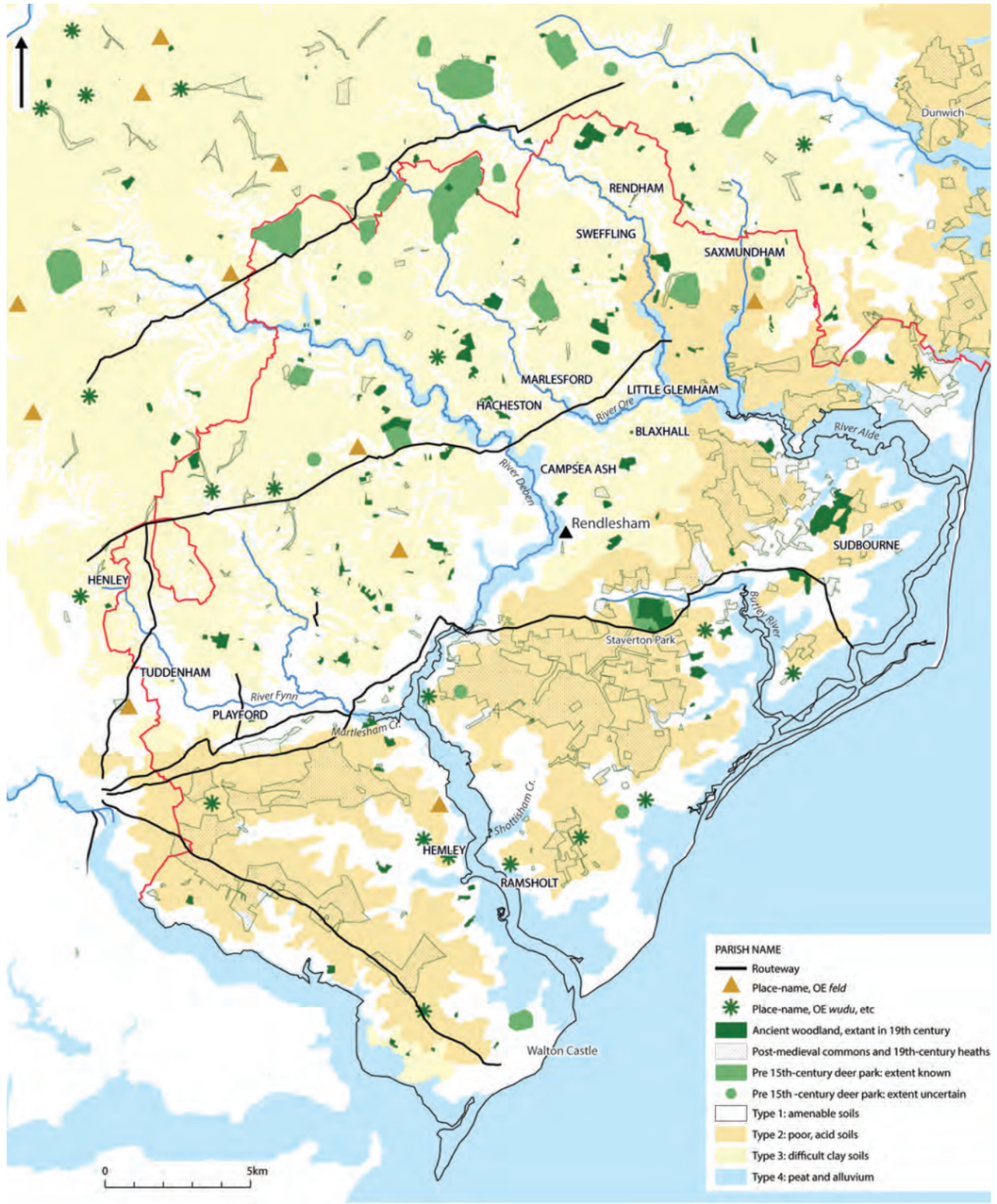

Fig 6.1.1 The Deben catchment: drainage, soil types and woodland indicators. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

Some researchers, moreover, have suggested that the term implies the presence of neighbouring tracts of woodland with which areas of open land termed *feld* were being contrasted (Rackham 1986a, 82), though a contrast with hills and marsh may be implied in some cases. Bredfield ('broad expanse of open land'; *Bredefelda, Bradefelda* 1086), Sternfield (perhaps '*Sterni's open land'; *Sternesfelda* 1086) and Charsfield (either 'open land at the bend or turn' or 'open land on the river *Cear*'; *Carsfelda, Ceresfella* 1086) are all on or adjacent to areas of Beccles and Ragdale soils, as are several places with such names lying at a slightly greater distance, Ashfield, Bedfield and Westerfield.

To the south and east of Rendlesham, the higher ground flanking the Deben valley carries soils of a very different character, those of the Newport 4 Association. These are formed not in clay but in acid, sandy drift overlying Pleistocene crag (Hodge *et al* 1984, 277–9). In the early modern period large tracts of heathland existed here, and today extensive areas are occupied by Forestry Commission plantations, although much of the land is under cultivation following several centuries of enclosure and reclamation (Williamson 2005, 61–75). It might be assumed that these sandy uplands were characterised by heathland in the early medieval period – and indeed Martin Carver's excavations at Sutton Hoo revealed that heaths had formed on the site following the abandonment, in the immediate post-Roman period, of land which had been under cultivation since the Bronze Age (Carver 2005, 456–8) – but there are indications that some of this land was occupied by woodland in the sixth and seventh centuries. A number of areas of ancient, semi-natural woodland still remain on the Newport 4 soils, including Captain's Wood in Sudbourne and the internationally important Staverton Park, the finest surviving example of a wood pasture in East Anglia (centred at TM 355 509, 4km south-east of Rendlesham). The park is first mentioned in 1288 but may have much earlier origins; it occupies land which soil profiles suggest has never been cultivated, although undated enclosures and a probable routeway appear within the wood on LiDAR images (Peterken 1968; Hoppitt 2020). It is first depicted cartographically on John Norden's 1601 survey of the Stanhope estates where it is shown as densely filled with trees (SRO V5/22/1). Beyond its boundary Norden depicts open treeless heath but the fact that the park pale does not correspond with any change in soil type implies that some at least of the surrounding land may have been tree-covered when the park was first established – indeed, the area of heath immediately to the west is named 'Woodlande' on Norden's map. Another medieval deer park is recorded at Hollesley and two others, with less certainty, at Sutton and Chillesford, all probably on Newport 4 soils (Hoppitt 2020).

Several major place-names attest the formerly wooded character of some, at least, of the areas characterised by Newport 4 soils. North and east of the Deben we find Hazlewood – ostensibly 'hazel wood', although the early spellings may indicate a different first element: *Haselwode* in 1324 but *Inselewod* in 1254 and *Asewode, Haswode* in 1286 (Baron 1952, 121; Briggs forthcoming; Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, 67) – as well as Hollesley ('*lēah* at the hollow'; *Holeslea* 1086), Butley (either 'Butta's *lēah*' or '*lēah* at the butt(s), stump(s) or mound(s)'; *Butelea*, *Butelai* 1086), Gedgrave ('goats' grove'; *Gatagraua* 1086), Ramsholt (either 'wood where wild-garlic grows' or 'ram's wood'; *Ramesholt* 1086), as well as the lost Domesday vills of *Culeslea* ('*Cūl's *lēah*'; *Culelea* 1086) – probably located on the higher ground in Alderton – and Stockerland in Sutton (perhaps 'stump land'; *stokerlanda* 1086) (Arnott 1946, 54–5, 70; Briggs forthcoming). To the south and west of the Deben and its estuary, Hemley ('*Helma's *lēah*'; *Halmelega, Halmeleia*, *Helmele* 1086), Trimley ('*Trymma's *lēah*'; *Tremelaia, Tremlega* 1086) and the lost Domesday vill of Haspley in Newbourne (perhaps 'hasp *lēah',* with *hasp* referring either to a gate or a river-bend; *haspelega*, *hespelea* 1086) similarly occupy soils later characterised by heathland (Arnott 1946, 15; Briggs forthcoming; Insley 2016, 171). Bixley, surviving into the twentieth century as Bixley Farm in the parish of Rushmere (TM 20374 44190, probably 'bushy *lēah*'; *Bischelea* 1086), is likewise located on Newport 4 soils. In addition, scattered across the sandy uplands are a number of other minor place-names, first recorded at a rather later date, which seem to refer to lost woodland, including Hatchley in Bromeswell (*lēah* with a hatch-gate or fence'; *Hachlea* 1454, *Hachele* 1464, *Hatheles* 1601) and 'Woodlande' discussed above (Arnott 1946, 59). As Arnott observed in 1946, 'It would seem … that East Suffolk may once have been a district of forest land rather than open heath' (Arnott 1946, 1).

In broad terms, the early medieval landscape in the area around Rendlesham thus appears to conform well to the 'river-and-wold' model, with arable land on the loamy soils on the lower ground beside the Deben, flanked by drift-covered uplands which, whether characterised by both clays and sands, were occupied by grazing and woodland. This simple picture needs, however, to be nuanced and elaborated to some extent, in order to better understand the significance not only of Rendlesham but also of other contemporary or near-contemporary sites in the locality. Firstly, we need to note that the proposed riverine 'core' of Rendlesham's putative territory includes not only much of the Deben valley but also the lower reaches of the valley of its tributary the Fynn, which runs south from its source near Henley, turns east a little to the south of Tuddenham St Martin, and continues through Playford to join the Deben at Martlesham Creek. Secondly, attention should be drawn to the complex topography in the area lying some 3km to the north of the Rendlesham site, in the parishes of Hacheston and Campsea Ash. Here the valley of the Deben runs close to that of the river Ore, which flows in a roughly west to east direction a little way to the north: the two rivers are separated by only 2.5km of relatively undulating Burlingham Association soils, with little in the way of a clearly defined watershed between them. This section of the Ore valley, between Beversham Bridge in Little Glemham and Marlesford, might thus be considered an extension of a natural territory based on the Deben, even if the two rivers never converge and belong to separate drainage systems. Downriver of Beversham Bridge the topography acts to reinforce this circumstance, for extensive areas of barren Newport 4 soils, some still occupied by heathland (notably Blaxhall Heath), extend from the uplands to the floodplain of the river Ore, separating the area of loamy clays flanking the river in Little Glemham and Hacheston from areas nearer to the coast.

In a similar way, the wide expanse of light soils associated with Rendlesham does not continue uninterrupted all along the Deben valley as far as the sea. Some 500m south of the confluence with the Fynn (TM 278 468) the valley narrows significantly and the river itself begins to widen into an estuary. At this point, it is flanked by only narrow strips of Newport 2 soils – respectively 500m and 100m wide to the west and east – leading up to less inviting, acidic uplands. To the south of this constriction, bands of Newport 2 soils continue to the east and west of the Deben but they are narrower than in the vicinity of Rendlesham, although widening in places to form more extensive yet relatively discrete pockets which were, to judge from place-names like Ramsholt, Hemley and Waldringfield, separated by tracts of woodland and grazing. Other smaller areas of open land and fertile soils might be identified north of the Ore, around Saxmundham, Sweffling and Rendham. We might hypothesise that all these areas – lying within what became the hundred of Colnes, the southern portions of Wilford hundred and the eastern and northern parts of Plomesgate – formed outer territories, originally perhaps independent of, or less closely associated with, Rendlesham. The upper valley of the Flynn, beyond Playford – remote from the Deben valley – might be regarded in a similar fashion. Many of these smaller areas of tractable soils are associated with parishes bearing names which contain the final element *-hām* (eg Shottisham, Falkenham, Tuddenham, Witnesham, and Rendham) but this is not true of all. Sutton, which occupies an extensive tract of Newport 2 soils lying to the north of the Shottisham Brook, is an exception. Its name (*Suttuna* 1086, the south *tūn*) implies not a separate territory but dependence on Rendlesham to the north (Ward 1942, 6; Warner 1996, 118). This may, however, represent a re-naming, following Rendlesham's rise to local dominance.

Close examination of the landscape would thus suggest that although there were patches of potential arable along the Deben estuary, and more generally towards the coast, the core of Rendlesham's territory was the valley of the Deben north of the confluence with the Fynn, the lower valley of the Fynn itself, and the dissected countryside beside the river Ore in Marlesford, Little Glemham, Campsea Ash and Blaxhall. This 'core' of open land, however, formed part of a wider tract of countryside which included the suggested 'outer territories', and which was separated from the rest of East Anglia to the north and west by the extensive clay-covered uplands already described. Only at the western end of the Fynn valley, in the direction of Ipswich, was there a more permeable barrier, in the area around Westerfield. However, what we have defined here so far is not a territory which was *definitely* associated with the Rendlesham site, nor even a territory with which it *may* have been associated. Rather, it is a topographic framework within which Rendlesham – its social, economic, and political role – might usefully be considered, alongside other evidence for settlement and administrative hierarchies.

It is striking that the wider topographic area we have defined corresponds closely to the medieval territorial unit known as the Wicklaw hundreds. This was a distinctive group of small hundreds – Loose, Plomesgate, Carlford, Parham, Colnes and Wilford – which were interdigitated in complex ways, and which by the time of Domesday formed a single jurisdictional 'Liberty' under the control of the Abbey of Ely (Martin 1999a, 26; Warner 1996, 152–7). This group of hundreds emerges into the (quasi-)historical record in 970 when it was granted to Ely by King Edgar on his re-foundation of the abbey as a Benedictine house, recorded in a possibly spurious re-foundation charter (S 779: Whitelock 1959, 77; Kennedy 1995, 141, 150–1). An earlier origin has been suggested, as part of the original endowment of Ely by Æthelthryth, daughter of King Anna, in 672/3 (Warner 1996, 155–6). This is considered further below (Chs 7.6 and 8.2), but what is important here is the close relationship between the outer boundary of the Wicklaw hundreds and the topographic framework defined above. The Wicklaw

Fig 6.1.2 The Deben catchment: relief, the Domesday Wicklaw hundreds, and early Old English habitative place-names. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

boundary runs up the Gipping estuary, then through the heathy land on the western boundary of Kesgrave and Rushmere, before following the high ground on the eastern edge of Westerfield. It picks its way in a great irregular arc through the wooded clay uplands to the north, and then returns to the sea between Aldringham and Sudbourne, following a long tongue of particularly intractable Ragdale soils to within 5km of the coast.

Rendlesham, and its arable core in the valley of the Deben, lies close to the centre of the group of hundreds (Fig 6.1.2).

None of this proves, of course, that the Wicklaw hundreds represent the original territory, social or economic, associated with Rendlesham, but the suggestion is plausible (cf Warner 1996, 154–5). The small size of the constituent hundreds, as well as their complex intermixture, is unparalleled in East Anglia: Parham half-hundred was divided into two sections separated by some 10km, but nevertheless comprised only six vills at the time of Domesday, two of them small and now lost, while Loose had three isolated portions, as well as a long projection separating Plomesgate and Wilford. The Wicklaw hundreds certainly look like an integral unit which has undergone later subdivision. As an ancient territory, moreover, the block contains no obvious central place other than Rendlesham.

As already intimated, we should not, of course, think of Rendlesham as the only centre of settlement in this putative territory in the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries. Even without the archaeological evidence discussed below (6.2), place-names suggest other settlement sites, and perhaps hint at aspects of territorial organisation and settlement hierarchy. Although most place-names in the area are not recorded until the tenth and eleventh centuries we can be reasonably certain, from what is known more generally about the chronology of place-name formation, that some were coined around the time that Rendlesham flourished. A handful of elements have long been thought to be amongst the earliest used in English, namely *-ingas*, a group-name-forming suffix; *hām,* meaning 'homestead, village'; and a compound of the two, *-ingahām* 'homestead/village of the people (of X)'. It is now generally agreed that *hām* was commonly used in a very early period of English place-name formation, whilst *-ingahām* and *-ingas* place-names were generally formed slightly later, although still probably before the eighth century (Dodgson 1966, 20; Cox 1973, 49). Two other early place-name types are now also generally recognised: certain topographical names (names describing a feature of the landscape in which a settlement is situated), and names which – like Wicklaw and Campsea – incorporate particular Latin-derived elements (cf Gelling 1973–6, 819–22; Cox 1976, 58–61; Baker 2006, 194–5).

Many names of these early types occur in the Deben valley area, and are mapped in figure 6.1.2 (names containing topographical elements that might be early are not shown). Strikingly, those in the early group avoid our postulated 'wold' areas on the drift-covered uplands, and instead occur in low-lying locations, on sandy loams or sloping clays, a pattern that has been noted elsewhere in south-east England and East Anglia (Baker 2006, 220; Williamson 1993, 83–9). Other name-types, in contrast, are more widely distributed. What is particularly noticeable is the way in which *hām*-names seldom occur as adjacent parishes or vills: that is, there is generally only one example on any given side-valley, or valley section, and each seems to be located within its own small 'territory' bounded at least in part by what – following our discussion above – must have been wooded uplands. Most, as already noted, are associated with pockets of tractable soil. In contrast, there are frequently several *tūn* and/or *þorp*-names in each of these micro-regions. It is possible that we have in these particular circumstances evidence not only for the chronology of settlements but also for settlement hierarchy.

It is curious, given the attention paid in recent scholarship to the specificity of Old English landscape vocabulary used in place-naming (Gelling 1984; Gelling and Cole 2000), that factors other than chronology are less commonly discussed in interpretations of habitative and group-names (although for a recent exception see Cullen *et al* 2011). One interpretation of the patterns just noted is that *hām* was used of early and substantial estates or estate centres, with *tūn* and other habitative elements often referring to contemporary but dependent settlements – although this is not to deny that some represent later additions to the settlement pattern (Smith 1956, sv hām; Hooke 1989b, 13, 19; Jones 2012; Parsons 2013, 52; see also Williamson 1993, 83–8). Indeed, in general terms the apparent rarity of *tūn*-names in the earliest records may to an extent be explained not by the absence of settlements known as *tūnas*, but by the fact that such places seldom existed as independent administrative units at this time. If this was the case then the area's *hām*-names may indicate significant post-Roman centres, albeit secondary in the hierarchy to Rendlesham, whose paramount importance is, as we have seen, repeatedly suggested by the place-name and landscape evidence as well as the archaeology.

We have posited here a contrast between arable core and wooded peripheries, building on the 'river-and-wold' model but adapting and nuancing the approach in the light of evidence for local circumstances and conditions. This should not, however, be taken to imply that the wooded uplands were empty, neglected spaces, or even uninhabited ones. They had an important part to play in the social and economic life of early medieval Rendlesham, as grazing grounds, as sources of building materials and of the fuel required for metalworking, and as venues for the hunting evidently enjoyed by the settlement's elite.

It should be emphasised that although the broad outlines of the local topography – the essential framework of valleys and upland – have remained largely unchanged since the period of Rendlesham's heyday, there have been numerous and extensive alterations to the coastline, and especially to the pattern of river outfalls. The soft geological deposits of the Suffolk coast are easily eroded – most dramatically in the case of the town of Dunwich, largely destroyed during the medieval period

(Williamson 2005). But while there are striking local examples of erosion – the site of the Roman fort of Walton Castle, for example, now lies 200m offshore – the coast east of Rendlesham has over the last millennium largely been an area of deposition. Banks of sand and gravel, moved by currents and longshore drift, have blocked estuaries and deflected outfalls, most notably in the case of the Alde. This river now turns abruptly southwards within a few metres of the sea and flows for over 16km, separated from the coast by the great shingle spit of Orford Ness, before reaching its outfall. The spit may have grown at a rate of around 13m per year between the twelfth and the nineteenth centuries (Steers 1926; Carr 1969). Further changes to coastal topography have been affected by human agency. The areas of salt marsh which built up behind spits, or which developed more generally as estuaries became blocked and silted, were gradually embanked and reclaimed as valuable 'fresh' marsh (Williamson 2005, 28–35). This process was, in some places, already underway by the twelfth century. The Pipe Rolls for 1169/70 record payments of £4 11s 7d for 'closing off the Marsh at Orford and … digging out earth of the same Marsh', presumably a reference to the construction of sea banks to prevent tidal penetration (Allen *et al* 2002, 18).

6.2 Patterns of settlement, burial and economy

Stuart Brookes and Christopher Scull

6.2.1 Introduction

We have argued above that the area of the Wicklaw hundreds broadly coincides with a topographic unit of *c* 620sq km focused on the Deben valley, which is likely to have had a long-term influence on social geography and which may plausibly be proposed as the social and economic territory of the elite centre at Rendlesham in the later sixth to earlier eighth centuries. It is, however, one thing to propose such a model and quite another to test it. This section examines the archaeology of the Deben valley and its putative territory with two aims: to contextualise early medieval settlement and activity at Rendlesham by locating it within wider networks and dynamics of settlement, burial and economy; and to examine the interrelationships between landform, environment and human activity for congruences that might identify configurations of community and authority and the scales at which they operated.

6.2.1.1 Connections

Our territorial model is based primarily on the physical constraints and opportunities of drainage, topography, soils and vegetation but settlement and activity would also have been influenced by, and influenced, routes of movement and communication.

Tidal estuaries and the coast were routeways for water traffic and provided links to inter-regional coastal and maritime routes. In the early modern period the tidal limit of the Deben lay at Melton, some 5km downriver of Rendlesham, but the non-tidal river was used for water transport for a further 26km upstream as far as Debenham (Caffyn 2010, 348; Simper 1992). The morphology of some of the drainage ditches in the Deben floodplain as far upstream as Ufford suggests that they may have developed from saltmarsh channels but geoarchaeological investigations carried out in 2015 close to the Rendlesham site itself, involving borehole transects ranged across the valley, failed to find 'any widespread finger-print of the influence of brackish water tidal creek conditions in the valley', except possibly in an uncertainly dated, but clearly prehistoric, palaeochannel (Ch 2.3.6; French and Taylor 2016). It is therefore unlikely that sea-going vessels could have reached Rendlesham during the fifth to eighth centuries and although it could presumably have been reached from the estuary by small, shallow keeled craft, Rendlesham's location does not appear to have been chosen because it could be readily accessed by sea-going vessels. Medieval purveyance accounts suggest that the river Alde was navigable as far as Snape (Edwards and Hindle 1991, 131).

Even where rivers were not navigable, or usable only by small craft, we can assume that river valleys would have been avenues of communication: a riverine pattern of settlement and farming would have acted to channel travel along valley routes between settlements and local knowledge of how to get from place to place would have reinforced this tendency. It is, however, possible to identify – with varying degrees of confidence – three major land routeways that follow different courses, cutting across the higher ground between river valleys.

Roman road Margary 340 linked the small towns at Coddenham and Hacheston, and probably continued east or north-east to a site on the coast (Margary 1973, 266). This is evidenced by the route's more-or-less continuous survival as far as Little Glemham and by the use of OE *strǣt* – a word probably meaning 'main or paved road' and often applied to Roman roads – in Stratford St Andrew (*Straffort* 1086: Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, 133). Along its course between Coddenham and Stratford are two place-names containing OE *ford* 'ford': Potsford (*Potesforda* 1086) in Letheringham parish and Marlesford (*Marlesforda*, *Merlesforda* 1086) (Briggs forthcoming), both of which probably denote early medieval river crossings. The Old English place-names indicate that the route, or elements of it, were used in the post-Roman period.

It is likely that there was a Roman road running from the lower Gipping valley in the area of Ipswich to the settlement and later Saxon Shore fort at Felixstowe (Moore *et al* 1988; Plouviez 1999). Excavation at Lark's Meadow, Purdis Farm shows that a road on this line was used as a droveway in the ninth century, at this date probably linking Ipswich and Felixstowe (Loader 2009, 14–20). Stratton Hall (*Strattuna* 1086, 'main/paved road settlement') could refer to this route closer to Felixstowe (Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, 133).

A group of Old English place-names denoting crossing places may indicate a route or routes between the Deben valley south of Woodbridge and the coast at Orford. Seckford (*Sekeforda* 1086, '*Secca's ford') probably denotes a crossing of the river Fynn or one of the streams flowing into Martlesham Creek; Woodbridge (*Wdebrige*, *Wudebrige* 1086, 'wooden bridge' or 'bridge near the wood') a similar crossing at a now unknown location; and Wilford (*Wileforda* 1086, 'ford at the willow-tree') the crossing of the river Deben which was the meeting place of Wilford hundred (Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, 119, 154–5, 157). From here, the route can be projected east to Chillesford (*Cesefortda* 1086, *Chiselford* 1184, 'gravel or shingle ford') and Orford (*Orefort* 1137–38, 1173, probably 'ford at the shore') (Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, 32–3, 105). From Seckford the route might have followed the Fynn valley west to the Gipping valley via Playford (*Playford c* 1040 (13th c copy), *Plegeforde* 1086, 'a ford where play or sports were held': Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, 110). A direct route to Ipswich can also be postulated, perhaps on the line of the modern A1214 or the parallel route to the north, both of which were turnpikes and which fork close to where the river Fynn enters Martlesham Creek.

We have argued that there were two routeways south from the settlement complex at Rendlesham (Ch 4.3.1.3), one along the line of the valley south-west to the suggested river crossing at Wilford, the other running south via the line of the modern Hollesley Road to join the suggested routeway between Wilford Bridge and Chillesford in the area of Spratt's Street. A remarkable linear cluster of metal-detecting finds along the length of the Hollesley Road indicates that it preserves an ancient routeway. Aoristic analysis of the sixty-five early medieval items found within 200m of the modern road line suggests that the route was in use through the fifth to eleventh centuries, with a peak in the seventh and eighth centuries when this would appear to have been an important vector of approach to Rendlesham.

Margary 340 and the Playford/Ipswich–Wilford–Orford route run – with the exception of the Fynn valley stretch – across uplands, linking the Deben valley with the Gipping valley to the west and the river Alde and the coast to the east. The former represents the continuing or opportunistic use of an existing routeway and landscape feature. The latter may have developed in the post-Roman period through the chaining of local routes as the need developed to link new centres and foci of exchange. It seems unlikely, for example, that a direct overland route from the head of the Deben estuary to the Orwell would have been significant before the emergence of the Ipswich area as a focus of long-distance exchange contacts from the later sixth century and the major expansion of the *emporium* from the early eighth century (Ch 9.3; Scull 2009a, 313–19).

6.2.1.2 The archaeological sample: spatial and chronological modelling

Excluding Rendlesham, twenty-six settlement or burial sites of the period AD 400–800 are known from the recording of *in situ* features or deposits. This figure includes discoveries made during agriculture, quarrying or development before PPG 16; set-piece research excavations at, for example, Sutton Hoo, Snape and Burrow Hill in Butley (Bruce-Mitford 1975; 1978; 1983; Carver 2005; Filmer-Sankey and Pestell 2001; Fenwick 1984); and more recently development-led excavation and the community archaeology excavation at Barber's Point, Friston, supported by the National Heritage Lottery Fund (FRS 001; Meredith 2012). The built-up areas of Felixstowe, Woodbridge and Wickham Market mask considerable tracts of ground and, unlike central Ipswich, have seen relatively little development-led archaeology. Otherwise, information comes from chance discoveries and surface finds from 469 individual findspots. Between 1983 and 1989, systematic fieldwalking over a transect of the lower Deben valley was undertaken through the South-east Suffolk Survey, including three fields in the Rendlesham survey area, RLM 012, 013 and 014. Since then, a main driver of new information has been the continuing popularity of metal-detecting and the systematic reporting of finds through the PAS.

Archaeological evidence for early medieval settlement and activity thus comes from a range of sources, all of which bring biases of recognition and retrieval, and our approach to characterisation and mapping has been developed to accommodate this. Excavations and interventions provide the most detailed data but are not

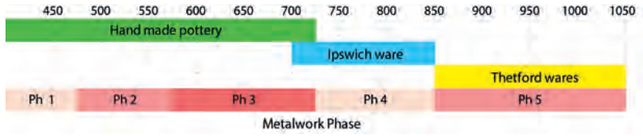

Fig 6.2.1 Phasing and dating and scheme for pottery and metal finds

in any way a representative sample (Scull 2009a, 305–6) and metal-detecting, although it has provided information on a regional scale, has been largely opportunistic and unsystematic. The systematic approach of the South-east Suffolk Survey means that it is possible to be more confident about patterns of both presence and absence in the areas covered, but it was geared to recovering pottery and so a different sample of past material culture than that generated by metal-detecting. These factors compound the uncertainties inherent in the characterisation of past activity from surface material, especially when dealing with single finds or small assemblages (Chs 2.4 and 4.1).

In order to integrate the different sources of evidence at a regional scale we have, in addition to mapping known sites, collated all surface and chance finds of the period AD 400–800 recorded in the Suffolk HER to December 2017 and the PAS database to June 2017, discarding duplicate entries and records which cannot be dated or located securely, and noting the numbers of metal and pottery finds recovered from each location. This gives us 486 metal items and thirty-eight finds of pottery totalling at least sixty-nine sherds (not all pottery finds are fully quantified). Data have been aggregated by overlying the study area with a grid of hexagons, each with an area of 500sq m, hexagons being chosen rather than quadrats in order to minimise edge effects (Birch *et al* 2007), with counts of metal and pottery finds by phase within each hexagon. Where a site known from *in situ* features and deposits falls within a hexagon, activity is characterised accordingly as settlement or burial. Where surface finds only occur, we note the presence of metalwork, or pottery, or both, and take three or more finds of pottery or metal, or finds of pottery and metalwork together, as thresholds that are likely to indicate significant past activity: to some extent this also controls for problems posed for diachronic approaches by differential prevalence and survival of material over time. The resulting semi-quantitative distribution plots represent the evidence for past activity at a landscape scale without imposing prior interpretations as to site-type except where this is certain, drawn from data which can be interrogated in greater detail as necessary.

The ceramic sequence provides three chronological horizons: early medieval hand-made wares, produced from the fifth century to the late seventh or early eighth centuries; Ipswich wares, produced from the early eighth century until the middle of the ninth century; and Thetford-type wares produced from the middle of the ninth century until the middle of the twelfth century. Metalwork and coins offer greater chronological precision, and allow us to define three phases within the fifth to early eighth centuries, giving a five-phase sequence which integrates the different data sources while offering greater discrimination for diachronic analysis across the fifth to early eighth centuries than that afforded by the pottery alone (Fig 6.2.1).

The date-ranges of known sites have been assessed from the full range of excavated and recorded data, with individual finds dated as closely as possible, and both sites and finds have been assigned to phases. Inevitably, there is sometimes a tension between date-range and phase boundary. In such circumstances, material has been allocated to the phase or phases least likely to generate false positives. For example, hand-made wares have been assigned to Phases 2–3 unless form or decoration place them in the early or middle fifth century; conversely, metalwork items considered typical of the eighth century would be assigned to Phase 4 rather than to Phases 3–4. In diachronic analysis it is also important to be aware of problems of comparability arising from differential prevalence and survival of different materials and material culture types. Ipswich and Thetford-type wares are more distinctive and survive better than hand-made pottery, and so are more likely to be retrieved and correctly identified; similarly, the use of ubiquitous and distinctive dress accessories, and their deposition in furnished burials, means that Phase 2 activity is over-represented in the metalwork assemblage.

6.2.2 Summary of archaeological evidence

6.2.2.1 The late Roman background (Fig 6.2.2)

Judith Plouviez

The Roman assemblages throughout the Wicklaw area have not been assessed in detail but the HER and PAS records have been rapidly scanned to identify the sites with the strongest evidence for late Roman activity, specifically in the 50 years after 360. As noted in Chapter

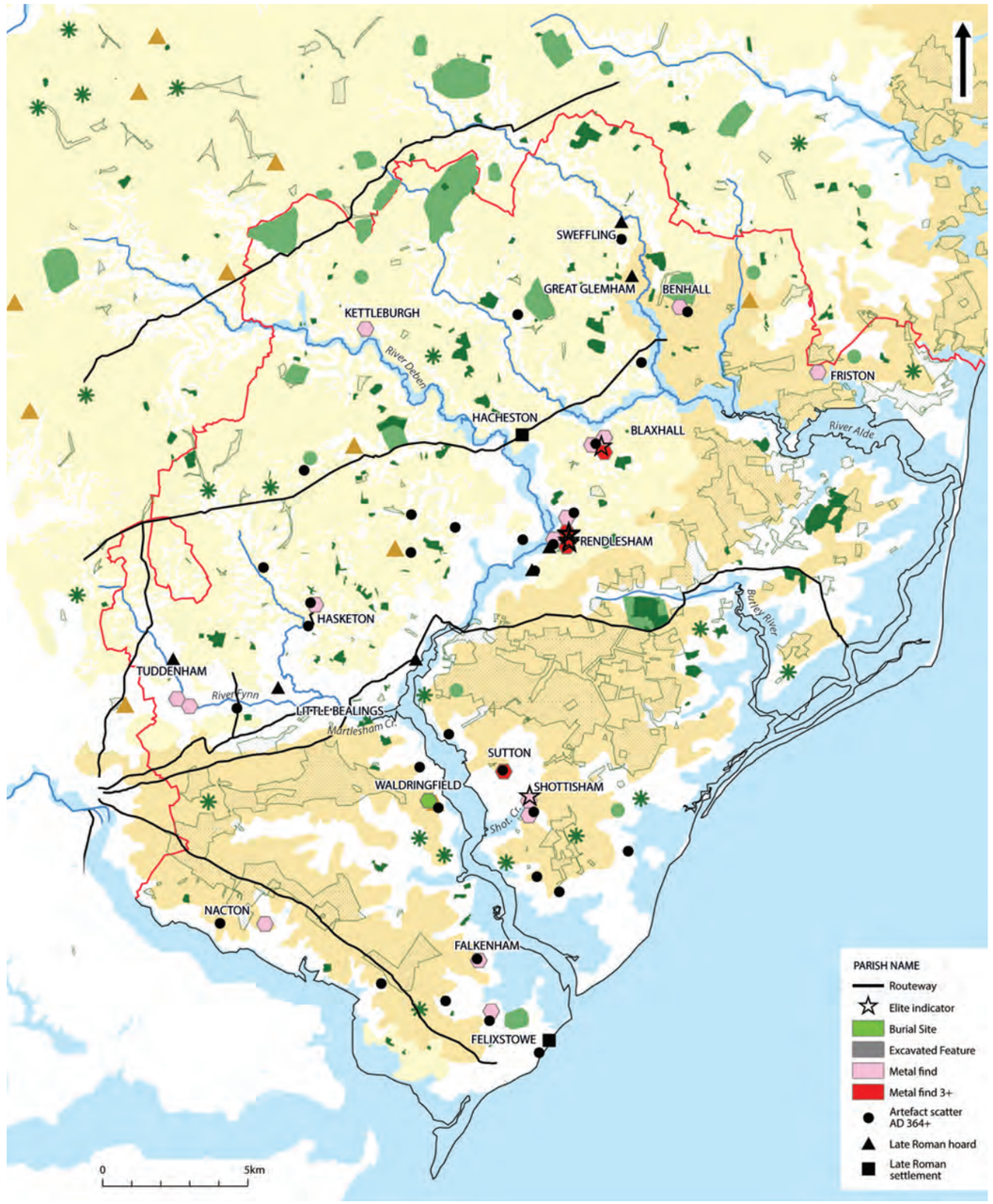

Fig 6.2.2 The Deben: main sites and finds AD 360–410 and Phase 1 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

3, coins form the bulk of the evidence in assemblages of metalwork from the later third century onwards and the coin assemblages show a particular pattern of relative decline in east Suffolk from the 360s until the end of substantial coin import around 402.

Both Felixstowe, initially probably a port and subsequently also a fort of the Saxon Shore, and the Hacheston small town have evidence for activity after 360. Hacheston shows the marked decline in coin use typical of the area and excavation in the core of the settlement showed that activity was hugely reduced during the mid- to late fourth century and possibly

completely absent after around 370. However, fourth-century pottery was found in a probable *Grubenhaus* in the south of the site and a piece of late fourth-century Oxford ware in one of the *Grubenhäuser* just west of the small town.

Of the other sites and hoards (excluding the three Rendlesham survey sites and two hoards) mapped as showing activity after 360 only four have evidence indicating villa-type buildings but Roman-style villas are generally scarce in the east of Suffolk. The presence of portable wealth in the early fifth century is indicated by hoards of silver and gold coins from Tuddenham, Great Glemham and Sweffling, while a rare hoard of Theodosian *nummi* from Little Bealings invites comparison with that from Rendlesham (RLM 013). As well as coins, significant late Roman objects include developed crossbow brooches and belt fittings, the latter noted more frequently as present on over half the sites. These late Roman sites are located along the lower Orwell and Deben estuaries (but not along the Alde/Ore estuary or the Butley river, where the latest recorded sites apparently end in the middle of the fourth century with occasional later individual finds); and along the middle reaches of all the main rivers and their tributaries, but with less activity on the more intractable clay soils towards the north-west.

There is some overlap with the earliest post-Roman activity (Phase 1), with eight of the late Roman sites having, or being very close to, finds of material defined as Phase 1 (at Felixstowe, Falkenham, Waldringfield, Hasketon, Shottisham, Sutton, Blaxhall and Benhall). Of these only Shottisham, Sutton and Benhall have recorded coins likely to be in use in the early fifth century. On this limited evidence there was substantial dislocation during the final decade of the fourth century and the first three decades of the fifth, with continuous activity the exception rather than the rule. The results of the South-east Suffolk Survey suggest an abandonment or major reduction in settlement or direct exploitation of the upland clay soils during this time (Newman 2005, 481–3).

6.2.2.2 Phase 1 (420–70) (Fig 6.2.2)

No settlement features and only a single burial, the urned cremation from Waldringfield (WLD 001), can be confidently dated to before *c* 470. Otherwise, twenty metal surface finds, the majority cruciform brooches of Martin (2015) group 1 or supporting-arm brooches, show early to middle fifth-century activity at fourteen locations. These include two elite items: a silver buckle of Legoux *et al* (2009) type 141 from Blaxhall (PAS SF3877) and a Continental gold-and-garnet mount from Shottisham (SF-394035). Finds from Benhall, Blaxhall, Hasketon, Shottisham, Sutton and Tuddenham St Martin are all from places that continue as significant foci of activity into the later fifth and sixth centuries.

This almost certainly under-represents the density and distribution of settlement activity and a number of places known from hand-made pottery, or archaeologically visible from *c* 470 onwards because of distinctive and common metalwork items, may have earlier origins. None the less, when taken with the late fourth- and early fifth-century evidence this indicates that although some places may have seen continuing activity there were major reconfigurations of settlement pattern and settlement location during the first half of the fifth century.

6.2.2.3 Phase 2 (470–570) (Fig 6.2.3)

At Hacheston, a probable *Grubenhaus* was excavated on the site of the Roman settlement (HCH 001) and one or two more, with other possible settlement features, were recorded adjacent to the Roman cremation cemetery at Gallows Hill (HC 013), where a coffined unaccompanied inhumation within a small sub-rectangular enclosure may be late Roman or early medieval (Blagg *et al* 2004, 57, 199, 203–7). Three *Grubenhäuser*, a post-built structure and other settlement features of the late fifth and sixth centuries have been excavated at Church Road, Snape (SNP 103) (Mustchin 2018), and contemporary settlement features excavated east of Warren Hill, Saxmundham (SXM 043) include a rectangular post-built structure 6m by 10m, at least two other post-built structures and nine *Grubenhäuser* (Clarke 2016). At Little Bealings, three *Grubenhäuser* and a weapon burial are recorded from Hall and Company's gravel pit (BEL 006), a possible *Grubenhaus* or shallow pit from Firecrest Nursery (BEL 024) (Smedley and Owles 1958, 90; West 1998, 9–10; Newman and Boulter 1992), and *Grubenhäuser* and a post-built structure at Holly Lane (BEL 058; Minter and Saunders 2018, 295). Concentrations of occupation debris, including hand-made pottery, daub, metal objects, and animal bones may indicate a settlement site at Martlesham (MRM 034), and several *Grubenhäuser* are clearly visible as cropmarks on aerial photographs in Hollesley (HLY 006). Settlement features have been excavated at Grange Farm, Walton, Felixstowe (FEX 081) and a ditch at Brackenbury Battery, Felixstowe (FEX 088).

With the exception of the excavated cemeteries at Snape and Tranmer House, secure evidence for burial sites is sparse and fragmentary. At Ufford, urned

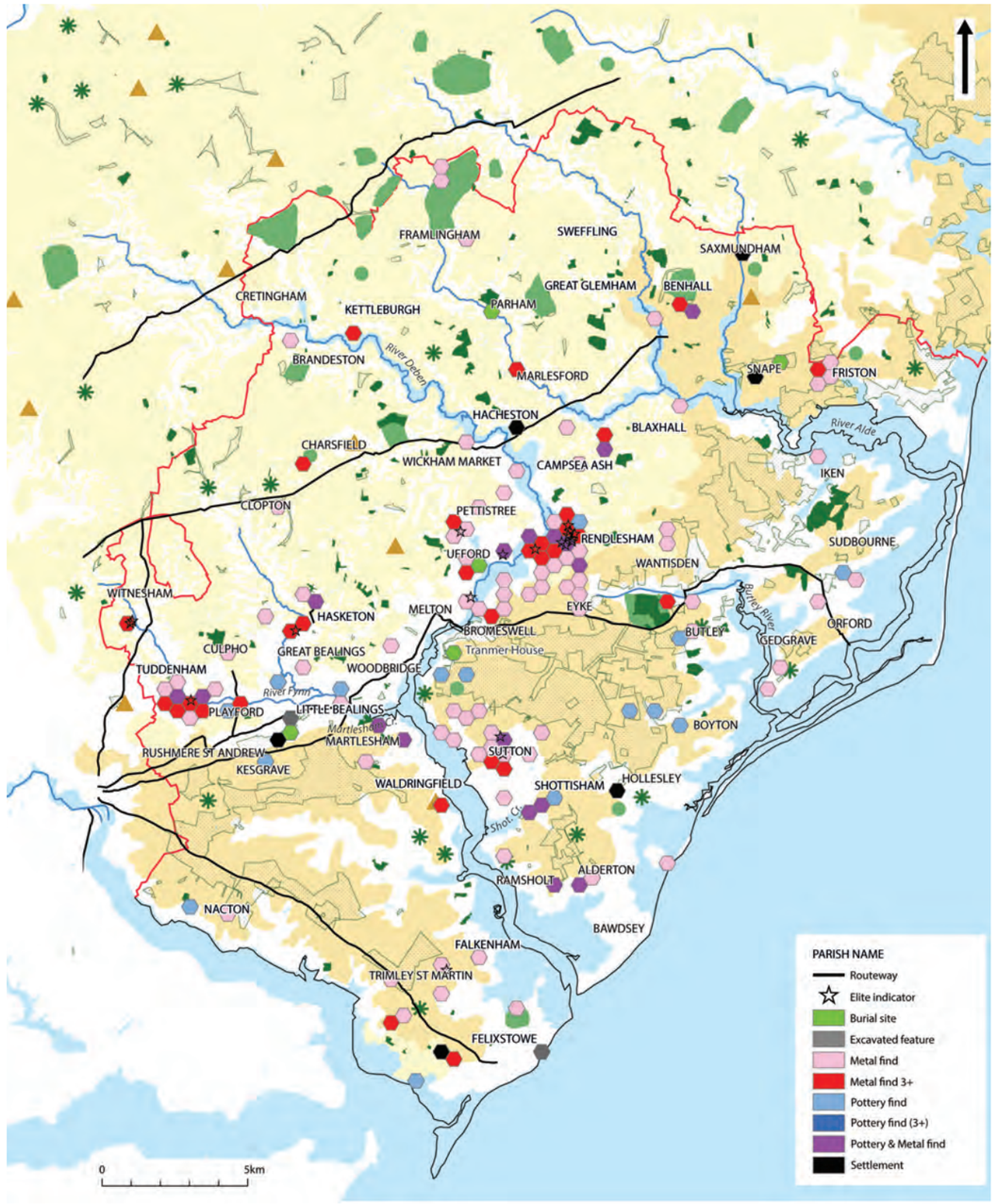

Fig 6.2.3 The Deben: Phase 2 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

cremations with dress accessories found in 1786 (UFF 028) and a weapon burial in 1819 (UFF 027) are probably of the later fifth to sixth or seventh centuries and may be from two separate cemeteries (Meaney 1964, 235; Myres and Green 1973, 262). A single weapon burial found in 1873 at Woodbridge (WGB 022) is probably of the same date-range, and across the river is the cemetery at Tranmer House, Bromeswell (BML 018) where metal-detecting finds to the north-west of the excavated area probably represent further burials (Fern 2015). At Little Bealings, a weapon burial and possible urned cremation were recovered during gravel extraction in the 1960s

(BEL 010). North of the Deben and Fynn valleys are the Snape cemetery (SNP 007), on high ground north of the estuary of the river Alde, and a weapon burial found in 1734 at Parham (PRH 002). Whether the monumental barrows and ship burial at Snape should be attributed to the end of this period or the beginning of Phase 3 is discussed below (6.2.5).

Plotting chance and surface finds enhances the picture significantly, allowing us to identify significant activity at a number of further locations and so to situate the excavated sites within broader patterns of settlement and burial. In the lower Deben valley there is evidence for significant activity at Alderton, Shottisham and Sutton on the east bank, and Waldringfield and Martlesham on the west bank. There are finds along the east side of the valley south of Rendlesham, a concentration of metalwork finds at Bromeswell, east of Wilford Bridge, that might indicate a cemetery, and clusters of metalwork finds on the west side of the Deben at Ufford and Pettistree. In the upper Deben valley groups of metal finds may indicate inhumations at Brandeston, and at Charsfield at the head of the Potsford Brook.

There is a strong clustering of pottery and metal finds along the Fynn valley between Tuddenham St Martin and Playford. Significant activity is also indicated at Hasketon, and at the head of the Fynn valley just south of Witnesham where metal finds suggest a cemetery. East of Rendlesham there is evidence for activity in Butley parish at the head of the Butley river. In the valleys of the Alde and the Ore significant concentrations of metalwork are known at Friston, 1.5km east of the Snape cemetery at the head of a stream running into Alde estuary, and at Benhall, Blaxhall and Hacheston. On the Colnes peninsula there is evidence for activity in the Felixstowe area and the parish of Trimley St Martin.

6.2.2.4 Phase 3 (570–720) (Fig 6.2.4)

Two new settlement sites are dated to this phase. At Barber's Point, Friston (FRS 001), an enclosed settlement and cemetery was established in the late sixth or early seventh century on what would have been an island on the north side of the Alde estuary (Meredith 2012; 2017). At Burrow Hill, Butley (BUT 001), a settlement and cemetery were established in the late seventh century on a prominent rise overlooking the estuary of the Butley river which would, before modern channelling and drainage, have been an island surrounded by coastal marsh; the site has been provisionally interpreted as a monastic establishment (Fenwick 1984). Iken church is usually identified as the site of the monastic settlement established by Botwulf in 654 at *Icanho* although the earliest physical evidence for activity here belongs to the eighth century (West *et al* 1984; Hoggett 2010, 47–50).

The elite barrow cemetery at Sutton Hoo, established around the turn of the seventh century, belongs to this phase (SUT 006–7; Carver 2005, 307–8), as does the multiple cremation in a copper bowl under a barrow at Brightwell Heath (BGL 017; Reid-Moir 1921). The monumental barrow cemetery at Snape probably also belongs to this phase but it is possible that the ship burial, and thus some of the other mounds, date to the middle of the sixth century – the end of Phase 2 (Filmer-Sankey and Pestell 2001, 265–6). Elite burial at Sutton Hoo appears to have ended in the middle of the seventh century. Some of the less ostentatious furnished inhumations may, but need not, represent some continuing burial for another decade or two (Carver 2005, 201–82, 307–8; Hines and Bayliss 2013). Subsequent use of the site as an execution place *may* have begun before the end of the seventh century but appears to have been predominantly an eighth- to eleventh-century phenomenon (Reynolds 2009, 131–4, 153–5). The single inhumation at Gallows Hill, Hacheston, if post-Roman, is more likely to belong to the seventh or eighth century than earlier.

The number of metal finds is lower than for Phase 2, for reasons discussed above. The density distributions of chance and surface finds suggests continuing activity at most Phase 2 locations but there are places where activity appears to diminish or cease; some which appear to take on a new importance; and some new places. The fifth- and sixth-century focus at Blaxhall appears much less significant, as does activity in the Fynn valley between Playford and Witnesham. A Merovingian *tremissis* and a group of early silver pennies suggests a focus of activity at Sudbourne, east of Chillesford. South of Rendlesham in Eyke parish, there is concentration of material including a hanging-bowl mount (PAS SF-C74ECE) where the modern Hollesley Road meets the suggested route from Wilford to Chillesford, and another immediately south of Eyke village. The Coptic bowl from Wickham Market (WKM Misc) is likely to be from an elite burial. Finally, a Menas ampulla from Woodbridge should be assigned to this phase if it is an early medieval import rather than a nineteenth- or twentieth-century travel souvenir (WBG 023; Owles and Smedley 1964, 123).

6.2.2.5 Phases 4 (720–850) and 5 (850–1100) (Figs 6.2.5–6)

For the purposes of this project comprehensive information on metal finds was collated only up to the cut-off date of AD 800. Excavated sites apart, we are

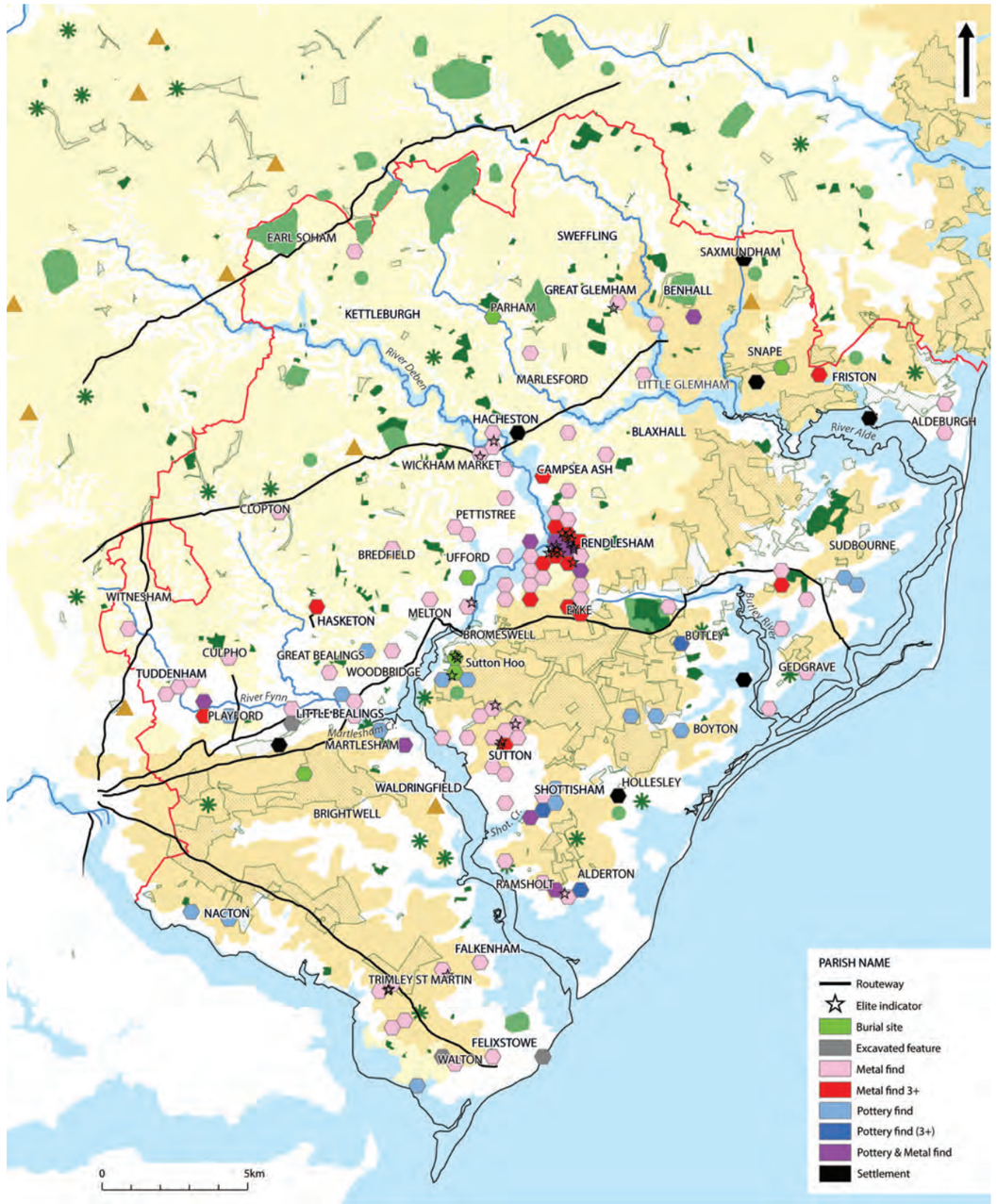

Fig 6.2.4 The Deben: Phase 3 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

therefore largely dependent on surface finds of Ipswich and Thetford wares, and particularly the material recovered by the South-east Suffolk Survey, for broader patterns of settlement and activity.

Ipswich ware and contemporary metalwork show a wider distribution than earlier material, suggesting an expansion of settlement over the course of the eighth century (Newman 1992; 2005). In the Fynn valley, features containing Ipswich ware are known from monitoring and evaluation at Kesgrave Quarry, Little Bealings (BEL 026). There is particularly strong evidence for activity in the valley of the river Lark, where a

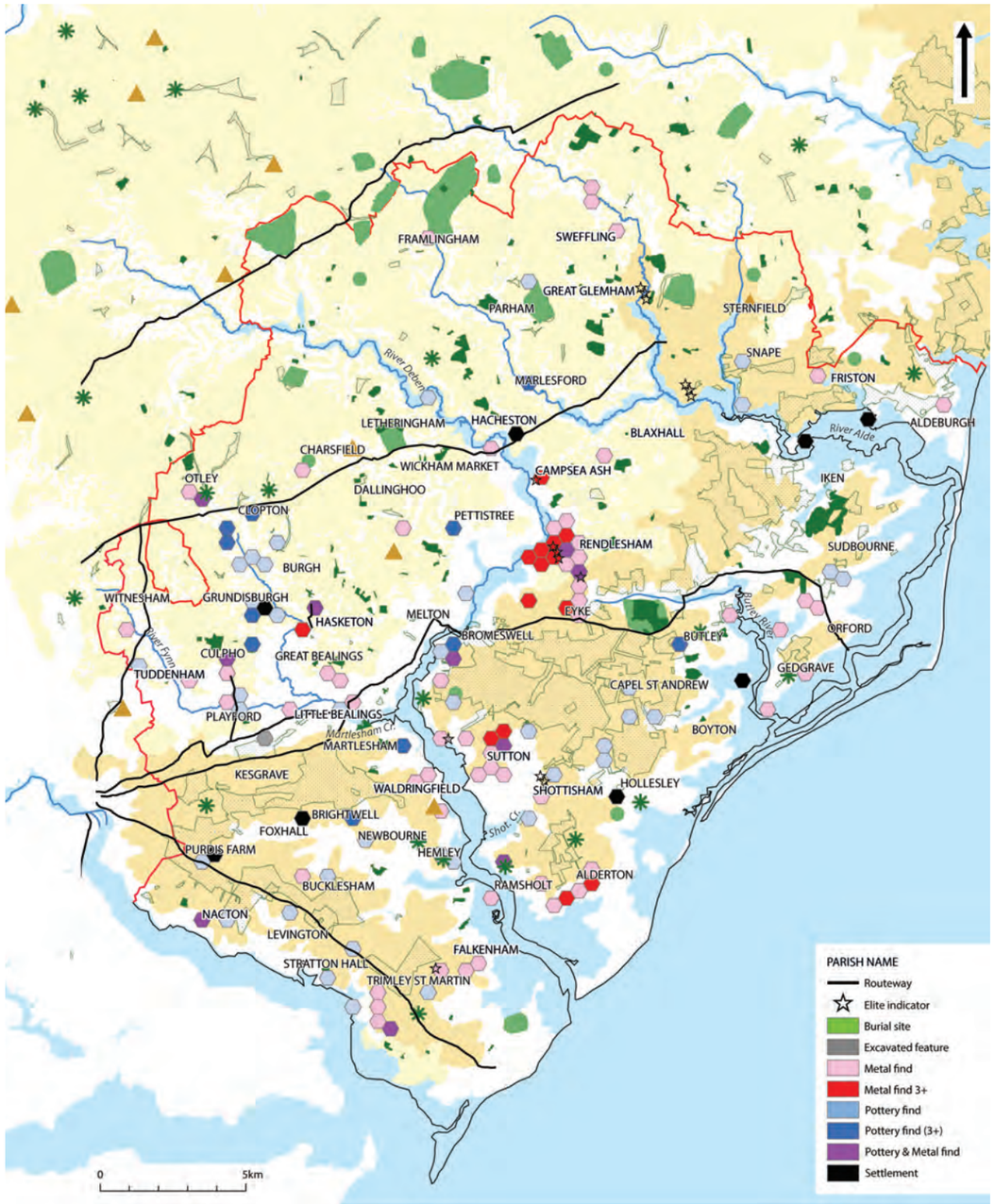

Fig 6.2.5 The Deben: Phase 4 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

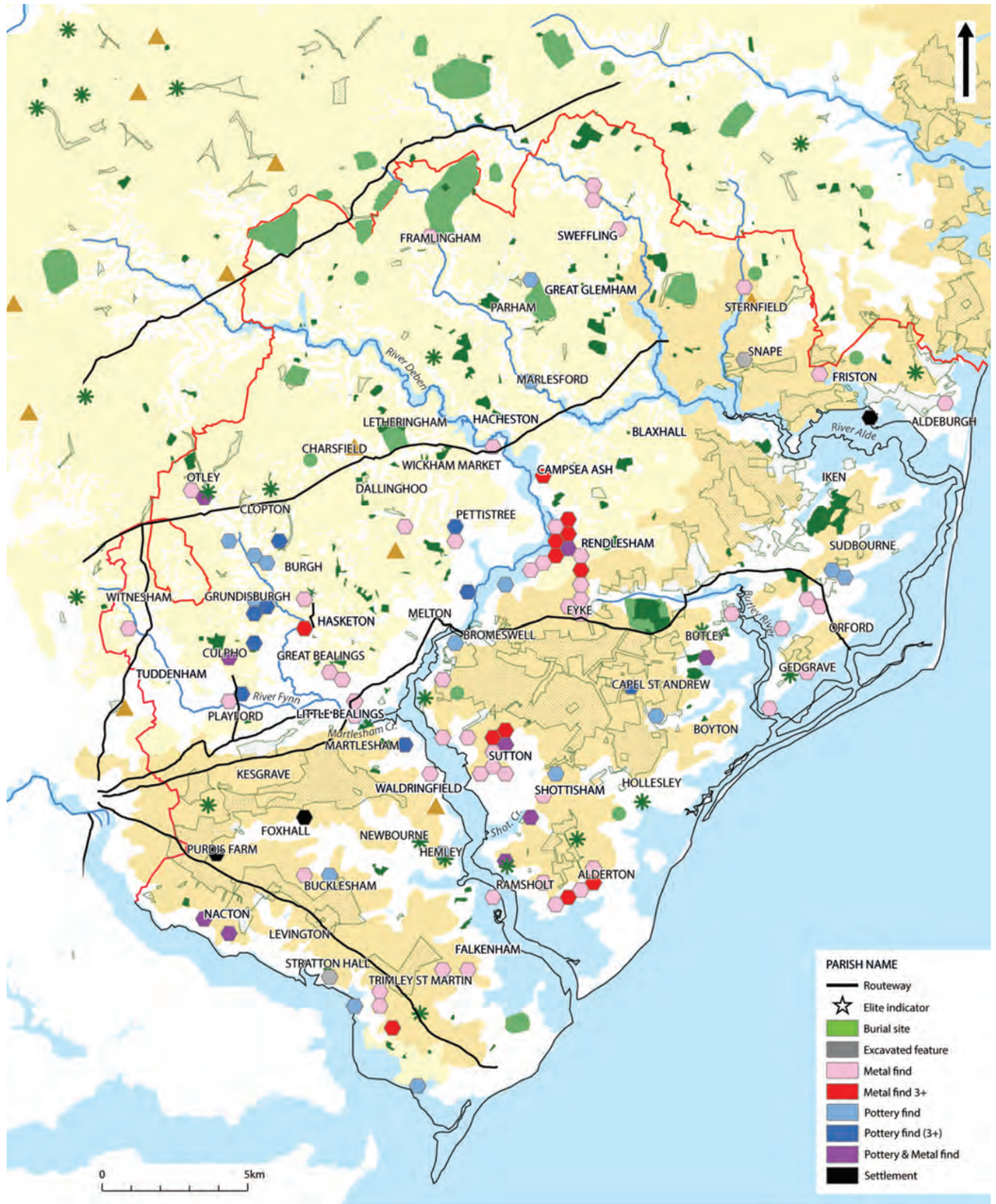

Fig 6.2.6 The Deben: Phase 5 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

building and other settlement features have been excavated at Grundisburgh (GRU 037; Boulter 1994). On the Colnes peninsula, the settlement at Foxhall (FXL 013) is dated by Ipswich and Thetford wares (Martin *et al* 1992) and at Lark's Meadow, Purdis Farm (PFM 008), the ratio of Ipswich to Thetford wares suggests that the main period of occupation was from the ninth to eleventh centuries (Loader 2009, 13–15). New settlements of the later ninth or tenth centuries are suggested by clusters of Thetford ware and contemporary metalwork in the vicinity of Culpho and at Butley. Excavated features dated by Thetford ware are recorded at Stratton Hall (SNH 013) and Church Road, Snape. Rare items of eighth- to tenth-century elite metalwork have been found at Campsea Ash (PAS SF9400), Sutton (SF-AED017) and Alderton (SF6136). As noted above, the site of the elite cemetery at Sutton Hoo was used as a place of execution during these centuries.

6.2.3 Settlement patterns

The strong correlation seen at Rendlesham between evidence for fifth- to eighth-century activity and tractable and fertile soils (the Newport 2 Association and the Burlingham 3 Association where slope allows

Table 6.2.1 The Deben territory: early medieval PAS finds (excluding Rendlesham) and HER records and their locations relative to soil type

	Area (sq km)	%	PAS	%	HER	%
1: good soils	216.06	35.1	163	45.9	127	61.1
2: acid soils	167.95	27.3	137	38.6	54	25.9
3: difficult clay	169.39	27.5	50	14.1	20	9.6
4: waterlogged silt/peat	62.11	10.1	5	1.4	7	3.4
Total	**615.51**	**100.0**	**355**	**100.0**	**208**	**100.0**

Table 6.2.2 The Deben territory: sites datable by early medieval pottery types and their locations relative to soil type

	Area (sq km)	%	Hand-made	%	Ipswich	%	Thetford	%
1: good soils	216.06	35.1	34	68.0	47	60.3	35	71.4
2: acid soils	167.95	27.3	13	26.0	22	28.2	8	16.3
3: difficult clay	169.39	27.5	3	6.0	6	7.7	6	12.2
4: waterlogged silt/peat	62.11	10.1	0	0.0	3	3.8	0	0.0
Total	**615.51**	**100.0**	**50**	**100.0**	**78**	**100.0**	**49**	**100.0**

drainage) is replicated more widely across the study region.

Table 6.2.1 shows the areas of the four main soil types and the proportion of known sites and finds of the fifth to eighth centuries from each. Excluding Rendlesham, both finds reported to the PAS and those listed in the HER are disproportionately on the good soils and acid sands. Moreover, where sites and findspots are on heavy clays and acid sands they are almost invariably located at or close to a junction with better soils. There is of course a range of retrieval biases in play but given that large areas of the less tractable soils are under modern cultivation and subject to surface collection and metal-detecting, and that a higher proportion of later material is from the heavier soils (below), the picture is unlikely to be misleading.

The good soils make up 35 per cent of the region by area. They occur on valley slopes where the additional attractions of easy access to water and relatively sheltered locations also favour settlement. The most extensive areas of good soils are in the Deben valley south of Wickham Market and the Fynn valley, and at the end of the Colnes peninsula. The densest concentration of sites and finds is in the Deben and Fynn valleys. To this extent, the settlement pattern is consistent with the 'river-and-wold' model, with a concentration of settlement and population in what can be identified as the arable core of the region.

Taking the known settlement and burial sites with the finds density distributions allows finer-grained modelling of settlement patterning. There are clusters of material and/or known sites, likely to represent settlements and associated burial places, at intervals of 2km–3km (the mean distance is 2.6km) on both sides of the middle and lower Deben valley and along the Fynn valley, situated on or adjacent to good arable land and placed to exploit the range of resources from valley bottom to interfluve. This pattern was established by the later fifth century and persisted into the eighth century and beyond. It suggests a fundamentally stable relationship between community and resource territory, with periodic reformulations of settlement configuration at favoured locations but little large-scale settlement shift.

A striking number of the settlement foci identified from surface finds are in minor tributary valleys; burial sites are typically on elevated land overlooking settlement and watercourses. This pattern, identified at Rendlesham, can be seen at Friston on the north side of the Alde valley, Ufford and Pettistree on the Bing Brook, Hasketon, and at Trimley St Martin on the Colnes peninsula. On the west side of the lower Deben valley, the Martlesham settlement site overlooks a small creek running into the estuary. On the east side of the estuary the focus of activity at Sutton lies between the head of a small valley draining west and the source of Shottisham Brook; to the south, in Shottisham, is the concentration of material along Shottisham Brook. This is not, though, an invariable picture. The focus of activity at Alderton is not directly associated with a watercourse but overlooks Alderton and Ramsholt marshes which in the early medieval period would have had the appearance of a large coastal embayment. The relatively coarse scale of spatial resolution, however, is likely to mask significant complexity. Within the Rendlesham survey area, for example, we have identified a probable cemetery in EKE 021 within 1.5km of the settlement and cemeteries in RLM 036 and 044 that are less than 1km from the elite site in RLM 013.

The two settlements that diverge markedly from this pattern are Barber's Point and Burrow Hill. The location of the former is well-placed for water travel and to exploit the range of dryland and estuarine resources. The Burrow Hill settlement, on a prominent island surrounded by tidal mudflats, must have been provisioned from other holdings and enjoyed wider resource rights and – whether or not it should be characterised as monastic – is an example of how communities not directly engaged in farming can afford to choose locations that make symbolic statements mediating broader social and ideological agendas.

From the second quarter of the eighth century the distribution of Ipswich wares and contemporary metalwork suggests an expansion of settlement away from the core areas of the main river valleys. This has been seen as an expansion of settlement and farming onto heavier clay soils (Newman 1992; 2005) but the pattern is more complex (Table 6.2.2; figs 6.2.3–6). Correlating findspots of hand-made, Ipswich and Thetford wares against soil types shows a clear preference throughout the sixth to eleventh centuries for good soils, and with acid soils preferred over heavy clays. During Phase 4 there is a slight increase in the proportion of findspots on heavy clays and acid soils but a marked shift in Phase 5 towards good soils and heavy clays at the expense of acid soils.

Mapping suggests that the eighth- and ninth-century expansion mainly represents settlement and exploitation of good soils at greater distances (typically more than 2km) from the main rivers. Thus the concentrations of material in the valley of the river Lark are associated with complex interdigitations of tractable soils with poorly drained clays which represent more complex and localised farming terrain than the larger tracts of good soils in the main river valleys. Where associated with acid soils, findspots are close to the boundaries with good soils, again at greater distances from the main river valleys. This can be seen at the Foxhall settlement and findspots along the minor valley of the Mill river that drains into the Deben estuary, and with findspots at Butley and Boyton.

The pattern of settlement expansion over the course of the eighth and ninth centuries, into more peripheral areas that may have been less easy to farm, is consistent with a rising population, and might be linked to changes in lordship and administration, but the fact that the same sorts of locations were preferred suggests no fundamental change in farming regimes. The shift in emphasis in the ninth and tenth centuries towards good soils and the heavier clays might, however, suggest an intensification of arable production that prompted some taking into cultivation of heavy soils previously considered too difficult to work productively, or some increased specialisation in dairy farming for which heavier clays were better suited than acid sands.

6.2.4 Social differentiation and hierarchy

The criteria adopted for Rendlesham allow us to identify proxies for wealth and status in the regional dataset (see Ch 5.6.2). This allows us to locate elite groups, whose disproportionate social and economic power was materialised through access to restricted materials and skills, and to chart changes in the materialisation of elite identities and their inscription on the landscape over time.

The silver buckle from Blaxhall and the gold-and-garnet mount from Shottisham are evidence for elite groups or individuals of the middle or third quarter of the fifth century and suggest links with the Frankish Continent. Also significant is a gilded chip-carved copper-alloy roundel with scrolled floriate cross decoration from Sutton (PAS SF-64FB55), a high-quality piece of the early to middle fifth century; two further fragments found separately may be from the same item (SF10414). The suggestion that these were important early centres is supported by significant activity into Phase 2 at Blaxhall and Phase 3 at Shottisham and Sutton.

Fragments of silver dress accessories from Witnesham, including wrist clasps and a great square-headed brooch, suggest very high-status burials of the later fifth and first half of the sixth centuries (PAS SF-0C2447), and there are single finds of elite material from Tuddenham St Martin (TDM 002: silver-gilt scutiform pendant) and Hasketon (HSK 006: disc brooch with garnet settings over gold foils). In the Deben valley there are Phase 2 elite items from Pettistree (PAS SF-1E08E5: silver brooch), Ufford (UFF 021: radiate-headed brooch fragment with garnet setting) and Sutton (PAS SF-1AFC73: silver fitting with red glass or garnet cloisons), and items of Phases 2 or 3 from Melton (PAS SF-DB2F43: silver pommel cap) and Sutton (PAS SF-94DB56: silver-gilt fragment with garnet cloisons).

There are elite items from secure funerary contexts of the later sixth and seventh centuries at Sutton Hoo, Snape and Tranmer House. A gold pendant (TYN 058) and a hanging-bowl mount (TYN 102) have been

recovered from Trimley St Martin; there is a fragment of a hanging-bowl escutcheon from Great Glemham at the head of the Alde valley (PAS SF-30C065); and a gold ring with a Merovingian *tremissis* as bezel from an unknown findspot in Aldeburgh (Rigold 1975, 673; Filmer-Sankey 1989, 261). Otherwise all finds are from the middle and lower Deben valley: an east Mediterranean cast copper-alloy bowl (WKM Misc) and a hanging-bowl escutcheon (PAS NMS1561) from Wickham Market; a silver sword pyramid from Rendlesham parish south of the survey area (PAS SF-9F5377); two hanging-bowl mounts from Eyke (EKE Misc; PAS SF-C74ECE0); a copper-alloy, gold and garnet buckle plate from Melton (MTN Misc); a gilded copper-alloy harness fitting reported from Woodbridge (PAS YORYM-3FD7C7); a gold openwork pendant (PAS SF-0646A8) and gold filigree faceplate from a composite disc brooch from Sutton (SUT Misc), and a gilded copper-alloy harness pendant from Alderton (PAS SF-552FD2). A copper-alloy bird-mount from Pettistree (PAS SF-0C6961) may be from a hanging bowl.

This is a small number of finds and locations but some trends are apparent. The quantity and character of elite indicators over time shows a similar profile to Rendlesham. Elite material of the fifth century is rare and has Continental affinities. There is more material dating to the later fifth to later sixth centuries, predominantly silver, with Insular types represented. Although overall there are fewer metal finds of Phase 3 than of Phase 2 there are more elite items, with gold the main precious metal and imported metal vessels strongly represented. The material suggests a fifth-century elite presence at Rendlesham, Blaxhall and Shottisham, and possibly Sutton. From the later fifth century there is evidence for an elite presence at sites in the Fynn valley, and in the Deben valley at Rendlesham and Sutton with status items from Pettistree and Ufford also suggesting wealthy and important kindreds. From the later sixth century, however, elite material is heavily concentrated in the middle and lower Deben valley.

This changing picture is consistent with the model that the autonomy of local elite actors, who might establish limited periodic hegemonies, was subject from the later sixth century to a wider lordship centred on the core area of the middle and lower Deben, where elite indicators cluster and there are long-lived centres at Rendlesham and Sutton. In particular, the evidence might suggest a local polity or magnate territory centred on the Fynn valley whose autonomy did not survive into the seventh century.

Broader patterns of mortuary practice and settlement structure argue that lordship emerged from a society constituted of broadly equal internally ranked communities. However, the elite material implies some significant social differentiation from the early to middle fifth century, and the differential occurrence of elite indicators from the late fifth century suggests emergent ranking – even if only temporary – between communities or, more accurately, between their central kindreds or lineages. This implies hierarchies of place linked to the status of central persons or kindreds even though there is no evidence at this time for a settlement hierarchy discernible in clear distinctions of building size, scale and planning. The establishment of the elite centre at Rendlesham in the later sixth century, like great hall complexes elsewhere, was an innovation intended to consolidate rulership and surplus extraction by those exercising a new regional lordship (Scull 2019a; McBride 2020; Scull and Thomas 2020). However, the material signature of the activities transacted there and at other places indicates prior and more fluid centralities that were not materialised in the same way. Burrow Hill, Butley, which must have been dependent on wider holdings, provides further evidence for the subsequent development of settlement hierarchies based on rights in or over landed resource.

6.2.5 Mortuary geography

Spatial relationships between settlement and burial during the fifth to eighth centuries were diverse and dynamic (Williams, H 2006, 187–96; Scull 2013, 527–8) and while it is possible to identify some trends and patterns these are not necessarily mutually exclusive, nor do they describe all circumstances. In many cases convenient proximity to the settlements they served appears to be a major factor in the location of burial sites, whatever other symbolic or ideological considerations might have influenced their specific situation. The evidence from Rendlesham, and from elsewhere in East Anglia, would suggest that most fifth- to seventh-century cemeteries were in relatively close proximity to the settlements they served, although not necessarily in simple one-to-one relationships, and the proximity of contemporary pottery and metalwork at a number of the main foci of activity identified from surface finds would be consistent with this.

The clear exceptions to this pattern, on current evidence, are Tranmer House and Sutton Hoo, Snape, and the Brightwell barrow burial. It can be argued that the monumental elite burials at Sutton Hoo and Snape, both on poor soils, were deliberately located away from settlements at prominent points in the landscape as monumentalising statements of lordship over a polity and territory greater than that of the ancestral kin group. The

Brightwell mound is also on elevated agriculturally marginal land and its position adjacent to prehistoric barrows can be read as an act of legitimation through association with the past (cf Semple 2013). Situating their burials at a distance from their residences can thus be seen as a strategy of distinction by the new elites, deliberately contrasting with the closer physical association between dwelling place and burial site seen in the later fifth and sixth centuries, and thereafter lower down the social scale, where rights or recognised interests in land were more localised or restricted.

This does not, however, explain the location of the earlier cemeteries at Snape and Tranmer House.

The Snape cemetery is on high ground and marginal soils north of the Alde estuary. The settlement site at Church Road (SNP 103) is 1km to the south-west and the activity focus at Friston 1.5km to the east; the cemetery may have served both communities. Cremations at Snape may suggest that its earliest phase was an urnfield serving communities across a wider area and that this explains its location. The evidence for an early urnfield at Rendlesham raises the possibility that both may have been central places for widespread fifth-century burial communities in the same way as has been argued for other major cremation cemeteries in East Anglia and eastern England (Faull 1976; Hills and Lucy 2013, 293–5; Brookes 2019). Tranmer House, like Sutton Hoo, is on agriculturally marginal land above the Deben estuary. Metalwork and some hand-made pottery from the adjacent field is interpreted as deriving from further burials, and Ipswich ware and two fragments of eighth- to tenth-century metalwork attributed to activity associated with the use of Sutton Hoo as an execution site (Fern 2015, 179–80). It is argued both that the cemetery may have served a community located across the estuary or upstream, and that those burying here included the emergent elite faction that established Sutton Hoo (ibid, 217–21). That being so, the Tranmer House cemetery might be seen as an early signal of distinction through distance in burial.

This prompts a reconsideration of how the elite cemeteries at Snape and Sutton Hoo related to each other and to Rendlesham and other places. Sutton Hoo is usually seen as the main burial ground of the East Anglian royal kindred in the early to middle seventh century (Bruce-Mitford 1975, 683–717; Carver 2005). Readings of Snape are contested. The ship burial excavated here in 1862 may be earlier than the Sutton Hoo cemetery (Filmer-Sankey 1989, 248–9; Filmer-Sankey and Pestell 2001, 196), and the elite burials may be variously interpreted as those of a local lineage subordinate to the East Anglian kings or decapitated during the dynastic competition from which regional hegemony was forged, members of a cadet branch of the ruling kindred, or as belonging to another burial ground of the ruling lineage, a predecessor to or even contemporary with Sutton Hoo.

It is possible to propose a distinction between Snape, where the barrows are immediately adjacent to a long-lived flat cemetery and the elite group may be seen as expressing a rootedness in local community, and Sutton Hoo, where the physical isolation of the barrows can be seen as symbolising a new social and political distance between ruling kindred and followers, and this might support the view that the Snape barrows are slightly earlier and associated with a group that failed or was subordinated. However, the argument that members of an emergent elite group burying at Tranmer House established a separate dynastic cemetery at Sutton Hoo would imply a local identity, and a connection between folk cemetery and elite burial ground, similar to that proposed for Snape.

Conversely, though, it is possible to read the establishment of the barrow cemetery at Snape as an act of assertion by an elite group located elsewhere, the statement of lordship amplified by the repurposing or appropriation of an existing burial place – and carrying greater symbolic impact if the Snape cemetery acted as a central burial place for dispersed communities. The same can be proposed for Sutton Hoo. Linked by the rite of ship burial, new levels of monumentality and wealth investment, and similarities in the choice of location, both barrow cemeteries share a symbolic programme and can be read as claims to lordship and territory by a new ascendency. The elite burials at Snape may therefore mark the incorporation of a previously autonomous group centred on the Alde valley into a larger polity focused on the Deben, with Snape and Sutton Hoo representing the same paramount group. Snape is 10km north-east of Rendlesham, and Sutton Hoo 5.5km south-west of Rendlesham and 3km north of the possible elite centre at Sutton.

Sutton Hoo and Snape are linked by the rite of ship burial, a new level of monumentality and wealth investment, and similarities of situation which suggest a coherence in the choice of location for the burials of rulers and their kin. Their setting on high ground above the upper reaches of the estuaries of the Deben and the Alde is surely significant given the likely symbolism of ship burial for maritime-facing communities and they can be seen as asserting control of the two main waterborne entry points to the region. Their prominence in the landscape should not, however, be exaggerated. It is highly unlikely that Snape, which is more than 2km from the Alde, was visible from the water (Scull 2019b, 131). At

Sutton Hoo, which is much closer to the Deben, there are good views of the estuary from the vicinity of the barrow cemetery but the mounds themselves are set back from the crest and it is highly debatable just how visible or visually striking they would have been from a ship on the estuary even when they were new and at full height (Williamson 2008, 113–15; Scull 2019b, 131). At both places it may have been as much the knowledge of the barrows' existence and location as their immediate visual impact that was significant, the cognitive landscape structuring responses to the physical.

Some single finds of late sixth- and seventh-century elite metalwork may be from similarly situated burials. In particular, the harness pendant from Alderton (PAS SF-552FD2) is from a site overlooking marshes close to the mouth of the Deben estuary and the two pieces of elite metalwork from Trimley St Martin (TYN 058 and 102) might indicate high-status burials at prominent locations overlooking respectively the mouths of the Deben and Orwell estuaries.

6.2.6 Carrying capacity and population

Defining Voronoi tessellations around foci of settlement activity identified for Phases 2 and 3 allows us to model catchments or resource territories (Fig 6.2.7). While this can only be a crude approximation, which will be subject to change in light of new discoveries, it does afford some interesting insights. The smallest catchment territories, other than Saxmundham, are grouped in the Deben valley between Hacheston and Shottisham, and in the Fynn valley, strengthening the impression that the highest densities of settlement and population were in these river valleys. Conversely, the largest catchment territories are in the peripheral areas, suggesting lower densities of population. Within the core area of the Deben each catchment offers access to between 2.4sq km and 7.1sq km of good-quality soils, with varying proportions of wood, wood pasture and meadow. Rendlesham itself has a site catchment of 13.75sq km, of which 4.63sq km (34 per cent) is good arable land.

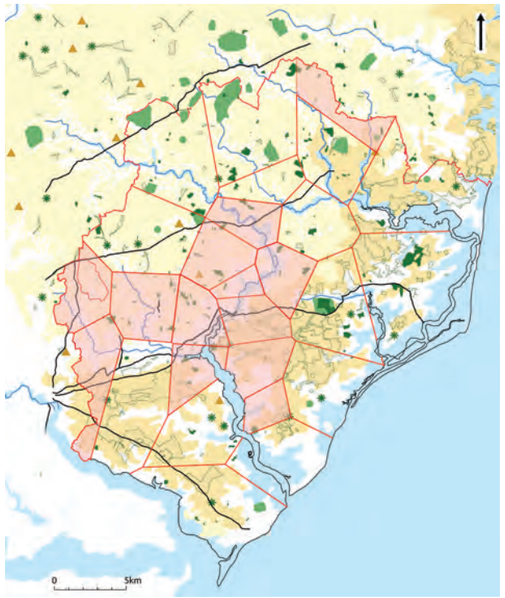

Fig 6.2.7 The Deben: model settlement catchments for Phases 2–3: those with the smallest areas are shaded. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

The earliest indication of population densities in the area is provided by Domesday, which for Suffolk (in the form of Little Domesday) appears to present a particularly complete account of tenants, subtenants and freeholders. The figures for total population numbers recorded in TRW show the Deben valley core of the Wicklaw hundreds as having the highest densities in the county (Table 6.2.3). For Loose hundred, in which Rendlesham is located, 883 rural manorial tenants of all sorts and conditions, including slaves, are listed. Following Moore (1997), a further 5 per cent may be added for unrecorded labour. The combined figure for the three Deben hundreds of Carlford, Loose and Wilford is 2,527. Population values in Domesday are lower outside the core of the Deben valley. Despite being the largest by area of the Wicklaw hundreds, Plomesgate has fewer people listed, and Colnes and Parham fewer still. Given the evidence for settlement expansion and population increase between the eighth and eleventh centuries (above), we can reasonably assume a lower overall population in these areas in the sixth to eighth centuries, and a greater disparity between them and the core zones of the Deben and Fynn valleys.

Table 6.2.3 The Wicklaw hundreds: population in Domesday Book TRW (* values derived from Moore 1997; † rounded to nearest whole number)

Hundred	Villagers (villeins)	Smallholders (bordars)	Slaves	Free Men (sokemen + *liberi homines*)	Total	+ 5%*†	x 4.75*
Carlford	72	303.0	15	365.5	755.5	793	3,768
Colnes	19	134.0	2	317.0	472.0	496	2,354
Loose	120	267.5	16	479.5	883.0	927	4,404
Parham	2	12.0	4	133.5	151.5	159	756
Plomesgate	50	182.0	3	446.5	681.5	716	3,399
Wilford	49	75.0	1	644.0	769.0	807	3,835
Total	**312**	**973.5**	**41**	**2,386.0**	**3,721.5**	**3,898**	**18,516**

In order to derive the total population represented by Domesday values, Moore suggests that the latter should be multiplied by 4.75 on the basis that each tenant – including slaves – was supporting a family. By this measure, the population of the Deben valley was 12,000 in 1086. There are arguments for suggesting that such a multiplier may be slightly too low. The scale of population increase through the subsequent two centuries across England as a whole implies that the average family must have included more than 2.75 children, given likely childhood and adolescent mortality rates; while the suggested figure appears to assume two-generational households, with tenants having no surviving parents, whose numerical presence is unlikely to have been entirely cancelled out by the early death of spouses. On the other hand, as a guide to possible population densities during Rendlesham's *floruit* several centuries earlier, we need to remember the range of agricultural innovations, including improved ploughing equipment, which occurred during the eighth to eleventh centuries, and which may have increased yields on good-quality soils as well as facilitating (in the peripheral zones especially) the expansion of cultivation onto less tractable and less inherently fertile ones (Banham and Faith 2014; Banham 2010).

As a very rough estimate, the 46.5 households recorded by Domesday in Rendlesham itself would have together cultivated around 2.18sq km of light loams and sloping, well-drained clays, assuming the area of Rendlesham vill was roughly the same as that of the modern parish. This is equivalent to around 4.7ha for each household. Given the relatively limited evidence from the immediate area for any very significant expansion of cultivation onto more challenging environments before the twelfth century, it seems reasonable to suggest that the same area could, in the seventh century, have supported a similar number of people – at least 220 individuals. If, however, we assume that the area of good-quality soils within the site's catchment was as suggested by the Voronoi tessellations – that is, around 4.63sq km – then this figure rises to around 460 individuals. This, of course, does not preclude the possibility that significantly higher numbers could have been living at Rendlesham if an agricultural surplus was being extracted from a wider area. Indeed, the scale of non-agricultural production attested archaeologically leaves little doubt that this must have been the case.

6.3 Overview and conclusions

Early medieval Rendlesham was situated centrally within one of the largest areas of open, tractable and relatively fertile arable land in post-Roman East Anglia, representing a substantial concentration of landed resource and population. The Deben territory was also well connected by estuarine and maritime routeways north along the east coast and south to Essex, Kent and the Merovingian Continent. As such, it would appear to be a prime candidate to emerge as a focus of power in the early post-Roman centuries.

The evidence from Rendlesham suggests multiple roles linked to the Roman government at the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the fifth. The abundance and hoarding of late bronze coins, primarily intended to provide the military with small change, suggests official ties in the final Roman period of a kind only seen elsewhere in the Deben territory at Little Bealings, and the presence of clipped *siliquae* suggests a focus of civilian wealth in the decades after 410. Such foci are likely to have been the initial points at which taxation was gathered before centralised administration ceased. The Theodosian coinage and the relative proximity of Rendlesham to the shore fort at Felixstowe raises the possibility that there was a small detachment of troops here in the first decade of the fifth century.

Whether the small town at Hacheston, 3.7km north of Rendlesham, had a role in the primary accumulation of taxes is unknown, but it was clearly central to an area comparable to the later Wicklaw hundreds (Moore *et al* 1988, 56, fig 36) as a market centre and potentially fulfilled other devolved administrative functions. Activity at Hacheston dropped to little or none after about 370 (Blagg *et al* 2004, 199) and some replacement by Rendlesham seems likely, with Rendlesham subsequently the local focus of a transition from official authority to magnate power in the second and third decades of the fifth century. A later awareness of Hacheston is, however,

implied by the neighbouring place-names Wickham (Market) (OE *wīc-hām*) and Campsea (Ash) (OE *camp* + *eg* 'island'). Wickham Market is one of the place-names containing OE *wīc-hām* which are spatially associated with Roman roads and settlements (Gelling 1967; 1977; Briggs 2009). In these cases, OE *wīc-hām* is interpreted as denoting a settlement at or close to the site of significant Roman occupation, retaining aspects of the meaning of Latin *vicus* 'quarter, village, hamlet', from which OE *wīc* was ultimately derived. Hacheston must be the *vicus* referred to in Wickham Market and similarly explains the occurrence of OE *camp* (< Lat. *campus*) in the name of Campsea Ash, probably used in the sense 'open land near a Roman settlement' (Gelling 1978, 76–7). Both names belong to a class recognised as being amongst the earliest English place-names (Gelling 1967; 1977) and suggest that Hacheston was recognisable as a Roman settlement to the area's English-speaking inhabitants in the post-Roman period. Exactly what this means is unclear, but it would be consistent with some degree of continuity in the importance of the Hacheston/Rendlesham area into the early to middle fifth century (Fig 6.2.8).

The cremation cemeteries at Rendlesham and Snape may have been urnfields serving dispersed burial communities from the early to middle fifth century. From the middle to the late fifth century the pattern of activity is consistent with small settlements of ancestral farms,

Fig 6.2.8 The proximity of Rendlesham to the Roman small town at Hacheston and Old English place-names incorporating Latin loan-words. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

each exploiting its own resource territory, optimally located along the major river valleys with the strongest concentrations of settlement and population in the Deben and Fynn valleys. There is evidence for social differentiation from the middle of the fifth century if not earlier but this becomes stronger in the late fifth and earlier sixth centuries when the material suggests leading kindreds wielding local authority or influence in the Fynn valley (Witnesham, Tuddenham St Martin and Hasketon) and in the lower Deben valley and along the east side of the Deben estuary (Rendlesham and Sutton). If the Snape cemetery is to be seen as a central place then this would indicate a further local grouping centred on the Alde valley. There is no evidence of a formal settlement hierarchy like that seen at Rendlesham and other great hall complexes from the later sixth century; rather, the evidence suggests more temporary and fluid centralities of place focused on local leaders. Rendlesham, however, may perhaps be seen as *primus inter pares* as a significant place for a wider population and the seat of a leading kindred from the early to middle fifth century. It is tempting, as an heuristic, to equate place-names in *-hām* with these localised social groupings (Fig 6.2.9).

Changes in the material record in the later sixth century are consistent with local leadership being supplanted by wider lordship: elite material is concentrated in the Deben valley with two important places at Rendlesham and Sutton. The deliberate transformation of Rendlesham, with the establishment of the elite centre, suggests a formal settlement hierarchy, with the wider territory looking to Rendlesham as a centre for surplus extraction and jurisdiction. That there is no obvious change in patterns of settlement location suggests that this was the establishment or crystallisation of wider lordship over previously autonomous groups and their leaders rather than a fundamental change in landholding and farming regimes; in other words, a new level of overlordship accompanied by a new centralising surplus extraction in the form of dues and renders rather than direct territorial administration. Under this model of extensive lordship we can envisage direct farming and administration of territory in the immediate vicinity of Rendlesham, a looser network of dues and obligations over other holdings in the wider region, and a central place function for the theatre and practicalities of rulership as the caput of a jurisdictional territory broadly commensurate with the territory that became the Wicklaw hundreds (Fig 6.2.10).

There is very little direct evidence for the settlements and holdings that were subordinate to Rendlesham but our model would predict that devolved lordship and

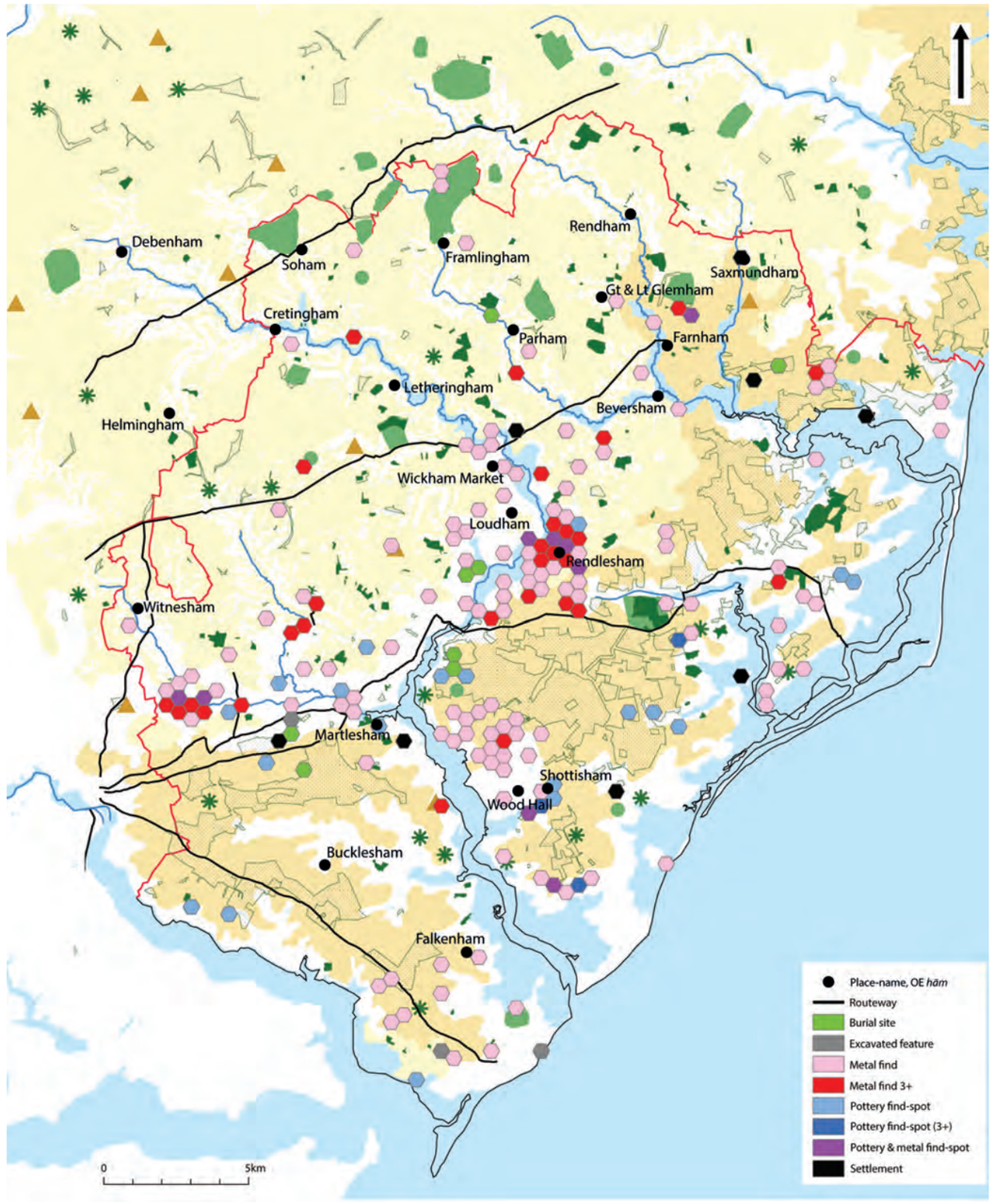

Fig 6.2.9 The Deben: archaeological evidence for settlement and activity in Phases 2 and 3 and Old English habitative names ending in *-hām*. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

surplus extraction was centred on previously autonomous local groupings. There are hints of important places, or at least an aristocratic presence, in elite material at, for example, Wickham Market, but on current evidence the only place in the late sixth to early eighth centuries that may have been on a level with Rendlesham is Sutton. We have argued above that Sutton was named in relation to, and dependent on, Rendlesham. If so, the archaeology would suggest that this relationship was established, and the name given, after Rendlesham's emergence as the

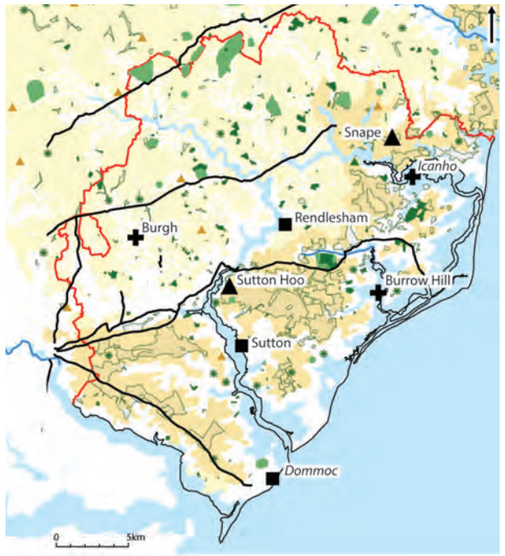

Fig 6.2.10 The Deben: the proposed jurisdictional territory of the late sixth to early eighth centuries

central place in the later sixth century and before its change of status and character in the second quarter of eighth century. This interpretation is consistent with place-name evidence: the element OE *-tūn* is reasonably well-attested in pre-AD 731 sources (Cox 1976, 51).

The locations of Rendlesham and Sutton provide further support for the idea of a core zone in the central Deben valley and the east side of the Deben estuary with its origins in the landed interests and social networks of leading families at Rendlesham and Sutton or Shottisham. As already noted, Tranmer House and Sutton Hoo are midway between Rendlesham and the foci of activity at Sutton and Shottisham, and a good argument can be made that the placing of elite burial sites at Snape and Sutton Hoo was part of the deliberate creation of a monumental ceremonial landscape that framed approaches to the Deben valley core and the central place at Rendlesham. The locations of the three possible monastic sites within Rendlesham's territory – Iken, Burrow Hill (Butley), and Burgh by Woodbridge – are also suggestive in this respect (Fig 6.2.10). Iken can be identified with a fair degree of confidence as the site of the minster or monastery founded by Botwulf at *Icanho* in 654 (West *et al* 1984; Scarfe 1986, 39–51; Hoggett 2010, 47–50) and Burrow Hill, referred to as *Insula de Burgh* in early documents, is plausibly – although not certainly – identified as a monastic site (Fenwick 1984; Hoggett 2010, 72–3). Both are located in the wooded peripheries of Rendlesham's territory, and – like the cemeteries at Sutton Hoo and Snape – are sited on higher ground overlooking estuaries. The evidence for Burgh is more circumstantial (Stevenson 1922, 43–5; Scarfe 1986, 49–50), and its identification as Fursa's *Cnobheresburg* (Hoggett 2010, 67–9) must be regarded as speculative, but if there was a seventh- or eighth-century monastic community here it is striking that it also appears to have been placed in Rendlesham's wooded peripheries. At one level this could be explained by the availability of holdings to be granted to new religious establishments: if rights to lands in the core were already in the hands of major magnates then new estates in the wooded peripheries may have been all that was available – a scenario that would also be broadly consistent with the eighth-century expansion of settlement into less favourable areas indicated by the distribution of Ipswich ware. It does, however, also suggest a consciousness of centre and periphery within the putative territory, and perhaps a conscious distinction between geographies of the secular and sacred. None of these, of course, need be mutually exclusive. One further element here is the possibility that the first seat of the East Anglian bishopric at *Dommoc* is to be identified with Walton Castle, the former Saxon Shore fort overlooking the southern coastal approach to the mouth of the Deben estuary. As noted above, late fourth- and early fifth-century activity at Rendlesham may have been linked to the administrative hinterland of the Saxon Shore. As well as fitting a pattern of peripheral locations for ecclesiastical or monastic sites, and an elevated position above water, if the seat of the bishopric was established here in the 630s because it lay at the mouth of the royal river Deben on land at the ruler's direct disposal, the implied relationship with the elite complex at Rendlesham would represent a remarkable echo and inversion of the relationship between the two places under latest Imperial authority.

Rendlesham's importance as a focal place in the fifth and sixth centuries was rooted in part in its role and status under the late Empire. Its choice as the location for the elite complex in the later sixth century is likely to have been conditioned by its existing importance, its physical centrality to the region, and its location in respect to major communication routes. It is notable that although there is easy access to Rendlesham from the head of the Deben estuary and from the suggested east–west land route crossing the Deben at Wilford, the site is located a few kilometres from each, at sufficient distance to protect it from surprise attack but close enough for a retinue here to control the major land and water approaches.

Rendlesham saw radical and deliberate changes in character and status in the second quarter of the eighth century. This should be seen against the wider abandonment of great hall complexes across southern Britain with the functions they integrated as periodic centres for royal residence, places of administration and centres for surplus extraction subsequently configured in different geographies of residence and rulership (Blair 2018; Scull and Thomas 2020). This change and the decline in coin use at Rendlesham coincide with similar patterns at other sites in south-east Suffolk, notably Coddenham in the Gipping valley (Ch 9.1), and with the expansion of the settlement area and monetary activity at Ipswich, suggesting a major realignment of economic networks and functions. These issues, however, and how the Deben territory articulated with the wider areas of south-east Suffolk and East Anglia, need to be explored at a larger scale and are considered in Part 2 (Chs 9–11) of this monograph.

The eighth and ninth centuries saw an expansion of settlement into previously less attractive farming land at a time when landholding became increasingly vested in smaller proto-seigneurial holdings (Faith 1997, 153–77). Filling the farming landscape closer to its carrying capacity would have put an increasing premium on landed resource and helped to promote the formal definition and consolidation of boundaries between small estates. The focus of this study ends at the turn of ninth century and we have warned against the retrospective deployment of tenth- and eleventh-century administrative geographies to define earlier configurations. It is, however, worth noting that where hundredal meeting places coincide with significant places in the earlier geographies of settlement and rulership they may hint at pre-hundredal territorial and administrative arrangements. The meeting place from which Carlford hundred was named is a stream crossing in Hasketon parish close to the activity focus of the late fifth to late sixth centuries (Anderson 1934, 91–2; Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, 30). The place-name *Thingelowe* (OE *þing* 'thing' + *hlāw* 'mound') may indicate that the Snape barrow cemetery was the meeting place of Plomesgate hundred (Filmer-Sankey and Pestell 2001, 266). An echo of the *vicus* at Hacheston is preserved in the name Wicklaw hundred, probably named after its meeting place, which was still in use in 1160. The first element ('the *vicus* mound/hill') is usually supposed, like the first element of Wickham Market, to refer to the Roman small town at Hacheston (Warner 1996, 154) but Briggs (2018) has recently noted the presence of the surname *de Wykelawe* in Rendlesham and Hacheston in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and the existence of a lost *Wikelohel* (ie '*Wicklaw*-hill' or 'hill of the *Wicklaw* family') in a fine of 1205, its precise site unlocated but probably within Rendlesham parish. Whether in Rendlesham, Hacheston or somewhere in between, the presence of a meeting place for an extensive territory in the immediate area of Hacheston and Rendlesham provides further evidence for the long-term administrative importance and territorial centrality of this area.

7 Conclusions: early medieval Rendlesham in long-term perspective

7.1 Rendlesham and Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*

Barbara Yorke

7.1.1 Rendlesham as *vicus regius*

Rendlesham is the only named East Anglian royal centre in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. The context is the baptism of King Swithhelm of the East Saxons by his bishop Cedd between 655 and 663/4, which took place in the *vicus regius* of Rendlesham with King Æthelwald of the East Angles standing as his sponsor. Given the focus of this volume the passage deserves citation in full.

> *Successit autem Sigbercto in regnum Suidhelm, filius Sexbaldi, qui baptizatus est ab ipso Cedde in prouincia Orientalium Anglorum, in uico regio qui dicitur Rendlaesham, id est mansio Rendili; suscepitque eum ascendentem de fonte sancto Aediluald rex ipsius gentis Orientalium Anglorum, frater Anna regis eorundem.*
>
> Swithhelm, the son of Seaxbald, was successor to Sigeberht [as king of the East Saxons]. He was baptised by Cedd in East Anglia, in the royal vill called Rendlesham, that is the residence of Rendil. King Æthelwald of East Anglia, the brother of King Anna, the previous king of the East Angles, was his sponsor (III, 22; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 284–5).

Rendlesham is described as *vicus regius*. Bede's normal term for a royal residence was *villa regia* (Campbell 1979b, 43–5), so one of the first questions to be asked is whether *vicus regius* was an alternative name for *villa regia* or a different type of site. Bede is known for his careful application of terminology and it has been noted that when he departs from his normal practice he is likely to have been following information (probably written) from one of his informants (ibid, 39). This would seem to be the case with *vicus regius*. *Vicus* was also used in III, 21, the preceding chapter, for comparable circumstances when King Peada of the Middle Angles was baptised by Bishop Finan of Lindisfarne *in uico regis inlustri* [of King Oswiu of Northumbria] *Ad Murum*. Peada returned to his own province with Cedd and three other priests. When Oswiu subsequently took control of Mercia and Middle Anglia after the battle of the river Winwæd in 655, Cedd was dispatched to the province of the East Saxons. Cedd is the real subject of both III, 21 and 22, and was one of Bede's monastic heroes on whom he received information from the brothers of Cedd's home monastery of Lastingham in Deira (Yorkshire). V*icus regius* or *regis* may therefore have been provided by Bede's informants from Lastingham and reflects the vocabulary in use there (Sargent 2020, 48–54).

Bede's second reference to *Ad Murum* (III, 22) – describing the baptism of Sigebert 'Sanctus' by Bishop Finan, under the direction of King Oswiu – refers to it as *villa regia*, Bede's more usual term for a royal residence (Campbell 1979b, 43–5). This strongly suggests that the terms *villa regia* and *vicus regius* were seen as interchangeable in Bede's Northumbria. Catterick (also in Deira) is referred to twice as a *vicus* (II, 14 and III, 14) but the contexts in which the references occur, as well as other references in later Northumbrian annals, implies that it too was seen as a *villa regia* (Pickles 2018, 46–9). In the II, 14 reference, for instance, Bede describes Paulinus baptising Northumbrians in the *villa regia* of Yeavering in Bernicia, and in Deira at the *vicum* of Catterick, while also building a church at the *villa regia* of *Campodunum* (Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 187–9). In other words, Catterick, Yeavering and *Campodunum* appear to have been comparable places, and possibly *vicum* may have been applied to Catterick for stylistic reasons, to avoid repetition. Rendlesham would seem to have been considered a place of the same type and all may have been more than just a royal residential complex. One can also note that Compiègne, referred to in III, 28 as a *vicus regius,* is called *villa regalis* in other sources (eg *Vita Eligii*, ch 76, Krusch 1902, 737). In the Old English version of the *Ecclesiastical History*, *villa* and *vicus* are both translated as *tun*, and this would appear to be the regular Old English designation for this type of site, especially in Wessex (Sawyer 1983). The four *tunas* recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* as captured by King Cuthwulf of Wessex in 571 are described as *regiae villae* in Æthelweard's Latin translation (Campbell 1962, 13).

Bede interprets the place-name of Rendlesham – discussed above in Chapter 2.1.2 – as meaning *mansio Rendili* 'the residence of Rendil'. Bede's place-name etymology is often suspect as his default explanation was to assume derivation from a personal name which is by no means always correct (eg Rochester). The element *rand* is attested in personal names from medieval Francia and Scandinavia, of which Rendil could be a diminutive, but seems to be otherwise unattested in England. An alternative etymology derives the name from OE *rand* 'a shore' and notes later East Anglian usage for 'a marshy reed-covered strip of land between a river and its embankment' (Watts 2004, 497). *Mansio* was used quite extensively in the *Ecclesiastical History* for different types of dwelling site but this is the only place in which it referred to a building that was not in the possession of an ecclesiastic (David Sherlock, pers comm). These *mansiones* could vary in size but the term could be applied to quite a substantial array of buildings within a compound, as in the case of the *mansio* near Hexham which Bishop John used as a retreat (V, 2; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 456–9).

Bruce-Mitford explored the possibility that Rendlesham could be the location of two events from the reign of King Rædwald referred to in the *Ecclesiastical History*, but for which no location is given (Bruce-Mitford 1974). One is the *palatium* of Rædwald where King Edwin of Northumbria had his vision during his exile among the East Angles (II, 12; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 174–83), the other the site of the *fanum* in which Rædwald had both pagan and Christian altars (II, 15; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 188–91). Although Bruce-Mitford went further than the evidence warranted in suggesting that both were likely to be references to Rendlesham, that must remain a possibility, though it should be noted that the *fanum* is not specifically said to have been at a royal residence. Wherever it was, it was still visible when King Aldwulf, who was a nephew of Æthelwald, was growing up in East Anglia for he recalled seeing it when he was a boy (II, 15; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 190–1). This is likely to have been around the 650s, that is, at about the same time as Swithhelm's baptism.

7.1.2 The political significance of the baptism of King Swithhelm at Rendlesham

The record of Swithhelm's baptism at Rendlesham would seem to have been included in the *Ecclesiastical History* as part of the achievements of Bishop Cedd. A key aspect of the entry is that we have an East Saxon king baptised by an East Saxon bishop, but in a royal vill of the East Angles whose king acted as godfather. This was clearly not just a religious act, but also a political one, and it seems to echo the ceremony already mentioned that took place at *Ad Murum* when Swithhelm's predecessor Sigebert 'Sanctus' was baptised after being persuaded to do so by the arguments of King Oswiu. As Oswiu was not only king of Northumbria but also, it would appear, overlord of most of southern Britain, Sigebert's baptism in a royal Northumbrian vill at Oswiu's behest can be seen as part of the negotiations of a relationship between a powerful king and a client. Previously King Eorpwald, the son of Rædwald, had been baptised at the insistence of the Northumbrian king Edwin. Bede does not locate nor date that event precisely, but it is likely to have occurred soon after the death of Rædwald (616x627) to mark a change in the balance of power when Edwin succeeded the latter as overlord of the southern kingdoms (II, 15; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 188–91; Yorke 1990, 60). Another possible parallel comes from the period when King Wulfhere of Mercia was southern overlord in the 660s and stood as godfather to King Æthelwalh of the South Saxons who was baptised as part of the clientship arrangements between them. We are probably justified, therefore, in assuming that King Æthelwald of the East Angles was the superior of King Swithhelm of the East Saxons and that the baptismal ceremony was in part intended to reinforce that fact.

What complicates the interpretation is that the baptism was carried out by Cedd, who was Swithhelm's bishop, not Æthelwald's. From the sequence of bishops of

East Anglia that has been reconstructed, it would appear that the baptism took place during the episcopate of Berhtgisl (also called Boniface) (652/3–69/70) who is not mentioned in the account (Whitelock 1972, 20). Cedd was also King Oswiu's appointee and so there may be an indication in his presence of more complicated tiers of overlordship, with Æthelwald as Oswiu's agent but still superior to Swithhelm. When Æthelwalh of the South Saxons became the client of Wulfhere of Mercia, the alliance was sealed not just by his baptism but by Wulfhere putting him in charge of the lesser provinces of Wight and the *Meonware* (IV, 13; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 370–7); their conversion and ecclesiastical provision was subsequently organised from Sussex.

We might be better able to construe the political significance of Swithhelm's baptism at Rendlesham if we could date the event more exactly. The baptism must have occurred after 655 (when Æthelwald succeeded his brother Æthelhere who had died in the battle of the river Winwæd) and before 663/4 (when Cedd, Swithhelm and, possibly, Æthelwald died of plague). Dating to within an eight- or nine-year span is not bad for the seventh century but some significant events took place within that timespan including Oswiu's loss of control of the Mercian kingdom when Wulfhere became its king in 658. It would fit well with a context shortly after the battle of the Winwæd when Oswiu was at the height of his powers and reinforcing his control over areas that had been subject to Penda of Mercia, the leader of the opposing army in the battle (and who was killed there). As Bede observed, Æthelhere of the East Angles had fought on Penda's side in the battle (III, 24; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 290–1), and the baptismal ceremony, overseen by Oswiu's agent Bishop Cedd, could be seen as also marking East Anglia's political realignment from Mercia to Northumbria.

7.1.3 A church at Rendlesham

The account may be taken to imply that there was a church at Rendlesham by the 650s (Ch 4.3.3). One of the features of Anglo-Saxon conversion was that, unlike in some other former Roman provinces, no baptisteries were built to cope with adult baptisms (Blair 2010). Mass baptisms of the conversion period could take place in rivers but King Edwin is said to have been baptised in a wooden church at York which had been built specifically for this purpose while he was undergoing instruction as a catechumen (II, 14; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 186–7). By the 650s it would surely have been expected that the baptism of a king such as Swithhelm would take place in an appropriate ecclesiastical setting. The full ritual involved more than the act of baptism with water. After a preliminary anointing with the oil of the chrism, the head was bound with white cloth and the candidate wore a white baptismal robe for eight days before the unbinding of the chrism (Foot 1992). The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records how in 878, after the battle of Edington, the defeated Danish leader Guthrum and thirty of his men were baptised at Aller, near Athelney, (with King Alfred standing as godfather to Guthrum) and that the unbinding of the chrism took place at Wedmore (Whitelock 1961, 49–50), a *villa regia* according to Asser (ch 56; Stevenson 1904, 46–7). A church is not specifically mentioned as being part of the proceedings, though it is probably implied that there was one at Aller and it may have been the closest church to Athelney. But a *villa regia* was certainly deemed necessary for the twelve days of entertainment and gift-giving which Alfred provided for Guthrum and his men. The ceremonies may not have been as elaborate in the 650s but are likely to have been a major piece of public royal ritual enacted at Rendlesham.

Rendlesham church has the potentially early dedication to St Gregory. It is impossible to know how early that dedication is but as Pope Gregory I only died in 604 it is unlikely that any members of the mission he dispatched to England under the leadership of Augustine, or even Bishop Felix who worked with the permission of Canterbury, could have founded a church with that dedication as there would not have been time for Gregory to have developed a reputation as a saint (an officially sponsored cult emerged in Rome in the later seventh century) (Thacker 1998). As noted above, although it is tempting to suggest that Rædwald's temple to which he is said to have added an altar to the Christian God after his baptism in Kent could have been at Rendlesham (Bruce-Mitford 1974, 82–7), that is not something that is directly supported by Bede's text which does not even locate the temple at a royal residence (II, 15; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 188–91). Although it is likely that a church was built at the *vicus regius* of Rendlesham by the 650s, the exact date of foundation cannot be specified.

7.1.4 Conclusions

Bede's account is disappointingly vague on where East Anglian events took place and it is probably thanks to the precision of records from Lastingham concerning the activities of Cedd that he learnt that Swithhelm of the East Saxons was baptised in the *vicus regius* of Rendlesham. This event recalls comparable baptisms with political connotations of overlordship that Bede described as occurring at royal vills in Northumbria. King Eorpwald may have experienced such an event when he was

persuaded to accept baptism by his overlord King Edwin of Northumbria. The implication is that Rendlesham was a similar type of royal centre, probably with a church and the facilities to entertain, and no doubt impress, a neighbouring, but politically inferior king and his entourage.

7.2 The late fourth and fifth centuries

Rendlesham shows significant reconfigurations of settlement pattern and major changes in material culture over the first half of the fifth century but the assemblage very probably represents continuous activity within the survey area through the fourth and fifth centuries. The assemblage includes latest Roman material culture types and coinage, and earliest post-Roman material culture types whose origins and parallels lie outside the *limes* in northern Europe and south Scandinavia (Ch 3).

The evidence for an official and military presence, and relative civilian wealth, suggests that Rendlesham was the centre for a range of functions linked to Roman government, and a place at which taxation was gathered, at the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the fifth (Chs 4.2 and 6.3). It is widely agreed that after the break from the Western Empire around 409–11, the centralised administration supporting state institutions and the military became redundant and was abandoned, with power devolving to the underlying networks of influence and authority focused on local aristocracies and landowners and – especially in north Britain – local military leadership (Esmonde Cleary 1989, 131–61; 2011; Wickham 2005, 309–14; Collins 2012; Gerrard 2013). These local landowners constituted the curial classes in whom, under the late Empire, civic authority was embodied with social and economic power (Jones 1964, 737–45; Esmonde Cleary 1989, 8–10; Gerrard 2013, 233–44). Although subject to change and renegotiation, the local fabric of society and social relations persisted in these ways in many areas.

What this might have meant at a local level is easy to speculate upon and difficult to demonstrate but must have encompassed a wide range of contingencies, dynamics and outcomes. Freedom from the need to exact and render centralised taxation and military supply may have contributed to a de-monetisation and shifted the emphasis of lowland farming economies to less intensive cereal production and a greater emphasis on livestock (Esmonde Cleary 1989, 139–41, 158–9; Dark 2000, 142–3, 152–6; Gerrard 2013, 100–3) but it seems unlikely that magnates dependent on rural estates gave up trying to extract surplus and services, and there must have been a strong temptation to convert central taxation into personal dues under the vestigial sanction of civic authority. There must also have been ruptures and realignments of social relationships. Without the power of the state there would have been opportunities for tenants and peasants to break free from ties with landowners and landlords. The freeing-up of state-controlled land, and that owned by absentee landlords or those who decided to become absentee, would have afforded opportunities to people at different levels, both cultivators and expansion-minded landowners. Where socio-economic power and nominal legal authority commanded a degree of consent, and/or could be backed by force or coercion (if, for example, a magnate or landlord could deploy armed retainers), then local lordship and local political identities – micro polities – might be established (cf Gerrard 2013, 236–44, 259–60). Against a background of economic, social and political dislocation there might be powerful forces towards local social and political cohesion, not least the attractions of physical protection and security in numbers. The inertial effect of pre-existing authority and inherited structures of power and society would play a part in this, as would the psychological impulse to cling to the familiar in times of uncertainty.

It was these small worlds, and their inhabitants, that also saw migration to eastern Britain from Continental societies around the North Sea coast in the first half and middle years of the fifth century. The material culture profile at Rendlesham is consistent with the presence of people from the northern Continent and southern Scandinavia from the third decade of the fifth century, if not earlier: the supporting-arm brooches of Typ Perlberg could in principle be as early as the second decade of the fifth century or even pre-date the break with the Western Empire (Ch 3.4.1.1; Hills and Lucy 2013, 303). The cremation cemetery is consistent with the place then acting as a funerary focus for a segment of the wider population whose cultural practice – inherited or adopted – expressed affiliation with the societies of the Continental North Sea coastal province, and fragments of weapon fittings suggest an elite warrior presence with links to south Scandinavia in the middle fifth century. However, as discussed above (Ch 5.6), population movement does not imply wholesale population replacement. It is entirely possible that a fifth-century British magnate family exercising power in the Rendlesham area lost out to a military leader from the Continent or south Scandinavia in the middle decades of the fifth century. Such a scenario, however, must assume a substantial continuity of local population and rural

economy, and accommodate the possibility that a post-Roman British magnate polity may have included groups from the Continent or their descendants. Given the contexts and dynamics of migration it is likely that incoming groups encompassed a diversity of identities and allegiances and, to set up a hypothetical example, it is not clear why second-generation farmers whose parents had settled from what is now Lower Saxony should necessarily feel greater alignment with a war-leader from what is now Denmark than with the local indigenous population and its leadership. Equally, it is possible that local magnate lineages retained some degree of power and that some of the leading individuals in south-east Suffolk in the middle and later fifth century, and later, were British by descent.

In this respect, it is interesting to note the late Roman official or military belt fittings at Rendlesham that may have come from fifth-century or later contexts (Ch 4.2.2.2). There is no reason to see these as representing incoming mercenaries and settlers rather than circulating within post-Roman British society, especially given the militarisation of higher-status masculine identities in the late Roman world, a trend likely to have been intensified in early fifth-century Britain by the elision of military and civil spheres in personal leadership (Böhme 1986; Halsall 2000; 2007, 101–10, 482–8; Scull 2023a; 2023b). The incomplete Typ Glaston brooch – a type also interpreted as a component of militarised masculine display – would also sit well in such a context. The possible early dating of the Typ Mahndorf and Perlberg supporting-arm brooches serves as a reminder that there were individuals within late Roman society who had come from, or who had links with, societies across the *limes*, and whose contacts and knowledge of the provinces of Britannia may have helped enable subsequent settlement from the Continental North Sea coastal region. There is a case for considering these brooches not simply as an intrusive cultural marker but for taking a more nuanced approach, and accepting that they circulated as a specific element of the material culture suite of latest Roman Britain as well as arriving with settlers in the earliest phases of post-Roman migration (cf Hills and Lucy 2013, 303; Halsall 2000).

Rendlesham was a persistent focus for settlement and activity from late prehistory but exhibits a local importance only from the late fourth century AD. It is easy to envisage how a place linked to taxation and jurisdiction under the Imperial administration might then become a focus for authority and exaction under the aegis of a local aristocrat, magistrate or military leader, and how this in turn might be translated into lordship – whether that of a local aristocrat and his retinue or the leader of a warband from overseas. If Rendlesham is to be identified as a locus of transition from official authority to magnate power in the second and third decades of the fifth century, and as an early post-Roman magnate centre, then it can be seen as the focus of local networks of extraction, obligation and authority from which structures of wider lordship and hegemony developed, retaining significance as a seat of power irrespective of whether its leading families were of indigenous British or immigrant Continental ancestry, or both. Subsequent configurations of social and political identity were the product of complex and contingent interactions situated in the circumstances of the time in which cultural inheritance, expressions of affiliation or distinction (at a range of social and geographic scales) and appeals to the past were all actively deployed.

7.3 A central place complex and royal settlement

Rendlesham was a place of local significance in the fifth and sixth centuries that became a centre of much wider importance from the later sixth century when the greater scale, diversity and reach of the settlement's economic and social profiles, together with the evidence for the existence of major halls, indicate the establishment of an elite complex which was the principal place of a wider territory.

We have discussed in Chapter 1 how a range of central functions might be enacted at a single place or be distributed across different places in the landscape, and have explored the distinction between central person and central place. A further useful distinction may therefore be drawn between the practice and materialisation of rulership, and the social and economic infrastructures that supported it. To the former belong evidence for elite lifestyle, culture and contacts, patronage and conspicuous consumption, assemblies and the theatre of rulership, and public cult practice; to the latter farming, the collection and processing of a landed surplus, and routine craft production and exchange. While these two categories inevitably intersect, they offer a framework within which to characterise the networks and hierarchies of social, economic and political power represented by the material evidence, and to consider how the activities transacted at Rendlesham may have served to integrate the landed economy with the social and political relationships of lordship, centred on elite groups and individuals, and so with the wider networks of power and exchange that operated at the elite level.

Rendlesham was the centre of farming, extractive and administrative hinterlands, and its periodic function as an

elite residence and centre of rulership depended upon the capacity to feed and service, from time to time, a royal or magnate household and its retinue. There was a mixed farming regime with an emphasis on stock raising, and the evidence is consistent with the receipt of additional food renders from a wider hinterland. Lavish consumption of meat suggests episodes of feasting associated with periodic elite residence, and an elite presence is confirmed by the finds of high-status items and gold coinage. There is direct evidence for fine metalworking in copper alloy, silver and gold for elite patrons. Gold coinage and fragments from hanging bowls and east Mediterranean copper-alloy basins show that people here were acquiring the inter-regional imports that made up part of the contemporary elite cultural package, with raw materials for the production of status items acquired through same channels. We have argued above (Ch 5.5) that in the elite sphere the control of access to craft skills, and so to the material trappings of elite identity, could reinforce the relationships of service and reward which were fundamental to personal lordship, and in the same way socially restricted access to imported prestige items might be manipulated to promote and reinforce power and social distance. Both examples illustrate how control of assets and resources might act to align aspects of economic with social and political centrality, enacted periodically at specific places.

This coincidence of social and economic centralities, and their links to political authority, is also seen in the evidence for coin use from the later sixth century. The coin assemblage represents transactions over a period that spanned the circulation of Continental gold issues, the production of the first English gold coinages, and the transition from gold to silver in the third quarter of the seventh century. Transactions in gold would conventionally be seen as social and jurisdictional payments such as tribute, fines and gifts, but the evidence for trading contact with the Mediterranean world also indicates its use in commercial transactions, albeit of a socially restricted nature. The lower value silver coinage is usually seen as circulating in an increasingly monetised market economy but would also have been used in jurisdictional and administrative payments. It is highly probable that first gold shillings and then early silver pennies were struck here under royal authority. Bullion and coinage flowed disproportionately to Rendlesham, and as an early centre of coin use it acted to promote wider and deeper monetisation in its hinterland.

Like the coins, much of the ploughsoil assemblage, including status items such as harness and weapon fittings, appears to represent material dropped on the old ground surface and can be seen as the aggregate loss from periodic gatherings. At least some of this material, therefore, is likely to be a residue of the actions and transactions of rulership at a theatre of power: public hospitality, gift-giving and tribute-taking, the dispensing of justice and the exercise of jurisdiction, all in the context of gatherings of local leaders with their armed followers. A permanent administrative function, the periodic presence of an elite household, and assemblies of the social elite would also be powerful attractions for directed trade and might over time foster a periodic market or fair. The evidence for the manufacture on a considerable scale of low-value utilitarian items in copper alloy suggests some centralisation of specialist craft production for a population rather larger than that of the settlement complex.

Rendlesham, then, can be characterised as a magnate farm and periodic elite residence, co-located with a more extensive farming settlement, that acted as a collection point for a landed surplus, dues and tribute, as a centre from which delegated authority was exercised, as a venue for the cyclical enactment of governance by peripatetic rulers and – as a correlate of this – as a focus for long-distance exchange and more localised economic transactions. Even without Bede's reference, the archaeology would identify the place as a likely royal centre. The physical extent of the settlement, its material culture signature, and the range of activities all add dimensions of understanding to Bede's terminology.

Yet questions still remain when setting the archaeology against Bede's account. Given what we know of Bede's sources (Ch 1.5; above, 7.1.4), it is likely that he understood Rendlesham to have been a *vicus regius* in the middle of the seventh century rather than applying retrospectively his understanding of its contemporary status when he was writing in the 720s. Although clearly an elite place from the later sixth until the earlier eighth centuries, and – on the basis of Bede's account – a royal centre for some if not all of this time, it is not clear whether this applies to all or part of the settlement complex. Bede appears to have used the terms *villa regia* and *vicus regius* interchangeably (above, 7.1) and so there is probably no significance to be read into the use of the term *vicus* rather than *villa* in relation to Rendlesham. That said, given the extensive and poly-focal character of the complex, it is entirely possible that there was a balance of interests within the settlement, with royal rights vested more in some areas than others. For example, royal ownership might have been confined to the elite complex and its direct landholdings – whatever they were – with other farms held independently and the broader farming and resource territories of the settlement subject to a balance of individual and collective

Fig 7.3.1 Rendlesham as it may have looked in the middle of the seventh century, looking north and west across the great hall complex on the promontory above the river Deben. *Edward Impey; © Suffolk County Council*

entitlements. These would, of course, be moderated by any services, dues or renders arising from relationships of lordship and by the ruler's need to guarantee sufficient space for an influx of people, as well as peace and protection, during episodes of residence and assembly.

Whether or not there was a church in the seventh or eighth centuries is also an open question – although with the balance of probability perhaps favouring a church by the 650s (above, 7.1) – as is whether or not Rendlesham was a pre-Christian cult centre. Direct evidence for cult activity is scanty and equivocal at best. The two gold bracteates could be from votive deposits, and the age profile of horse remains from the dump layers in RLM 013 would be consistent with horse sacrifice or the consumption of horse meat although there is no unequivocal evidence of horse butchery (Scull 2014, 63–4). Rendlesham is not unusual in this respect: with the exception of the Northumbrian *villa regia* at Yeavering there is only sparse evidence for pre-Christian cult activity at other great hall sites (Hope-Taylor 1977; McBride 2020, 60–7). However, cult focus was an important element of contemporary Scandinavian central place complexes (Hauck 1994; Fabech 1994; Nielsen *et al* 1994; Hedeager 2002; 2011, 148–63; Larsson 2004; 2015; Jørgensen 2009) and it is highly unlikely, given the intrinsic entanglement of cult belief with the world-view and ideologies of rulership, that cult practice – public and private – was not a significant element of the behaviours enacted at Rendlesham. It is in this context, if not at this specific place, that we should locate the cult house (*fanum*) in which Rædwald honoured both Christ and his traditional deities.

The economic, social and political centrality of Rendlesham is matched by its central location within the wider Deben valley territory, close enough to the site of the Roman small town at Hacheston to suggest that the Rendlesham/Hacheston area had some longer-term and persisting significance as a central area. We have argued that the Rendlesham central place complex was part of a monumental landscape of rulership focused on a core zone in the Deben valley (Ch 6.3). The elite residence was more prominently situated than the barrow cemeteries at Sutton Hoo and Snape, and the smoke from its hearths and fires would have marked its position from a distance – a visual reminder of its centrality in the physical as well the cognitive landscapes (Fig 7.3.1).

7.4 From the eighth century to Domesday

One of the most striking features of the settlement at Rendlesham is its permanently diminished status after the second quarter of the eighth century. This is starkly illustrated by the evidence of Domesday Book, which suggests that the vill was purely agricultural in character in the second half of the eleventh century. It was a modest place in divided ownership, listed under no fewer than eight headings (pertaining to the fiefs of Count Alan of Brittany, Robert Malet, Roger Bigod, Hervey of Bourges and the Abbey of Ely), some of which include complex subdivisions. Three of the holdings were described as 'manors', but of these, one extended over a mere 34 acres and had only two bordars as tenants. The largest, rated at one carucate, was in Malet's fief. It had only ten tenants, although it also possessed a mill. It is interesting, given the fact that St Gregory's lies isolated from the probable site of any manorial hall, that the church recorded by Domesday in Rendlesham was associated with a holding which was not described as a manor: a 30-acre estate held in 1086 by Gilbert of Wassant, in the fief of Robert Malet, formerly held by an unnamed free man and with a recorded population of two. The other entries concern free men, or small groups of free men, holding small acreages and with only one or two under-tenants. In the vill as a whole there were, on the various holdings, 7½ acres of meadow and eight plough teams – the latter figure impossible to convert with confidence into an area of arable but suggesting, perhaps, around 1,000 acres under cultivation (roughly half the area of the present parish). There was no recorded woodland.

What is perhaps more significant is the absence of anything in Domesday to suggest that Rendlesham had an earlier importance. Elsewhere in East Anglia, and more widely across southern Britain, landscape historians and others have identified many examples of former royal tribute centres and ancient caputs – and the extensive territories with which these were associated – using a range of evidence: place-names, post-Conquest documentary sources, and above all Domesday. Indeed, the reconstruction of 'multiple estates' (Jones 1971; 1976) and/or the early 'folk territories' (Joliffe 1926) from which these supposedly developed has become something of a cottage industry in landscape and regional history (Bassett 1997; Harvey 1997; Warner 1988; Williamson 1993, 92–104; 2010, 115–63; Friel 1982; Short 1987; Rippon 2022). Many of these attempts have arguably been characterised by poor definition of terms and concepts and a failure to distinguish different levels of scale (Williamson 2013a, 27–30), as well as by an assumption that the progress of territorial evolution was always in the direction of fragmentation – from large units to small – without acknowledging the possibility that the former might have been aggregated out of the latter relatively late in the pre-Conquest period (Hadley 2000). Jones' initial formulation of the 'multiple estate' model, based primarily on twelfth- and thirteenth-century evidence from Wales, has also been criticised by Faith for being 'too fiscal, too royal, too mathematical, and above all too *Welsh*' (Faith 2008, 9). All this said, there remains amongst scholars in a number of disciplines a consensus that early territorial organisation was based on units more extensive than the manors and vills recorded by Domesday; and that in many cases their configuration can be reconstructed, with varying degrees of confidence, using the kinds of evidence just outlined.

In particular, the former role of particular places as major estate centres can be signalled in Domesday by obligations owed there by the inhabitants of neighbouring vills, and especially by those individuals described as 'socmen'. In some parts of the country it may be indicated by the large numbers of such men recorded in the entry for a particular vill, although in reality dwelling in neighbouring places. According to many researchers, socmen represent the remnants of the peasants dwelling on the outlying *warland* of extensive early territories (Faith 1997, 97–101, 121–5). Other signs that a Domesday vill may once have formed a major estate centre include the possession of tracts of woodland more extensive than could be accommodated within their bounds, implying the retention of rights to distant wood pastures long after the alienation of most outlying portions of its territory; and the presence of a church either explicitly described as a minster or with a particularly large landed endowment suggestive of such a status on the assumption that, to a large extent, structures of ecclesiastical territorial organisation mirrored secular ones with important early churches being erected close to aristocratic or kingly halls. The fact that a vill gave its name to the hundred in which it lay may also be suggestive, indicating that the hundred court met there. All these indications, in the pages of Domesday, of a place's ancient status may receive further support from post-Conquest sources which describe archaic obligations, ecclesiastical or secular, owed by one place to another.

Domesday Rendlesham, however, conspicuously lacks any of the accepted indications of archaic importance. It was a fairly populous place – with forty-

six-and-a-half recorded households it was in the upper 20 per cent of Suffolk vills – but it was minutely divided. It was not a unitary vill, owned by a monastic house, a major aristocrat or the Crown. In 1066 all the holdings had been held by free men variously 'commended' to Edric of Laxfield, Edwin Grimm or the Abbey of Ely. These were freeholders, not socmen, and there are no signs that individuals living in any neighbouring vills owed suit of court or other duties at Rendlesham. The vill did not share its name with the hundred in which it lay and the church, which was on the property held by Gilbert of Wassant from Robert Malet, had a modest endowment of only 20 acres. There are no signs in the post-Conquest documents that any of the Rendlesham manors enjoyed unusual rights and privileges nor is there any evidence in the fabric of Rendlesham church that it developed from an early minster – it is a small and simple structure which appears entirely of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century date (Pevsner 1961, 371). The parish never gave its name to a rural deanery (as minster churches often did) and it had no tithable lands in neighbouring parishes. Only its dedication to St Gregory might hint, perhaps, at an early significance (above, 7.1; Jones 2007, 160).

The absence of conventional indicators of Rendlesham's early importance is a useful reminder that the kind of 'retrogressive' approaches often employed in reconstructions of early medieval territorial arrangements can, on occasions, mislead. It presumably reflects the fact that, by 1086, Rendlesham had functioned for several centuries as nothing more than a collection of agricultural establishments. Much less metalwork dating to the period after, than before, *c* 750 has been recovered from the site and this is dominated by everyday items such as strap ends, pins and simple hooked tags. Tenth- and eleventh-century material is particularly meagre. The coins tell a similar story, with very few examples of the period *c* 750–1066, few of William I and William II and none of Henry I (Ch 3.7.4). To an extent, this pattern is widely shared by rural sites which have been subject to systematic metal-detecting but this emphasises the point that Rendlesham had ceased to be a place of unusual importance.

During the ninth to eleventh centuries there was a progressive focusing of settlement in RLM 038 and around the area of Rendlesham Green and the parish church in RLM 013, 014, 042 and 043 (Ch 4.2.3.3). Some material in RLM 013 is likely to come from a site wholly or partially obscured beneath Naunton Hall. Material in the south-east of RLM 013 and south-west of RLM 014, including Thetford wares, suggests farms fronting the green. How these different sites relate to the holdings listed in Domesday is an open question. The largest of the Domesday manors – that held by Gilbert of Colville from Robert Malet – is probably to be associated with the location of the present Naunton Hall (Ch 2.1) and may have developed directly from the sixth- to eight-century elite settlement. The main medieval manor, 'Naunton Hall als Rendlesham', can be identified with the second largest of the two Domesday holdings to be described as a 'manor', that held by Godiva before the Conquest and afterwards forming part of Hervey of Bourges' fief, and is probably to be associated with the location of the present High House (Ch 2.1). It is tempting to identify the site represented by the common-edge scatter of material around St Gregory with the holding of Gilbert of Wassant, which included the church, but there is no firm evidence for this.

The material in RLM 013, 014, 042 and 043 suggests the kind of common-edge settlement frequent in East Anglia and, to a lesser extent, throughout south-east England. It is possible that the activity focus in RLM 038, which lies immediately north of the tributary valley, also had a common-edge location. This low-lying area was private property by the time the earliest maps were surveyed but land of this type often had the status of common in the period before the fourteenth century.

The congregation of farms and minor manors on the margins of greens and commons, a particularly prominent feature in East Anglia, began in the pre-Conquest period but intensified thereafter, and in many cases served to suppress the development of older sites and to disperse settlement more widely across the landscape (Wade-Martins 1980; Warner 1987; Rogerson 1995; Roberts and Wrathmell 2002). Positioning farms in this manner had obvious practical advantages, in that it facilitated the movement of livestock from yards and tofts onto the common pasture. It might be argued that farms often congregated around what post-medieval maps suggest were tiny greens, which would have provided little in the way of grazing. But many of these are probably the truncated remains of more extensive areas of common land – or of wide droves which provided access to these – which had otherwise been removed by subsequent encroachment and enclosure (Williamson 2013a, 154–62). Rendlesham Green itself, to judge from the distribution of early medieval metalwork finds, originally formed a ribbon of unploughed ground which incorporated the main north–south routeway through the early medieval settlement complex. It may have functioned in part as a droveway between the low-lying pastures and meadow beside the Deben and its tributary stream and the more extensive areas of grazing and woodland above the Deben valley.

7.5 Medieval and post-medieval

By the thirteenth century there were six or seven manors in Rendlesham, each probably comprising a mixture of enclosed land (mainly demesne) and open field; within the latter the property of some, at least, of the manors lay intermingled. Consolidation, enclosure and the absorption of copyholds led by the seventeenth century to the emergence of a small number of large ring-fence farms, at least three of which were, for a time, the homes of resident gentry. Through the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries further consolidation of land ownership gradually led to the almost complete domination of the parish by the Thellusson family, who by 1840 owned over 95 per cent of the land, with the glebe and charity land accounting for much of the remainder. Of the 1,910 acres owned by the Thellussons, no fewer than 485 comprised gardens, plantations and parkland around Rendlesham Hall, itself rebuilt on three successive occasions, on slightly different sites, in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Most of the rest – 1,305 acres – lay in four large farms (TNA, PRO IR 30/33/334).

The Thellussons owned some 19,864 acres in east Suffolk by 1871 (Bateman 1883, 378): their near-monopoly of ownership in Rendlesham, the marked concentration of agricultural activity in a few large farms, and the extent of aesthetic and amenity land all fit in well with historical and archaeological models for the spatial organisation of post-medieval landed estates, which generally assume a pattern of 'distance decay' (Clemenson 1982; Rawding 1992; Williamson 2007a). Ownership was most continuous, consolidation of tenancies into large holdings most marked, and landscape manipulation most intense towards the residential 'core', and correspondingly less towards the estate periphery. It is important to emphasise, however, that the role of Rendlesham as a major eighteenth- and nineteenth-century estate centre had no connection with its early medieval importance. It arose entirely through random patterns of inheritance and purchase in the course of the post-medieval period, albeit building on late medieval engrossment and consolidation, and it was largely effected through a massive injection of outside capital from the world of trade and finance brought to east Suffolk by Peter Thellusson in the 1790s. The only possible connection between the importance of the parish in these two periods lies in the character of the local environment: both large post-medieval estates and major centres of early medieval power display a broad association with the areas of relatively light soil (Williamson 2007a, 2–4). By the eighteenth century the sands and sandy loams of the east Suffolk coast were characterised by large estates like Rendlesham, Campsea Ash, Sudbourne, Benhall or Henham, in a way that the claylands to the west were not.

But while environmental influences structured regional patterns of ownership and tenure they did not shape the details. Smaller units of ownership often survived at the interstices of large estates, just as smaller farms persisted towards estate peripheries. Such characteristics often had their roots in medieval tenurial structures but were accentuated by post-medieval developments. The parish of Eyke, and certainly that part lying within the area of the metal-detecting survey, thus developed in different ways to Rendlesham. There were two main manors in the parish by the thirteenth century. By the end of the sixteenth century much of the parish formed a peripheral holding of the Stanhope estates, based in Sudbourne. Significant amounts of open field still remained and – especially within the surveyed area – there were larger numbers of small farms. Even in the middle of the nineteenth century, when the Thellussons had acquired around 80 per cent of Eyke and almost all of the land lying within the metal-detected area, the latter was still divided between four different farms (TNA, IR 30/33/152).

These medieval and post-medieval differences in tenurial patterns and agrarian organisation to the north and south of the parish boundary had a determining influence on the character and distribution of metalwork finds (Ch 4.2.4). By the post-medieval period, comparison with map evidence makes it clear that most of the metal-detected material was entering the ploughsoil through manuring and farming operations. The density of material acts, in effect, as a surrogate for the intensity of agricultural inputs, with the larger, more gentrified and more capitalist farms to the north of the parish boundary generating a pattern of large, dense concentrations of metalwork, separated by near-continuous but lower-density spreads, while the more 'peasant'-like agrarian system to the south produced numerous small, moderately dense but discrete scatters of material. Similar patterns are discernible in the period between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, although with complexities in Rendlesham arising from the existence at this time of outlying peasant farms, since lost, alongside the large demesne farms. Analysis of the medieval and post-medieval archaeology did not form a major part of this project. Nevertheless, these observations demonstrate the potential for using metalwork recovered by systematic detecting surveys to throw important light on the character of agrarian organisation in comparatively recent periods.

7.6 The 'afterlife' of an elite centre

The character and status of settlement at Rendlesham changed radically in the second quarter of the eighth century. Its long-term significance before then is not apparent in the conventional indicators of early importance commonly employed in retrospective approaches to early medieval settlement and landscape (above, 7.4; cf Pestell 2003) and the only possible pointer to its early status, apart from Bede's reference, is the *hām*-place-name (Ch 6.1).

The change in status appears to have coincided with a deliberate remodelling of the site of the elite residence. This would argue deliberate proprietorial intervention and is consistent with the broader proposal that this elite centre – like other great hall complexes – was no longer a necessary or useful element of the apparatus of rulership (McBride 2020, 144–5; Scull and Thomas 2020, 61–4). Over the course of the eighth and ninth centuries the needs for royal residences and places of jurisdiction were met in different ways, through new geographies of rulership linked to more locally distributed systems of lordship (Ch 11; Faith 1997, 153–77; Pestell 2003; Scull and Thomas 2020, 61–4).

The site was not abandoned, however. The persistence of settlement activity in RLM 013 and around the site of Naunton Hall suggest a continuity of establishment, and the probability is that this continued to be a focus of tenurial interest, but it never again had anything more than local economic, social or administrative significance. There is no evidence that the secular elite centre was succeeded by an eighth- or ninth-century ecclesiastical or monastic establishment (cf Blair 2018, 131–6). If there was a chapel or church associated with the *vicus regius* then this may have continued in use and eventually become a parochial centre, as has been suggested at Yeavering in Northumberland (Lucy 2005; Scull and Thomas 2020, 61–2), but there is nothing to suggest that it was ever a mother church. Rendlesham may have remained part of the royal holdings as a farming establishment, or the centre of a small estate without wider importance, but had clearly been divided and alienated before the eleventh century and, to judge from the absence of any indicator of its former importance at the time of Domesday, some time before. Both Mercian overlordship of the East Anglian kingdom between 794 and 825 and Viking settlement and rulership between 869 and 918 might have seen appropriation and reconfiguration of former royal landholdings. The transfer of the five-and-a-half hundreds of Wicklaw to Ely Abbey would also have had its impacts. It has been argued this formed part of the original seventh-century endowment (Warner 1996, 155–6) but it is unlikely that such a holding could have been retained intact through the upheavals of the late eighth to early tenth centuries and a grant to Ely in the context of Æthelwold's re-foundation of 970 is more likely (Blake 1962, 161–3; Yorke 1988, 5–6; Ch 8.2). However, given the dearth of pre-Conquest documents from East Anglia, and without better archaeological evidence for the eighth to eleventh centuries from the settlement itself, this must all remain speculative. There is in any case sufficient evidence for an active land market in England before the eleventh century to account for the partition and alienation of extensive holdings into smaller estates (Hadley 2000, 158; Naismith 2013a).

That said, the early medieval central place left a deeper indirect legacy. The largest of the Domesday manors can be associated with the location of the present Naunton Hall and may have developed from the elite settlement. It influenced the medieval and early modern manorial structures which in turn helped shape the subsequent patterns of land ownership and investment that ultimately explain differences in landholding and farming between Rendlesham parish and neighbouring Eyke parish in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This deep connection would be invisible without the detailed survey results and painstaking definition of manorial history. Moreover, it cannot be more widely extrapolated as a general model but is specific to the circumstances and history of place, illustrating the complexities and contingencies inherent in the long-term development of settlement, landscape and tenurial geography.

Part 2

Power and place in East Anglia

8 The regional background

8.1 Introduction

In Part One of this monograph we examined the settlement at Rendlesham in its landscape, establishing its chronology and its character as a significant place from the late fourth century and as a royal residence and major central place from the late sixth until the early eighth centuries. We have situated it within its immediate topographic and landscape setting and have modelled the wider territory for which the elite establishment at Rendlesham was the principal place for the articulation and enactment of regional rulership. We argue that this coincides with a watershed territory, broadly equivalent to the catchments of the rivers Deben and Alde, consistent with the predictions of the 'river-and-wold' hypothesis. The location of the major antecedent Roman settlement in the area, and the coincidence of the watershed territory with the area of the Wicklaw hundreds, suggest long-term coherences of centrality and social territory. These do not represent any simple continuity of settlement, but represent the periodic reconfiguration of social, economic and political structures at different scales within the dynamic interplay of cultural inheritance and the long-term influence of topography and terrain on human geographies.

In Part Two we widen the scope of investigation to examine whether our conclusions about Rendlesham and its landscape are more widely applicable within the territory of what became the East Anglian kingdom, and what this might tell us about trajectories of socio-political development and how the polity was established. In this chapter we first review what is known about the East Anglian kingdom and its rulers from the documentary sources, establishing the historical timescale and the geographical reach of the East Anglian rulers' authority and hegemony, and then examine at a regional scale the relationships between topography and terrain and the archaeological evidence for human settlement and activity in the early medieval period. From this, we identify a series of case studies that offer the potential to examine the development and character of other possible central places, and their territorial contexts, in comparison with each other and with Rendlesham. Chapter 9 investigates Rendlesham's broader setting within south and east Suffolk while Chapter 10 examines sites and topographies in north central Suffolk and in Norfolk. The comparative insights are synthesised in Chapter 11, which concludes with a new narrative of socio-political development and kingdom formation.

8.2 The East Anglian kingdom from the documentary sources

Barbara Yorke

8.2.1 East Anglian kingship

Although meagre in many respects and with frustrating gaps, the written sources do nevertheless provide valuable evidence about aspects of East Anglian rulership, including genealogy, symbolic and actual origins, and patterns of rulership and political organisation, which can take on greater significance when viewed in broader contexts of other forms of evidence and what is known of other early Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

8.2.1.1 Genealogical evidence

Bede gives the earliest surviving version of the East Anglian royal genealogy (II, 15; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 190–1):

> *Reduald … filius Tytili, cuius pater fuit Uuffa, a quo reges Orientalium Anglorum Uuffingas applellant*
>
> 'Redwald … was the son of Tytil, whose father was Wuffa, from whom the kings of the East Angles are called Wuffings'

A fuller genealogy is given for King Ælfwald as part of the Anglian collection of Anglo-Saxon royal genealogies (Dumville 1976, 31):

> *Aelfwald alduulfing; Alduulf eðilricing; Eðilric ening; Eni tyttling; Tyttla wuffing; Wuffa wehing; Wehha wilhelming; Wilhelm hryping; Hryp hroðmunding; Hroðmund trygling; Trygil tyttmaning; Tyttman casering; Caser wodning; Woden*

Dumville has suggested a composition date of 725 or 726 for the subgroup to which the genealogy of Ælfwald belongs (Dumville 1976, 40, n.2), and one would expect that in any case it would have been in existence while Ælfwald was king (713–49). A related version for Æthelric (the brother of Ælfwald) is provided in the *Historia Brittonum* (ch 59; Morris 1980, 36 and 77):

> *Woden genuit Casser, genuit Titinon, genuit Trigil, genuit Rodmunt, genuit Rippam, genuit Guillem Guechan*
> *Ipse primus regnavit in Britannia super gentem Estanglorum.*
> *Guecha genuit Guffan, genuit Tydil, genuit Ecni, genuit Edric, genuit Aldul, genuit Elric*

Allowing for changes in the rendering of the names, and use of Latin, by the British author of the work, this is recognisably the same genealogy although it designates Wehha (Guecha) as the founder of the dynasty rather than his son Wuffa (Guffa). A possible parallel may be provided by the Kentish royal house, whom Bede says were known as Oiscingas even though Oisc's supposed father Hengest was said to be the first to come to Britain (II, 5; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 150–1). One can also note that neither Hengest nor Oisc were necessarily real individuals rather than invented ancestors (Brooks 1989).

Putting aside Woden and Caser, the names in the 'prehistoric' part of the East Anglian genealogy fall into three alliterating groups:

Wuffa – Wehha – Wilhelm
Hryp – Hrothmund
Trygil – Tyttman – Tyttla

Kinship-marking through alliterative personal naming and the re-use of name elements is a feature of Old English personal naming (Clark 1992, 458, 462), and so it could be that the first two groups of names, that each include a name known from poetic or saga tradition, were shoe-horned into the third group of alliterating 'T' names, perhaps to give necessary credentials for a North Sea/Scandinavian origin from royal and heroic stock as adopted by other Anglo-Saxon royal lines (and which descent claimed from Woden also symbolised). Alternatively, the three groups could possibly be seen as representing rival aspirant powers within East Anglia, with two unsuccessful lines eclipsed by the descendants of Tyttla.

Symbolism and cultural connections of the names

As with most Anglo-Saxon genealogies, that of the East Angles contains names of different type and origin that in themselves may represent different stages in composition and different messages that the genealogy tried to convey (Sisam 1953; Dumville 1977). Records from some other kingdoms show that more detailed origin legends could be developed around names of founders in the genealogies and that these myths might ultimately have a complex interrelationship with traditions recorded by classical writers (Yorke 2008).

The name of Caser/Caesar appears at the head of the genealogy, immediately beneath that of Woden, and is the only instance of a Roman person or title incorporated into an Anglo-Saxon genealogy. The desire to claim Roman Imperial connections is considered further below, in the interest apparently shown in East Anglian elite circles in the story of Romulus and Remus. Then there are names that appear to link the East Anglian kings with Scandinavian heroes who also appear in the poems *Widsith* and *Beowulf*. Hrothmund (three below Caser in the East Anglian genealogy), together with his brother Hrethric, appear fleetingly in the poem *Beowulf* as the young sons of Hrothgar, the Danish king (1.1189), who were murdered by their cousin in the disasters that befell Heorot after the death of Hrothgar (Newton 1993, 77–104). Hrothmund is, however, the only name shared

with the Danish royal house to appear in the East Anglian royal genealogy. In it he has a different father (Trygil) and a son Hryp who is not known in any legendary context. Hryp also appears as the first element of two significant early medieval centres, Repton and Ripon (Newton 1993, 80–1; Watts 2004, 497, 501). Personal names with a first element *Hroth* are relatively common in Anglo-Saxon written records (Insley and Rollason 2007, 129–30). Without the further Beowulfian association of the name Wulf/Wuffa in the East Anglian genealogy that of Hrothmund would not seem exceptional in an Anglo-Saxon context.

Wuffa appears as the grandfather of Rædwald in the East Anglian genealogy and in *EH* II, 15 where Bede adds 'from whom the kings of the East Angles were called Wuffings' (*a quo reges Orientalium Anglorum Uuffingas appellant*) (Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 190–1). Wuffa is a hypocoristic variant of the name Wulf. Although *wulf* was common as both a first and a second element in Germanic personal names, it was used more frequently in later rather than early pre-Conquest England, and the monothematic *Wuffa* does not seem to occur in other written sources (Insley 2007). The same name-element is found in the Wulfingas of *Widsith* (1.29) and the Wylfingas of *Beowulf* (1.471), a people based in Östergötland (modern central western Sweden) and neighbours of the Danes and the Geats (of whose royal house Beowulf is said to have been a member through his mother) (O'Loughlin 1964, 4). From a close reading of *Beowulf* and later saga traditions it has been argued that Wealhtheow, wife of the Danish Hrothgar and the mother of Hrothmund and Hrethric, was a Gotland Wylfing, as was Beowulf's father Ecgtheow (O'Loughlin 1964, 5; Newton 1993, 105–31). From these associations it has been further suggested that the names should be taken as representing a genuine tradition of the migration of Wuffingas/Wylfingas from southern Sweden to East Anglia, and even that Geatish survivors, after the destruction of their province by the Svear (as alluded to in *Beowulf*), might have fled to East Anglia to join their Wuffingas neighbours, carrying with them some of the 'Swedish' items buried in the Sutton Hoo Mound 1 that they had taken from their enemies (O'Loughlin 1964; Newton 1993). However, this explanation for possible 'Swedish' links in the Mound 1 assemblage is somewhat strained, to say the least. Any Swedish parallels for some aspects of the Mound 1 burial are with the Uppsala/Valsgårde area of eastern Sweden, not Östergötland. Although both regions are in present-day Sweden, their early medieval political associations (in so far as they can be reconstructed) lay in different directions. The Östergötland area was under Danish control for much of the early Middle Ages, while the Uppsala area had stronger connections east to the Baltic (Woolf 2014). An alternative interpretation presents Ecgtheow as a brother of the Swedish king Ongentheow, the enemies of the Geats in the poem (Shaull 2017). References in *Beowulf* can be elusive and contradictory, and it is questionable how far the poem can be interpreted as a reliable historical source. Rather it is a work of literature that is set nominally in the past and in which some actual events have been blended with myth, legend and traditions of story-telling in order to serve conditions in England at the time of its composition (Leneghan 2020).

Wulfingas in *Beowulf* and *Widsith* is the name of a people, and no individual called Wulf appears in either poem. Wolves were one of the totemic fierce animals deployed in the Anglo-Saxon animal art styles and so perhaps a suitable name for a founding ancestor, like the horses referenced by Hengest and Horsa in the Kentish foundation legends (Speake 1980; Fern 2010). During the eighth century, when we know the East Anglian genealogy was in existence and during which the first version of *Beowulf* was probably composed, a small selection of objects suggest that the wolf may have been consciously deployed as a royal emblem within the East Anglian kingdom. Particularly striking is the occurrence of the image of Romulus and Remus being suckled by a wolf. It is found on silver pennies issued by the moneyer Lul in the name of King Æthelbert (d 794), and subsequently on coins issued in the name of the Mercian king Offa when he had taken over the East Anglian mint (Naismith 2012a, 152). The same image is to be found on the Larling ivory plaque from a box or book-cover found near the church dedicated to the same King Æthelbert as a martyred saint put to death by King Offa (Pestell 2004, 94–6; Davies and Pestell 2015, 66–7). A wolf also appears in Abbo's account of the death in 869 of East Anglia's second martyred king Edmund where one is discovered guarding his severed head (Whitelock 1969, 218–22; Winterbottom 1972, 80–1).

The image of Romulus and Remus and the wolf was ultimately derived from coins of the Emperor Constantine. The interrelationship of Germanic foundation legends and the story of Romulus and Remus is a complex one with more than one point of intersection (Neuman de Vegvar 1999). The fifth-century gold bracteate from Undley, Suffolk, for instance, depicts a head based on that of a Roman helmeted emperor above a wolf suckling twins taken from the same range of Constantinian coins as those later utilised by Lul for King Æthelbert (Suzuki 2005; Marzinzik 2013, 92–3). In eighth-century England the story of Romulus and Remus could carry both royal and religious connotations, and

both strands may lie behind a rather different representation of the Romulus and Remus story on the Franks Casket (Neuman de Vegvar 1999; Webster 2012). Kings may have been attracted by the Imperial associations of the Roman foundation legend. One can point to possible parallels in the appearance of Caser/Caesar in the East Anglian royal genealogy and in the conspicuous use of Vergil made by Felix in his *Life of St Guthlac* commissioned by King Ælfwald (Roberts and Thacker 2020). But it is also the case that twins as founders of royal houses seem to have been a feature of Anglo-Saxon culture from an early point as the well-known instance of Hengest and Horsa in Kent indicates (Yorke 2008). If we possessed an East Anglian chronicle we might find that one of the names in the genealogy came from a pair of alliterating founder brothers as elsewhere in Anglo-Saxon England and the Germanic world; Hrothmund and his brother Hrethric could, for instance, have had such a role.

The East Anglian genealogy as we have it would seem to be a construction of the eighth century and can be seen as part of the legitimation of East Anglian kingship at that time. Some of its names, and the traditions that they represent, may date back further and allow us to glimpse stages in the formation of the East Anglian kingdom, but there are limits to how much should be built upon these rather slender foundations.

8.2.1.2 Origins of East Anglian kingship

The first reliably attested king is Rædwald, and as he was in a position before the end of his reign to be overlord of the southern English (II, 5; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 148–9), it can be inferred that he was likely to have had a base of established kingly power on which to build. No separate East Anglian king-list with reign-lengths survives. For the names of the earliest rulers one only has the versions of the East Anglian royal genealogy as a possible guide.

Some post-Conquest historians appear to have felt the lack of early East Anglian royal history and claimed individuals as rulers and dated their accessions and deaths. Henry of Huntingdon dated the beginning of the reign of Wuffa and the origins of the East Anglian kingdom to the same year as the battle of Dyrham (that is 577) (Greenaway 1996, 108–9). The St Albans historians Roger of Wendover and Matthew Paris dated Wuffa's reign from 571 to 578 and that of Tyttla from 578 to 599. Wendy Davies has made the case for seeing these entries as having a possible reliable origin in Easter annal tables (Davies 1977), but the fact is that we do not know how the authors came by these supposed dates and so how reliable they might be (Bruce-Mitford 1975, 696). Some other entries in these works for the East Angles do not inspire confidence: for instance, Matthew records that Rædwald died and Eorpwald succeeded in 599 as well as in 624.

That Tyttla was a ruler of the East Angles seems likely as the succession passed down through two of his sons, Rædwald and Eni, so there is an implication that both had an inherited right to rule. The dates of 578 to 599 for Tyttla's reign provided by the St Albans historians are quite feasible – Æthelbert of Kent's father Eormenric was most probably ruling by 580 (Brooks 1989, 64–7) – but it is impossible to be sure that there is a reliable tradition behind them. Wuffa is even more problematic. The fact that he gave his name to the dynasty might suggest he established its royal power, but his equivalent in the Kentish genealogy, Oisc, is a decidedly ambivalent figure, possibly an euhemerised deity or divine founding figure rather than an actual ancestor (ibid, 59–60). The possibility that Wuffa too might have been more mythical or symbolic than human has already been explored. There was also a separate tradition, via the genealogy of Æthelric in the *Historia Brittonum*, that Wehha, the father of Wuffa, was the first to rule. Varying opinions on how far back the first king could be traced are also to be found in the Kentish genealogy (albeit presented differently). Bede has Oisc as the great-grandfather of Æthelbert (d 616 or 618) (which is the same relationship as that of Wehha to Rædwald), but the Anglian collection of genealogies has Oisc as the grandfather of Æthelbert (the same relationship as Wuffa to Rædwald and his brother Eni). This may tell us more about how genealogies were assembled than anything else. By the time the genealogies we have were first written down, that is by the early eighth century at the latest, it was possible for the founder of the dynasty to be presented as the grandfather, or great-grandfather, of kings who were ruling in the early seventh century when recording in writing first became possible. For the royal house of the East Angles, as for other Anglo-Saxon dynasties, reliable written information does not stretch back beyond the generation of those who were fathers of kings who were ruling in the early seventh century.

Nevertheless, one might expect the grandfather of Rædwald to have been exercising significant power, if not using the title of king. Insley points to names with 'Wulf' as a first element being commoner in Francia than early medieval England, and that the same was also the case for the names of the early East Anglian rulers Rædwald, Rægenhere and Sigebert (Insley 2007). Alex Woolf has suggested that Tyttla was named from the Gothic king Totila/Toutilas, who died fighting Emperor Justinian in 552, and was thus part of a 'Gothic horizon' of Anglo-

Saxon royal personal names, along with Theodric of Bernicia and Eormenric of Kent (father of Æthelbert), who were probably all born in the middle third of the sixth century. He speculates that these naming patterns could be the result of Gothic contacts with Anglo-Saxon leaders in the 540s or 550s (Woolf 2017, 11–16). There could be a possible parallel with the adoption of the name 'Sigebert' in both the East Anglian and the East Saxon dynasties in the early seventh century which could be seen as a result of Austrasian Frankish influences at these two courts. The names of Wuffa, Rædwald and Rægenhere could also potentially be evidence for a significant connection of the family with Francia in the sixth and early seventh centuries. The suggestion that references to Wuffa and Tyttla are preserved in the Old English place-names Ufford, in a potentially significant location immediately across the river Deben from Rendlesham, and Tittleshall in Norfolk remains speculative (Bruce-Mitford 1975, 691; Williamson 2008, 18, 116–18; Walton Rogers 2013, 78–9; 8.2.5, below).

Not even the date of Rædwald's death can be fixed with any certainty, let alone his succession, but he was clearly roughly contemporary with Æthelbert of Kent and perhaps slightly younger as Bede (*EH* II, 5) records that he succeeded Æthelbert as overlord of the southern English. Æthelbert was fifty-six when he died in 616 or 618 and so was probably born in 560 or 562. Nicholas Brooks estimated that he was most likely to have become king between 580 and 593. Gregory of Tours implies his father was ruling by the late 570s or early 580s (Brooks 1989, 64–7). The estimation of the post-Conquest chroniclers that those who might be considered to be the first rulers of the East Angles were in power in the 570s and 580s may be the type of educated estimate which we can do little to improve upon (as all of us may be dependent upon the same limited records).

One might expect that the East Anglian kingdom was formed from the amalgamation of more than one territory whose leaders or ruling houses were suppressed. There are hints of such rival dynasties within East Anglia. These include the different sets of alliterating names in the upper reaches of the East Anglian royal genealogy that have already been considered. Slightly more substantial is the information given by William of Malmesbury and John of Worcester that King Sigebert of the East Angles (whom Bede calls the brother of Eorpwald, son of Rædwald) (III, 18; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 266–9) was only related to Eorpwald on his mother's side; ie his father was someone other than Rædwald (Mynors *et al* 1998, 142–3; Thorpe 1848–9, 260–1). The information deserves to be taken seriously as both authors seem to have had access to a collection of Anglo-Saxon genealogies and regnal lists (perhaps preserved at Worcester). Sigebert spent the reigns of Rædwald and Eorpwald in exile in Francia (III, 18; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 266–9). Could this be a near parallel to the situation in contemporary Northumbria, where Æthelfrith of Bernicia invaded and killed Ælle of Deira, annexed his kingdom, married Ælle's daughter and exiled his son Edwin (Yorke 1990, 74–81)? A subsequent Deiran queen – after more hostilities between the two dynasties – sent the surviving infant princes to Francia to be out of the range of Bernician assassins. Not conclusive evidence perhaps, but it may provide some support for the possibility of a second East Anglian dynasty that may have briefly returned to power on the death of Eorpwald (as Edwin of Deira had been able to do in Northumbria).

8.2.1.3 The pattern of East Anglian kingship 600–800

Regnal dates are particularly difficult to reconstruct for the East Anglian kingdom as no king-list with regnal dates survives and even Bede, who often had access to that type of information, does not give the length of a single East Anglian king's reign. What can be deduced about East Anglian regnal dates is summarised in Table 8.2.1 (additional discussion about the problems in reconstructing the dates can be found in Kirby 1991 and Yorke 1990). The relationship of kings up to Ælfwald (d 749) is shown in Fig 8.2.1. Later kings cannot be fitted into a genealogy but it seems likely that, with the exception of Beonna who may have been Mercian, they were also Wuffingas. Their names fit the pattern of naming apparent from the time of King Anna, and the sources concerning the martyred kings Æthelbert and Edmund assumed that they were the descendants of earlier kings – though neither of these points is as decisive as one might like. It is not possible to discern whether there was the type of rivalry between different branches claiming descent from founder kings that was found in several other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in the eighth and ninth centuries.

Table 8.2.1 Known kings of the East Angles (* denotes kings known only from coin evidence whose dates are taken from Naismith 2016, 51)

Principal kings	Subsidiary kings
Rædwald d by 627/8	?Rægenhere
Eorpwald d 627/8	
?Ricbert 627/8–630/1	
Sigebert acc 630/1	Ecgric
Anna d 654	
Æthelhere 654–5	?Æthelwald ?Æthelmund
Æthelwald 655–63	?Æthelric
Aldwulf 663–713	
Ælfwald 713–49	
Beonna acc 749	Hun; Æthelbert I
Æthelred	
Æthelbert II d 794	
Eadwald 796–*c* 800*	
Æthelstan *c* 825–45*	
Æthelweard *c* 845–55*	
Edmund 855–69	
Æthelred *c* 869–79*	Oswald *c* 869–79*
Guthrum 879–90	

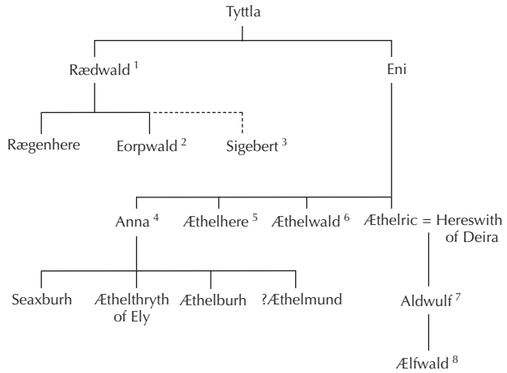

Fig 8.2.1 East Anglian kings whose relationships can be reconstructed. Kings are numbered in order of ruling as principal kings

Table 8.2.1 also demonstrates that there were a number of joint reigns recorded for seventh-century kings, and these are considered further below in the section on the geography of the kingdom (8.2.2). Shortage of written evidence should not be seen as indicating that the royal house was insignificant. Rædwald's is the fourth name in Bede's list of great overlords of the English at a time in the early seventh century when it was the kings of the south-east who were dominant. Subsequently there was the rise of the large 'middle' kingdoms of Northumbria and Mercia; East Anglian kings were major enemies of the latter and allies of the former, marked, for instance, by the marriage *c* 660, in the reign of Æthelwald, brother of Anna, of his niece Æthelthryth to prince Ecgfrith, the son and heir of Oswiu (Higham 2015, 110–11). As in other successful kingdoms at this time, warfare was a major concern of kings, and Bede records Rædwald, Sigebert and Anna playing significant roles as warleaders. The series of relatively short reigns and sudden deaths was followed by the long reign of King Aldwulf of around fifty years (663/4–713) which must have provided much needed stability. It must have been while Aldwulf was ruler that the exiled Mercian princes Guthlac and Æthelbald were able to seek refuge in the North Gyrwan province that would seem to have been under his overlordship, and that his cousin Æthelthryth established a religious house in the *regio* of Ely in 672/3. The translation of her body which marked her recognition as a saint in 695 also occurred while he was on the throne (IV, 19; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 390–7). Aldwulf's son and successor Ælfwald (713–49) was the dedicatee of the *Life of St Guthlac* by the East Anglian Felix (Colgrave 1956), and possibly benefitted from good relations with the now all-powerful Æthelbald of Mercia (716–57) because of the help he had received earlier from Aldwulf (Higham 2005). It was when Ælfwald died in 749 that serious disruption occurred to the apparently smoothly controlled succession of Wuffingas kings. For that year the *Historia Regum* records that 'Hunbeanna and Alberht divided the kingdom between them' and this is generally interpreted as indicating a threefold division between Hun, Beonna and Ælbert (probably Æthelbert I) (Whitelock 1979, 265; Hart 2006, 84–5). Nothing further is known of Hun, but Ælbert/Æthelbert I and Beonna may have ruled together at first as both produced coins (Archibald 2005). Beonna subsequently emerged as sole king and carried out important monetary reforms marked by a new 'penny' coinage in his name (Naismith 2016, 49–50). Beonna's name contrasts with that of the previous Wuffingas kings, and is one borne by prominent Mercian nobles. Whether Beonna was Mercian or not, Mercia became an increasing threat to the independence of the province under King Offa (757–96), culminating in the murder in Herefordshire of the East Anglian king Æthelbert II (son of King Æthelred) in 794 (James 1917). Coin evidence suggests that a certain Eadwald tried to take control of the province on the death of Offa but he would seem to have been suppressed by Offa's successor Coenwulf (796–821) (Naismith 2016, 50–1). However, exactly what should be inferred from the coins needs careful consideration. The numismatic evidence is really concerned with whose name the East Anglian moneyers of Ipswich were putting on their coins and it is difficult to be certain what this actually represented in terms of practical politics (Naismith 2012a).

What is striking is the ability of the East Anglian kings to fight back against Mercian overlordship and to regain control. Kings Beornwulf and Ludeca of Mercia were killed in battle with the East Anglians in 825 and 827 respectively, perhaps during the reign of King Æthelstan whose name is known only from coins, as is that of Æthelweard who probably succeeded him (Whitelock 1961, 40; Naismith 2013c, 137–8). We do not know how these kings were related to one another or to

earlier East Anglian kings but their names would seem to be compatible with those used by the later members of the Wuffingas dynasty and Abbo refers to the distinguished ancestry of the last major East Anglian king Edmund (855–69) (Winterbottom 1972, 70). The implication would seem to be that although East Anglia even at its greatest extent was considerably smaller than Mercia, and without additional resources from extensive overlordship, it was still in a position to resist absorption and raise armies sufficiently large to defeat the Mercians in battle (though admittedly after Mercian power was on the wane in the ninth century). Rather than a series of royal exiles, what the numismatic evidence may suggest is that, while Mercian kings were minting coins at Ipswich, East Anglian kings remained in power in part of the kingdom but are invisible to us as they were not permitted by Mercian overlords to mint coins in their own names. The minting of coins by Æthelbert II was arguably interpreted as an act of independence that cost him his life (Naismith 2012a, 118–20).

The East Anglian recovery also argues for a royal house with a secure base and means of support that did not depend only on profits of war or ownership of land. Kent probably provides the best parallel among the better-recorded kingdoms and the evidence from law codes and charters for the ability of its kings to enjoy profits from trade, tolls and the protection of traders may be particularly relevant for understanding rights that might also have underpinned East Anglian royal power (Kelly 1992; Middleton 2005). The power of the royal house was only ended through violent intervention by Viking leaders with the killing of King Edmund in 869 (Whitelock 1969), though rare coins in the names of the otherwise unknown Æthelred and Oswald, seemingly struck after this date, may suggest native royal power was not entirely eclipsed even then (Naismith 2016, 51). The whole situation may have been more complicated than just Vikings on one side and East Anglians on another. The St Edmund 'memorial' coinage, seemingly produced under Viking rule, might imply that some of the Scandinavian forces were working with Edmund and that he was slain by a rival group. Could an earlier ninth-century recruitment of Scandinavian fighters help explain how the East Anglians were able to defeat the mighty Mercians?

8.2.2 Political geography

8.2.2.1 The North folk and the South folk

The names of Norfolk and Suffolk (Old English *norð folc* 'north people' and *sũð folc* 'south people' respectively) may sound archaic, and the division between them along the Waveney and Thet valleys could correspond to the use of rivers or river valleys as boundaries that is recorded from early in the Anglo-Saxon period (Warner 1996, 147–9; Williamson 1993, 82–3). However, the names are not recorded before the eleventh century, and some parishes straddle the border. In the tenth century East Anglia was administered as a separate earldom, and there is a reference in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* to *þa witan on East Englum* ('the councillors in East Anglia') (Plummer 1892, 134–5; Whitelock 1961, 87). The subdivision of the earldom into two shires and the appointment of sheriffs to administer them seems to have occurred in the reign of either Cnut or Edward the Confessor (Marten 2008). The history of significant subdivisions within the East Anglian province has a number of ramifications. The division into two bishoprics, possible joint reigns, and long-lasting administrative groupings may all throw light on the topic. It should also be kept in mind that the historic kingdom of East Anglia was of greater extent than the tenth-century province and the two shires, as information about the *regio* of Ely demonstrates.

The division into two bishoprics

The two bishoprics provide the best evidence for a significant early subdivision within the kingdom of the East Angles. Felix had been appointed as bishop of the whole East Anglian kingdom in 630 or 631 by Archbishop Honorius and King Sigebert (II, 15; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 190–1; Whitelock 1972, 3–4). At the synod of Hertford in 672 Archbishop Theodore had raised the issue of creating more bishoprics 'as the number of the faithful increases' but the matter had been left unresolved, perhaps because incumbent bishops objected to the possible splitting up of their sees (IV, 5, ch 9; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 352–3). The synod was attended by Bishop Bisi of *Dommoc*, and Bede records that when he subsequently fell seriously ill and could not administer his diocese Archbishop Theodore appointed two bishops in his place (IV, 5; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 352–5; Whitelock 1972, 19–20). Professions of obedience by newly appointed bishops make it clear that the new see was at Elmham, and though the case has been made for it being South Elmham, it is generally accepted today that it was more likely to have been North Elmham, where the see was re-founded in the tenth century (Rigold 1962; Williamson 1993, 83; Campbell 1996). No explanation is given of what dictated the dividing line between the two dioceses. However, there was an expectation that kingdoms or major subgroupings that had been absorbed into large kingdoms should have

their own bishop, and when bishoprics were subdivided in southern England it was usually to take account of internal political boundaries. A number of the new dioceses created after the synod of Hertford seem to have been made along these lines. Thus the Mercian diocese was divided so that there were separate bishoprics for the Mercians, the Middle Angles, Lindsey, the Hwicce and the Western Angles (Sims-Williams 1990, 87–91). The West Saxon diocese was divided in 705 so that there was a separate see for the western areas which had until recently been under British control. In Kent there had been two dioceses from an early stage in the history of the Augustine mission, and the two dioceses of Canterbury and Rochester preserved a major political and cultural division that was also marked by West Kent having its own subking from the Kentish royal house (Yorke 1983). *A priori* there can be an expectation that the division into the two dioceses of *Dommoc* and Elmham was connected with an existing cultural or political subdivision within the province. This, however, is unlikely to have been along exactly the same boundary as that between the North folk and the South folk in the eleventh century.

8.2.2.2 Joint kingship

If there were one or more major political divisions within East Anglia one might expect this to reveal itself through references to multiple kingship, as one of the ways that kings dealt with annexation of a previously independent area was to appoint subrulers from their own family to control it. On this topic the lack of any early charters from East Anglia is a major disadvantage as those from Kent and the East Saxons are a major source of evidence for the practice there and enable a fuller interpretation of what are often rather elusive references in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. It follows that any references in the *Ecclesiastical History*, or other narrative sources, to more than one king ruling at any one time among the East Angles may be more significant than might at first appear, though it is also the case that joint kingship does not seem necessarily to have always involved territorial subdivision.

Bede's only explicit early reference to two kings ruling concurrently in East Anglia is in the account of King Sigebert's retirement to a monastery, where he is said to have entrusted the kingdom to his *cognatus* Ecgric who had previously ruled part of the kingdom (III, 18; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 266–9). Possibly Bede implies that Rædwald's son Rægenhere was ruling with him when he records that the latter was killed at the battle of the river Idle (II, 12; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 180–1); those whom Bede specifically names as killed in battle generally seem to have had the status of kings, though he may not give them a title if they were in a junior position. It is possible that two of King Anna's brothers ruled jointly after his death. Folcard's *Vita Botulfi* refers to two brothers *Adlerus* (Æthelhere) and *Adelwoldus* (Æthelwald) ruling together (Love 2015; Newton 2016). Bede refers to Æthelhere as brother and successor of Anna, and the leader of the East Anglian forces at the battle of the Winwæd in 655 (III, 24; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 290–1). Æthelwald was the king who sponsored the conversion of Swithhelm of the East Angles at Rendlesham (III, 22; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 284–5), but that is all that is known of him. The conversion is not closely dated but is placed shortly before the account of the battle of the Winwæd and so provides some support for the possibility that the two brothers ruled jointly. There was a third brother Æthelric who married Hereswith of Deira (sister of Hild) and it was from him, according to the genealogies, that the later East Anglian kings were descended (Stenton 1970, 394–402). Possibly he ruled alongside his brother Æthelwald after Æthelhere's death. The *Vita Botulfi* also raises the possibility of a third member of the royal house ruling with Æthelhere and Æthelwald, a youth who was their *propinquus* called Æthelmund and whose claims they are presented as undermining.

A threefold division also appears in the Northumbrian annals embedded in the *Historia Regum*, where it is stated that the kingdom was divided in 749 between Hun, Beonna and Æthelbert (Whitelock 1979, 265; Hart 2006, 84–5). Both Beonna and Æthelbert I issued coins, but none is known in the name of Hun. Beonna's is the more numerous coinage and it is often presumed that he ruled for longer having ousted the other two (Archibald 2005). Beonna's rule may have been ended when Offa asserted overlordship of the province sometime between 760 and 770, and East Anglian mints produced coins in his name (Naismith 2012a). It is possible that East Anglian kings continued to rule in part of the kingdom, but without issuing coins. The hagiographical material associated with Æthelbert II, who was killed by King Offa in 794, identifies him as a son of King Æthelred (otherwise unknown) and that both were descendants of ancient kings (James 1917). It is also possible that there were subdivisions of the province during the Scandinavian occupation. King Edmund seems to have been based in the vicinity of Bury St Edmunds at the time of his death, by which point eastern parts of the kingdom may have been under the control of Scandinavian leaders (Winterbottom 1972, 73, 79 and 82; West 1983; Ridyard 1988, 218–23). The coin evidence

also indicates two rulers called Æthelred and Oswald, probably between Edmund's death in 869 and Guthrum's assumption of the kingship in 879 (Naismith 2013c, 149–50).

8.2.2.3 *Regiones* in the East Anglian kingdom

An important question is whether the written records reveal any major subdivisions within the East Anglian kingdom that may once have been independent entities. Only one is specifically identified. Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* refers to *Elge in provincia Orientalium Anglorum regio* and rates it at 600 hides (IV, 19; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 396–70). Ely is, of course, outside the area of the tenth-century earldom and the shires of Norfolk and Suffolk but is relevant to understanding how seventh- and eighth-century East Anglian rulers might have achieved a wider hegemony (Scull 1992, 5–6). The double monastery of Ely was founded by Æthelthryth, the daughter of Anna, in 672/3, during the reign of her cousin Aldwulf, when she returned to her native province after separating from her second husband King Ecgfrith of Northumbria (670–85) (IV, 19; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 394–5). Her first husband had been Tondbert, *princeps* of the South *Gyrwe* (IV, 19; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 390–1). There has been much debate over whether the *regio* of Ely was identical with the province of South *Gyrwe* or adjoined it (Courtney 1981; Hines 1999c; Oosthuizen 2017, 69–89). In the Tribal Hidage the province of the *Gyrwe* was assessed at 600 hides, the same-sized assessment that Bede gives for the *regio* of Ely. The *Liber Eliensis* claimed that Ely had been given to Æthelthryth as her dowry on her marriage to Tondbert (Miller 1951, 8–11). This goes beyond what Bede states, as he does not specifically link the two territories, and a reference to a dowry in a seventh-century context is in any case anachronistic. What can be more certainly said in the context of understanding the political geography of the East Angles is that East Anglian kings in the second half of the seventh century were actively seeking to control fenland areas on their western border, and both Æthelthryth's marriage to Tondbert and her foundation of a religious community at Ely were part of that process. Both the North and South *Gyrwe* were included as autonomous units in the Tribal Hidage (Hart 1971; Davies and Vierck 1974, 230–5) and, at times, were part of the Middle Anglian province that is first mentioned in 653 as ruled by Peada, the son of King Penda of the Mercians (III, 21; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 278–81). There are indications that East Anglian kings were seeking to establish overlordship of the area in the late seventh and early eighth centuries. Thomas, who was appointed bishop of the East Angles on the death of Felix, is said to come from the *Gyrwe* (III, 20; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 276–7) and King Ælfwald (713–49) commissioned a *Life of St Guthlac* whose hermitage at Crowland was in the territory of the North *Gyrwe* (Colgrave 1956; Courtney 1981, 95–6). This control was disputed with Mercia and may have contributed to the warfare between the two provinces. Overlordship of the *Gyrwe* evidently fluctuated. King Wulfhere of Mercia (658–75) was able to found the monastery of Medehamstede (Peterborough) among the *Gyrwe* (IV, 6; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 354–5), but in the reign of his nephew Ceolred (709–16) the exiled future king Æthelbald and his kinsman Guthlac lived freely in the fens, probably under East Anglian protection (Higham 2005; Leeser 2020).

There are no specific references to *regiones* within the main East Anglian province in the surviving sources but significant groupings of hundreds may preserve possible indicators of their former existence. We have already identified the catchment territory that broadly equates to the five-and-a-half hundreds of Wicklaw as a jurisdictional territory for which Rendlesham was the central place. The eight-and-a-half hundreds of West Suffolk that formed the Liberty of St Edmund are another candidate for a distinct *regio* (Warner 1996, 149–51). They are first referred to as the eight-and-a-half hundreds of Thingoe (*Thinghog*) in a writ of Edward the Confessor granting them to Bury that indicates they had been held previously by his mother Queen Emma (Harmer 1952, 154–5, 435–7) but are likely to have been an older unit. It was in the area of Bury that King Edmund seems to have made his last stand against Viking invaders, having perhaps withdrawn to the western province when the invaders had established control further east (Ridyard 1988, 218–20). A marginal note in the oldest manuscript of the *Liber Eliensis* names Bury as the place where King Sigebert was buried, and by implication the monastery which he founded and retired to before he was brought out to face King Penda in battle (Blake 1962, 11). There could be a parallel with King Æthelred of Mercia retiring to the monastery of Bardney which was not within his main kingdom but in the province of Lindsey which the Mercians were hoping to annex permanently (Thacker 1985, 3–4). A case can be made that Blything hundred also represents an early territory within Suffolk (Blake 1962, 18; Warner 1996, 159–65; Ch 9.7.4) and the recorded burial of King Anna at Blythburgh might be another example of royal burial and patronage as a strategy to secure the assimilation of a once independent or autonomous group. It is more difficult to propose such units for Norfolk, which is even more poorly represented

in the early written records than Suffolk, but consideration of Caistor-by-Norwich and the Burnham parishes does allow the modelling of early territories (Ch 10).

8.2.2.4 Centres of authority

The lack of charters and narrative sources from the East Anglian kingdom means that the number of sites recorded as royal vills is regrettably small. Bede refers to many events in East Anglia, some of which would undoubtedly have involved royal residences, but only Rendlesham is specifically identified (Ch 7.1). Nevertheless, one can expect that royal itineration would have been as important for royal control and economy as it was in other kingdoms (Sawyer 1983), that sites would rise and fall from favour with different rulers, and that the appearance of sites and manifestations of royal administration would change over time (Blair 2018).

Table 8.2.2 summarises places in East Anglia that are specifically named as royal vills in sources up to the end of the twelfth century but in the context of events up to

Table 8.2.2 East Anglian places identified as royal vills or with strong royal associations in contexts up to AD 900 (from sources up to end of the twelfth century)

Place	Description	Source	Date	Comments
Blideburch (Blythburgh, Suffolk)	*locus:* burial place of King Anna and his supposed son Iurminus	*Liber Eliensis* I, 7 (Blake 1962, 18)	655 (in work of late C12)	Body of Iurminus subsequently translated to Bury St Edmunds
Betrichesworde (Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk)	*monasterium*: burial place of Sigebert	*Liber Eliensis* I, 1 (Blake 1962, 11)	630s/40s (*EH*, 731)	Added in margin of one version and copied in later texts
Betricheswrðe (Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk)	*villa beati martyris Ædmundi*	*Liber Eliensis* I, 23 (Blake 1962, 42)	Late C7 (in work of late C12)	With reference to burial at Bury of St Ælgetus, steward of Æthelthryth
Burna in original text, with scribe adding in margin '*vel Buran*' (Burnham, Norfolk or Bures, Suffolk)	*villa regia … regalis sedes*	*Annals of St Neots* 856 (Dumville and Lapidge 1985, 51)	856 (in work of early C12)	Edmund anointed king there by Bishop Hunbert
Dyrham/Deorham Dereham (Norfolk)	*villa* with *aula*	*Liber Eliensis* II, 53 (Blake 1962, 122); *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle F* (Baker 2000, 58)	Gift of King Edgar (959–75) to Ely	Former *monasterium* in which St Wihtburh was buried
Haegilisdun/Haeglesdun (Hellesdon, Norfolk or fieldname at Bradfield St Clare near Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk) (West 1983)	*villa … palatium*	Abbo, *Passio S. Eadmundi* chs 6 and 11 (Winterbottom 1972, 73, 79)	869 (in work written 985x7)	Where King Edmund retreats and is slain and hidden in wood; buried in church of Sutton (*villula*) nearby
Headleaga (Hadleigh, Suffolk or Essex)	*villa regia*	*Annals of St Neots* 890 (Dumville and Lapidge 1985, 95)	890	Burial place of King Guthrum
Holcham (Holkham, Norfolk)	*vicus* on lands of her 'father', King Anna	*V. Wihtbyrge* (Love 2004, 86–7)	C12 text	Wihtburh spent her childhood here; church dedicated to her
Rendlaesham (Rendlesham, Suffolk)	*vicus regius … id est mansio Rendili*	Bede *EH* III, 22 (Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 284–5)	650s (before 663) [*EH*, 731]	

900. The sites suggest a spread within Norfolk and Suffolk but must represent only a fraction of what once existed. A number of references come from the middle to late ninth century when Viking armies were active along, or in possession of, parts of the east coast and when the East Anglian kings may have moved their centres of activity further west. Edmund's presence in the vicinity of Bury St Edmunds when he was captured and killed may be an example of such a trend (Winterbottom 1972, 73, 79 and 82). The use of a royal vill at Bures, near the Suffolk/Essex border for the anointment of King Edmund by Bishop Hunbert in 856 might also fit this context (Dumville and Lapidge 1985, 51) but the identification is not secure. A scribe has written *Buran* in the margin of the earliest surviving manuscript, and this was followed by later copyists and users of the annals, but the name in the text is *Burna*. In Chapter 10.3 we make the case for Burnham in Norfolk as a significant centre and a more likely site for a royal vill than Bures.

There are hints that a church was a significant element of East Anglian royal complexes. This is implied by the ceremonies that took place at Rendlesham in the seventh century and Burnham/Bures in the ninth, and by the burial of Guthrum at the *villa regia* of Hadleigh (Dumville and Lapidge 1985, 95). Bury is described as a royal vill, and perhaps it was when King Sigebert retired there to live a religious life. By the ninth century matters may have been more complex as Bury had become a significant religious community. King Edmund is described as staying in a royal residence at *Haegilisdun* when he was seized and killed, and subsequently buried at *Suthtune* until his body was moved at some unspecified point to Bury itself (Winterbottom 1972, 73 and 79; Ridyard 1988, 217–22). Stanley West has provided plausible identifications for these places in the parish of Bradfield St Clare, only five miles from Bury, as well as a clutch of Kingshall local names (West 1983). Possibly all these places could have been considered part of a greater Bury royal vill estate but with distinct locations for a church and a ninth-century royal residence.

Blythburgh may also have been a royal vill with a significant minster church. It is described merely as a *locus* in the *Liber Eliensis* (Blake 1962, 18), but was a significant royal manor in Domesday Book and may have been the focal place of an early *regio* (Warner 1996, 120–1, 159–65; Ch 9.7.4). King Anna was patron of Fursey's *Cnobheresburg*, and Botwulf's Iken may have been founded to commemorate him, but according to the *Liber Eliensis* he and 'Iurminus' – possibly another member of the royal house – were buried at Blythburgh (Blake 1962, 18; 8.2.3.3, below). It is a pity that we do not have more records of royal burial which would allow us to clarify whether burial at churches on royal vill estates was as distinctive an East Anglian practice as these few examples might suggest.

8.2.2.5 Conclusions

The available evidence indicates that the territorial extent of direct East Anglian lordship or rulership – probably established from the later sixth century – was broadly equivalent to the historic counties of Norfolk and Suffolk. The province's southern boundary with the East Saxons is likely to have been on the Stour or the Gipping/Stour watershed (Hirst and Scull 2019, 348–9; Ch 9.7.4–5). For some period after the middle of the seventh century the province included the eastern fenland (the *regio* of Ely), and there are indications of fluctuating overlordship and ambitions to incorporate further groups in the western fenland and its borders. Rival claims to Middle Anglian territory help to explain the warfare between the rulers of the East Angles and Mercia which was such a feature of the recorded history of the seventh and eighth centuries.

It seems very likely that the East Anglian polity, like other southern kingdoms, was created by the progressive absorption of smaller units. The information that we have for the Ely *regio* may show the process in action in the middle of the seventh century. Some evidence for joint reigns, and the early division of the East Anglian see, could suggest a major political divide that was later crystallised in the establishment of the two shires of Suffolk and Norfolk in the eleventh century. But there are also some possible indications of three kings ruling jointly, and West Suffolk – the liberty of St Edmund – is another candidate for a significant and long-lasting subdivision within the kingdom.

8.2.3 The church in East Anglia

In the *Ecclesiastical History* Bede used East Anglian examples to illustrate different phases of conversion and they provide some of his most iconic passages, particularly concerning kings and the relationship between elite power and Christianisation. His account can be supplemented from a handful of other sources including the *Transitus Beati Fursei* (Rackham 2007), Folcard's *Vita S. Botulfi* (Love 2015; Newton 2016) and the *Liber Eliensis* (Blake 1962).

8.2.3.1 The sees of *Dommoc* and Elmham

Bede's first phase of conversion involved the foundation of sees as part of the mission sent by Pope Gregory the Great. It would appear that Rædwald had been

introduced to Christianity at the Kentish court, probably in the time of Æthelbert (d 616 or 618) (II, 15; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 188–91). He may have returned to East Anglia with the Roman missionary Paulinus for it would appear that Edwin of Northumbria may have encountered Paulinus when in exile there (II, 12; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 174–83; Colgrave 1968, 98–101). A bishopric was not established at this point, but around 630 Archbishop Honorius dispatched Felix, a Burgundian who had come to him wishing to work as a missionary, to the East Angles whose new king Sigebert had been baptised when in exile in Francia (II, 15; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 190–1). A recent reassessment of the early episcopal chronology of East Anglia has proposed that Felix arrived three years earlier during the reign of Sigebert's predecessor Eorpwald (son of Rædwald) (Platts 2022), but it seems unwise to reject the association of Sigebert and Felix which Bede is likely to have received from one of his main sources of information on East Anglian affairs, such as Abbot Esi or Canterbury itself. The *Liber Eliensis* states that Sigebert had met Felix in Francia and that he returned to England with the king (Blake 1962, 11) but it is difficult to assess the reliability of this claim. There were established links between Canterbury and Burgundy: Augustine stayed there on his way to England and a number of Burgundian clergy joined his mission (Wood 1994b, 8). Moreover, Felix may not have come direct from Burgundy if he was the Felix who was bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne and present at the council of Clichy in 626/627 (McClure and Collins 1994, 381–2). Bede stresses in two different places that Felix had come to the East Angles *via* Canterbury and says that Canterbury provided him with teachers so that he could establish a school (III, 18; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 268–9). The two accounts may be compatible, however, if Sigebert had met Felix in Francia and if Felix had got the approval and support of Canterbury for his appointment as bishop of the East Angles – which is the point that Bede, and presumably Canterbury, wished to stress. It would be going too far to infer that Sigebert himself had been in exile in Burgundy, or that Felix had come from the Columbanian foundation of Luxeuil in Burgundy (Wallace-Hadrill 1988, 77–8, 223).

Felix received as his see the *civitas* of *Dommoc* (II, 15; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 190–1). There has been much debate about the location of *Dommoc* (Campbell 1996, 4–6). The case for it being Dunwich dates back to the Middle Ages (Whitelock 1972, 4) but is not necessarily the more convincing because medieval authors could be prone to inventing interpretations of place-names and eliding place-name elements that were only somewhat similar – such as interpreting *dom* as OE *dūn* 'hill' when other etymologies are preferable (Coates 2000). So although Dunwich still has its modern supporters (Haslam 1992), most recent commentators have found the identification unconvincing (eg Pestell 2004, 20–4; Hoggett 2010, 36–40). Bede refers to *Dommoc* as a *civitas*, and it is also so described in the proceedings of the council of *Clofesho* of 803 (Campbell 1979b, 40-1) and in the profession of obedience made by Bishop Æthelwold of *Dommuciae* to Archbishop Ceolnoth (d 870) (Rigold 1961, 56–7; Richter and Brown 1972, 24, no. 28). This is a term that Bede applied regularly, but not exclusively, to former major Roman towns, many of which became the seats of bishoprics, including Canterbury, London, Winchester and York (Campbell 1979b, 34–8). In the East Anglian province only Caistor-by-Norwich, the former *civitas* capital of *Venta Icenorum*, was a town of that sort of status, but there is no evidence that it was ever an early medieval see. Bede also applied *civitas* to a range of other Roman sites, some of which, such as Rochester and Dorchester-on-Thames, became early bishoprics. Perhaps most pertinently of all for the identification of *Dommoc* is his description of *Ythancaestir* (Bradwell-on-Sea in Essex) as a *civitas* (III, 22; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 282–5). *Ythancaestir* was the former Saxon Shore fort of *Othona* which was chosen by Cedd of Lastingham as one of his two episcopal centres when he was appointed bishop of the East Saxons in 654; the other, which by implication Bede also designates as a *civitas*, was at Tilbury – probably East Tilbury where there have been Roman finds (Pewsey and Brooks 1993, 33–5). It is possible that *Dommoc* may also have been a former Saxon Shore fort, and a strong case has been made for the lost Saxon Shore fort of Walton Castle which is recorded as having had a church dedicated to Felix as well as being in the immediate vicinity of Felixstowe which presumably preserves the name of the bishop (Rigold 1961; 1974; Hoggett 2010, 36–40; Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, 52). A recent reassessment of Roman Felixstowe suggests that it may have had substantial buildings and been a significant port (Fairclough 2011), and so it too might fit the early medieval designation of *civitas*. Felixstowe and Walton Roman shore fort were on opposite sides of a small headland now lost to the sea. If that headland was known as *Dommoc* it could explain why the name fell out of use as the names Felixstowe and Walton Castle became preferred for its constituent elements. Old Felixstowe church had the potentially early dedication to St Peter and St Paul, but its exact location is not known. The fact that this identification would place East Anglia's primary see in south-east Suffolk, close to the proposed royal 'core zone' in the Deben valley, is another point in its favour (Ch 6.3).

The site of East Anglia's second bishopric has also been the subject of some discussion. Sometime after the council of Hertford in 672, at which the division of the larger dioceses was agreed in principle, Archbishop Theodore divided the East Anglian see when Bishop Bisi of *Dommoc* fell ill (IV, 5; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 348–55). Bede does not name the new see, but the attestation at the council of *Clofesho* in 803 and professions of obedience indicate that it was Elmham (Campbell 1996, 6–8). There has been some debate about whether this was North Elmham in Norfolk or South Elmham in Suffolk, but close to the Norfolk border (Warner 1996, 129–31). By far the most economical thesis is that it was North Elmham, as that was undoubtedly the site of the bishopric in the tenth century, and the alternative location would require there to have been an unnecessarily complicated shifting of episcopal sites (Rigold 1962, 67–72; Williamson 1993, 145). The location of *Dommoc* also has a bearing on which Elmham was the site of the second bishopric. If there was a case for Caistor-by-Norwich as *Dommoc* then South Elmham might seem a plausible choice, but the more likely identification of *Dommoc* with Felixstowe/Walton Castle instead supports the case for North Elmham as better placed to serve the northern part of the province.

The bishops of East Anglia are likely to have established a network of churches to provide for the population as well as consecrating churches and ordaining priests for those founded by laymen. However, many episcopal possessions are likely to have been lost during the period of Danish occupation in the late ninth and early tenth centuries when there seems to have been a gap in East Anglian episcopal succession (Whitelock 1972, 20–2). In the second quarter of the tenth century Theodred, bishop of London, appears to have administered the Suffolk diocese from a see based at Hoxne, and one reading of his will is that it was his only East Anglian episcopal estate (Kelly 2004, 92). It is uncertain whether Hoxne, whose church was dedicated to the martyred East Anglian king Æthelbert (d 794), was an episcopal possession before the tenth century or whether it was granted to Theodred by one of the English kings, most likely Edmund or Eadred, in order to revive the see; such issues are discussed further in Chapter 10. The Viking raids may well have forced the last bishops to leave *Dommoc* in favour of an inland base. One indication of this may be the record of the death of Bishop Ælfhun in 798 at Sudbury (Baker 2000, 58). Another possible late centre is Eye where an episcopal seal of Æthelwold, the last known bishop of *Dommoc*, was discovered (Whitelock 1972, 18; Webster and Backhouse 1991, 238). The will of Theodred also refers to religious communities at Mendham, on the Suffolk–Norfolk border, and at Bury St Edmunds (Pestell 2004, 81–6). Possible early episcopal centres in Norfolk are even harder to identify. Churches at Babingley and Reedham were claimed in the twelfth century as foundations of Felix (Williamson 1993, 143–4). Other early episcopal churches in both counties may be preserved in identifiable minster centres of the late Saxon and Norman periods, but these could also have had disparate origins.

Dorothy Whitelock correlated the episcopal lists for the two East Anglian bishoprics with other available evidence (Whitelock 1972, 18–22). Charter evidence shows that there were still two bishops in 845, but only Bishop Hunbert of Elmham is recorded as active in the reign of King Edmund (855–69). He is said to have consecrated Edmund as king at the royal vill of either Bures or Burnham in 856 (Dumville and Lapidge 1985, 51) and was probably the unnamed bishop recorded by Abbo in the company of King Edmund at the time of his death in 869 (Winterbottom 1972, 74–6); Symeon of Durham has him share the king's martyrdom (Rollason 2000, 98–9). It would appear that no further bishops were appointed after these last two incumbents died and that the two sees were in abeyance. Theodred, bishop of London, whose exact dates in office are uncertain, seems to have acted also as bishop of the southern East Anglian diocese in the second quarter of the tenth century until his death between 951 and 953 (Kelly 2004, 90–4, 225–8; Pestell 2004, 81–6). It is not known whether he also acted as bishop for the Elmham diocese but the sequence of its bishops had recommenced by 955 at the latest and they then served as bishops for the whole of East Anglia (Campbell 1996, 14–16).

8.2.3.2 Major monastic foundations

As well as stressing the importance of the establishment of bishoprics, Bede also pays tribute to the role of monastic founders from Francia and Gaul in converting the English. After Felix his focus of attention for the East Anglian province was Fursey, who probably came from Ulster (Ó Riain 2016). Bede's account is very closely based on the *Transitus Beati Fursei* which survives separately (Rackham 2007). The *Transitus* states that King Sigebert gave him a *castrum* by the sea in which to build a monastery and Bede gives the name of *Cnobheresburg* that is not otherwise recorded (ibid, 52–3; III, 19; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 270–1). King Anna and his nobles were patrons of Fursey but around 648 he decided to leave for Francia because of the threat of 'pagan incursions' – usually presumed to be Penda and the Mercians. He died soon after founding a new monastery

at Lagny in 649, after which his brothers left East Anglia with the intention of taking it over (Rackham 2007, 56–9; III, 19; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 274–7; Wood 2016). What happened to *Cnobheresburg* is not known, but other followers of Fursey are mentioned so there is no reason for thinking that it did not continue. It would seem logical that a second potential missionary centre, after *Dommoc*, should be established in the north of the kingdom. The Roman shore fort at Burgh Castle in Norfolk is usually identified as *Cnobheresburg* but this is not certain and a case can be made for either of the other Roman shore forts in Norfolk, at Caister-on-Sea and Brancaster (Johnson 1983, 115–21; Darling 1993, xviii; Pestell 2004, 56–8).

The other major monastic founder with a written tradition was Botwulf (Botolph/Botulf) whose foundation at *Icanho* (Iken) is recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* under the year 654 (Whitelock 1961, 20). Botwulf was not mentioned by Bede and there has to be some uncertainty whether the eleventh-century life by Folcard preserves reliable traditions or is an imaginative embroidering of what the *Ecclesiastical History* has to say about East Anglian history in the 650s (Love 2015; Newton 2016, 527–30; Ch 1.5). The *Vita* records that Botwulf was living in a monastery in Francia when he was visited by two sisters of King Æthelmund of the 'South Angles' who invited him to return to East Anglia to found a monastery. These could be daughters of King Anna whose presence in Francia is described in the *Ecclesiastical History* (III, 8; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 238–9). Æthelmund is not otherwise known, nor his mother Sywara who is said to be acting as regent on his behalf, but two other kinsmen mentioned, Æthelhere and Æthelwald, are known and were brothers of Anna who ruled after him (III, 22 and 24; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 284–5, 290–1). The *Chronicle* entry links the death of Anna with the foundation of *Icanho* and this, plus the tradition of the active role of the widow and children of Anna, might suggest that Botwulf's foundation was intended as a memorial to the dead king, who had died in battle with Penda of Mercia.

Botwulf seems to have received national recognition as an expert on monasticism which could be explained by the tradition in his *Vita* that he had lived in a Frankish monastery. He was visited by Ceolfrith, the future abbot of Wearmouth and Jarrow, *c* 670 and his biographer epitomised him as 'a man of unparalleled life and learning, and full of the grace of the Holy Spirit' (Grocock and Wood 2013, 82–3). He also had links with the monastery of Much Wenlock and may have been involved in its foundation (Finberg 1972, 197–216; Sims-Williams 1990, 98–9). The discovery of a cross-shaft at Iken, probably of later ninth-century date and a unique find in East Anglia, suggests its continuity as a religious community into the ninth century, if not beyond (West *et al* 1984). Botwulf's remains seem to have been shared among several fenland religious communities in the eleventh century, of which Folcard's Thorney was one (Newton 2016, 535–40). References to the necessity of rescuing a dishonoured saint's body because Iken had been destroyed by Vikings are a hagiographical *topos* intended to justify the movement of his remains. There were probably other early religious leaders of whom little or nothing is known, including Abbot Wereferd based in Norfolk (see 8.2.3.4, below), and St Walstan of Bawburgh in Norfolk, associated particularly with holy wells there and at other sites, but of uncertain date (Blair 2002, 558).

8.2.3.3 Royal foundations

An alternative way to present the origins of *Cnobheresburg* and Iken would be as royally sponsored foundations. Royal investment in the church in the East Anglian province is a topic that Bede highlighted in the *Ecclesiastical History*, and he accorded East Anglian kings seminal roles at different phases of conversion and Christianisation. An initial stage is marked by the account of Rædwald's *fanum* (often translated as 'temple') in which he had both a Christian altar and a smaller one for offerings to pagan gods (II, 15; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 190–1). This could suggest that Rædwald, and his wife and advisers according to the *Ecclesiastical History* account, may have hoped that Christianity could be practised alongside traditional beliefs and rites, a not unreasonable approach from their perspective but one that enraged Bede. The *fanum* was, according to Bede, seen by King Aldwulf when he was a boy, which on a rough estimate would have been in the 650s, and a period of 40 to 60 years from the point of initial conversion during which traditional beliefs were practised alongside the new religion can be suggested for the seventh-century English kingdoms (Yorke 1999b). Bede gives no indication of where the *fanum* was located or whether it was associated with a royal residence (Ch 7.1.1) but his account does suggest that public cult practice at dedicated sites was an important component of royal status in the pre-Christian period for which kings would have wanted to find Christian equivalents (Ch 7.3; Blair 1995; Semple 2013, 63–107).

It can be argued that putting the royal house at the centre of Christian worship was a legacy of Sigebert, who had been in exile in Francia and became a Christian there before returning to rule *c* 630. Bede wrote with approval of his decision to resign his throne in order to enter a

monastery which he had founded (III, 18; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 266–9). 'Kings who opted out' are a feature of the more whole-hearted acceptance of Christianity by royal houses in the latter part of the seventh century (Stancliffe 1983). Abdication by a king to enter a monastery might show concern to save his own soul but, coming at a point where one set of beliefs and practices was being replaced by another, might also be seen as a means of establishing a special relationship with the Christian God to take the place of whatever links may once have been claimed with traditional deities (Yorke 2003). When persuaded by his subjects to lead the East Anglians against Penda of Mercia because his presence would help inspire the army with greater confidence, Sigebert refused to carry weapons because of his monastic vows and died in battle (III, 18; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 266–9). Monastic vocation and death in battle are both qualifications for a dead king being declared a saint, but no cult is known for Sigebert, perhaps because he left no direct heirs (Ridyard 1994). An addition to the oldest manuscript of the *Liber Eliensis* identified his monastery as Bury St Edmunds (Blake 1962, 11). This deserves to be taken seriously not least because it comes from an East Anglian house other than Bury where, if there was any cult of Sigebert, it was entirely eclipsed by that of their later martyr king Edmund. Material relating to Edmund implies that there was a community at Bury in the ninth century (Ridyard 1988, 211–24) and this may also be suggested by the will of Bishop Theodred (Pestell 2004, 81–6).

King Anna was perhaps a more acceptable Christian role-model for the church. Described by Bede as 'a very religious man and noble both in mind and deed' (IV, 19; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 390–1), Anna stuck to his secular role in life and was also killed in battle with Penda. The possible commemorative role of the foundation of Iken has already been mentioned but Anna was not buried there: *Liber Eliensis* records that he was buried at Blythburgh and that his cult was still being celebrated there in the twelfth century (Blake 1962, 12). Finds of an eighth-century carved whalebone plaque and styli support the identification of a religious community, as does the Domesday Book entry for a well-endowed church on a royal estate (Warner 1996, 120–1; Pestell 2004, 91–2), but any cult of Anna does not seem to have left further trace. The *Liber Eliensis* also refers to a son of Anna called 'Iurminus' being originally buried at Blythburgh and subsequently translated to Bury. His cult is relatively well-attested (Blair 2002, 538–9), but that 'Iurminus' was really a son of Anna may be doubted as his name does not fit with that of Anna's known children. He may, however, have been some other member of the royal house. The first element of his name could have been 'Eormen', a name-element found in the Kentish royal house and borne by Eormenhild, a granddaughter of Anna whose father was King Eorcenbert of Kent.

It is Anna's daughters who had a greater role in the church and belonged to the first generation of princesses to found and enter religious houses. This was a means of intercession with the Christian God and of obtaining a saintliness that could demonstrate the special nature of royal blood that was more acceptable to the church than a proliferation of monk-kings (Yorke 2003). Anna's daughter Æthelthryth founded the nunnery of Ely in 672/3 (IV, 18; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 391–7). She was followed as abbess by her sister Seaxburh and – in Ely tradition at least – by several other female relatives (Love 2004). Another daughter of Anna, a step-daughter and a granddaughter all joined the nunnery of Faremoutiers, probably under the patronage of the Frankish queen Balthild (III, 8; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 236–41; Yorke 2017). Ely claimed that Wihtburh was also a daughter of Anna but this may be doubted, particularly as it is recorded that she died fifty-five years before the translation of her body in 798 which would place her death in 743, eighty-nine years after Anna was killed 654 (Baker 2000, 58); possibly, though, she was of royal birth. Her cult was based at East Dereham and may be evidence for a religious house there, potentially the only royal monastic foundation known in Norfolk other than *Cnobheresburg* (Williamson 1993, 182–3; Love 2004, lxxxvi–c, 54–93). As the case of Wihtburh and Dereham suggests, Ely's later dominance and historical activities may overshadow the importance of other early royal foundations, particularly in the absence of early records such as charters. One might have expected from analogy with other kingdoms a greater preponderance of early royal nunneries, and at least one closer to the heartlands of the Wuffings. It is uncertain, for instance, where King Aldwulf's daughter Abbess Ecgburh, who was a patron of St Guthlac, was based (Colgrave 1956, 146–9, 156–7).

8.2.3.4 Elite foundations

One aspect that is undoubtedly under-represented in our sources, and is not referred to in the *Ecclesiastical History* at all, is the role of non-royal elites in founding churches. It is apparent that this was an extremely significant aspect of the spread of Christianity in certain areas (Pickles 2018). The only specific reference to the role of a noble in an East Anglian church foundation is the somewhat confused account in the *Liber Eliensis* of the foundation by the nobleman or prince (*clito*) Lutting of a monastery for Abbot Wereferd at *Seham*. This would seem to be a church also associated with Bishop Felix and where he is supposed to have been buried. It has generally been taken to be Soham in Cambridgeshire, but the case has been made for Saham Toney in Norfolk, and attention drawn to other traditions linking Felix, Lutting (*ætheling*) and Wereferd with other Norfolk churches at Loddon, Reedham and Babingley (Williamson 1993, 144–5). Possibly we have here a record of how Felix was able to extend church provision by co-operation with a member of a locally important family in Norfolk. There may have been many other Luttings who have gone unrecorded. After all, Bede in his *Letter to Bishop Ecgbert* implies that it was normal for a nobleman's residence to have incorporated a church (Grocock and Wood 2013, 142–7). The debate over whether certain types of site with certain types of finds were 'secular' or 'religious' may be a false dichotomy, and we refer to all such places as magnate centres in this volume.

8.2.3.5 Conclusion

It is apparent that written information about the church in East Anglia is limited, but what we do have suggests that its early medieval history was comparable to that of better-recorded kingdoms such as Northumbria or Kent which are often seen as central to the Christianisation of early medieval England. The Gregorian mission had a limited impact in East Anglia; more significant were independent Frankish influences, represented by the Burgundian Felix, and by Irish and Anglo-Saxons trained in Francia who came to East Anglia, notably Fursey and Botwulf, and their associates. East Anglia was recognised in other kingdoms as a leading centre for the monastic way of life. The recent assessment of the Staffordshire Hoard may imply that the early church in East Anglia was also innovative in Christian art (Fern *et al* 2019). The ornament on the Christian objects from the hoard, including the ceremonial cross and the possible priestly headdress, appears to have its closest parallels in items included in the Sutton Hoo ship burial, thus opening up the possibility that the hoard's Christian objects may also have originated from the East Anglian kingdom (ibid, 99–118, 276–9). The quotation from Numbers on the inscribed strip is also cited in Felix's *Life of St Guthlac* that was commissioned by King Ælfwald of East Anglia (Colgrave 1956; Klein 2013; Gameson 2019). Parallels between items in the Staffordshire Hoard, the Sutton Hoo ship burial and the Book of Durrow have suggested the possibility that this striking illuminated manuscript, whose place of manufacture has been much debated, could have been produced in an East Anglian religious house (Henderson and Henderson 2010; Webster 2012,

78). A number of possible communities that are named in early written sources have been discussed, but by 800 there are likely to have been many additional religious communities within the East Anglian kingdom, and Norfolk is notably under-represented. The place-name element *burh* may have been applied to such communities and identifies a number of additional possible early minsters (Rye and Williamson 2020). Clearly there is the potential for the achievements of the early medieval church in East Anglia to be taken further in future discussions.

8.2.4 Contacts

Written sources throw some light on links between the East Anglian and other English kingdoms, and with areas of Francia. The seventh century is best documented but there are hints and implications for the eighth century as well. The records are principally concerned with the activities of the royal families and leading ecclesiastics but have wider implications and may indicate significant routes of travel and communication.

8.2.4.1 Insular contacts

When we first get references at the beginning of the seventh century, the East Angles belong to an axis of relationships between maritime-facing polities along the east coast with Kent at one end and Deira at the other. Rædwald's intervention in 616 that resulted in the death of King Æthelfrith of Bernicia at the battle of the river Idle and the accession of Edwin as king of both Deira and Bernicia can be viewed in such a context (II, 12; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 175–83). Rædwald's victory ushered in what would seem to have been East Anglia's period of greatest power among the other kingdoms, marked by Rædwald's position as fourth in the list of early great overlords included in the *Ecclesiastical History* (II, 5; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 148–51). After his death, perhaps in 627 or 628, this ascendency passed to the Northumbrians, first Edwin and then his two Bernician successors, Oswald and Oswiu. East Anglia under Anna and his sons had a significant role in the Northumbrian nexus of power.

Rædwald's intervention on behalf of Edwin might have led to a feud between the royal families of Bernicia and East Anglia but any differences were probably subsumed by the threat posed to both by Penda of Mercia and his sons. The middle years of the seventh century were characterised by alliances of most of the other English kingdoms against the Mercians, though Mercian military power meant that the East Angles and other

southern kingdoms were sometimes obliged to recognise Mercian overlordship. The East Angles were in direct competition with Mercia for overlordship of Middle Anglian peoples of the fenland and its western borders, such as the *Gyrwe*. It is in this context, of opposition to Mercia, that we can place the marriages of daughters of King Anna into the Bernician and Kentish royal houses, and the sheltering of King Cenwalh of Wessex when he was temporarily driven from his kingdom (III, 7; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 232–5). Fortunes in the middle seventh century were mixed. Three East Anglian kings died in battle with Penda and, after the defeat and death of Anna in battle in 654, Anna's brother and successor Æthelhere was obliged in 655 to fight in Penda's army at the battle of the river Winwæd, where he was killed (III, 24; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 288–91). This victory resulted in Northumbria under King Oswiu becoming the dominant kingdom.

It was in this period that the baptism of Swithhelm took place at Rendlesham in the reign of Æthelhere's brother Æthelwald (III, 22; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 284–5). The fact that the baptism was carried out by the East Saxon bishop Cedd, a Northumbrian who had previously been installed among the East Saxons by King Oswiu, strongly suggests that it was part of Oswiu's reassertion of his overlordship in the south after the battle of the Winwæd (Ch 7.1.2): indeed, the whole tenor of Bede's chapter is about how Northumbria ensured the East Saxons remained Christian. Æthelwald can be seen as acting as the client of Oswiu, but in a more favoured position than Swithhelm who can be viewed as in some respects subject to him – such tiered overlordship is a feature of the seventh century. The same chapter describes the baptism of an earlier East Saxon king at Oswiu's *villa regia Ad Murum* and the baptism at Rendlesham can be seen as modelled on the earlier event; both were orchestrated by Lindisfarne churchmen – as Cedd was in origin.

Another attested East Anglian connection within England was with the Western Angles (or *Hecani*) of Herefordshire. Merewalh, who founded a short-lived dynasty there, was said to be a son of Penda but his province was also under pressure from the expansionist tendencies of the main Mercian kingdom. The so-called 'Testament of St Mildburg' implies that Botwulf's monastery of Iken had been involved by King Merewalh in the setting up of a female-led religious community at Much Wenlock and that terms of engagement were being renegotiated by Merewalh's daughter Mildburg (Finberg 1972, 197–216; Sims-Williams 1990, 98–9). Merewalh's Kentish wife and their daughter Mildrith were founder members of the nunnery of Minster-in-Thanet and major figures in the various texts of the Kentish Legend together with daughters and granddaughters of King Anna (Rollason 1982). Anna is reputed to have founded a church near the Herefordshire Welsh border which was subsequently dedicated to St Æthelthryth (Blake 1962, 281–2; Whitelock 1972, 12). It was at Sutton Walls in Herefordshire that King Æthelbert of the East Angles was killed on the orders of King Offa of Mercia in 794, having travelled there expecting to marry one of Offa's daughters. He was buried in Hereford and his cult seems to have been more actively promoted there to begin with than in East Anglia, perhaps a last glimpse of long-lived connections between the two areas (James 1917; Blair 2002, 505–6).

8.2.4.2 Merovingian kingdoms

Like Kent, East Anglia's best-attested links were with the western Frankish kingdom of Neustria (Wood 1991) but there are also indications of possible connections with Burgundy and with Austrasia. The earliest written evidence concerns the exile of King Sigebert in Francia during the reigns of Rædwald and Eorpwald. Exact dates for this are not known but Sigebert may have been there for much of the first two decades of the seventh century before his accession in 630 or 631; Bede says it was 'a long time' (II, 15 and III, 18; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 190–1, 266–9). In seeking refuge in Francia Sigebert may have been able to draw on longer established links. He appears to have a Frankish name, borne by one of the grandsons of Clovis married to Brunhild who would have been administering Austrasia and Burgundy on behalf of her grandsons when Sigebert is likely to have been born. It was Brunhild rather than the Neustrian court who assisted the mission dispatched by Pope Gregory I to England (Higham 1997, 76–80). Sigebert was baptised during his exile in Francia but the *Ecclesiastical History* does not say where. However, if he did encounter Felix, and if Felix was the bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne who attended the council of Clichy in 627 (above, 8.2.3.1), then he would have been in Neustria and his host during that time would have been the powerful Chlothar II who ruled Neustria from 584 to 629 and Burgundy, where Felix came from, between 613 and 629.

One can only speculate on the useful connections Sigebert might have made during his lengthy exile, but in the middle of the seventh century, during the reigns of Anna and his sons, one receives a much fuller impression of frequent and varied interaction between East Anglia and Francia. When Fursey apparently felt East Anglia was no longer a safe place to live because of Mercian attacks, he moved to Francia (above, 8.2.3.2; Rackham 2007,

56–7). Fursey's patron was the most powerful man in Neustria, Erchinoald, mayor of the palace, who seems to have had significant links with England – a kinswoman of his had married into the Kentish royal house (Fouracre and Gerberding 1996, 96–104; Wood 2016, 2–7). At some point in the 640s Erchinoald had acquired a possibly well-connected slave from England called Balthild who took the fancy of the young King Clovis II who married her in 648.

Fursey's move can be seen as part of an established network of connections between Neustrian and East Anglian elites; the entry of a daughter, step-daughter and granddaughter of King Anna into the Frankish nunnery of Faremoutiers (III, 8; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 238–9) must be regarded in the same light. Bede does not date the move of the princesses to Francia precisely or explore its ramifications, and both these aspects have been subject to varied interpretations. The *Vita Botulfi*, if it can be trusted, implies that the move to Faremoutiers occurred after the death of King Anna in 654. There have been attempts to link the movement of the princesses with the departure of Fursey and his brothers and the patronage of Erchinoald, but the date seems too early and none of these individuals had a known link with Faremoutiers (Fouracre and Gerberding 1996, 97–132; Le Jan 2001, 254–5). The person who did was Queen Balthild, who used patronage of Faremoutiers and other nunneries to bolster her position, especially after the death of Clovis II in 657 when she became regent for her young son Chlothar III (Nelson 1978). Cultivation of her English connections through these nunneries was a key part of her campaign to strengthen her position (Yorke 2017). A remarkable metal-detecting find from near Norwich may support the idea that Balthild was in direct communication with individuals in East Anglia. This is a gold seal-matrix from a signet-ring with the name 'Baldechilde', a version of the name Balthild (Pestell 2013b; Davies and Pestell 2015, 64). Although there is no definitive proof that this was Queen Balthild the identification seems more than likely. Nor can it be known how the seal-matrix came to be in a field near Norwich but one could envisage it being carried as a means of identification by a legate or messenger.

There is also written evidence, though less abundant, for connections between the East Angles and the more easterly Austrasian kingdom. When the brothers of Fursey, Fóillán and Ultan, fell out with Erchinoald, mayor of the palace of Neustria, they moved to Austrasia and received patronage from the family of its former mayor Pepin I instead. It is tempting to suggest that existing links with East Anglia aided this transfer from one Merovingian province to another. The brothers seem to have been involved in more than just monasticism. Fóillán was murdered in 655 in murky circumstances that seem to have been linked with a plot by the Austrasian mayor Grimoald, son of Pepin I, to depose the Austrasian king Dagobert II (son of Sigebert III) and spirit him away to Ireland, possibly via East Anglia (Fouracre and Gerberding 1996, 301–29; Wood 2016). Another possible Austrasian link visible through the activities of churchmen with East Anglian connections is Folcard's information that Botwulf's brother Athulf (perhaps Æthelwulf) was bishop of Utrecht (or possibly Tongeren) (Love 2015, 41). No bishop of that name is known from either see but East Anglian involvement in the mission of the Northumbrian Willibrord to Frisia, under the patronage of the Pippinids, would not be surprising. King Ælfwald was in correspondence with the West Saxon missionary Boniface *c* 747, and sent him gifts and set up mutual supporting prayers, though Boniface seems to have been in contact with most of the English royal courts (Emerton 2000, 127–8). We can briefly glimpse other East Anglians journeying further afield. Bishop Cuthwine visited Rome in the early eighth century and, probably at the end of the century, an East Anglian abbot called Lull from the see of *Dommoc* visited Alcuin in Francia and gave a good report of the state of his diocese (Whitelock 1972, 9, 17).

8.2.4.3 Long-distance routes

The written sources imply regular journeying between East Anglia and Northumbria, with routes beyond to Francia – both Austrasia and Neustria – and to Ireland, especially the north-east (Wood 2016). When the *Transitus Beati Fursei* shows Fursey and his brothers, who probably came originally from County Down, travelling across the country to East Anglia and settling there for a few years before travelling on to Neustrian Francia and ultimately Austrasia, they may have been following a well-established route that included journeying across part of Northumbria (Rackham 2007; Ó Riain 2016). A reverse journey may have been taken by Dido, bishop of Poitiers, when he smuggled the deposed Dagobert II out of Austrasia to Ireland (perhaps to Slane in County Meath) (Picard 1991; Wood 2016). Subsequently, when the political situation changed again, Bishop Wilfrid of Northumbria was responsible for orchestrating Dagobert's return. What we know of Botwulf reinforces this picture. Botwulf also travelled from Francia to East Anglia with the help of East Anglian royal connections and was visited by someone from Northumbria – the young Ceolfrith, later abbot of Wearmouth and Jarrow (Grocock and Wood 2013, 82–3; Newton 2016). These events all

occurred within the middle two quarters of the seventh century. A route from Francia to Ireland *via* East Anglia might be one reason why Northumbria may have wished to cultivate links with the East Anglian court. It would provide access to maritime routes around and across the North Sea and Channel, including alternatives to the shortest Channel crossing for anyone wishing to avoid travelling through Kent or Neustria: the royal houses of Bernicia and Kent were not always on good terms because of the latter's kinship with the Deiran royal house, and Dido of Poitiers and Dagobert would have wanted to avoid Neustria because the whole point was to remove Dagobert from the threat posed by Neustrian leaders. Journeys between Herefordshire and East Anglia have already been mentioned and could have continued further into Wales and across to southern Ireland. East Anglia would also be an obvious starting point for any crossing to the Continental North Sea coast north of the Merovingian kingdoms (Williamson 2013b, 44–5).

8.2.5 The place-names Tittleshall and Ufford

Eleanor Rye

It has been suggested that the place-names Tittleshall (Norfolk) and Ufford (Suffolk) may preserve references to the Wuffa and Tytil/Tyttla of the East Anglian royal genealogies (Bruce-Mitford 1975, 691; Walton Rogers 2013, 78–9; Williamson 2008, 18, 116–18).

The place-name Tittleshall (*Titeshala* 1086, *Titleshal* 1200, *Tetles-, Titleshal* 1205, *Tutleshal* 1275) has been interpreted as a compound of an unattested Old English personal name **Tyttel* and the place-name element *h(e)alh* 'nook, corner' (Watts 2004, sv Tittleshall; Ekwall 1960, sv Tittleshall). Ufford (*Uffeworda, Offeworda, Uf(fe)forda* 1086) is most likely a compound of the OE personal name *Uffa*, a hypocoristic form of personal names containing the element *Wulf-*, *-wulf*, and OE *worð* 'enclosure', the latter later reinterpreted as OE *ford* 'ford' (Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, sv Ufford; Ekwall 1960, sv Ufford; Watts 2004, sv Ufford).

The names in the East Anglian genealogies could feasibly be identical with the OE personal names in Tittleshall and Ufford. The dynastic name *Wuffingas* is formed from the personal name *Wuffa*, a hypocoristic form of names containing the element *Wulf-*, *-wulf* and the group-name forming suffix *-ingas* (Insley 2007, 313). The rarity of names from *Wulf-*, *-wulf* amongst the earliest English personal names – at a time when they were common in Francia – may be another trace of Frankish onomastic influence in the dynastic name (ibid, 314). The name *Tytilus* (Bede), *Tyttla* (*Historia Brittonum*) has been explained as a name formed from the root of OE *tȳtan* 'to shine, to protrude' (Insley 2007, 314; cf OED 2020, sv toot, v.1), presumably with the same hypocoristic suffix OE *-el* found in **Rendel* (Ch 2.1.2). The form Latinised by Bede would appear to allow for the personal name being strongly inflected (as is the case in Tittleshall's forms with genitive *-es)*.

There is, however, no strong reason to equate either place-name with the individuals named in the *Ecclesiastical History* and *Historia Brittonum* even if we accept their historicity. Personal names with the OE element *Wulf-* are common in late Old English (Insley 2007, 314), so the likelihood that the person named in Ufford is another *Uffa* or bearer of a name in *Wulf-* is high. The case of *Tytilus/Tyttla* and Tittleshall looks stronger at first glance given the rarity of the personal name in question. However, identically derived personal names occur in at least two other place-names, Telscombe (Sussex) and Titlington (Northumberland) (Watts 2004, svv Telscombe, Titlington), and its occurrence in Tittleshall tells us only that the name was known and used, if not common, in early medieval East Anglia. The aggregate evidence that south-east Suffolk was the core area of early East Anglian royal power would also make a connection between the *Tytilus/Tyttla* of the genealogies and a person named in a place-name some 80km distant in Norfolk seem less plausible.

8.3 Landscape and territory in East Anglia

8.3.1 Topography and territory

Tom Williamson and Eleanor Rye

Chalk is the dominant underlying formation in the west of East Anglia, although it is only exposed in a few places along the margins of the Wash and the Fen basin, and southwards to Newmarket, together with an intermittent band of earlier formations including the Gault Clay and Lower Greensand. The chalk dips towards the south-east and becomes buried ever deeper beneath more recent deposits which lie unconformably with it – the so-called 'Crag' formation, a varied collection of Pliocene and Pleistocene clays, gravels and shelly sands. In the far south of the region, in the area around the Deben estuary, the deposits which lie between chalk and crag have survived erosion and form the main solid geology: Tertiary sands and clays, the most important of which is the London Clay (Lee *et al* 2015). The solid geology of

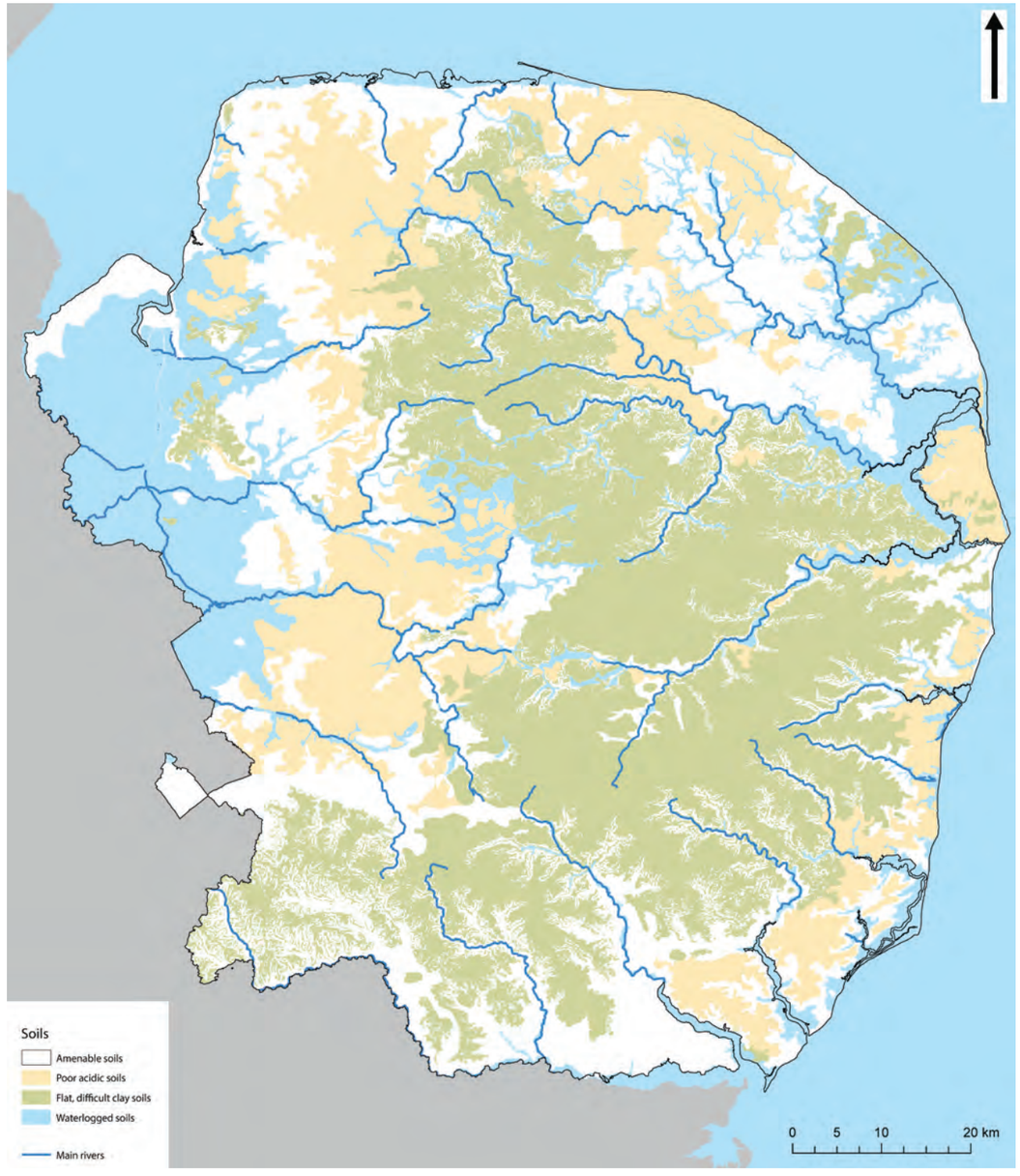

Fig 8.3.1 East Anglia: principal soil types. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

the region is thus relatively simple but it is largely obscured by more complex Quaternary deposits, East Anglia being the quintessential region of glacial deposition. Indeed, the successive Pleistocene sequence of glaciations and interglacials was largely worked out here, and the different phases mainly carry names derived from East Anglian type-sites (Boulton *et al* 1984; Funnel 2005; Lee *et al* 2015; Lewis *et al* 1999). It is these soft and relatively recent formations which provide the principal raw materials for the region's soils. In addition, glacial processes have modified or structured much of its topography. Thus, for example, the rivers Little Ouse and the Waveney, which form the boundary of Norfolk and Suffolk for most of its length, share a single continuous valley along which one flows west and one east from sources near Redgrave. The valley is older than, and

physically independent of both rivers: it was probably created as water, penned up by the Woltonian ice sheets to the north, spilled from the periglacial lake known as 'Lake Fenland' in the south-east Midlands, and flowed east towards the North Sea (Lewis *et al* 1991; Rose 1994).

East of the Fenland, which was poorly drained in the early medieval period with tracts of open water and permanent occupation confined to islands such as Ely and the silt ridge beside the Wash (Silvester 1988; Waller 1994; Hall 1996), the most obvious distinction in the region's geography is between the dissected plateau of boulder clay, running in a broad arc through the central mass of Suffolk into south and then central Norfolk, and the land lying to either side of it. The clays give rise to soils which are generally poorly draining, although not universally so (Chs 2.1 and 6.1). They range from the clayey loams of the Burlingham Associations, through the stagnogleys of the Beccles Associations to the pelo-stagnogleys of the Ragdale Association (Fig 8.3.1; Hodge *et al* 1984). Towards the margins of the plateau spreads of well-drained loamy soils of the Melford and Ludford Association, formed in glaciofluvial drift or thin layers of till, occur in some of the major valleys.

Outside the clay belt, the soils are generally formed in chalk, or in freely draining formations of aeolian or glaciofluvial origin. To the east, in south-east Suffolk, glacial outwash deposits, variously mixed with the underlying Crag, give rise to the freely draining and acidic soils which have given the 'Sandlings' their name. To the west and north of the clays are further areas of light soil, again formed in sands (of both glaciofluvial and aeolian origin) but here mainly overlying chalk. In the district called Breckland, in north-west Suffolk and south-west Norfolk, the chalk is often very deeply buried beneath sands, except in the principal valleys. Further north, however, in northern and western Norfolk, the sands are thinner and more mixed with clays, giving rise to a variety of acid loams – hence the term 'Goodsands' applied to the district by the eighteenth-century agriculturalist, Arthur Young (Young 1804, 3–6) – except in places along the margins of the Fen basin and the Wash where, in a band running north from King's Lynn, there are areas of sandy soil associated with exposures of Lower Greensand. For the most part, however, the lower ground to the west of the clay belt is characterised by soils formed in chalk or calcareous head, most notably those of the Newmarket 1 and 2 Associations.

Immediately to the north of the clay belt, extending from Norwich almost to Aylsham, is a further band of poor, sandy soils which gives rise to countryside similar in some respects to Breckland or the Suffolk 'Sandlings', much of it – like them – planted in the course of the twentieth century with conifer plantations. After a gap of *c* 10km, mainly occupied by an area of coarse acid loams of the Wick 3 Association, such soils appear again on the high ground of the Cromer Ridge beside the coast. To the east of this intermittent band of sandy soils, in eastern Norfolk, and also in the area of Suffolk lying between Yarmouth and Lowestoft, lies a wide area dominated by soils formed in aeolian drift or *loess,* overlying glaciofluvial sands or clays of the Happisburgh Formation. These deep, well-drained loams of the Wick 2 Association, especially in the area of the former island of Flegg, include some of the most easily worked and fertile land in England.

As we have already noted (Ch 2), discussions of early medieval settlement and land use in East Anglia usually emphasise the broad contrast between the boulder clay plateau and the areas of lighter soils which flank it: 'Anglo-Saxon settlers' are held to have preferred the latter, with the extensive clearances on the claylands made during the Roman period abandoned after the fourth century (West 1999). But it is important to emphasise again that both 'light' and 'heavy' soils could pose problems for early cultivators, that a simple distinction between them obscures a more complex range of variation, and that the character of soils may have changed over time.

The heavier clays were difficult to cultivate or drain in the early medieval period, probably more so than before significant quantities of humic material and *loess* were removed by cultivation in the late prehistoric and Roman periods. But the clay soils held nutrients well and were generally fertile in character. Light soils, formed in sands or chalk, were generally easy to cultivate but they were comparatively infertile, or at least soon became so as clearance and cultivation removed any thin layers of more fertile, windblown *loess* which they possessed (Catt 1977; 1978). Nutrients rapidly leached away through the porous subsoil: so too, in the case of those formed in sands or gravels, did lime, leading to high levels of acidity. In many places soils called *podzols* developed, in which grey upper levels, leached of humus and iron, overlie hard layers of pan where these have been redeposited. These were the characteristic soils of the heathlands which, prior to the late eighteenth century, covered vast tracts of sandy ground in East Anglia. By the twelfth century, and probably long before, complex arrangements for maintaining fertility had been developed in these districts.

Large flocks of sheep were grazed on the heaths or harvest residues by day, and closely folded on the arable by night, when it lay fallow or before the spring sowing. Here they dunged or 'tathed' it, replenishing the nutrients which were both depleted by cropping and rapidly leached from these porous soils (Allison 1967; Bailey 1989; Belcher 2020; Wade-Martins and Williamson 1999, 9–13). At a local level the distinction between heaths and arable often had a topographic dimension. In most districts of light soils the main arable areas were found on the lower ground, where soils were often formed in part in underlying, more calcareous formations. The higher ground was characterised by deeper sands and spreads of gravels and here, through the eleventh to fifteenth centuries, wood pastures dwindled at the expense of open heath. In many of these districts, the area under cultivation expanded over the same time period but the spread of settlement onto the uplands was often constrained by problems of water supply on porous geologies.

This valley : upland contrast – the contrast between 'river' and 'wold' – was also evident in clayland areas, although here taking a different form. In the fifth to eighth centuries, as we have seen in the case of Rendlesham, the main arable areas were located on the sloping ground of the principal valleys, where the soils were loamier and could be drained with relative ease, while the more level and poorly draining interfluves were occupied by woods and pastures. Between the eighth and the thirteenth centuries cultivation expanded into these more problematic areas but much land remained under trees or pasture as coppiced woods, commons and deer parks. Settlement also expanded away from the valleys, the perched water table of the claylands allowing farms to disperse without restriction, often coming to form loose girdles around the margins of the surviving tracts of common land (Roberts and Wrathmell 2001).

The critical importance, on almost all soil types, of the distinction between 'river' and 'wold' helps to explain many aspects of East Anglia's early geography. In particular, finds of material of fifth- to eighth-century date, while closely associated with chalk soils of the Newmarket 1 and 2 and Swaffham Prior Associations, and with well-drained loams of the Wick 2, Melford and Ludford Associations, also occur on clays, where the slope is greater than 1.75 degrees. They are sparse on the higher tracts of acid sands, although often abundant on the lower, more loamy sands of the Newport 2 and Newport 3 Associations. Also noteworthy in this context is the distribution of woodland (most of which was grazed woodland) recorded at Domesday. Vills with the largest recorded quantities of woodland are mainly concentrated in an arc running from north-east Suffolk, through south and into central Norfolk, all areas characterised by level clay tablelands occupied by poorly draining soils of the Beccles Association soils. But the arc then continues into north-east Norfolk, now on lighter land, and this time picking out the acidic soils on the higher ground (Fig 8.3.2). This 'wooded crescent', to use Oliver Rackham's term (Rackham 1986b, 164–5), is structured by regional topography as much as by soil type. It follows the main watershed running through the centre of East Anglia, separating rivers which drain east – entering the North Sea via Great Yarmouth or draining via Southwold, Minsmere, Aldeburgh and Felixstowe – from those reaching the sea via the Wash or with outfalls on the north Norfolk coast (the Stiffkey and the Burn). Interestingly, the belt of woodland runs across the through valley shared by the Little Ouse and Waveney where the two rivers have their sources in the low-lying fens around Redgrave and South Lopham. Even though the watershed between the two is not discernible as a physical feature it appears to have shaped aspects of early geography.

Domesday, however, must be handled critically as a source of evidence for the location and extent of woodland, especially at more local scales (Rackham 1986a, 78–80). Woodland is recorded by its capacity to support numbers of swine rather than by area and, like other resources, is listed by manors which are in turn identified by the township or vill within which they lay. Modern mapping will attach woodland figures to the location of the parish church, almost always within a valley, but many vills extended far onto the adjacent uplands. Thus woodland which was mainly located in the latter areas will appear, when mapped, to be concentrated within the former. Furthermore, some vills – especially major estate centres – had rights to detached areas of woodland located at a distance and this is only occasionally made explicit in Domesday. For example, it is only because its possession was in dispute that we learn that Fakenham in Norfolk possessed woodland in Colkirk, some 3.5km to the south (Williamson 1993, 122–3). Consequently, maps like figure 8.3.2, while providing a good general impression of the distribution of woodland in the eleventh century, tend to blur and smooth the details, especially where rather narrow valleys cut through extensive uplands.

Using Domesday as evidence for the possible distribution of woodland in the fifth to eighth centuries, as opposed to the eleventh, raises additional problems. Settlement and cultivation expanded significantly in the intervening period, with woods giving way to farmland or degenerating to the kinds of open grazing – heathland and the like – which Domesday generally passes over in silence. Major place-names can, to an extent, be used to obtain an idea of wooded areas which disappeared between the seventh or eighth centuries and the 1080s,

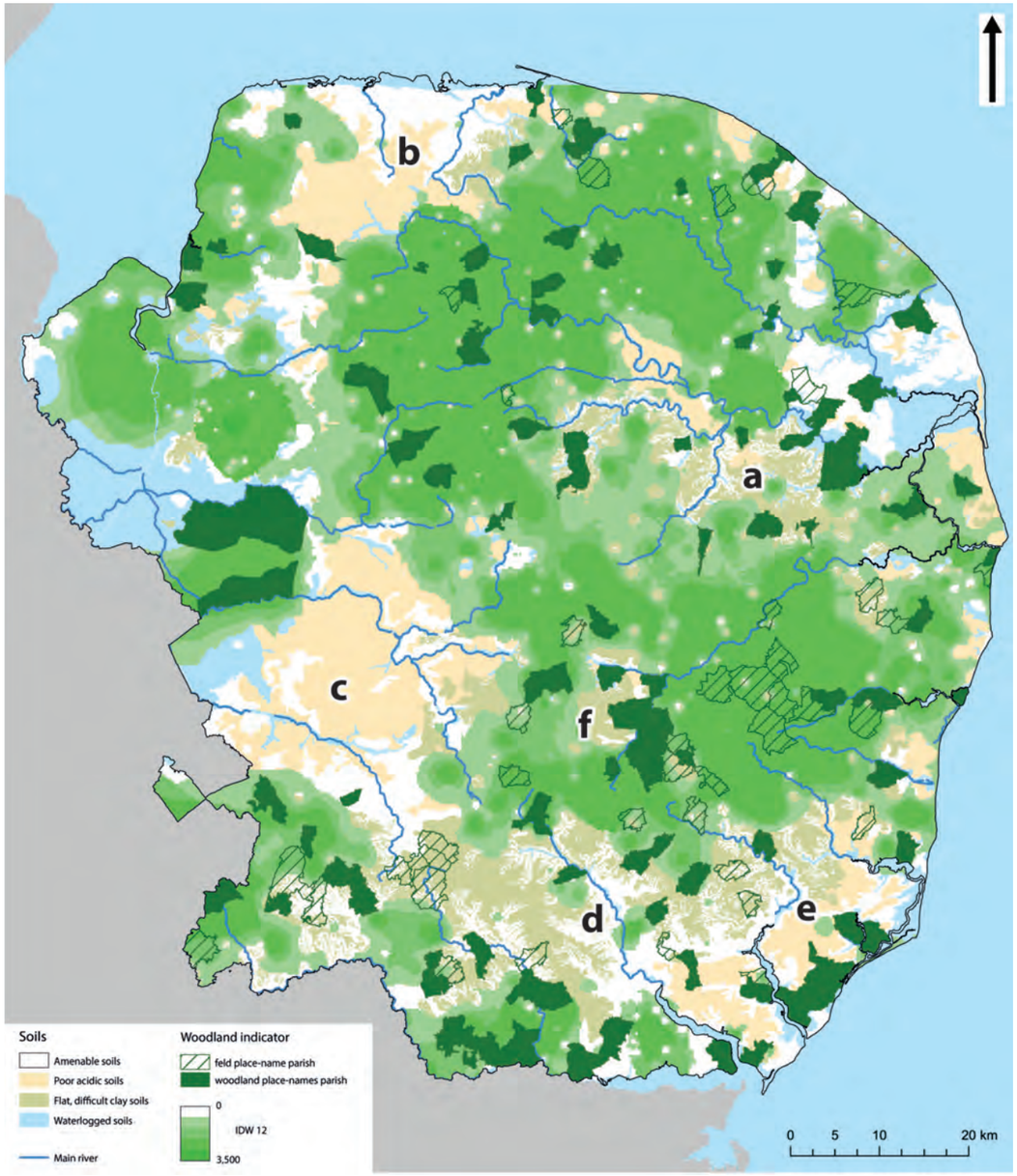

Fig 8.3.2 Early woodland in East Anglia: parishes containing woodland place-names; Domesday woodland interpolated from totals by vill using Inverse Distance Weighting from 12 nearest points (IDW 12). Probable major tracts of open land labelled a)– f). *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

but the fact that most vills and parishes extended across both valleys and uplands again introduces a measure of 'blurring' to distribution maps. In general, place-names featuring elements like *feld* and *lēah* are found in areas which Domesday suggests were well endowed with woodland but some individual examples, and some concentrations, are located in what had by then become relatively open districts and presumably indicate wooded tracts which had disappeared by the eleventh century. In addition, many areas of woodland had already degenerated to relatively open grazing by the Roman period and in Breckland, in particular, large areas of heath appear to have developed on the interfluves before the end of the Iron Age (Murphy 1984; Fryer *et al* 2005). Early maps can be used to locate some examples of such land, most of it surviving as areas of common grazing, but mapping them at a regional scale is problematic, not least because some kinds of non-arable land – such as valley-floor fens – were always located towards the centres of areas of open country.

Making allowance for these issues, it is none the less clear that the regional distributions of Domesday woodland and Old English place-names indicative of woodland appear to indicate a number of extensive tracts of largely open countryside separated by more wooded zones, including the Deben valley territory within which Rendlesham is situated (fig 8.3.2).

Firstly, we can identify an area of open land extending from central Norfolk eastwards to the coast which is bounded to north, west and south by the 'wooded crescent' (a). It corresponds with the loamy Wick 2 soils on the margins of the former Broadland estuary and the light clays of the Burlingham Association on the rolling terrain to the south of the Yare and to the south of Norwich. The original core of this area was apparently based on the latter soils, and more particularly on the drainage basin of the river Tas, a major tributary of the Yare. Many of what Domesday shows as sparsely wooded vills further to the east on the edge of the Broadland estuary (Acle, Blofield, Cantley, Lingwood, Strumpshaw, Witton) bear names with clear woodland associations.

Secondly, a broad unwooded tract can be identified extending across north-west Norfolk, centred on the valleys of the rivers Burn and Stiffkey, from Holt in the east to the Birchams in the west and as far south as Fakenham (b). This corresponds with a wide area of freely draining soils, formed largely on chalk on the lower ground but on sands on the higher.

Thirdly, an extensive open area corresponds with the southern half of Breckland (c), focusing on the valleys of the Little Ouse and the Lark. It might perhaps be considered as two areas, one based on each valley, separated by an area of drift-covered 'upland' which had lost its woodland cover at an early date but which continued to be characterised by extensive tracts of heathland into the post-medieval period. This territory is bounded to the south by a band of Domesday vills in west Suffolk with high or moderately high levels of recorded woodland, and by a marked cluster of parishes with woodland names (the three Bradfields, Brockley, Cockley, Rede and Stanningfield), both of which follow the watersheds between the catchments of the Little Ouse, Gipping and Brett. It is noteworthy that in the area to the south of this wooded band, and across south Suffolk as a whole, the landscape is less wooded and the pattern of distinct open areas, separated by well-defined wooded uplands, is much less clear. There are traces of a formerly well-wooded district along the relatively narrow interfluves between the Deben and the Gipping, effectively defining two distinct areas of open land (d and e), but no real sign of one between the Gipping and the Brett.

It is thus possible to identify with some confidence the main areas of open countryside in the early medieval period and the more wooded zones which separated them. Smaller areas are less easy to identify because of the spatial imprecision inherent in both the Domesday and the place-name evidence. There is a suggestion, particularly in the distribution of Domesday woodland, that an area of open country existed amidst the otherwise wooded terrain of north-central Suffolk, based on the valley of the Dove but also extending north of the Waveney into the area around Scole and Billingford in Norfolk (f). Smaller territories might possibly be indicated around Barnham Broom in central Norfolk between the Yare and the Tiffey, within the catchment of the river Blyth around Blythburgh, and perhaps in north-east Norfolk in the area of the 'Soke of Gimmingham' in the valley of the Mundsley Beck. For the most part, though, such restricted areas of open land are barely discernible at this level of mapping and need to be modelled using finer-grained evidence at a local scale.

In summary, then, the Domesday and place-name evidence can be used to identify a number of extensive areas of relatively open countryside, separated by more wooded tracts, with configurations broadly relating to aspects of the natural topography. The most extensive of these open areas – or perhaps more accurately, the part of East Anglia least subdivided into discrete tracts of open land – extends across much of southern Suffolk. Characteristic features of this area are the relative narrowness and permeability of the uplands lying between the principal drainage systems and the early contraction of any woodland associated with them. It is within this distinctive geographical context that we need to consider the character and significance of Rendlesham and its relationship with the elite settlements at Coddenham and Barham, and with the *emporium* at Ipswich.

Rendlesham, Barham and Coddenham all have names featuring the element *hām* which belong to a very early stratum of Old English place-names. In East Anglia these may be indicative of core areas of settlement and activity in the early post-Roman centuries and, in many cases, major centres of early medieval power (Ch 6.1). In contrast, the other common habitative element *tūn* may

be associated with places which were settled later – after the sixth century – and/or which had a subsidiary role in the settlement hierarchy. Place-names in *-hām* are predominantly found scattered along major river valleys cutting through deposits of glacial clays or gravels. Only in a few districts of light and calcareous soils, as in parts of north-west Norfolk, do they constitute the majority of place-names, presumably indicating the presence of particularly extensive tracts of open land (Williamson 1993; Martin 1999c; Gelling 1984, 111–18).

In positing a broad distinction between open and wooded zones we do not mean to suggest that the latter were entirely devoid of settlement. Significant valleys, associated with ribbons of amenable soils (and now containing settlements with *-hām* names), penetrated them almost everywhere: indeed, the largest known cremation cemetery in East Anglia, Spong Hill, is located within an area characterised by particularly high densities of Domesday woodland, and a dense cluster of woodland place-names, within Rackham's 'wooded crescent'. The cemetery lies within the parish of North Elmham, the probable site of the second East Anglian bishopric established in the later seventh century. Wooded zones contained extensive tracts of woodland and pasture, but also small areas of farmland, and scattered settlements, some perhaps with specialised functions relating to the management of livestock, or hunting.

8.3.2 Patterns of settlement and burial

Stuart Brookes and Christopher Scull

From data in the Norfolk and Suffolk HERs we have been able to identify 143 burial sites of the fifth to eighth centuries where mortuary evidence has been directly observed and 136 sites where settlement evidence or archaeological features have been recorded, of which 83 can be securely identified as settlement sites from excavated building remains (Ch 1.4.1). The PAS records 7,447 individual findspots for Norfolk and Suffolk of the same date-range. Together, these provide a good sample from which to characterise at a regional scale the relationships between topography, soils and human activity in the early medieval period to AD 800.

Settlement and cemetery sites – the direct evidence for settled communities – show a strong river valley distribution (cf Scull 1992, 10–13; Chester-Kadwell 2009, 94–9, 149–54). This is to be expected as such locations offer sheltered situations on or close to the most tractable agricultural soils, with access to a range of resource environments and networked to the natural corridors of travel and communication that river valleys afford (Scull 2019b, 129–30). The PAS data, which represent a broader range of activity and circumstances of loss or discard, similarly show a predominantly river valley distribution.

Tractable and relatively fertile soils (sandy, chalky or loamy soils, and well-drained sloping clay soils of the Burlingham, Hanslope and Hornbeam associations) make up just over 30 per cent of Norfolk and Suffolk by area. Plotting the archaeology against an extension across Norfolk and Suffolk of the fourfold characterisation of soil types used for analysis of the Deben valley shows that both settlements and burial sites were preferentially located on or immediately adjacent to such soils (Table 8.3.1; Fig 8.3.3) and that the intractable clays and waterlogged silt and peat environments were largely avoided. There is a significantly higher proportion of burial sites on acidic soils than would be expected from a random distribution, to be explained by preferential use of good terrain for habitation and cultivation with marginal or less attractive soils within a settlement territory more likely to be selected for burial. The over-

Table 8.3.1 Norfolk and Suffolk: sites and findspots of the fifth to eighth centuries, and findspots of the first to fourth centuries, against soil type

	Area (sq km)	%	C5–C8 Settlements	%	C5–C8 Features	%	C5–C8 Burial sites	%	C5–C8 PAS	%	C1–C4 PAS	%
1: good soils	2,739.35	30.37	46	55.42	27	50.94	75	52.45	4,279	57.46	24,905	46.53
2: acid soils	1,694.55	18.79	16	19.28	8	15.09	41	28.68	770	10.34	9,652	18.03
3: difficult clay	2,954.86	32.76	11	13.25	4	7.55	15	10.49	1,893	25.42	15,198	28.40
4: waterlogged silt/peat	1,585.43	17.57	10	12.05	14	26.42	12	8.39	505	6.78	3,765	7.04
Total	**8,974.19**	**100.00**	**83**	**100.00**	**53**	**100.00**	**143**	**100.00**	**7,447**	**100.00**	**53,520**	**100.00**

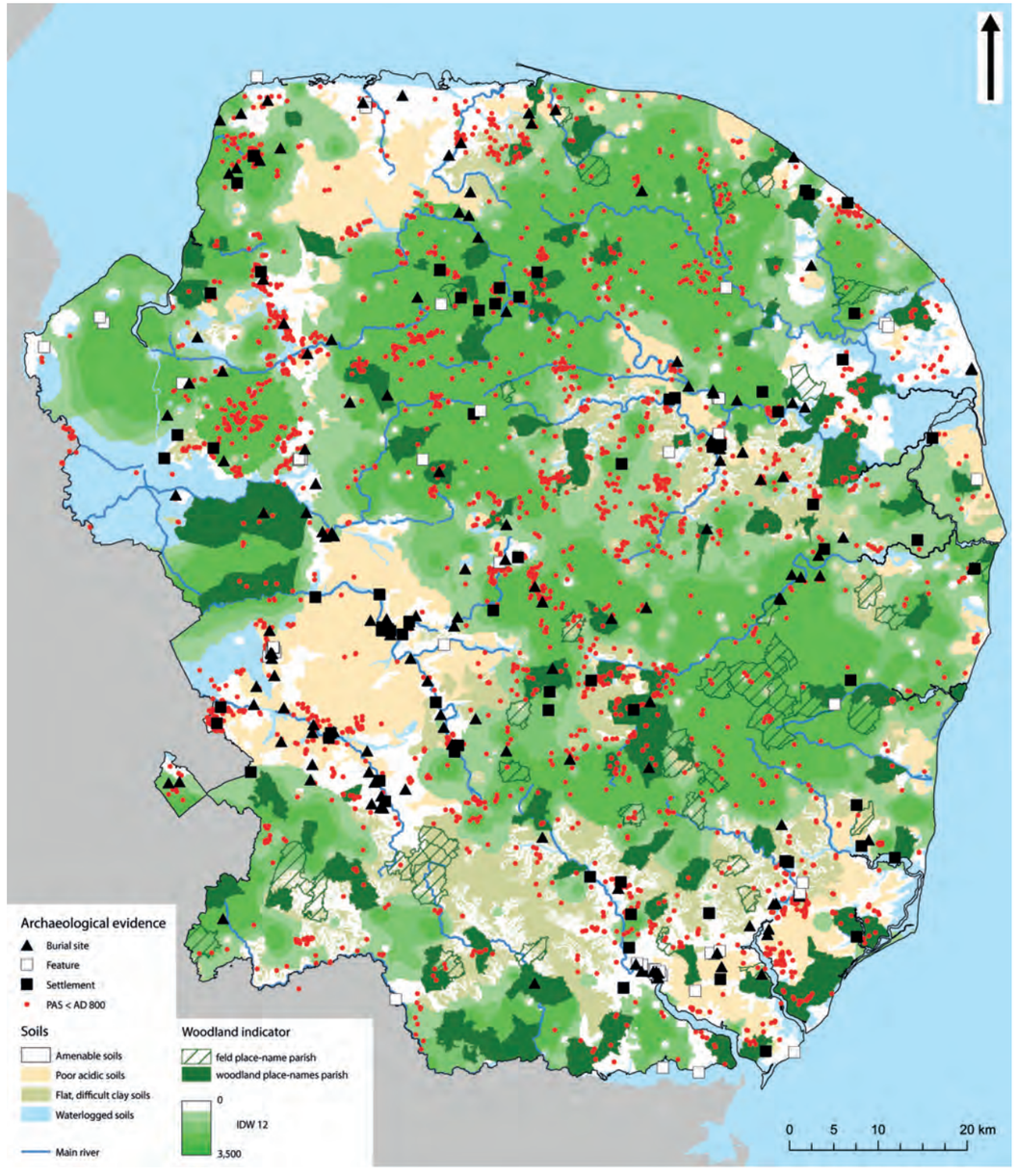

Fig 8.3.3 Norfolk and Suffolk: distribution of settlement sites, burial sites and PAS findspots of the fifth to eighth centuries against drainage, soil types, early woodland, and probable tracts of open land. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

representation of features in waterlogged environments is largely explained by fishtraps or other structures recorded in inter-tidal or riverside environments, and by settlement features excavated within the area of the *emporium* at Ipswich.

The PAS data also show a strong correlation between human activity and tractable fertile soils, but when compared with the archaeological sites there are significantly lower proportions on acid soils and waterlogged environments and a higher proportion on difficult clay soils. To some extent this must reflect the different recognition and retrieval biases associated with the identification and excavation of subsurface archaeology on the one hand and metal-detecting on the

other. That said, the PAS data provide the broader and more representative spatial sample at the regional scale, and also represent a spectrum of off-site activities as well as settlement and burial sites. The PAS finds show clusters of activity that must represent settlement in the tributary valleys joining the Wensum south of Reepham, in the valley of the river Bure in the immediate hinterland of the former Roman small town at Brampton, and on Flegg – all areas where absence of excavated sites might otherwise be taken to suggest only sparse settlement during this period (eg Williamson 1993, 91). The higher proportion of PAS finds on clays may in part be a chronological phenomenon, representing expansion of settlement onto the more intractable clay soils during the course of the eighth century (Ch 6.3), but may also represent individual mobility and the exploitation of upland clay environments – wood and wood pasture – from valley settlements.

At the level of discrimination afforded by modelling of terrain and land cover at the regional scale, and the constraints of the archaeological sample, the archaeological evidence shows concentrations of settlement and activity in the five major zones of open land (fig 8.3.3). These, and the river valleys within them, represent exactly the concentrations of population and productive capacity that are likely to have constituted major social and political groupings. This is not, however, the full picture. As noted above (8.3.1), valleys with amenable soils which inter-penetrate the 'wooded crescent' supported significant settlement and activity. This is evident in the concentration of finds and sites – including Spong Hill, North Elmham – along the valley of the upper Wensum and its tributaries, and in the clusters of findspots already mentioned south of Reepham and in the Bure valley. There are also significant concentrations of sites and finds in the river valleys and on the amenable soils of north-west Norfolk, an area with a high density of Domesday woodland.

Comparing the density and distribution of PAS finds of the first to fourth centuries with those of the fifth to eighth centuries gives some deeper temporal context to the early medieval pattern of settlement and activity (Fig 8.3.4). Even allowing for the vastly greater amount of metalwork manufactured and lost or discarded during the Roman period, the early medieval picture suggests a reduction in the density of settlement across the region as a whole, and a reduction in settlement or direct agricultural exploitation of the upland clay soils – trends which are also clear from other archaeological evidence and field survey (eg Davison 1990, 16–21; Williamson 1993, 57–63; Newman 2005, 481–3). This would be consistent with some reduction in population and a shift towards less intensive farming regimes with a greater emphasis on animal husbandry (Ch 7.2; Rippon *et al* 2015, 170–5). Otherwise, there are striking similarities in the density distributions at the regional scale, indicating long-term coherences in configurations of population density and in the preferential settlement and exploitation of favourable environments and terrains. This, and the strong river valley distribution of archaeological evidence for early medieval settlement activity, guides our approach to exploring the relationships between settlement aggregates, central places and early jurisdictional territories in Chapters 9 and 10.

One notable feature here is the concentration of evidence for early medieval activity in the immediate localities of some major Roman settlements. We have already noted this in the case of Rendlesham and the former Roman small town at Hacheston (Ch 6.3), and something similar can be seen at Coddenham (Ch 9.1) and at the cantonal capital at Caistor-by-Norwich (Ch 10.2) where we also see the emergence of elite centres in the sixth and seventh centuries. The clusters of evidence for early medieval activity in the upper Wensum valley and the Bure valley are also in the immediate hinterlands of former Roman small towns, at Billingford and Brampton. This does not argue some simple continuity – none of these Roman settlements survived long, if at all, into the fifth century, and there are significant dislocations and discontinuities at the scale of the individual site or locality – but neither is it explicable entirely by determinants of topography and terrain. Early medieval human geographies were clearly influenced by antecedent patterns of settlement, population and social landscape, but in complex and contingent ways. These dynamics were the cumulative effect of multiple human responses – both innovative and inertial – to inheritance and the circumstances of time and place. Thus, although it is possible to identify some high-level trends and patterning at the regional scale, a more detailed understanding requires the interrogation of patterns of human activity, settlement and landscape at finer spatial and chronological resolution.

8.3.3 Linear earthworks

Tom Williamson

The major linear earthworks of Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire (fig 1.1) are usually seen as territorial or political boundaries, and more specific military functions, control of trade and a role in state-formation have also been proposed (Thackray 1980); it is thus important to consider how they fit our narrative of social worlds

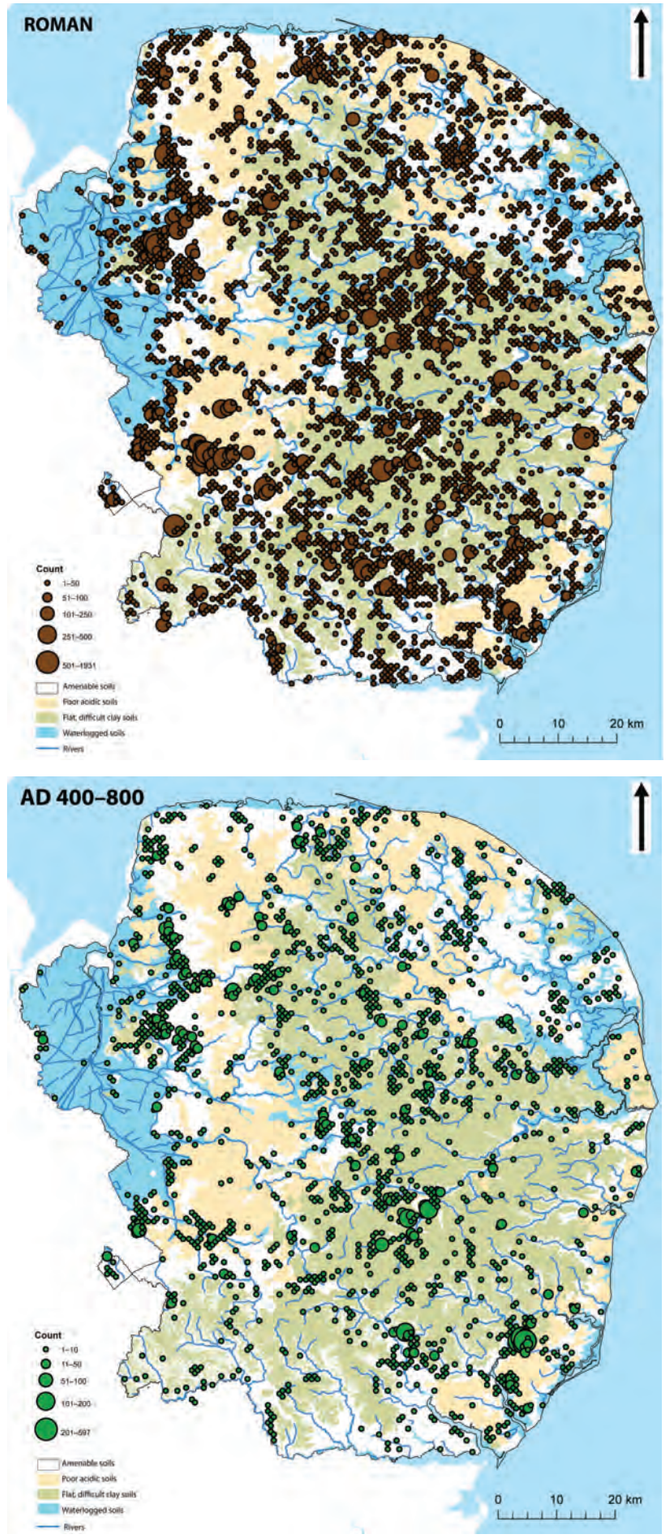

Fig 8.3.4 Norfolk and Suffolk: (top) distribution and density of PAS findspots of the first to fourth centuries by 1km choropleth; (bottom) distribution and density of PAS findspots of the fifth to eighth centuries by 1km choropleth. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

structured by topography and drainage systems. The best-known examples are in south-east Cambridgeshire, only partly extending into neighbouring counties. The Bran Ditch (or Heydon Ditch), the Brent Ditch, Fleam Dyke and the Devil's Dyke lie roughly parallel to each other, running across the chalk escarpment south of the Fenland (Fox 1923). All are linear embankments with ditches to the west except the Brent Ditch which, in present form at least, comprises a ditch alone. They terminate, to the south-east, where the plateau of boulder clay overlying the chalk begins although in several cases their line is continued for some distance by stretches of parish boundary or field boundary, perhaps marking the course of less prominent earthworks. To the north-west, at the foot of the escarpment, Devil's Dyke runs to the edge of the peat Fens, but the others end at the headwaters of tributaries of rivers draining into the Fens, in all cases meeting them where areas of 'hummocky ground', patches of poorly draining land formed through periglacial action at spring-lines, come close to the escarpment. That this positioning was intentional is suggested by the fact that the south-eastern terminations correspond with spurs projecting out from the clay plateau: the dykes, that is, were placed in locations where the band of chalk narrows slightly.

The Cambridgeshire dykes were clearly intended to block or control movement of wheeled vehicles and perhaps livestock along the band of open, dry countryside on the chalk. They were considered unnecessary or less necessary on waterlogged ground, or on the clay, where place-names suggest woodland was extensive. All can be broadly dated, with varying degrees of confidence, to the late Roman or early medieval periods (Malim *et al* 1996; Malim 2000). But in spite of the similarities in their relationship to the topography they exhibit marked differences in form and magnitude which suggest that they represent a similar response over time by different rulers or communities to a recurrent problem – presumably raiding along this relatively narrow corridor of open land – rather than forming a single defensive scheme. Heydon and Brent ditches are diminutive features. Fleam Dyke is more substantial, but the most easterly of the earthworks, Devil's Dyke, is in a league of its own. It is a massive feature, 12km in length, comprising a bank 4.5m–5.3m high and up to 23m wide, flanked by a ditch 4m–5m deep and up to 19m wide (RCHME 1972). Its construction involved the excavation and movement of between 550,800 and 760,365 cubic metres of earth and chalk (Muir 1981, 160; Grigg 2015, 58), more than Silbury Hill (Ashbee and Jewell 1998, 491), making it by far the largest earthwork of any date in eastern England. Whereas the other Cambridgeshire dykes might have been constructed by local communities this, even if built over several years, must have involved the mobilisation of a much larger labour force.

Fleam Dyke was constructed in the fifth or sixth century, probably in two phases (Nenk *et al* 1992; Malim *et al* 1996, 58–72), but Devil's Dyke remains poorly dated (Scull 1992, 6). It seems unlikely to have been constructed in the late- or immediately post-Roman period to defend against the west at a time of seaborne raiding from the east, and too massive to be the work of a local community in the fifth or sixth centuries. More probably, it was built by an East Anglian ruler in command of considerable resources. It makes a major impact on the landscape, reflected in the names of the two parishes lying immediately to the east, Burwell (*burh*) and Wood Ditton (*dīc*). Its alignment, extended north-west, would define a territory which included the Isle of Ely, identified by Bede as within the East Anglian province (Ch 8.2) and, although immediately west of the western county boundary of Suffolk, the earthwork formed the boundary of the medieval Diocese of Norwich, which included all the Cambridgeshire parishes lying to its east. As a boundary work it can also be read as a monumental symbol of royal power and as an instrument in state formation (Squatriti 2002). The western limits of East Anglian lordship probably fluctuated with dynastic fortunes during the seventh century (above, 8.2.2.3; Scull 1992, 5–6) but Devil's Dyke can be seen as marking the western limit of East Anglian territorial lordship at the time it was constructed. It may be tempting to assign construction to the period of tension and warfare with the Mercian kingdom in the 640s and 650s, but more plausible contexts are offered by the reigns of Aldwulf and Ælfwald in the later seventh and first half of the eighth century. We argue below (Ch 11) that this period saw a consolidation of royal authority, very probably involving tighter definition and regulation of dues and services owed to the king, and significant reconfigurations of geographies of jurisdiction. This would also put the Devil's Dyke closer in time to royally initiated major boundary works in other English kingdoms (Reynolds and Langlands 2006; Reynolds 2020; Ray and Bapty 2016, 334–64).

While the south Cambridgeshire dykes all appear to be late- or post-Roman in date, and to form a group displaying a consistent relationship with the topography, the other East Anglian linear earthworks have more diverse or less certain dates and are much more contextually varied. Like the Cambridgeshire dykes, the Fossditch and the Bichamditch in Norfolk, and the Black Ditches in Suffolk, take fairly straight courses for long distances across open chalklands. The Black Ditches, apparently intended to control access to the Lark–Gipping corridor where it meets the chalk escarpment, might be considered part of the Cambridgeshire group but recent discussion suggests a late prehistoric origin (Martin 1999d, 82, 88–90). The Fossditch and Bichamditch both run between rivers draining into the Fens and cut the eastern approaches to peninsulas projecting westward into the Fenland. The Fossditch is late- or post-Roman but the Bichamditch is undated and may also be late prehistoric (Clarke 1955, 181–4; Wade-Martins 1974, 35; Grigg 2015, 356–8). Another substantial linear earthwork, now largely ploughed out, similarly sealed the end of a former promontory in the Broadland marshes, at the end of which St Benet's Abbey was located, although whether the two were directly associated, or the earthwork earlier, remains unclear (Pestell 2004, 138–42).

The other main linear earthworks are all in Norfolk and all are strikingly located on the main watershed between rivers draining east into the North Sea and those draining west into the Wash. The Launditch neatly cuts the interfluve between the Blackwater and the Nar but Bunn's Bank and the Panworth Ditch are more oddly aligned. All are relatively minor features and perhaps represent attempts to demarcate the allocation of upland resources of woodland and grazing between communities based in the neighbouring valleys. The Launditch, originally considered early medieval, is now argued by many to be Iron Age (Wade-Martins 1974; Ashwin 1999, 109; Ashwin *et al* 1999; NHER 7235). The others remain undated but the watershed locations of all attest the enduring influence of 'river-and-wold' on the development of territories and the allocation of resources.

9 South-east Suffolk

In this chapter we examine the broader context of Rendlesham and its Deben territory in south-east Suffolk. Our initial emphasis is on settlement and activity in the valley of the river Gipping, dealing in detail with the important sites and assemblages at Coddenham and Barham, which stand as comparanda for Rendlesham, and examining the relationship of these elite centres with each other and with the *emporium* at Ipswich (Fig 9.1.1) Like the Deben, the Gipping catchment can be seen as a natural river valley territory. Comparing the two may therefore help elucidate the scale and configuration of early post-Roman social and political groupings, and provide further clues as to how wider-reaching regional lordship was established and enacted. Following from this, we consider the evidence for other possible early territories and elite centres in south and east Suffolk.

9.1 Coddenham

9.1.1 Location and fieldwork history

9.1.1.1 Location

The complex of sites at Coddenham lies to the west of the medieval parish church and modern village in the valley of a tributary that flows west to join the river Gipping 1.7km north of the major Roman settlement at Baylham House (CDD 003) (Fig 9.1.2). The main focus of early medieval activity (CDD 022, field name Ladycroft) lies on the north side of the valley, on a south-facing slope, between 25m and 35m OD. The soil types in the valley are calcareous loams of the Swaffham Prior Association (511e), overlying chalk rubble. To the north, at about 40m OD, are clay soils of the Hanslope Association (411d), while to the south the Swaffham Prior loams interdigitate with mixed loamy and sandy soils of the Ludford Association (0571x), formed on glaciofluvial drift.

To the west and east are the routes of two Roman roads, the Coddenham to Caistor 'Pye Road' (Margary 3d) and the Coddenham to Peasenhall route (Margary 34b) (Margary 1973, 265–8). An east–west route of possibly medieval or even earlier origin, surviving as a footpath, formerly crossed the northern part of the CDD 022 field and was replaced at some time between 1783 and 1839, probably in the 1790s, by the present road on the south side of the valley.

9.1.1.2 Fieldwork history

The archaeological significance of the area was recognised as the result of metal-detecting, which began in field CDD 019 in 1985. Field CDD 022 was first detected in 1987 and by late 1988 had been recognised as yielding exceptional early medieval material (West 1998; Newman 2003). Other fields along both sides of the valley were also examined at this time, with field CDD 035 to the west detected from 1992 (the land between CDD 022 and CDD 035 had been heavily disturbed by a post-medieval lime works and there is an extraction pit immediately west of CDD 022). Most detecting and reporting was undertaken by David Cummings but Terry Marsh, who mainly detected at Barham and more recently was one of the Rendlesham team, also covered

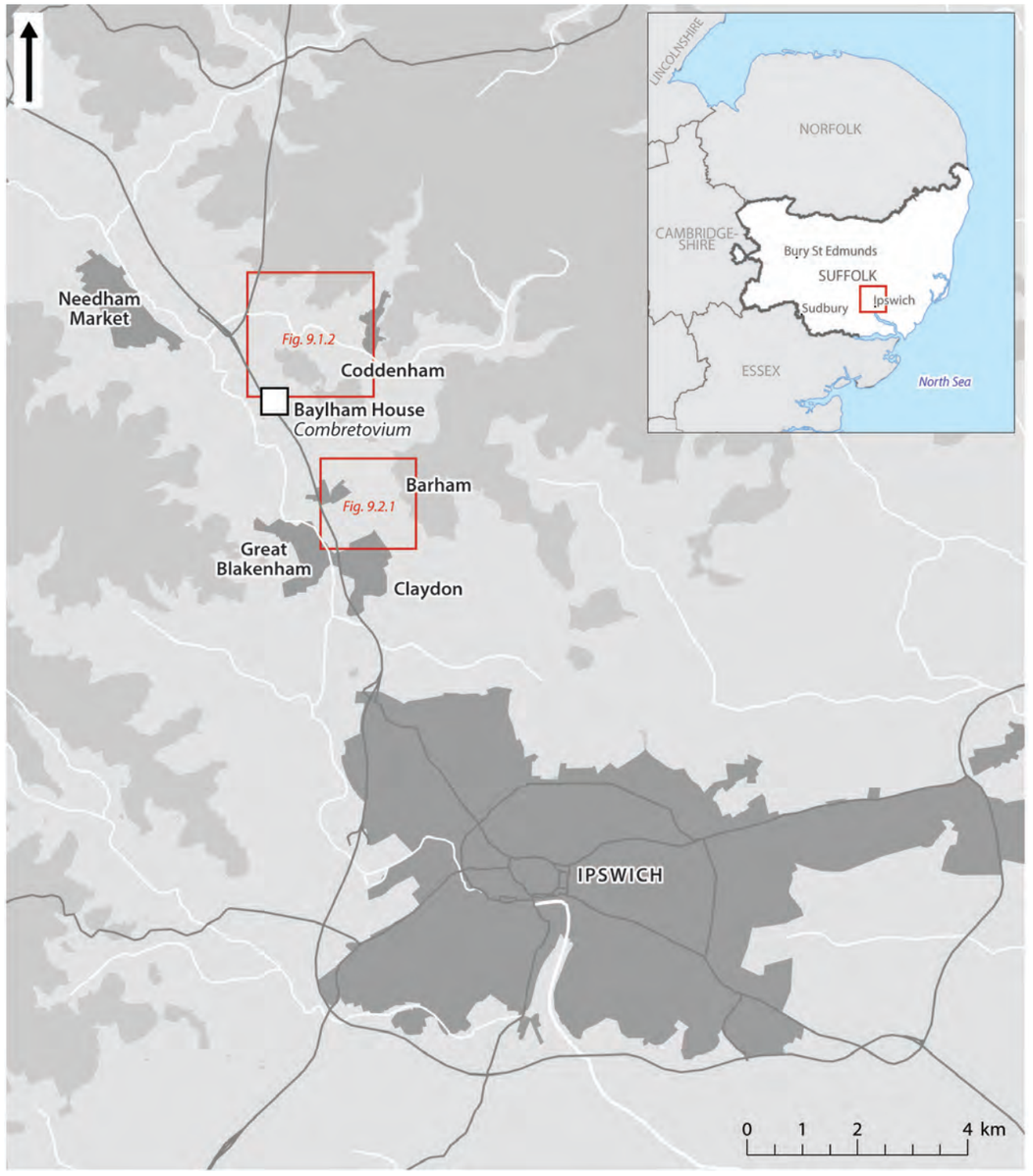

Fig 9.1.1 Location map of major sites in the Gipping valley. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

some areas between 1985 and 1990. David Cummings continued detecting, but at a lower intensity, after 2000.

Fieldwalking by John Newman (SCCAS) of CDD 019, 022 and 023 between 1987 and 1990 identified areas of prehistoric worked flint, a scatter of Roman pottery on CDD 019 and on CDD 022 a sparse scatter of Roman or medieval pottery and a single hand-made sherd possibly of the fifth to seventh centuries. In 1988, to increase recovery, the detectorists and farmer mechanically stripped up to 200mm of the upper ploughsoil across the main finds area in CDD 022. Within this some 74sq m were taken down a further 100mm by John Newman of SCCAS to examine features visible in the subsoil; a few small pits and a discontinuous occupation layer were found, together with Iron Age and fifth- to seventh-century AD pottery.

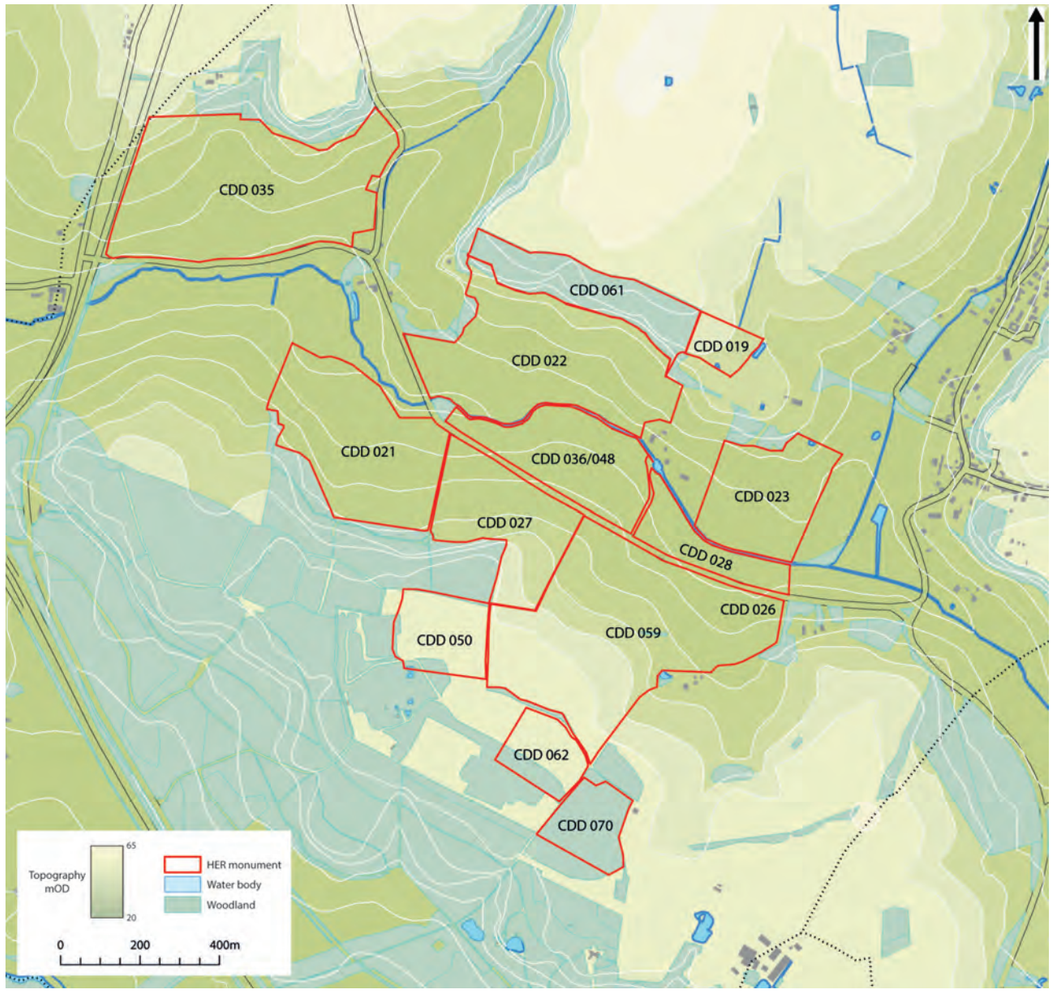

Fig 9.1.2 Coddenham: topography and main HER sites. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

Field CDD 022 was examined more systematically in 2003 through magnetometry and trial trenching in an exercise supported by the BBC *Hidden Treasures* programme (Everett *et al* 2003). The excavation trenches identified a subsoil layer rich in animal bone which extended at least 70m east–west and 120m north–south. Within the area of these occupation deposits was the post-in-trench foundation of a rectangular building, 11m by 7m, and evidence for ironworking. Two probable *Grubenhäuser* were identified further east. Finds included fifth- to seventh-century pottery, a copper-alloy buckle loop, iron knives and an antler comb.

The mainly Roman site to the north-east at CDD 019, where a rectilinear ditch layout orientated north-west to south-east is known from magnetometry, saw excavation by the Coddenham Local History Group and the Suffolk Archaeological Field Group between 1988 and 2009. Finds range from the middle of the first to the late fourth century, the ditches being mainly earlier Roman. Summaries are published in the annual round-up of archaeological work in *Proc Suffolk Inst Archaeol Hist*.

On high ground to the south, overlooking the valley, excavation in 1999–2000 recorded fifty seventh-century inhumations in a cemetery partly destroyed by quarrying; these included a high-status female bed burial and male weapon burial (CDD 050; Anderson 2002; Penn 2011).

Fifty-nine test pits were excavated in and around Coddenham village between 2006 and 2011, mainly in gardens, under projects run by Access Cambridge Archaeology (Ransom and Cooper 2017). Hand-made pottery of the fifth to seventh centuries and Ipswich ware sherds were found in properties bordering the churchyard.

9.1.2 The metal-detecting assemblage

9.1.2.1 Recording and data quality

Finds reported to SCCAS between 1985 and 1999 were recorded in the HER in handwritten or typed lists with the finders' reference numbers. Many were photographed (mainly monochrome 35mm) and a smaller number were drawn, several of which are included in Stanley West's *Corpus* (West 1998). After 1999 reported finds were recorded on the PAS database.

For this project, all HER and PAS records have been checked, collated, and integrated in a single MS Access database. Paper records and images were scanned, and the images cross-referenced. For the early medieval coins, the following records were also consulted: unpublished MS listings by Marion Archibald (British Museum) in 1989 and 1990; records from the British Numismatic Society's Coin register in the 1980s; the Early Medieval Coinage (EMC) database curated by the Fitzwilliam Museum; and the listing from Sotheby's auction sale of 4 October 1990.

The database contains 1,682 records (Tables 9.1.1–2). The overwhelming majority are single items, but a few entries of undiagnostic material that cannot be dated to period cover multiple items. More than half of the material (56 per cent of the total) is from CDD 022, which also has a high proportion (34 per cent) of early medieval material including almost all the coins. There are also significant quantities of early medieval material from CDD 036/048, CDD 023 and CDD 027, and substantial groups of Roman material from CDD 019 and CDD 035 and a coin assemblage from CDD 122.

The database represents our best effort at listing material that can be securely attributed to Coddenham. It includes the great majority of finds identifiable to type and date but it is not comprehensive; because of different reporting routes the exact number of coins which certainly derive from the Coddenham sites remains unclear and may never be resolved. Nor does it include material considered undiagnostic or undatable by the finders and not reported. A quick scan in July 2018 of a portion of such material held by David Cummings

Table 9.1.2 Coddenham: summary of coins by site and period (Iron Age to 1066)

HER code	Iron Age	Roman	Early medieval
CDD 019 and 019_S	1	87	1
CDD 021	0	14	1
CDD 022	10	71	65
CDD 023	0	15	0
CDD 026 and 059	0	8	0
CDD 027	1	3	0
CDD 028	0	0	0
CDD 035	0	76	2
CDD 036 and 048	0	11	5
CDD 061 woodland	0	1	0
CDD 062 and 070	0	5	0
CDD 122	1	43	0
Total	**13**	**334**	**74**

Table 9.1.1 Coddenham: summary of metal-detecting finds by site and period

HER code	Neolithic to Iron Age	Roman	Early medieval	Medieval	Post-medieval	Undated	Total
CDD 019 and 019_S	1	115	5	13	3	4	141
CDD 021	0	18	6	16	12	5	57
CDD 022	13	159	323	156	103	190	944
CDD 023	2	22	30	22	9	7	92
CDD 026 and 059	3	11	5	11	8	0	38
CDD 027	5	4	17	5	5	8	44
CDD 028	0	3	3	1	1	0	8
CDD 035	3	120	37	51	13	9	233
CDD 036 and 048	0	17	18	7	7	9	58
CDD 061 woodland	0	6	0	0	0	0	6
CDD 062 and 070	1	8	2	1	3	2	17
CDD 122	1	43	0	0	0	0	44
Total	**29**	**526**	**446**	**283**	**164**	**234**	**1,682**

identified at least one fragment of an early medieval brooch and a number of copper-alloy casting sprues. Unfortunately it was not possible to undertake a comprehensive examination and listing.

Neither metal-detecting nor the recording of findspots were undertaken systematically. Finds were usually located only to field or HER site area although some site visits were made by SCCAS staff with the finder to map key individual finds, particularly on CDD 022. There is no accurate record of the intensity of survey but there was a concentration of effort on CDD 022, including measures to increase recovery here by machine stripping the upper ploughsoil in 1988 followed by deeper or repeated ploughing in subsequent years. Consequently, although approximately 19 per cent of finds can be geolocated with a reasonable degree of precision and certainty, and the main area of activity within CDD 022 identified, it is not possible to calibrate or undertake analysis of spatial distributions as has been done for Rendlesham.

9.1.2.2 The early medieval assemblage

The database records seventy-four coins, 360 metal items and five sherds of pottery that can be assigned securely to the period of the fifth to eleventh centuries, as well as a small number of metal finds that may belong to this period. Not included in this total are Roman objects that may have seen post-Roman re-use. All but three of the coins – silver pennies of Alfred (871–99), Eadred (946–55) and Edward the Martyr (975–8) – were struck before AD 800 and are discussed below. The non-coin finds are overwhelmingly copper alloy (343 items; 95 per cent of the assemblage), with seven gold, six silver, three iron and one lead item. Between 65 and 73 per cent of the assemblage (depending upon the precision of the dating) represents activity of the fifth to early eighth centuries.

The assemblage as a whole is dominated by dress accessories which make up 77 per cent of the total (Tables 9.1.3–4). Among the seventy or so items of the fifth to later sixth centuries there are forty-nine brooches, eleven wrist clasps, two buckles, a girdle hanger and four belt mounts. Other material includes a pommel cap and possible harness mount.

The late sixth- to early eighth-century assemblage is larger (around 190 items), more diverse and notably different in character. Only one brooch is represented – a silver fragment that is probably from a keystone garnet disc brooch (CDD 022 2485). There are more than 100 buckles, the great majority small copper-alloy examples including garter buckles, and seventeen pins of which nine are Ross (1991) type L. These totals include three unfinished buckles and four unfinished pins of Ross type L – castings discarded before the flashing was cleaned off – which show that the types were manufactured here. There are also twelve bag catches and a number of small loops and elements of chain are probably from chatelaines. There are four belt or strap mounts, including a gilded copper-alloy mount in Style II previously published as a brooch (West 1998, fig 19.18). Weapons are represented by four pyramid mounts and an incomplete gold cloisonné mount that may be a hilt fitting, and by two shield mounts. Four copper-alloy mounts, including an axe-shaped example, are probably harness fittings. One of three further mounts is a Celtic zoomorphic fitting, probably from a box (West 1998, 22–3; fig 22.80); there is also a box or casket hinge. There are eight fittings from metal vessels, mostly from hanging bowls, and a gold foil with repoussé interlace may also be from a vessel. Other notable items are a gold cloisonné fragment, possibly from a pendant and perhaps scrap for recycling, and a rectangular gold spangle (ibid, fig 19.10–11), a base gold shilling mounted as a pendant, a stylus fragment, and a gold cosmetic spatula with a human head terminal (Newman 2003, fig 9.3). The best parallels for the gold spangle are smaller silver examples from CDD 050, grave 30 which were mounted on a silver ring and associated with the silver toilet set (Penn 2011, fig 96.3d); it is possible, then, that the gold spangle and spatula are elements of a single toilet set.

Table 9.1.3 Coddenham: summary of early medieval assemblage by functional category (excluding coins)

Category	
Dress accessories (DA)	275
Equestrian and transport (ET)	17
Household (HO)	9
Metalworking (MW)	8
Personal possessions (PP)	39
Weapons and military equipment (ME)	9
Unknown (UN)	3
Total	**360**

Table 9.1.4 Coddenham: summary of early medieval brooches

Type		Date-range
Supporting-arm	2	380–420
Cruciform	17	420–550
Small-long	14	420–550
Cruciform or small-long	5	420–550
Annular	3	500–600
Other (fifth to seventh centuries)	6	450–700
Ansate	6	750–1000
Other (eighth to eleventh centuries)	5	750–1100
Total	**58**	

The furnished burials from CDD 050 include a range of items, especially iron and non-metal objects, that are not represented or only minimally represented in the metal-detected assemblage (Penn 2011), notably combs, beads, iron knives, spearheads and shield bosses and glass beads. They also include types that are represented in the ploughsoil assemblage, including a coin pendant, early silver pennies, a hanging bowl, toilet implements, chatelaine elements, small buckles and bag catches. The items selected for burial thus provide a different and wider sample of material circulating at this place in the seventh century than those of non-ferrous metal which primarily represent loss or discard.

Of the 100 or so items of the eighth to eleventh centuries, forty-nine are hooked tags; some of these may date to the later seventh and early eighth centuries but the great majority, if not all, represent later activity. There are eleven brooches: six ansate; a nummular brooch; two disc brooches, one a *Heiligenfibel* with enamelled saint's bust and halo; and two plate brooches, one oval and one rectangular with a serrated edge. There are nine strap ends; five finger-rings, one of gold; two dress fasteners; and a copper-alloy spoon. There are also two bridle-bits, a cheekpiece and ten stirrup mounts or terminals of the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Compositional analysis of a buckle and metalworking debris

Eleanor Blakelock, Zofia Stos-Gale and Marcos Martinón-Torres

Material from the metal-detecting assemblage was not accessible for analysis but two objects from the 2003 excavations, a buckle loop (1005) and a piece of metalworking debris (1049), were analysed alongside the Rendlesham material. Chemical composition was determined by SEM-EDX analysis and both were sampled for analyses of trace elements (ICP-MS) and lead isotopes (MC-ICP-MS).

The buckle is a tin bronze with some lead and the piece of metalworking debris a brass with a small quantity of lead and tin. Neither falls within the main distribution of lead isotopes seen at Rendlesham but both are similar to a few outliers from Rendlesham and Hoxne. The buckle has lead isotope and chemical compositions consistent with the multi-metallic ores from the mines of Troya-Legorreta in the Cantabria region of the north-west Iberian peninsula (Velasco *et al* 1996). The piece of metalworking debris, with a relatively high zinc content, has lead isotope ratios consistent with ore sources in the eastern Rhodope mountains of the north-east Aegean. These lead isotope ratios could not have been achieved when re-melting metals from the British Isles or north-west Europe.

9.1.2.3 The fifth- to eighth-century coins

Andrew Woods

The database records seventy-one coins of numismatic periods EM1–EM4. To these can be added two further coins reported to EMC but not to SCCAS. One of these is a Byzantine gold coin, found in 1996, which in previous literature has been positively identified to the parish of Coddenham but explicitly not the 'productive site' CDD 022 (eg Abdy and Williams 2006; Table 9.1.5). This attribution, however, is based on a note which reads 'Exact findspot unknown, and not necessarily from the productive site at Coddenham' (Martin Allen, pers comm, 24 June 2020). The other coin was reported to the EMC in 1998, via a collector, with an antiquarian provenance. Its type – a type 26 (Constantine) shilling – matches a number of other coins known to be from CDD 022. In both cases it is possible that the coins came from another site in the parish. However, in the author's view the strong balance of probability is that there is an association with the other coins from the immediate study area and they have been included in the following discussion.

The chronology of the coinage at Coddenham is unusual when compared to the more general pattern from East Anglia (Fig 9.1.3). It has a far larger proportion of coins from numismatic phase EM1 than is typical. The coinage of this period is headed by four sixth-century

Table 9.1.5 Coddenham: summary of coins of the fifth to eighth centuries by site

HER code	
CDD 019	1
CDD 022	65
CDD 036	5
None	2
Total	**73**

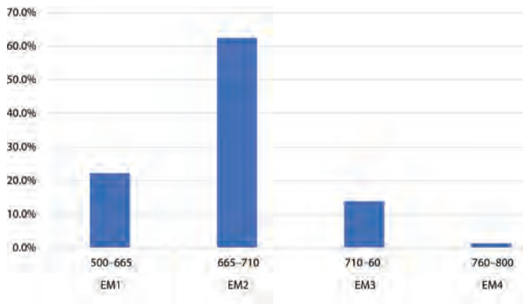

Fig 9.1.3 Coddenham: proportions of early medieval coinage by numismatic period

coins. There is the Byzantine *tremissis* struck in Constantinople (EMC 2001.0014), a Visigothic pseudo-Imperial *tremissis* (EMC 1990.0164) and a quasi-Imperial *tremissis* (EMC 1990.1290) struck in Provence. There is also a base copy of a *tremissis*, gilded with a copper core (CDD 022 2623). It was in poor condition when recorded but the winged victory advancing left on the reverse indicates that its model was an Imperial, pseudo-Imperial or quasi-Imperial issue. These coins were all struck before 580 and represent some of the earliest early medieval currency found in East Anglia.

This makes the relative absence of Frankish mint-and-moneyer types difficult to explain. With three early coins it might be expected that there would be a slightly larger number of coins struck in the period after 580, when greater numbers of coins reached England. This is not the case at Coddenham where there is only one definite mint-and-moneyer coin and two possible copper-alloy copies for which precise details are not recorded. Later coins within numismatic period EM1 include a Frisian *tremissis* of the mid-seventh century but the late part of the period is overwhelmingly represented by English gold shillings of which there are eight from Coddenham. If genuinely representative of coin loss at the site, this suggests significant access to coinage in the middle to late sixth century, followed by a relative dearth after *c* 580 before a resurgence from *c* 630, led by English coinage.

In addition to these examples there is a coin from late within EM1, a looped *solidus* of Dagobert I (629–39), from CDD 050, grave 30 (Penn 2011, 24–32, pl 9). This use of a Continental pale gold coin in burial stands in contrast to the contemporary settlement where almost all of the currency was English and much was probably struck at, or near to, the site. A small, irregular and heavily corroded copper-alloy disc from the same burial has been described as an imitation of an early penny (Metcalf 2011; Archibald 2013, 515; Scull and Naylor 2016, 238) but after examining digital photographs I conclude that this interpretation is open to question. If this is indeed a coin then a late Roman date seems more likely (there is another Roman coin from the burial).

The high level of coin use continued into the early years of numismatic period EM2: the Coddenham assemblage includes four coins of type PA and one of type VA, both struck in the 660s, which represents more than 20 per cent of the total from East Anglia. The large increase in the number of coin finds in period EM2 is quite typical of East Anglia and finds ready parallels at a number of sites with coins of period EM1, including Rendlesham. Less typical within this period are the relative proportions of types D and E coins from the Continent. There are more type D (12) than E (9) which is unusual as the proportions are usually the other way around. This places it in contrast to nearby Barham, for example.

The subsequent decline in period EM3 is atypical for East Anglia, and Coddenham lacks the variety of types that normally typify this period. The ten coins of period EM3 are all of types E (4), RS (5) or RQ (1). The reporting of these coins is such that it is impossible to trace the sub-types within E and RS to enable precise comparison with the data from Rendlesham and elsewhere. However, it is a reasonable assumption that coin use at Coddenham declined sharply at a relatively early stage within period EM3 as otherwise a greater variety of types would be expected within the assemblage.

Three coins from Coddenham are of particular note. The first is EMC 2003.0219, published in *the British Numismatic Journal* 'Coin Register' in 2004 where production at an East Anglian mint was suggested. Unique at the time, it has now been joined by two further examples, from Akenham (PAS SF-0C182A) and Eyke (SF-3862E5) parishes. All three coins were struck using the same set of dies. The presence of these three die-linked coins in close proximity to one another, and their absence from finds elsewhere in England, would strongly suggest that they were made in the vicinity. On the basis of this distribution it would appear that they were produced in southern Suffolk although exactly where in the Deben or Gipping valleys is impossible to say (Woods 2021). They are stylistically linked to the 'Trophy' type which Marsden (2016) has suggested are East Anglian shillings. The second coin of note is a Merovingian *tremissis* (CDD 022 T5) of Cabilonnum (Saône-et-Loire) which has been cut into a quarter, leaving it with a weight of 0.36g. The third is a type PA coin (CDD 022 1985) which has been pierced to turn it into a pendant. Such adaptations of coinage for weight and for display are also seen at Rendlesham but at both sites most coins are whole and unaltered.

The chronological signatures of the Rendlesham and Coddenham coin assemblages are the closest to each other of any East Anglian sites and both are quite different to most of the rest of region. They have an early beginning, with sixth-century coinage, and a similarly early and unusual decline in coin use in the eighth century, around 730. Both also have evidence for the cutting of gold coinage.

There are, however, also important differences between the assemblages from the two sites, particularly within EM1 in the seventh century. Rendlesham has a significant number of mint-and-moneyer coins struck across Merovingian Gaul. Coddenham lacks these coins but has a far higher proportion of late English gold shillings. There are two possible explanations for this. The first is that the Merovingian coinage was melted down and turned into English shillings. The second is that there were fewer coins circulating at Coddenham than at Rendlesham in the period *c* 580–630, and more thereafter. The second of these is the more persuasive as the English gold coins from Coddenham are mostly late issues, from the middle years of the seventh century. That there are four pale gold type PA coins from very early within period EM2 from Coddenham, but only one from Rendlesham, also supports the suggestion of a particularly intense period of use and loss at Coddenham in the middle of the seventh century.

The types represented at Coddenham and Rendlesham are similar in period EM2. In contrast to much of East Anglia, they share a similar proportion of types D and E. This might perhaps indicate that the two sites enjoyed subtly different relationships with Frisia and the Rhine mouth than other areas of East Anglia, Frisian-produced type D being more common than might otherwise be expected.

9.1.3 Chronology and settlement sequence

Aoristic analysis of the assemblage (Fig 9.1.4) shows activity during the second half of the fourth and the earlier fifth centuries, an increased level of loss or discard from the second half of the fifth century to the later sixth century, and a major peak of activity from the final quarter of the sixth century until the first quarter of the eighth century. There was then a dramatic reduction in the intensity of activity in the second quarter of the eighth century, with continuing low levels of loss or discard through the eighth and ninth centuries.

9.1.3.1 Roman

Roman-period activity is likely to have been influenced by the proximity of the large settlement at Baylham House, 1.7km to the south in the main Gipping valley (9.5.1, below). Within the immediate study area the main foci of Roman-period activity are west and north-east of CDD 022 at CDD 035 and CDD 019. Undated ditches found in the 2003 excavation trenches in CDD 022 may prove to be fields associated with CDD 019, and rectilinear field boundaries with fourth-century infill were found adjacent to the CDD 050 cemetery. The metal-detecting finds indicate that activity at CDD 035 declined sharply or ceased altogether after 360, as at many other rural sites in the Gipping valley area. However, the presence of Theodosian bronze coinage suggests that CDD 019 may have seen settlement activity into the early fifth century. Building material found here suggests a villa in the immediate vicinity, perhaps located south of the excavated areas, some 450m from the central area of CDD 022 at about 45m OD above the valley side. Fragments from two middle to late fourth-century crossbow brooches suggest a military or official presence here. There are also third- and early fourth-century crossbow brooch fragments from CDD 035 and CDD 022.

Several late Roman belt fittings have been found at CDD 022 (a discoidal strap loop and fragments of buckles of Hawkes and Dunning types IIa and IIIa) and from CDD 036/048 to the south (a fourth-century amphora-shaped strap end and a possible heart-shaped strap end). Modification of Roman material is also recorded: eight pierced coins from CDD 022 and two from CDD 048 represent 12 per cent of the Roman coins from these fields. Also from CDD 022 is a cylindrical gold ring consisting of a sheet band with plain and beaded filigree wire, thought to be either fourth or fifth century.

Fig 9.1.4 Coddenham: aoristic analysis of the late Roman and early medieval metalwork assemblage

9.1.3.2 Fifth to eighth centuries

Two supporting-arm brooches of Böhme's Typ Mahndorf from CDD 036 (1170; 1195) are evidence for activity in the first half or middle of the fifth century, and the late Roman belt fittings and adapted coins from CDD 022 may represent use or re-use in the fifth century. Otherwise there is no unequivocally post-Roman material that need be dated earlier than the middle or third quarter of the fifth century: the earliest cruciform brooch fragments, for example, represent the latest types of Martin's group 1 (CDD 023: SF-58DB00; Martin 2015, 247) or the earliest of his group 2 (CDD 019: Martin 2015, 367; West 1988, 135, fig 19.5).

The distribution of finds suggests that from the third quarter of the fifth century until the late sixth century the main areas of activity were on the north side of the valley at CDD 022 and CDD 023. At CDD 022 the excavated evidence confirms settlement on the south-facing slope. A concentration of dress accessories on the north-facing slope south of the stream at CDD 027 may represent plough-damaged inhumations. There are single finds or small quantities of metalwork from CDD 021, 035, 036/048 and 059.

The concentration of material, including coinage, and the results of trial excavation in CDD 022 show that this was the main focus of occupation and activity from the later sixth until the first quarter of the eighth century. The main concentration of finds is from an area of *c* 200m by 150m in the north-west of the field, running up to the extraction pit at its western edge, within which the 2003 excavations defined extensive dump layers and a rectangular building; associated pottery sherds were hand-made and there was no Ipswich ware. No finds of this date are recorded from CDD 023 but scatters of material from CDD 027, 028, 035, 036/048, 059 and 062 indicate a wider area of activity. A hanging-bowl mount, buckle, and harness fitting from CDD 027 may indicate burial into the seventh century.

9.1.3.3 Eighth to eleventh centuries

The intensity of activity in CDD 022 decreases markedly from the second quarter of the eighth century. There is a concentration of ninth- to eleventh-century material in CDD 023 to the east, and of eighth- to eleventh-century material in CDD 035 to the west. Hand-made pottery and Ipswich ware from test pits to the north and south of the medieval parish church and its churchyard, *c* 1km east of CDD 022, suggest a presence here from the late seventh or early eighth century. Coddenham has been identified from Domesday Book as a possible minster (Scarfe 1999; Pestell 2003, 132–3).

9.1.4 Production, exchange and consumption

The evidence of the ploughsoil assemblage and limited trial excavation shows a developed farming base, networks of procurement and access to a range of skills. In the fifth and sixth centuries the latter are seen in the supply of copper alloy and precious metals, and access to metalworking expertise. From the middle to late sixth century there is a change in the scale and reach of contacts. There is coinage from Byzantium, the Visigothic kingdom and Merovingian Gaul, while hanging-bowl mounts and the Celtic box fitting show connections with north and west Britain and Ireland. These contacts are also seen in material from the CDD 050 burials: the hanging bowl and *solidus* pendant from grave 30, the trivet-based bowls from graves 1 and 24, and the pottery bottle from grave 24; the inlaid iron buckle from grave 48 may also be a Continental item (Penn 2011). Apart from the Byzantine *tremissis* there are no manufactured items of Mediterranean origin but the composition of the copper-alloy buckle loop and metalworking waste from the 2003 excavation may suggest access to sources of metal from Iberia and the Aegean.

There is direct evidence for iron smithing from the 2003 trial excavation, and for copper-alloy metalworking in the form of unfinished items and a casting sprue from the metal-detecting assemblage and debris from the excavation. Some fragmentary gold and silver items are best interpreted as scrap for recycling, suggesting manufacture also for elite patrons. The range of copper-alloy items is strikingly similar to that at Rendlesham, strongly suggesting that the same individuals or workshop groups were active at both places. Although there are no unfinished bag catches from Coddenham the number of examples from the ploughsoil assemblage suggests that they were also made here, as at Rendlesham. A copper-alloy bird brooch of the later fifth or sixth century from CDD 027 (0298; West 1998, fig 23.7) is closely paralleled at Hoxne and is probably by the same workshop or crafter (Ch 10.1.1.2).

Among the other skills and specialisms implied by the archaeological assemblage, the probable stylus fragment suggests the exercise of literacy. This is usually seen as characteristic of a religious milieu but – as the example of an iron stylus from a mid-seventh-century burial at the Buttermarket, Ipswich, indicates – can be situated equally well within secular as ecclesiastical contexts (Pestell 2009). There would have been a need for record keeping in the administration of a magnate centre and in the mediation of the social, exchange and jurisdictional functions transacted there.

As at Rendlesham, there is a decline in activity – and particularly in coin use – that coincides with the expansion of Ipswich as manufacturing centre and international trading port. This is explored further below (9.7.3).

9.1.5 Social signatures and cultural connections

9.1.5.1 Cultural identities and connections

The two supporting-arm brooches can be seen as indicative of people from the North Sea coastal regions of the Continent in the first half of the fifth century. Thereafter, the range of dress accessories dating from the middle of the fifth century to the third quarter of the sixth century can for most part be considered typical of East Anglia and more widely of the Anglian province of material culture. The large number of cruciform and small-long brooches in proportion to annular brooches is also a feature of Rendlesham and here, as there, may be a product of differential retrieval by metal-detecting as much as a reflection of local cultural practice. From the later sixth century, as at Rendlesham, the ploughsoil assemblage shows an Insular material culture signature common to most of eastern and southern England with little or nothing that might represent regional costume traditions.

That said, a small number of items speak of broader cultural contacts and affinities. A bow brooch of Böhme's Typ Pritzier-Perdöhl may indicate continuing contacts with the North Sea coastal region of Germany in the middle and second half of the fifth century (Böhme 1986, 556–7, Abb 73). Of the later fifth- to later sixth-century material, the single cast copper-alloy saucer brooch (CDD 027 2126) is an item more typical of regions south and west of East Anglia, and some contacts or affinities with Kent and the Merovingian Continent are probably indicated by a radiate-headed brooch (CDD 022 2532) and probable fragment from a second (CDD 022 2650), and by the bird brooch which can be seen as a local variant of a Merovingian type. As noted for the Rendlesham assemblage, garter buckles represent a later sixth- and seventh-century dress fashion of Continental origin. Otherwise, as noted above, the clearest indications of Continental social and cultural contacts are seen in the imported material in the seventh-century burial assemblages from the CDD 050 cemetery.

9.1.5.2 Social differentiation

The earliest elite item is the gold ring of the fourth or fifth centuries from CDD 022 but it is unclear whether this should be assigned to a late Roman or post-Roman context. This aside, the character of the material culture assemblage of the fifth to later sixth centuries suggests the degrees of social differentiation normally signalled in burial and material culture over this period. There are some status items in gilded copper-alloy, such as two rectangular Style I belt mounts (CDD 022 2813; CDD 027 2038), but only three precious metal items, all silver: two fragments probably from wrist clasps and a piece of scrap probably from a radiate-headed brooch. An elite signature is very much more marked in the late sixth- to early eighth-century assemblage. In addition to the hanging-bowl mounts and other vessel fittings, there are weapon fittings, elements of gold and gold-and-garnet jewellery, the gold spangle and toilet implement, and a silver disc brooch fragment. The harness fittings also indicate a high-status milieu. Some material may indicate gradations of social standing: the gold spangle and toilet implement, for example, can be seen as representing an even higher-status version of the toilet set from CDD 050 grave 30. By contrast, there are only two elite items among the ninth- to eleventh-century assemblage: a gold finger-ring and silver hooked tag.

The suggestion that the late sixth to early eighth centuries saw the peak of elite activity at Coddenham is further supported by the proportions of elite indicators and occurrence of precious metal objects over time. Elite indicators make up 7 per cent of the early medieval assemblage as a whole, but only 3 per cent and 2 per cent respectively for material of the fifth to sixth and eighth to eleventh centuries against 19 per cent for the late sixth to early eighth centuries. Although the numbers are small, there is the same trend in the use of precious metal that is seen at Rendlesham: silver in the fifth to late sixth centuries and primarily gold in the late sixth to early eighth centuries, to which all but one of seven unequivocally early medieval gold objects belong. There are two precious metal objects in the eighth- to eleventh-century assemblage, one gold and one silver.

The picture is consistent with a ranked community or communities in the fifth and sixth centuries which from the later sixth century displayed new degrees of social differentiation which were strongly signalled in material display. This coincides with evidence for inter-regional social and exchange contacts of a new reach and scope, and the ability to accrue precious metal – coined and uncoined – and prestige items on a new scale. Underpinning this must be the ability to extract and deploy a landed surplus, and call upon human resources, on a new scale. The material suggests a wide social range, consistent with a permanent service and farming population as well as a – possibly peripatetic – magnate household. The CDD 050 cemetery, with its high-status inhumations of the middle and third quarter of the seventh century, is wholly consistent with this social context.

9.1.6 Overview and conclusions (Fig 9.1.5)

Spatial patterning suggests one or two foci of occupation and activity on the north side of the valley (CDD 022 and 023) in the fifth and sixth centuries, with a cemetery on the south side (CDD 027). There appears to have been a consolidation of occupation and activity at one of these locations (CDD 022) around the last quarter of the sixth century. Inhumation may have continued at CDD 027 but at some point in the early or middle seventh century a new cemetery was established at CDD 050. From the early eighth century, the importance and scale of activity at CDD 022 diminished and a more dispersed pattern is apparent with further foci of activity emerging to the west at CDD 035 and to the east at CDD 023 and around the site of the medieval church. The small number of richly furnished burials of the middle and third quarter of the seventh century in the CDD 050 cemetery, including the female bed burial grave 30, can be seen most plausibly as leading members of Coddenham's magnate family or high-ranking royal retainers attached to a royal establishment here. The remainder of the graves show a range of provision and social identities, and probably represent other members of the permanent population and household of the elite establishment.

The record for Coddenham does not afford the same degree of spatial coverage and locational precision as at Rendlesham but the evidence suggests that the elite

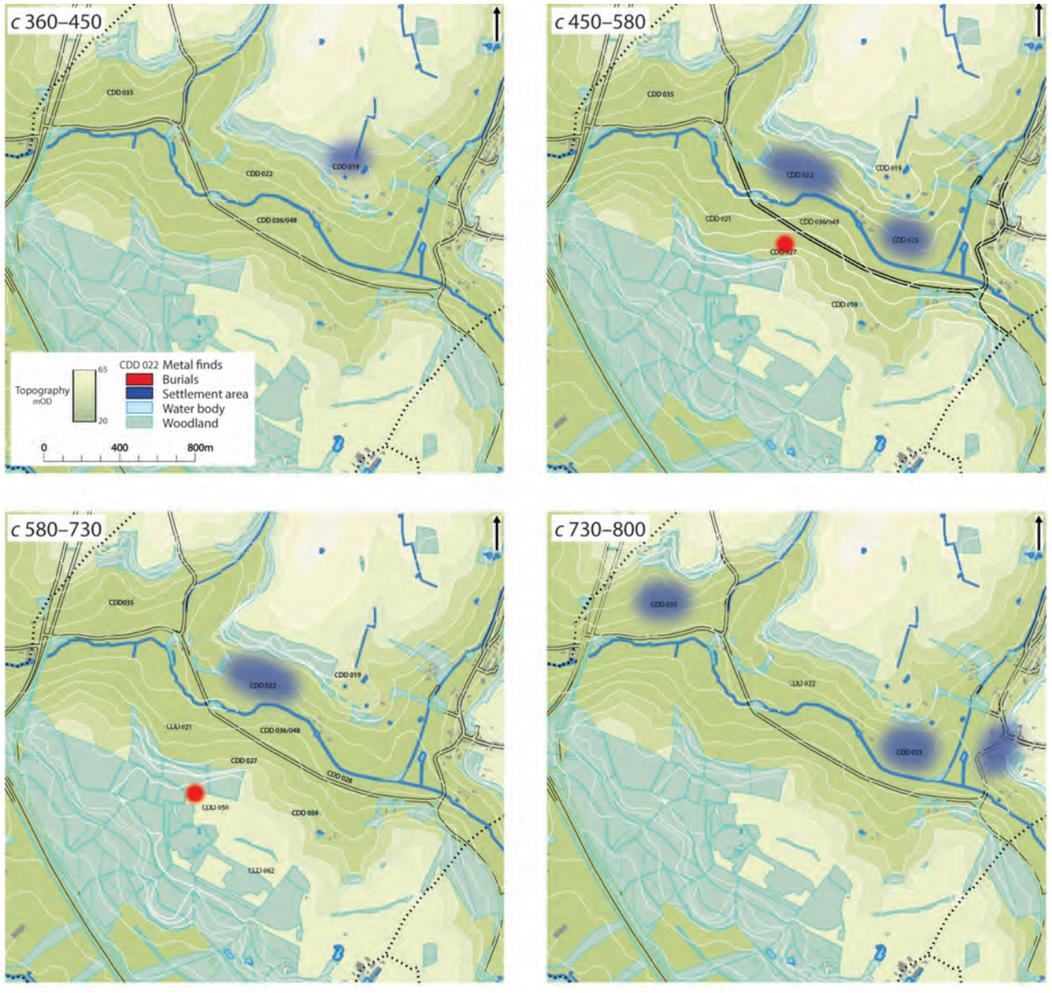

Fig 9.1.5 Coddenham: interpretative model of the settlement sequence from the fourth to the eighth century AD. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

settlement at CDD 022 extended over at least 6ha and was situated within a wider zone of activity extending over perhaps 20ha. The topographic context is striking, with the settlement on a south-facing slope within a bowl-like widening of the valley and the new cemetery overlooking it from a situation on the southern skyline. We have already argued that distancing burial from residence and use of prominent places in landscape were strategies of distinction that embodied elite claims to lordship and territory (Ch 6.2.5; Scull 2019b), and the spatial counterpoint and intersecting viewsheds of settlement and cemetery at Coddenham can be read as asserting ownership of the space between, and visible from, the two. As at Rendlesham, then, the elite establishment at Coddenham can be seen as part of a larger topographic entity, a place in the landscape that served as the setting for the range of social, economic and jurisdictional transactions that articulated rulership.

Coddenham from the late sixth to the early eighth century was thus a focus of elite activity, wealth, inter-regional contacts and early monetisation. There is evidence for non-ferrous metalworking, and indications that metalworkers at Coddenham and Rendlesham were part of the same network of patronage, manufacture and supply. The elite establishment here was clearly at or near the apex of the settlement hierarchy and must be considered a magnate residence and estate centre, and very probably the jurisdictional centre of a wider region. The questions raised by its proximity to former Roman small town at Baylham House and the near-contemporary elite site at Barham, and its relationship with Ipswich, are considered below (9.7). The Domesday evidence for the possible presence of an early minster church at Coddenham could suggest that the elite residence was given over to a religious purpose, or a monastery or collegiate church established alongside it, in the eighth century or later (Pestell 2003, 132–6) but there is nothing in the archaeology beyond a single stylus fragment – equally at home in a secular context – that might suggest a religious element to the assemblage.

9.2 Barham

9.2.1 Location and fieldwork history

9.2.1.1 Location

The Barham site is on the east side of the Gipping valley, 4km south of the early medieval complex at Coddenham and 3km south-east of the Roman settlement at Baylham House (CDD 003). It sits on the crest of the slope with the ground falling gently away from 45m OD to 15m OD towards the river Gipping 1km to the west; shallow dry valleys to the north and south mean that the site occupies a slight promontory, and the land continues to rise slightly to the east (Fig 9.2.1). The soils are deep loams of the Ludford Association (571x) overlying glaciofluvial drift, and excavations have shown that the latter is very variable in character with sands, gravels and silts or clays; the higher ground to the east comprises Beccles 3 (711t) clay soils over chalky till. On the downslope from BRH 016 to the west there is an area of heavy soil, noted during metal-detecting and confirmed by trial trenches excavated in 2017, which has produced fewer finds and probably marks the western limit of early medieval settlement activity.

The Colchester to Caistor Roman road (Margary 3c) runs *c* 2km away along the west side of the Gipping valley (Margary 1973, 264).

9.2.1.2 Fieldwork history

In 1949 Basil Brown for Ipswich Museum opened a trench following finds of Roman material in the field north of the church (Maynard 1950, 206–7; BRH 007). He also investigated medieval features to the east of the church (BRH 010) and recorded probably medieval burials and structures in an area known as Chapelfields (BRH 009). Successive episodes of discovery and archaeological intervention in quarries to the north have recorded prehistoric and Roman settlement activity (Martin 1993, 23–9; Boyles 2019; Pooley 2019, 2–3, fig 15; BRH 015, 043 and 080).

Metal-detecting began in 1979 on the fields north and west of the church. The main detectorist throughout was Terry Marsh, later a member of the Rendlesham survey team. Finds were initially reported to Ipswich Museum but a system of reporting to, and recording at, the Ipswich office of SCCAS was rapidly developed with finds locations plotted by the finder in the field on 1:2500 maps. Attention focused on the areas north (BRH 018) and west (BRH 016) of the church but other areas were also investigated including BRH 025 and BRH 027 downslope to the west of BRH 016, and BRH 019 which was detected in advance of mineral extraction. The field north of the church was a known Roman site but it rapidly became apparent that there was a significant quantity of early medieval material including coinage and high-status items of the seventh and eighth centuries; this was in fact the first example of a so-called 'productive' site identified in Suffolk (Newman 2003, 101). Survey has continued regularly for most years until the present. Some of the assemblage, mainly finds from

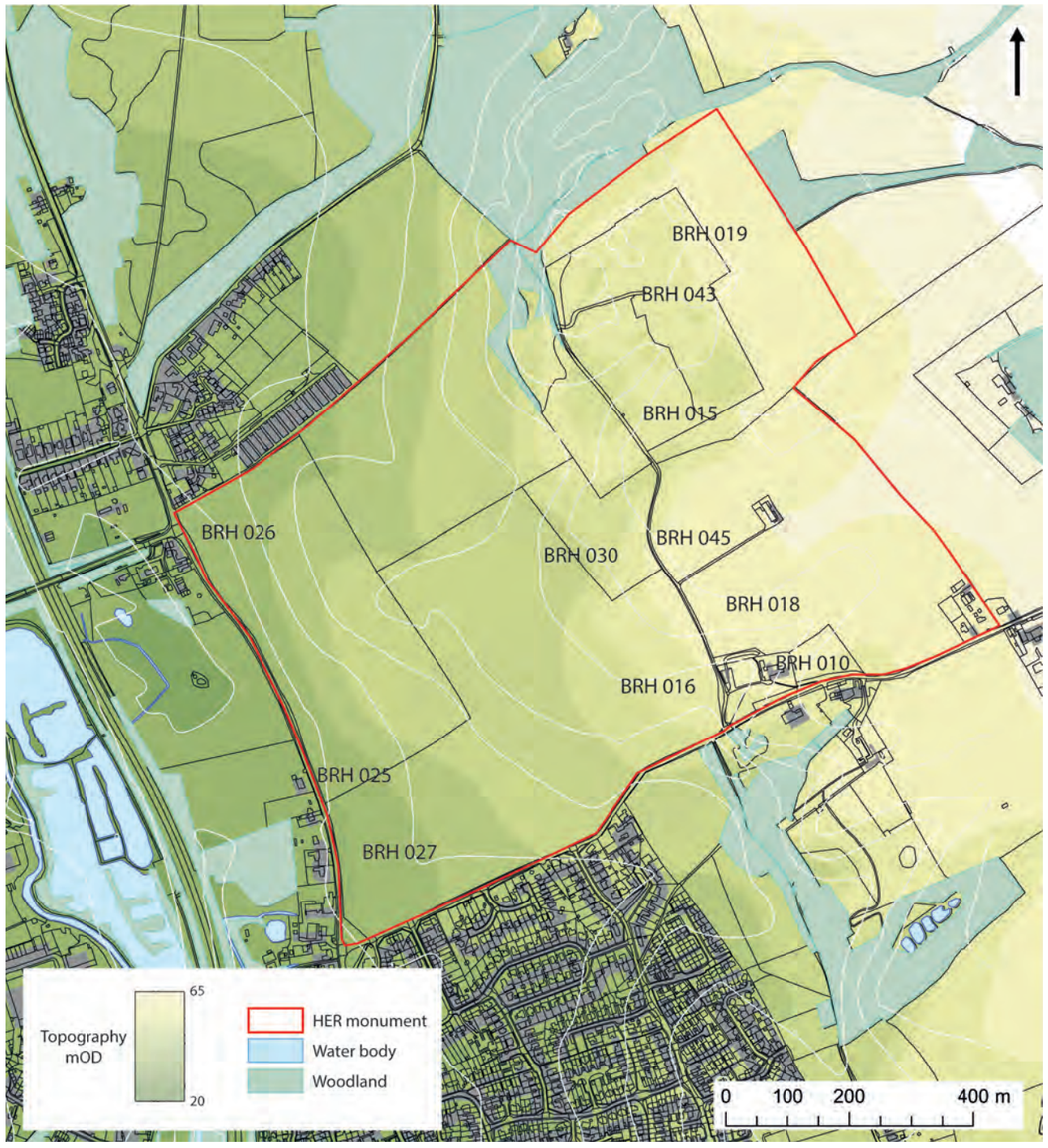

Fig 9.2.1 Barham: topography and main HER sites. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

BRH 018 but including early medieval coins from BRH 016, was acquired by the British Museum between 1980 and 1995.

Limited excavation in 1981 in advance of car park construction to the north-west of the medieval churchyard revealed prehistoric, Roman and post-Roman activity (Martin 1993, 29–31; BRH 017). The latest ditches, which appear to relate to the cropmark of a two-phase enclosure to the north (BRH 055), contained hand-made early medieval pottery and Thetford ware as well as a mainly Roman assemblage, and the partial remains of two Roman or later timber structures were identified. In 1983, an array of nine 6m by 6m trenches was excavated in BRH 018; hand-made pottery and Ipswich ware were recovered, and features including ditches, pits and postholes were recorded although few could be positively dated as post-Roman (Newman 2003, 101, fig 9.2). Fieldwalking of BRH 018 in 1984 recovered hand-made sherds, most of which are Iron Age but a few of which may be early medieval, as well as Roman pottery and Ipswich ware. BRH 018 was re-visited in 1989 and fieldwalking of BRH 016 in 1991 gave similar results.

In 2016 magnetometry and evaluation trenching was undertaken in response to development proposals relating to land west of the church, including BRH 016 and 027 (Picard 2017). A rectilinear ditch system identified within BRH 016 by magnetometry was shown to be Roman with some possibly later elements. In the north-east of the evaluation area, *c* 200m north-west of the church, a *Grubenhaus* was excavated. An inhumation, radiocarbon-dated to cal AD 555–646 at 95.4% probability (SUERC-69984), had been inserted into the fill and was associated with a sherd of imported Rhenish pottery. Two pits with sixth- or seventh-century hand-made pottery were excavated in the south-east of BRH 016; postholes and gullies, and Ipswich and Thetford wares, were also recorded in this area. Dump or midden deposits containing small quantities of Iron Age and Roman pottery may also be post-Roman.

9.2.2 The metal-detecting assemblage

9.2.2.1 Recording and data quality

As for Coddenham, all HER and PAS records have been collated in a MS Access database. There are, however, some anomalies and uncertainties, particularly for the early years of recording, where finds descriptions are minimal and identifications cannot be checked. This is a particular issue for the early medieval coins (for example, four were sent to the British Museum for identification in the 1980s without being first recorded by SCCAS) and it is not possible to reconcile fully the HER and PAS data with all coins given a Barham provenance in other records (9.2.2.3, below).

The database has 2,055 records. As with Coddenham, the great majority are single items, but some records of pottery finds and undatable material cover multiple items. Half (49 per cent) the recorded finds, and 91 per cent of the coins, are of Roman date (Tables 9.2.1–2). Early medieval material makes up just over 9 per cent of the total assemblage.

The detectorists mapped a high proportion of the finds and so in most cases there is good locational information. The intensity of coverage was not recorded beyond an acknowledged concentration of effort on BRH

Table 9.2.2 Barham: summary of coins by site and period (Iron Age to 1066)

HER code	Iron Age	Roman	Early medieval
BRH 010	0	2	1
BRH 016	4	403	22
BRH 018	3	332	34
BRH 019	0	11	0
BRH 025	2	3	0
BRH 026	0	0	2
BRH 027	8	33	1
BRH 043	0	1	0
BRH 045	0	30	0
None	0	0	1
Total	**17**	**815**	**61**

Table 9.2.1 Barham: summary of metal-detecting finds by site and period (* stray finds in the fields north-west of BRH 016 and east of BRH 026)

HER code	Neolithic to Bronze Age	Iron Age	Roman	Early medieval	Medieval	Post-medieval	Undated	Total
BRH 010	0	0	9	2	2	1	0	14
BRH 015	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
BRH 016	0	6	461	55	109	133	60	824
BRH 018	1	3	414	115	47	74	108	762
BRH 018 (NE)	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	4
BRH 019	0	1	17	1	3	1	1	24
BRH 025	1	2	5	1	17	8	5	39
BRH 026	0	1	1	7	14	8	2	33
BRH 027	0	10	50	6	119	69	15	269
BRH 030	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
BRH 043	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
BRH 045	0	0	35	4	5	2	3	49
None*	3	0	5	5	13	6	1	33
Total	**5**	**23**	**1,001**	**197**	**330**	**303**	**196**	**2,055**

016 and 018 and so it is not possible to calibrate retrieval as has been done for Rendlesham. However, this is of less significance because the main concentration of early medieval finds at Barham is very localised within BRH 018 and 016.

9.2.2.2 The early medieval assemblage

The database records sixty-one coins and 127 metal items that can be assigned securely to the period of the fifth to eleventh centuries, as well as a small number of metal items that may belong to this period. Of the coins, all but eight were struck before AD 800. The non-coin finds are overwhelmingly copper alloy (117 items; 92 per cent of the assemblage), with four of iron (a key and three knives), and two each of gold, silver and lead. Between 7 and 13 per cent of the assemblage represents activity of the fifth to later sixth centuries and around 50 per cent activity of the later sixth to ninth centuries.

The assemblage is dominated by dress accessories (Tables 9.2.3–4). Six of the nine items which are certainly datable to the fifth to later sixth centuries are brooches; the others are two joining fragments of the same neck-ring and a strap mount.

Table 9.2.3 Barham: summary of early medieval assemblage by functional category (excluding coins)

Category	
Dress accessories (DA)	89
Equestrian and transport (ET)	7
Household (HO)	6
Metalworking (MW)	1
Personal possessions (PP)	19
Weapons and military equipment (ME)	2
Unknown (UN)	3
Total	**127**

Table 9.2.4 Barham: summary of early medieval brooches

Type		Date-range
Cruciform	4	420–550
Small-long	1	420–550
Cruciform or small-long	1	420–550
Ansate	3	750–1000
Others (eighth to eleventh centuries)	6	750–1100
Total	**15**	

Of the forty-seven objects of the late sixth to early eighth centuries, twenty-one are copper-alloy buckles; all but two of these are small examples, and include garter buckles, but there is also a triangular buckle plate or counterplate from a belt set with cast Style II decoration (West 1998, fig 4.18) and a gilded copper-alloy belt or strap mount with a Style II animal (ibid, fig 7.71). Weapons are represented by a small pommel cap, more likely to be from a seax than a sword, and a pyramid mount. Harness fittings include a pelta-shaped mount and a fragment of a circular mount, both in Style II (ibid, fig 7.70; PAS SF-FDC374). There are two bag catches, a spoon, and five hanging-bowl fittings. A strip mount with interlace decoration is likely to be from a box or casket (ibid, fig 6.68); other fragments of decorative metalwork may be from mounts. The only precious-metal items are a circular gold-and-garnet mount (ibid, fig 5.47) and a small domed gold mount with a beaded wire collar.

Of the seventy or so items assigned to the eighth to eleventh centuries, twenty-five are hooked tags, one of which, in lead, may be a metalworking model. There are ten pins, including a silver-gilt linked pin (West 1998, fig 3.9), and seven strap ends. Other items include two spatulas, four pairs of tweezers and an iron key. There are two bridle fragments and a stirrup strap mount of the eleventh century.

9.2.2.3 The fifth- to eighth-century coins

Andrew Woods

Fifty-three coins of numismatic periods EM1–EM4 are recorded in the database but EMC records, four unpublished manuscript listings by Marion Archibald (British Museum), and the published attributions of material in the British Museum (Gannon 2013) allow the identification of fifty-six coins of these periods which, in the author's judgement, can be attributed with certainty or a high degree of confidence to BRH 016 and 018, with two more from BRH 027.

The chronology of the Barham coinage (Fig 9.2.2) is broadly consistent with the wider East Anglian pattern with a small proportion of EM1 issues increasing dramatically in EM2. The three coins of EM1 – two from Quentovic and one from the Mainz region – are likely to be of mid-seventh-century date, towards the end of EM1 (cf Ch 5.4). Taken with the three type PA coins from early within EM2, this suggests that coin use began at Barham in the middle of the seventh century with fair numbers of coins being handled from the outset.

There are very similar proportions of EM2 and EM3

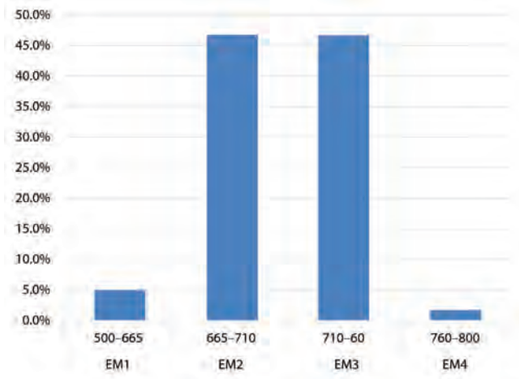

Fig 9.2.2 Barham: proportions of early medieval coinage by numismatic period

coins whereas the norm for East Anglia is that EM3 outnumbers EM2. This may reflect the intensity of coin use from the outset of period EM2 at Barham, something which is not seen at most other East Anglian sites. That said, there is a full range of coins of period EM3, including those of Beonna which can be dated to the 750s. The steep decline in period EM4 is in line with the regional pattern.

The origins of the coins from Barham mostly match the wider regional pattern but there are some differences within EM2. The proportion of coinage coming from the Continent in EM2 is in line with the broader East Anglian picture (twelve of twenty-eight, or 43 per cent) but the relative proportions of types D and E, with four and eight examples respectively, suggests a stronger connection than is typical with the Rhine mouths, rather than Frisia to the north. The English coinage of EM2 also shows an unusual ratio of types. There are four coins of East Anglian origin, three type VE and one type Z, and eight of the more common English types such as A, B and C, but across East Anglia as a whole there are seven times as many English as East Anglian types. The numbers of coins are small, and so the patterning can only be considered indicative, but it suggests that during EM2 the overseas exchange networks to which Barham was linked were more focused than normal on the Rhine mouths and that the settlement had preferential access to East Anglian issues. These differences are not seen in EM3 when the proportions of different types are in line with the broader East Anglian picture.

The inception of coin use at Barham in the middle of the seventh century appears to represent a tapping-in to existing levels of coin use and circulation, the earlier development of which are represented in the assemblages from Rendlesham and Coddenham. The main periods of coin use are EM2 and EM3, with a smattering in EM4, and here too Barham is consistent with the wider regional picture but different from Rendlesham and Coddenham, both of which lack the coins from the latter half of EM3. This further highlights the unusual decline in coin use at both Rendlesham and Coddenham around 730.

9.2.3 Chronology and settlement sequence

Aoristic analysis (Fig 9.2.3) shows a peak of early medieval activity between the last quarter of the sixth century and the first quarter of the eighth. Subsequent levels of loss and discard are proportionately higher than at Rendlesham or Coddenham, and point to significant activity through the eighth to eleventh centuries with a peak in the ninth.

Fig 9.2.3 Barham: aoristic analysis of the late Roman and early medieval metalwork assemblage

9.2.3.1 Roman

There was a rural settlement on the fields north and west of the church (BRH 016, 017 and 018) with a system of ditched enclosures but nothing to suggest a villa-type building. A second settlement area, possibly linked to it by a trackway, lies 0.5km along the crest to the north. Activity here is mostly late Iron Age and first and second century but there is a small coin group ending in the 350s and a small area of pits with an occupation layer containing fourth-century pottery (BRH 019 and 080; Pooley 2019; Boyles 2019).

The main concentration of Roman finds in BRH 016 and 018 covers an area of *c* 6ha and almost certainly extends under the churchyard; there is a scatter of material downslope to the west and a smaller concentration of predominantly late Iron Age and early Roman material in BRH 027 and 025. The coin profile is similar to the wider pattern for rural sites in south Suffolk, with a decline in the later fourth century and no coin loss after the 380s (Plouviez 2004, 84, fig 60).

Finds of military or official metalwork include a fourth-century strap end and buckle plate from BRH 025 but nothing that might be as late as the fifth century. The modifications made to Roman coins, four pierced for suspension and one with punched dots (from BRH 016, 018 and 027), together with an enamelled disc brooch that has been flattened by removing the back attachments (from BRH 016), might represent post-Roman adaptation and re-use.

The archaeology thus indicates a relatively prosperous rural settlement of the first to fourth centuries but with no clear evidence for a continuation of activity beyond the late fourth century (cf Newman 2003, 101).

9.2.3.2 Fifth to eleventh centuries

There are three fifth- or sixth-century brooch fragments from the foot of the slope at BRH 025, 026 and 027. The remaining items of this date were all recovered from the east of BRH 016 and from BRH 018, with the exception of a small-long brooch which was found in the immediately adjacent area of BRH 030 and, taken with the evidence of fieldwalking and evaluation, this suggests some later fifth- and sixth-century occupation. The larger assemblage of late sixth- to early eighth-century material covers *c* 6ha in BRH 016 and 018 and indicates more intense activity over a wider area; this is a very similar distribution to that of the Roman finds. There are also single finds of this period from BRH 019, 026 and 027 and two from 045. The eighth- to eleventh-century finds show the same pattern, with the vast majority coming from BRH 016 and 018, a single find from BRH 019, two from BRH 045 and three each from BRH 026 and 027. Similarly, the overwhelming majority of coins that can be located with confidence, including all but one of EM1–EM4 and all of EM1 and early EM2, are from BRH 016 and 018. The cumulative evidence of metal-detecting, fieldwalking and trial excavation thus indicates continuous settlement over an area of at least 6ha from the late sixth to the eleventh century and beyond, with origins in the late fifth or earlier sixth century. The spatial correlation also suggests continuous activity on site from the late Roman period but this cannot be demonstrated.

Concentrations of medieval and post-medieval material indicate continuing activity in or around BRH 016 and 018 and the pattern of field boundaries on the 1880s OS map suggests a small green with the church on the north side and Barham Hall to the south. There is also a concentration of medieval and post-medieval material at BRH 027. Modern settlement in the parish is very dispersed.

9.2.4 Production, exchange and consumption

The very limited evidence for activity from the later fifth to the later sixth century suggests nothing more than normal access to predominantly local networks of procurement and exchange. From the later sixth or earlier seventh century, however, there is evidence for inter-regional contacts: the hanging-bowl mounts indicate links to northern and western Britain, the earliest coins are Merovingian gold issues, and there is a single sherd of imported pottery associated with the human inhumation. As noted above, the evidence suggests a household tapping into existing networks of currency circulation and exchange rather than an elite site which was a principal focus of directed inter-regional exchange. From the early eighth century the place was integrated into the wider regional and inter-regional trading economies: the sources of coinage and the intensity of circulation are in line with the broader regional norm, and it was receiving Ipswich wares and then Thetford wares.

9.2.5 Social signatures and cultural connections

9.2.5.1 Cultural identities and connections

There is nothing in the very small fifth- and sixth-century assemblage that is out of place in south-east Suffolk. The same is true of the late sixth- to early eighth-century material, featuring types to be expected across much of eastern and southern England. Overall, the assemblage signals the same change in material culture identities from regional Anglian to wider Insular seen at Rendlesham and Coddenham, with pieces such as the triangular buckle plate suggesting a broader Insular alignment with aspects of Merovingian dress fashion rather than the direct acquisition of Continental items. The eighth- to eleventh-century assemblage includes brooch types typical of the wider North Sea cultural zone but nothing that need be taken as signalling special or foreign identities.

9.2.5.2 Social differentiation

Similarly, there is nothing in the small early assemblage to suggest any unusual degree of social differentiation or developing social hierarchy. This changes in the late sixth or early seventh century when the greatly increased quantity of material includes status markers and elite indicators, although a high proportion of the latter are hanging-bowl fittings that may in reality represent only one or two vessels. Alongside these are other pieces of high-status metalwork such as the Style II harness mount. Elite indicators make up 6 per cent of the early medieval assemblage as a whole, but 14 per cent of the late sixth- to early eighth-century assemblage and only 1.5 per cent of the eighth- to eleventh-century material. The incidence of non-currency precious metal items (three in total, two gold and one silver) is low: only 1.7 per cent of the early medieval assemblage as compared with 8.3 per cent at Rendlesham and 4 per cent at Coddenham. Both the gold items are fragments from objects of the late sixth or seventh centuries. The silver-gilt linked pin suggests an elite presence in the ninth century.

9.2.6 Overview and conclusions (Fig 9.2.4)

The close spatial coincidence of Roman and early medieval material might suggest continuous occupation and activity on the same site from the late Roman period but there is no direct evidence from the material culture assemblage to support this: unlike Rendlesham and Coddenham, Barham lacks early to middle fifth-century material and has only a very small fifth- to sixth-century assemblage. As it stands, the evidence would be consistent with a farmstead active from the later fifth century.

There is clear evidence for a major change in the status of the settlement and the intensity of activity in the late sixth or earlier seventh century. This could represent an uplift in the fortunes of the resident kindred or change related to their dispossession or subordination by another group. When compared to Rendlesham and Coddenham, however, the focus of settlement activity in a limited area and the much smaller early medieval assemblage suggests a single establishment rather than a component of a more extensive complex or arena of activity with a wider importance as a central place. Taken with the qualitative difference in the assemblage, this in turn suggests that Barham is best seen as a lower-order settlement than Rendlesham or Coddenham: an aristocratic residence or magnate farm with local estate holdings which retained its status into the ninth century, and with significant activity continuing into the eleventh century and beyond.

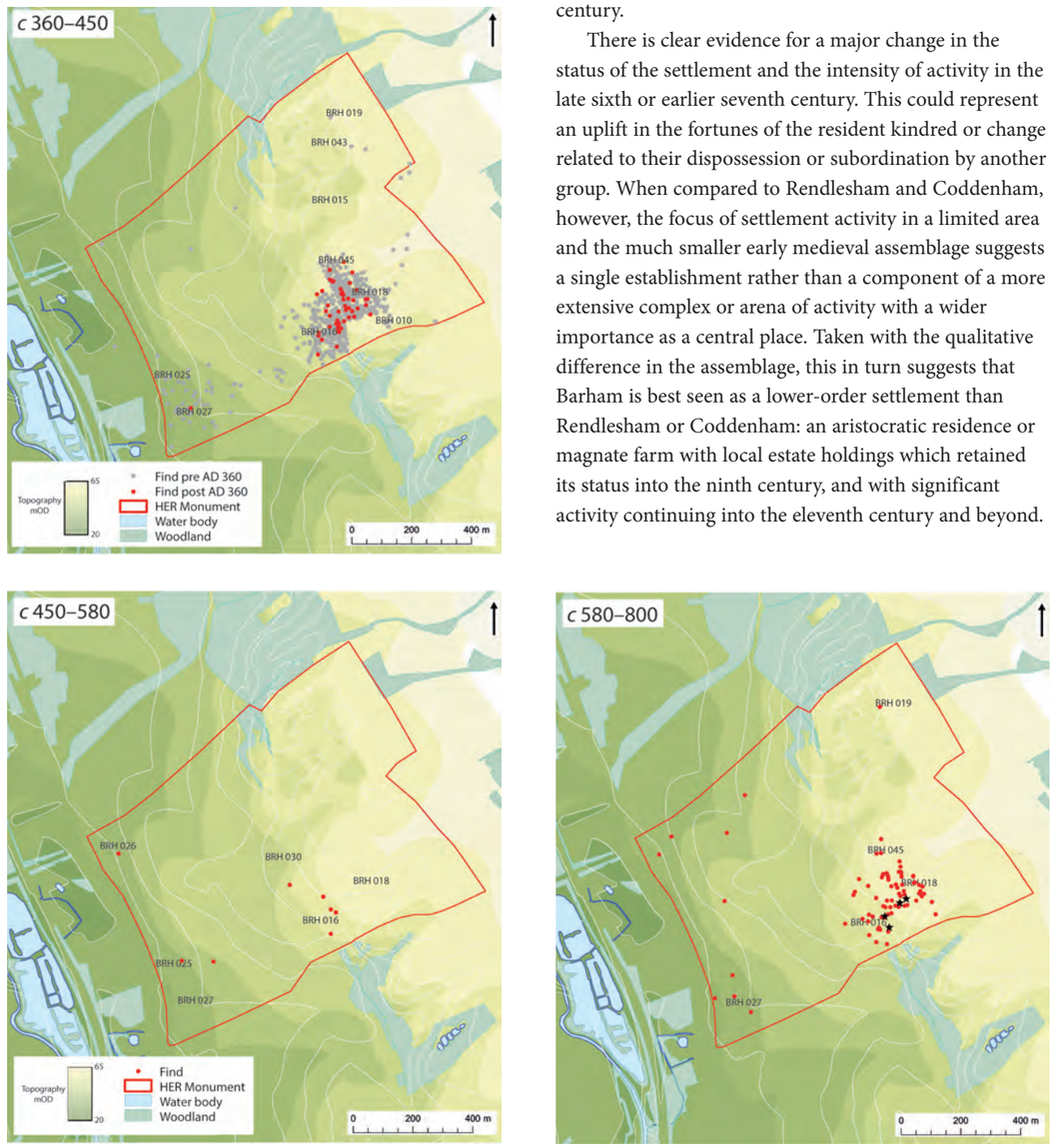

Fig 9.2.4 Barham: interpretative model of the settlement sequence from the fourth to the eighth century AD. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

At Domesday a majority of the somewhat fragmented landholdings recorded for Barham were held by Ely Abbey, including an estate of four carucates including the church with sixteen acres (Pestell 2003, 132); according to *Liber Eliensis* the Barham estate was purchased during the abbacy of Wulfric (*c* 1052–65) from Earl Ælfgar (Blake 1962, 152, 166).

9.3 Ipswich

9.3.1 Location and fieldwork history

9.3.1.1 Location

Ipswich lies at the transition between the Orwell estuary and the river Gipping, just over 19km by water from the North Sea at Felixstowe. The main area of early medieval settlement and activity was on the north bank, on an area of land rising gently from sea-level to *c* 15m OD which is dissected by several small tributary valleys running south to the river, and bounded to the west by an area of low-lying marsh or periodically flooded land; excavated evidence suggests that the main area of settlement was originally heathland. There was also a small area of seventh-century burials and subsequent settlement at a crossing point on the south bank. The soils are mainly deep loams of the Ludford Association (571x) overlying glaciofluvial drift, with Newport 4 (551g) sands to the east and alluvial clay along the river sides.

A Roman road may have crossed the area, linking the probable route to Felixstowe to the south-east with a possible route towards Barham and Coddenham to the north-west, but if so, it did not influence the predominantly north–south street axis of the eighth-century settlement and medieval town. The main road between Colchester and Caistor-by-Norwich (Margary 3c) lies 4km away to the west of the Gipping.

9.3.1.2 Fieldwork history

The core area of early medieval settlement has been continuously occupied since the eighth century and its immediate surroundings are masked by nineteenth- and twentieth-century urban and suburban expansion. The nature of the archaeological sample from this urban area is therefore different from those at the other sites under consideration, being generated by multiple excavations rather than by extensive field survey.

Before 1974 most archaeological work in the town was undertaken through Ipswich Museum. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Nina Layard excavated sites located both in the town centre and at Hadleigh Road (Layard 1899; 1907; Plunkett 1994). Research by John Hurst and Stanley West in the 1950s identified Ipswich ware as a local product (Hurst and West 1957) and excavations by Stanley West in 1958 and 1959 first indicated the extent and significance of the early medieval settlement (West 1963).

Within the urban core, the Ipswich Archaeological Survey (the Ipswich-based part of SCCAS) carried out thirty-six major archaeological excavations between 1974 and 1990 in line with a development-led research strategy; these collectively establish our understanding of the sequence of settlement and urban development from the seventh century (Wade 1988; 1993; Scull 2009a). Further excavations took place on the waterfront in the early 2000s and south of the river at Stoke Quay in 2012 (IPS 683; Brown *et al* 2020). Archive data and site summaries from the 1974–90 excavations, from which much of what follows is drawn, are available from the ADS (https://doi.org/10.5284/1034376).

Outside the urban core, excavations during the first half of the twentieth century at Hadleigh Road (Layard 1907) and on the Roman villa at Castle Hill (Moore *et al* 1988, 47–50) were both prompted by discoveries made during development. The results of more regular and systematic development-led archaeology since 1974 are summarised in overviews by Ipswich Borough Council (2018) and Cutler and Antrobus (2019).

9.3.2 The metalwork assemblage

9.3.2.1 Recording and data quality

In order to compare the metalwork signature at Ipswich with those at the other sites we have compiled a corpus of non-ferrous metal finds from the 1974–90 archive database and finds from the excavations at Stoke Quay (IPS 683). This includes all chronologically diagnostic items of the eleventh century or earlier from excavated contexts of all dates and all chronologically undiagnostic material from contexts of the eleventh century or earlier. This gives an assemblage of 1,354 items (Table 9.3.1) of which 615 (45 per cent) are chronologically diagnostic identifiable objects and the remainder unidentifiable or undatable fragments and metalworking debris from pre-twelfth-century contexts.

On the 1974–90 excavations many deposits were sieved on site to improve retrieval and metal detectors were used occasionally when local detectorists volunteered. This undoubtedly enhanced both recovery and contextual information but detailed spatio-chronological analysis of the Ipswich settlement is beyond the scope of this project

Table 9.3.1 Ipswich: summary of non-ferrous metal finds

	Roman	Early medieval	Undated	Total
All	33	582	739	1,354
Coins	26	166	6	198

and we are treating the assemblage as a whole as though it were decontextualised, representing activity across the area of eighth- to eleventh-century settlement in the same way as a metal-detecting assemblage from a rural site. The key difference is that we are able here to attribute otherwise undatable material to the early medieval period on stratigraphic grounds. This gives some indication of what we are not able to identify securely in metal-detecting assemblages and means that for most purposes comparative analysis must be based on chronologically diagnostic material.

9.3.2.2 The early medieval assemblage

A total of 166 coins and 386 metal artefacts can be assigned securely to the period of the fifth to eleventh centuries, and a small additional number may belong to this period. Of the coins, 108 were struck before AD 800 and are discussed below. Included within these figures are four coins and ninety-two other objects excavated from seventh-century inhumations at St Stephen's Lane (IAS 3104) and a single item from a seventh-century inhumation at Foundation Street (IAS 4601) (Scull 2009a); a further five items recovered from later contexts at St Stephen's Lane may be grave goods from disturbed burials. The vast majority of non-coin finds are copper alloy (337 items; 87 per cent of the assemblage), with eight lead and one item of lead and iron. Forty silver items are recorded but thirty-three of these are individual components of two necklets from inhumations at St Stephen's Lane (graves 2962 and 4275) and two more – a silver twist linking two glass beads (0002/3104Ag) and a probable cosmetic implement (0033/3104Ag) – may be grave goods from disturbed burials.

The assemblage as a whole is dominated by dress accessories, which make up 71 per cent of the total including grave finds and 72 per cent when they are excluded (Table 9.3.2); weapon fittings are represented among the grave finds but are almost entirely absent from the non-grave assemblage. Only six items might represent activity in the fifth to later sixth centuries, and of these only two – a dress pin and a fifth-century cruciform brooch – need be earlier than the late sixth century.

Table 9.3.2 Ipswich: summary of early medieval assemblage by functional category (excluding coins and grave finds)

Category	
Currency (CTJ) excluding coins	1
Dress accessories (DA)	212
Equestrian and transport (ET)	2
Household (HO)	8
Metalworking (MW)	5
Textile production (TP)	1
Personal possessions (PP)	27
Weapons and military equipment (ME)	1
Weights and measures (WM)	20
Unknown (UN)	16
Total	**293**

Excluding grave finds, a minimum of fourteen and a maximum of eighteen items can be confidently attributed to the period of the later sixth to earlier eighth centuries. These are mostly dress accessories, including two small buckles and two pins, but also include a bag catch and a sword pyramid. A further sixteen items, predominantly pins, could date from as early as the seventh century but are more likely to represent eighth- or ninth-century activity.

The great majority of objects (257 of 293 items excluding grave finds; 87 per cent of the assemblage) can be securely attributed to the period of the eighth to eleventh centuries. Dress accessories include seventy-four pins, twenty-two strap ends, twenty-one hooked tags and thirty-five brooches with ansate, nummular, rectangular plate, openwork cross and disc brooches all represented. There is evidence for non-ferrous metalworking in the form of unfinished dress accessories and litharge cake. Seventeen balances or balance fragments of the ninth to eleventh centuries complement the numismatic evidence for monetary and currency transactions. There are two stirrup strap mounts of the eleventh century.

9.3.2.3 The seventh- to eighth-century coins

Andrew Woods

There are 108 coins of EM1–EM4 from Ipswich, four of which are from inhumations at St Stephen's Lane. In line with established methodology these grave finds are excluded from the phase graph (Fig 9.3.1) but are considered in the discussion. One early penny has become disassociated from its site data but certainly came from one of the city-centre excavations; the others all

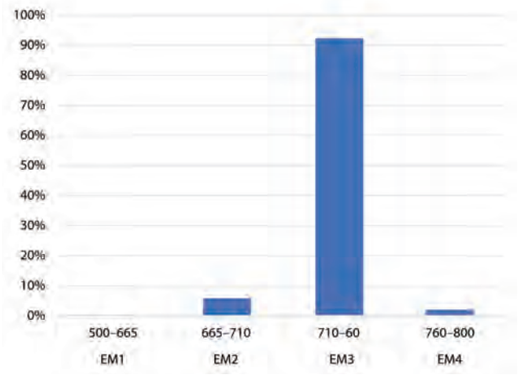

Fig 9.3.1 Ipswich: proportions of early medieval coinage by numismatic period

have secure stratigraphic provenances. The earliest coins are the grave finds from St Stephen's Lane which date to 650–80 (late EM1–early EM2): grave 4275 contained copper-alloy copies of an English shilling and a type PA fashioned as pendants, and grave 1356 contained two type PA coins (Scull 2009a).

The chronological pattern of coin loss at Ipswich is highly unusual. There is a very low proportion of EM2 coins that stands in marked contrast to the wider East Anglian pattern, and including the four grave finds would not significantly alter this. At Ipswich, then, low levels of coin use in the seventh century were followed by a vast expansion of coin use and coin loss in the eighth. This upsurge can be dated to the middle of EM3, perhaps around 730. The largest group of EM3 coins is type RS (48 coins, or 51 per cent) but it is difficult to date these more precisely than to 710–50. Most of the Ipswich examples were struck to the lighter weight standard averaging 0.60g (Metcalf 1994, 507–16), suggesting that they are later rather than earlier within the broad date bracket. This is supported by the presence of types SS (5 coins), L (7 coins) and KL (5 coins), all post-dating 730, and 9 coins of Beonna which date from after 749. Indeed, only 4 of the 95 EM3 coins can be confidently dated before 730.

The coinage from Ipswich was overwhelmingly struck in East Anglia. Over 70 per cent of EM3 coins are East Anglian. These are mostly type RS, some of which are assumed to have been struck in Ipswich (Woods 2021; Metcalf 1994, 523), but types Q and RQ are also present. There are also coins of Beonna, and again it has been assumed that some of his coinage was struck at Ipswich (Archibald 1985; Metcalf 2000). Most of the remaining coins were from other English kingdoms (22 per cent) with Continental issues representing only 7 per cent. Given the scale of archaeological evidence for Continental exchange contacts at Ipswich, the paucity of corresponding coin finds would suggest that Continental coins were melted down and re-issued as local types.

The assemblages from Rendlesham and Ipswich point to very different trajectories of coin use. In EM1 there is evidence for the re-use of coins as jewellery at Rendlesham but the bulk of the evidence indicates that coins circulated as currency; at Ipswich, by contrast, the only EM1 piece is a base copy used as jewellery from a funerary context. In EM2 coin use peaks at Rendlesham but is very limited at Ipswich, but this situation is reversed dramatically in EM3 when Ipswich has only a small number of coins which pre-date 730 and Rendlesham only a small number struck after 730. This represents a very significant fall in coin use at Rendlesham at the same time as there is a massive upsurge at Ipswich. This early uptake and peak of coin use, followed by an early decline, is seen at Coddenham as well as Rendlesham but not more widely at other sites. This suggests that the fall in coin use at Rendlesham and Coddenham and the increase at Ipswich were closely related and reflect changes that did not affect other places in the same way. This was a rapid change, not a gradual shift over a long period and – given the evidence for near-simultaneous recoinage and increasing control over the form of the circulating currency – it is likely to have been linked to elite action. This is discussed further below (9.6).

9.3.3 Chronology and settlement sequence

Aoristic analysis (Fig 9.3.2) shows minimal activity from the late fourth century until the end of the sixth. The first indications of a significant focus of activity are apparent over the course of the seventh century, and comparative aoristic analysis illustrates how grave goods from St Stephen's Lane dominate the seventh-century assemblage. There is a major upsurge of activity in the early eighth century associated with expansion of the settlement area, and subsequent urban occupation and activity up to the present day. The excavated sequences from interventions across the urban core establish in broad outline the spatial development of early medieval occupation and settlement activity.

9.3.3.1 First to sixth centuries

There is only very limited evidence for any activity within the area of the medieval town before the later sixth century. Late Iron Age to early Roman settlement features

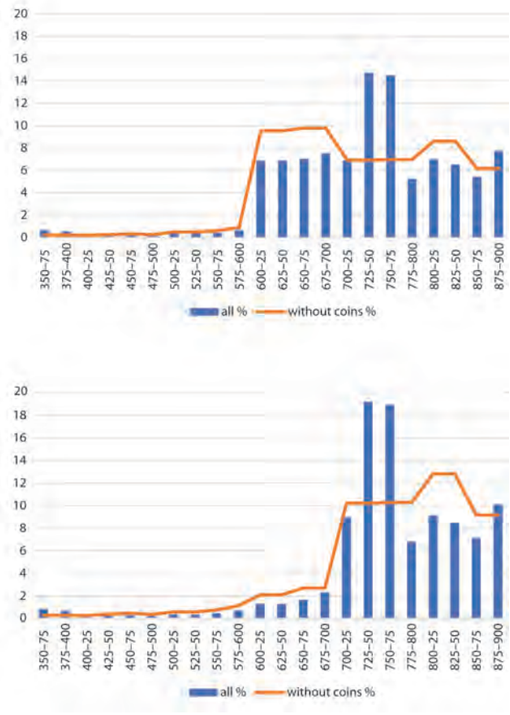

Fig 9.3.2 Ipswich: aoristic analyses of the non-ferrous metalwork assemblage. Top: including grave finds. Bottom: excluding grave finds

were excavated at Elm Street (IAS 3902), and small quantities of residual material from early medieval or later contexts suggest some activity in the waterfront area (IAS 5203 and 5801) and at School Street (IAS 4801), where there are first- or second-century finds and a fourth-century crossbow brooch. There was considerable re-use of Roman tile in the early medieval settlement, much of it probably taken from the major late Roman villa site at Castle Hill, 2.6km to the north-west, where there is evidence for early medieval robbing of building materials. There are only two post-Roman metalwork finds that need be earlier than the late sixth century: a fifth-century cruciform brooch from School Street and a dress pin from Lower Brook Street (IAS 5502). A second corroded brooch fragment from School Street previously identified as a cruciform (West 1998, fig 96.4) is perhaps more likely to be a third-century P-shaped or early crossbow type.

9.3.3.2 Seventh to ninth centuries

There was significant occupation and activity on the north bank of the Orwell from the very end of the sixth century or the early seventh century (Fig 9.3.3).

Settlement features excavated at St Peter's Street/ Greyfriars Road (IAS 5203), close to the waterfront, include two *Grubenhäuser* and many pits associated with a pre-Ipswich ware ceramic assemblage that includes a high proportion of imported pottery from the Rhine and Scheldt areas. Taken with the distribution of hand-made and early imported pottery from residual contexts at other sites, this suggests an occupation focus of *c* 6ha by the waterfront within a wider area of activity of up to 30ha. To the north of this was an extensive cemetery at Buttermarket/St Stephen's Lane (IAS 3104 and 3201) and there is also evidence for individual burials and small burial groups on the margins of the settlement area at Elm Street (IAS 3902) and Foundation Street (IAS 4601). South of the river, at Stoke Quay, was a small group of barrow burials (Brown *et al* 2020).

Between *c* 700 and *c* 750 there was a major expansion of the settlement to cover some 50ha both north and south of the river. A new orthogonal street pattern was laid out, possibly with a market on the Cornhill, and the earlier cemeteries were abandoned and their sites given over to occupation and craft activity.

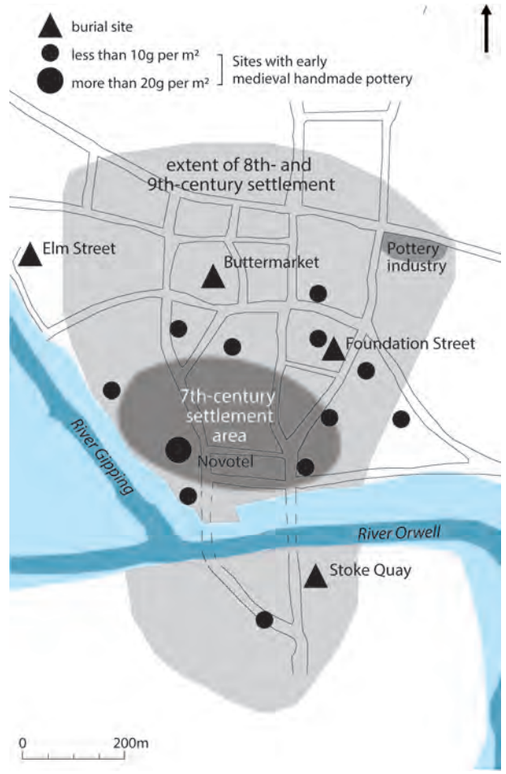

Fig 9.3.3 Ipswich: key sites and settlement sequence *c* 600–*c* 750. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

Expansion and reconfiguration of settlement space on this scale strongly suggests planning and instigation by royal authority. The precise chronology of layout and expansion remains unclear, and the archaeology can accommodate a range of possible scenarios (Scull 2009a, 315–19), but the consistent association of Ipswich ware with the earliest features of this phase would suggest widespread activity by the second quarter of the eighth century and the coin profile suggests an upsurge in monetary activity around 730. All sites excavated across this wider settlement area have provided evidence for craft production and international trade in the eighth and ninth centuries.

9.3.4 Production, exchange and consumption

The limited evidence for textile production and bone working prior to the early eighth century is consistent with domestic-scale production but the high proportion of imported pottery in the seventh-century ceramic assemblage, and the contemporary burial evidence for strong cultural affinities with the Continent and individuals of Continental origin, indicate close and direct Continental contacts. The use of coins in burial at St Stephen's Lane shows that the community burying here had access to contemporary coinage and presupposes its acceptance as portable wealth and a medium of exchange (cf Scull and Naylor 2016). There is, however, no evidence for monetary transactions here in EM1 and only sparse evidence for occasional coin use in EM2. This suggests that the settlement functioned primarily as a port and staging post through which the movement of traders and goods was controlled rather than as a place of exchange. Traders from the Continent were in residence, and cargoes were offloaded and embarked, but any significant monetary transactions, and the exchange they facilitated, was taking place elsewhere: at elite centres and magnate farms such as Rendlesham, Coddenham and Barham.

The expansion of the settlement area in the early eighth century was accompanied by an intensification and diversification of craft activity and production, and an upsurge in coin use, as well as continuing trade across the North Sea: bone and antler working, leather working and metalworking, textile production and pottery production. International trade is indicated by large amounts of pottery from northern France, Belgium, and the Rhineland and lava quernstones from the Rhineland. Wine was probably a major import and barrels, re-used as well-linings, have been found across the settlement. From the early eighth until the middle of the ninth century the main axis of Ipswich's Continental trade appears to have been with the estuaries of the Scheldt and Rhine through the *emporia* at Domberg and Dorestad.

Overall the quantity of imported pottery from the eighth- and ninth-century settlement is far greater than from the seventh and early eighth centuries but constitutes a smaller proportion of the total assemblage: imports account for 15 per cent of the seventh- to early eighth-century pottery but only 5 per cent for the eighth and ninth centuries. This would appear to indicate both an increase in the volume and intensity of foreign trade and the much greater diversity of production and commercial activity at Ipswich from the earlier eighth century. The reminting of foreign coinage suggests tight control by a central authority but can also be read as indicating that monetary exchange was linked as much if not more to the purchase of craft products and imported goods as it was to bulk commodity exchange. Ipswich appears to have functioned as a port and trading place for the exchange of commodities between foreign traders or middlemen and the agents of East Anglian landed elites, but also as a production centre and market servicing demands for manufactured items and imported goods both through exchange on site and redistribution through local and regional exchange networks. The clearest proxy for its market reach is the distribution of Ipswich ware within and beyond East Anglia (Blinkhorn 2012). This is heavily concentrated within Norfolk and Suffolk, but the evidence for wider distribution within southern and eastern England includes evidence for coastal trade networks from the Wash to Kent which took in the major *emporium* at London.

It is not clear exactly how the seventh- and early eighth-century settlement at Ipswich was fed. Foreign traders are likely to have brought provisions with them; there may have been a farming element among the permanent population, and arrangements for hospitality and supply from local farms and estates can also be envisaged. There is some evidence for agriculture and animal husbandry on the margins of the eighth- and ninth-century settlement (Wade 1993, 148; Scull 1997, 278), and it is likely that the permanent population cultivated garden plots and kept animals, but this was not a self-sufficient community and there is evidence for organised large-scale provisioning from the surrounding countryside (Crabtree 2012, 59).

9.3.5 Social signatures and cultural connections

9.3.5.1 Cultural identities and connections

Three seventh-century inhumations at St Stephen's Lane can be identified as men from northern France, the Lower Rhineland or the Netherlands on the basis of associated masculine grave goods, and other aspects of burial practice at Buttermarket/St Stephen's Lane also suggest close cultural contacts across the North Sea (Scull 2009a, 291–5). Isotope analysis shows that two of those buried under barrows at Stoke Quay on the south bank of the Orwell were not originally from eastern England. In one case the isotopic values and associated grave goods suggest an individual from northern France or the Netherlands; in the other, the isotopic values are consistent with an origin in southern France (Brown *et al* 2020, 588). This accords with the use and disposal of Continental pottery in the seventh-century settlement, the axes of overseas contact evident in the coinage from Rendlesham and Coddenham, and with the wider pattern of Continental burials associated with the seventh-century precursor phases of the other major southern English *emporia* at Southampton and London (Scull 2011b). However, local Insular identities are also expressed in burial practice at Ipswich and most of the pottery from the early settlement is locally produced hand-made wares. Even against a local background partly shaped by long-standing contacts across the North Sea and English Channel, some Continental identities and individuals stand out with unusual clarity.

Although there is clear evidence for continuing and intensifying exchange and cultural contacts across the North Sea from the second quarter of the eighth century, and certainty that Continental traders were present, there is little or nothing in the metalwork assemblage that need indicate foreign identities. The range of eighth- to eleventh-century dress accessories, in particular, sits comfortably within the context of an eastern English site within the broader North Sea cultural zone.

9.3.5.2 Social differentiation

The Ipswich metalwork assemblage has a very subdued status signature. There are no prestige imports nor items of gold and the only elite indicators are silver items. Excluding the certain grave goods from St Stephen's Lane, there are only two silver items that might date to before the early eighth century, both from St Stephen's Lane and both possibly grave goods from inhumations disturbed by later settlement activity. There are five silver objects of eighth- to eleventh-century date: four pins and a brooch or mount. Excluding the certain and possible grave goods, silver items make up 1.7 per cent of the total assemblage and 1.9 per cent of eighth- to eleventh-century material.

The patterns of furnished inhumation at St Stephen's Lane show social ranking and access to portable wealth in the form of silver, coined and uncoined, but nothing like the degrees of social differentiation and differential economic power seen in contemporary elite material from Rendlesham and Coddenham, or even from Barham. This stands in marked contrast to the range of elite indicators known from contemporary inhumations at other sites in the lower Gipping valley in the later sixth and seventh centuries, such as the hanging bowl from the Hadleigh Road cemetery and the elite burial assemblage of the late seventh century from Boss Hall grave 93 (West 1998, fig 69.1; Scull 2009a, 16–18, figs 2.20–1). Taken with the wider metalwork assemblage, this strongly suggests that the social composition of the Ipswich settlement in the seventh to early eighth centuries was different from that of the inland centres examined, lacking an elite or aristocratic element and including a significant and archaeologically identifiable Continental contingent. The larger population, greater intensity of settlement and wider range of production and commercial activity would imply that the social character of the eighth-century and later settlement was different again from that of its seventh-century precursor, and that it may have accommodated a wider range of social identities, but the near-absence of any elite or high-status signature remains a constant.

9.3.6 Overview and conclusions

Although there was Roman and post-Roman settlement along the lower Gipping valley and the Orwell valley (9.5, below), and possibly some fourth- and fifth-century activity at School Street, Ipswich was effectively a new settlement of the late sixth or early seventh century. Over the course of the seventh century it appears genuinely to have been a gateway: a coastal landing place and enclave for traders from overseas whose business was directed primarily to elites and their agents at magnate centres inland. This suggests elite action to funnel and control through a single designated place contacts and interactions that had previously been taking place at a range of locations along the Orwell estuary and lower Gipping valley. If so, this can be taken to imply a new threshold of elite authority and can be seen as a response to intensifying maritime cultural and commercial contacts.

In the earlier eighth century the settlement expanded and was reconfigured, and developed as a trading port, manufacturing centre and market. Again, it is difficult to explain the expansion and reorganisation of settlement space except as a royal initiative, albeit in response to broader economic dynamics, and this sequence of development is seen at much the same time at the other major *emporia* of southern England,

Southampton (*Hamwic*) and London (*Lundenwic*) (Scull 2002, 308–9). There was a new intensity of occupation and diversity of craft production and commercial activity, and a reliance on external provisioning. Ipswich articulated trade across the North Sea and Channel, and served both local and regional markets for manufactured and imported goods.

9.4 The Gipping valley: landscape and territory

Tom Williamson and Eleanor Rye

The early medieval settlements at Coddenham and Barham, and the Roman small town at Baylham House, Coddenham, are located within an area of light soil where the valley of the Gipping – a river which flows in a generally south-easterly direction from sources near Mendlesham and Wetherden to Ipswich – widens significantly and cuts through the boulder clay into the underlying chalk. The Roman town lies close to the river, surrounded by extensive tracts of well-drained soils: mainly those of the Ludford Association, neutral brown earths formed in non-calcareous head; and the Swaffham Prior Association, calcareous brown earths formed in chalk (Hodge *et al* 1984). These tractable loams are surrounded by clay soils of the Ashley, Beccles, Hanslope and Ragdale Associations, poorly draining where level but more amenable on slopes greater than 1.75 degrees which, given the dissected nature of the terrain, are extensive. The early medieval settlement at Coddenham lies on Swaffham Prior soils in the valley of a tributary stream; that at Barham on Ludford soils on the slope of the main valley 1km east of the river (above, 9.1.1.1 and 9.2.1.1; Fig 9.4.1).

Like Rendlesham, the Coddenham and Barham settlements lie within an extensive pocket of relatively light and tractable loams which is flanked by extensive uplands with less attractive soils. A number of areas of ancient woodland survive on the drift-covered uplands flanking the valley and, especially in the period before the parliamentary enclosures of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, numerous greens and other commons existed. Domesday, however, records only modest areas of woodland in the immediate area; there are very few known medieval deer parks (Hoppitt 2020) and only a few parishes with names relating to woodland (such as Henley and Badley) (Fig 9.4.1).

It should be emphasised that the till plateau immediately flanking the Gipping valley is dissected by numerous minor valleys, associated with tributary streams, and so areas of the most level, poorly draining clay are limited and discontinuous. This in turn is reflected in the abundance of major place-names with the final element *hām*, which constitute by far the most common form of vill and parish name within 10km of the site of the Roman small town. It is only towards the north and, in particular, the north-east, that significant numbers of place-names featuring elements like *-feld* or *-lēah* occur, and that significant amounts of Domesday woodland are recorded. This is on the higher and more level watersheds separating the drainage basin of the Gipping from those of the Dove, the Black Bourn and the Blyth. To the east, in contrast, the watershed with the Deben appears to have been narrow and permeable and breached to the south-east by a corridor of low-lying land containing fairly tractable soils, extending from Claydon in the west, through Westerfield, to the Fynn valley around Tuddenham (Ch 6.1). To the west, similarly, there are few traces of wooded tracts separating the Gipping drainage basin from that of the Brett. The sites at Coddenham and Barham thus appear to have been located within an extensive area of relatively open ground, albeit with numerous but discontinuous areas of woodland and grazing on the surrounding clay uplands, which was clearly separated from territories lying to the north, but less so from those to the east or west, by more extensive tracts of woodland and grazing.

In both the Roman and post-Roman periods the Coddenham area formed a nodal point in the communication network (Moore *et al* 1988; Plouviez 1999). The Roman town was approached from the north by the Roman road from Caistor-by-Norwich (*Venta Icenorum*) and Scole, which then continued south to Colchester (Margary 3c and 3d), from the north-east by a road from Peasenhall (Margary 34b), from the east by a road from Hacheston (Margary 340) and from the west by one from Long Melford (Margary 34a) (Fig 9.4.2; Margary 1973, 265–6). Most probably continued to function in the immediate post-Roman period, and the Caistor to Coddenham route (the 'Pye Road') largely survives today as a major road, the A140. The Gipping valley itself formed a major communication route through the central Suffolk claylands, continued beyond Haughley by the valleys of the Black Bourn and the Lark. The sites at Coddenham and Barham thus lay beside a major routeway leading from the Orwell estuary to the eastern and southern fen edge and so on into the English Midlands.

As in the Rendlesham area, free tenures and complex tenurial subdivision were, by the eleventh century,

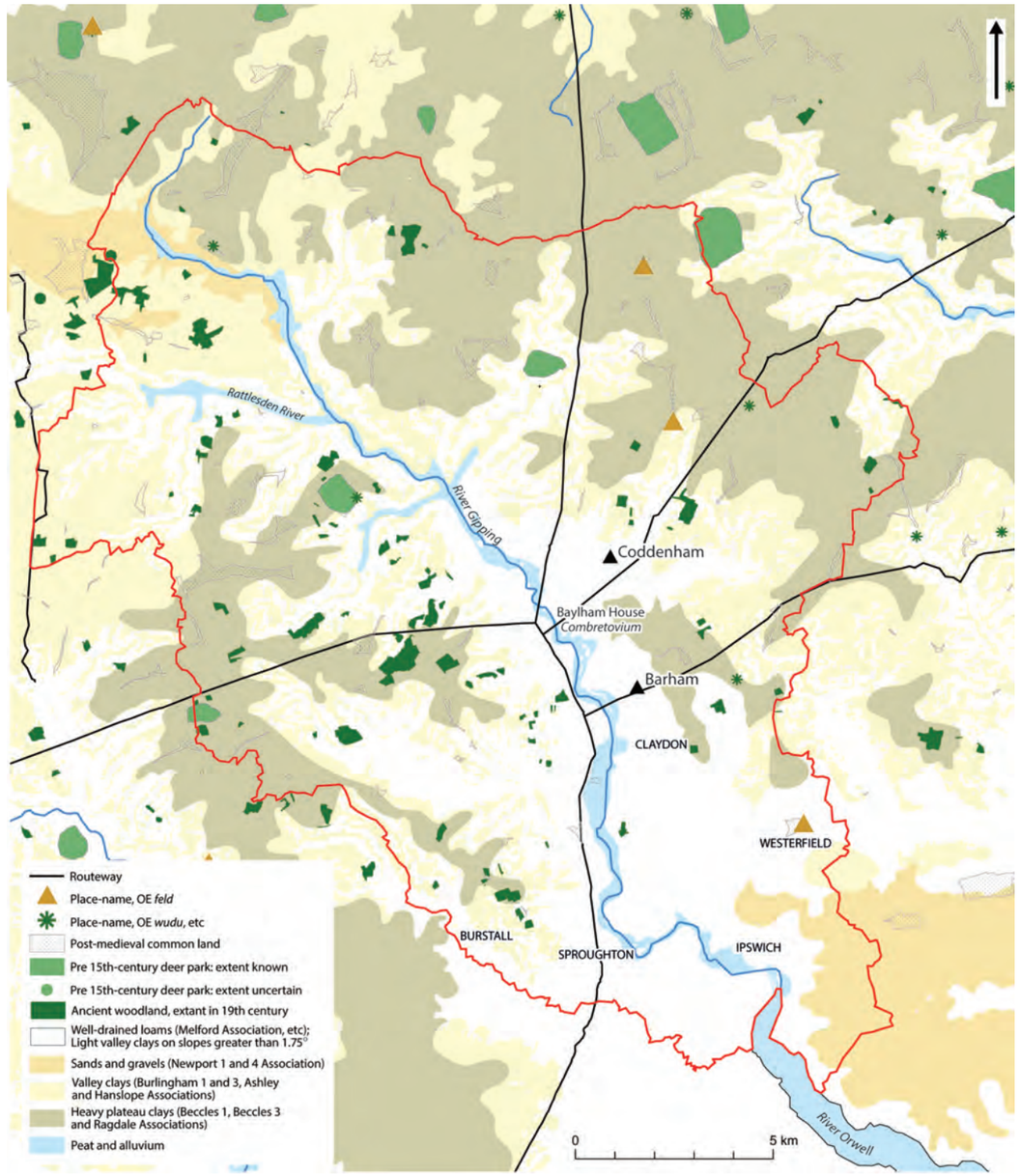

Fig 9.4.1 The Gipping catchment: drainage, soil types and woodland indicators. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

characteristic features of the local social geography. Barham otherwise appears tenurially unremarkable in Domesday but Coddenham has a particularly complex record, with eighteen separate entries, three of which are described as manors and the rest comprising the holdings of free men under a variety of commendations. It was a populous vill, with nearly a hundred recorded households. There were also multiple churches and shares of churches listed on the various holdings, which have been interpreted as indicating that the place was once the site of a minster (Scarfe 1999; Pestell 2003, 132–3). But none of the manors was held by the king and Coddenham does not appear to have been a major soke centre. There are hints of some importance, perhaps, in the distant past, but not by the eleventh century.

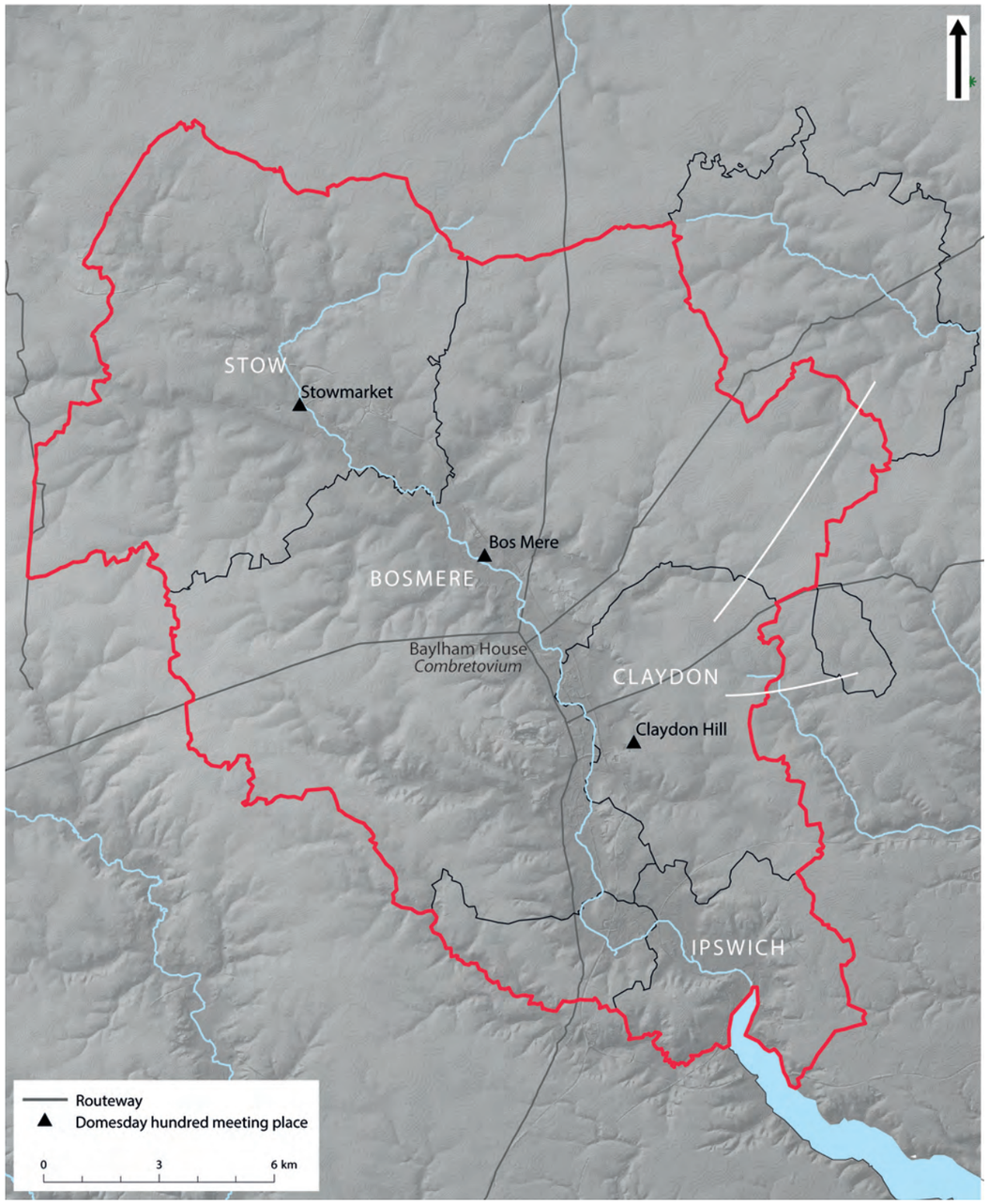

Fig 9.4.2 The Gipping catchment: relief; Domesday hundreds and half hundreds; hundredal meeting places; major Roman roads; Roman small town at Coddenham. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

At Domesday, this part of the Gipping valley was divided between two separate hundreds. Coddenham and places to the north of this, with Baylham, Great and Little Blakenham and Bramford west of the river to the south, were in Bosmere hundred. Barham, and vills to the south on the eastern side of the river, lay in Claydon hundred (fig 9.4.2). The meeting place of Claydon hundred was presumably somewhere in Claydon parish, perhaps at Claydon Hill *c* 1.5km south of the Barham settlement. Bosmere hundred takes its name from a

natural lake within the valley floor, Bos Mere, now in the parish of Creeting St Mary (TM 098 546), and the hundredal meeting place presumably lay in close proximity: Gallows Hill, just possibly an early execution site, lies 800m to the south, on the opposite (western) side of the Gipping (TM 101 538) in Barking parish. It may also be significant that the prominent hill spur lying 1.5km east and south of Bos Mere, overlooking the Roman road leading to Scole and Caistor, has been known since at least 1675 as Beacon Hill. Thus the two hundredal meeting places, the early medieval settlements at Barham and Coddenham, and the site of the Roman small town are all located within a 5km stretch of the Gipping valley, which also appears to have been a focus of late prehistoric settlement and activity (Martin 1999b).

It is striking that the site of the Roman small town lies less than 400m from the boundary between the two hundreds and is roughly central to their combined area, and there are other indications that the two originally formed a single territory. At the time of Domesday, Claydon lay in two sections, separated by Bosmere; the two hundreds were united in the fifteenth century to form the single hundred of Bosmere and Claydon. This, however, was after the north-eastern section of Claydon, a group of vills dominated by the Abbey of Ely, had been separated as the half-hundred of Thredling, and treated for many purposes at a part of the Wicklaw hundreds (Martin 1999a). An early territory may also have included the half-hundred of Stow, to the north-west of Bosmere and bisected by the Gipping: the configuration of their boundaries suggests that Bosmere and Stow were once one, and while Creeting St Peter lay in Stow hundred, the adjacent parish of Creeting St Mary lay in Bosmere. Bosmere, Claydon and Stow would together form a territory approximating to the drainage basin of the Gipping, with outer boundaries that mainly respect, and in some cases closely follow, the watersheds dividing this from neighbouring catchments. The only real deviations from topography are displayed by the northern section of Claydon (mainly, at a later date, the hundred of Thredling), which extends into the drainage basin of the upper Deben; and by the upper reaches of the Rattlesden river, which extends beyond the western boundary of Stow into Thedwestry hundred. But both these exceptions lie in the more wooded terrain towards the north, where firm boundaries were perhaps established at a late date and which, in the case of Thredling, were subject to a measure of post-Conquest renegotiation.

If the three Domesday hundreds of Claydon, Bosmere and Stow do very broadly preserve an early catchment territory then almost certainly this extended to the Orwell estuary and included what became the Domesday half-hundred of Ipswich (fig 9.4.2). There was no significant settlement or activity within the area of the medieval town of Ipswich before the late sixth century and its expansion as a major port and commercial settlement dates from the early eighth, and so the creation of the Ipswich half-hundred within the extent of an earlier social or administrative territory is to be explained by the character and importance of the town in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Topographically, the catchment territory would also include the modern civil parishes of Sproughton and Burstall, which in the Middle Ages lay within Samford hundred. Sproughton, although a medieval parish and township, does not appear in Domesday but the configuration of parish boundaries, the fact that Burstall Hall lay on the boundary between the two parishes, and other features, strongly suggest that it was subsumed within the complex entry for Burstall, the two originally forming a single unit. Unusually, neither the parish boundary of Sproughton, nor therefore the boundary of Samford hundred, respected the Gipping (here a wide river) but instead extended to the north and east of it, embracing the site of Boss Hall, in much the same way as the boundaries of Ipswich, to the south and east, extended to the south and west of the river.

Similarly, it is possible to argue on topographic grounds that the north-eastern part of Claydon, which became the half-hundred of Thredling, originally lay outside an early catchment territory focused on the Gipping valley and was incorporated into the Domesday hundred as a result of tenurial and administrative renegotiations towards the end of the first millennium. As with the Deben, however, the broad coincidence of topography and later administrative geography provides a useful model to frame the investigation of early medieval activity and human geography.

9.5 The Gipping valley: patterns of settlement, burial and economy

Stuart Brookes and Christopher Scull

9.5.1 The archaeological evidence

Excluding the archaeology at Coddenham, Barham and Ipswich discussed above, there are thirteen post-Roman settlement or burial sites of the period AD 400–800 known from the recording of *in situ* features or deposits.

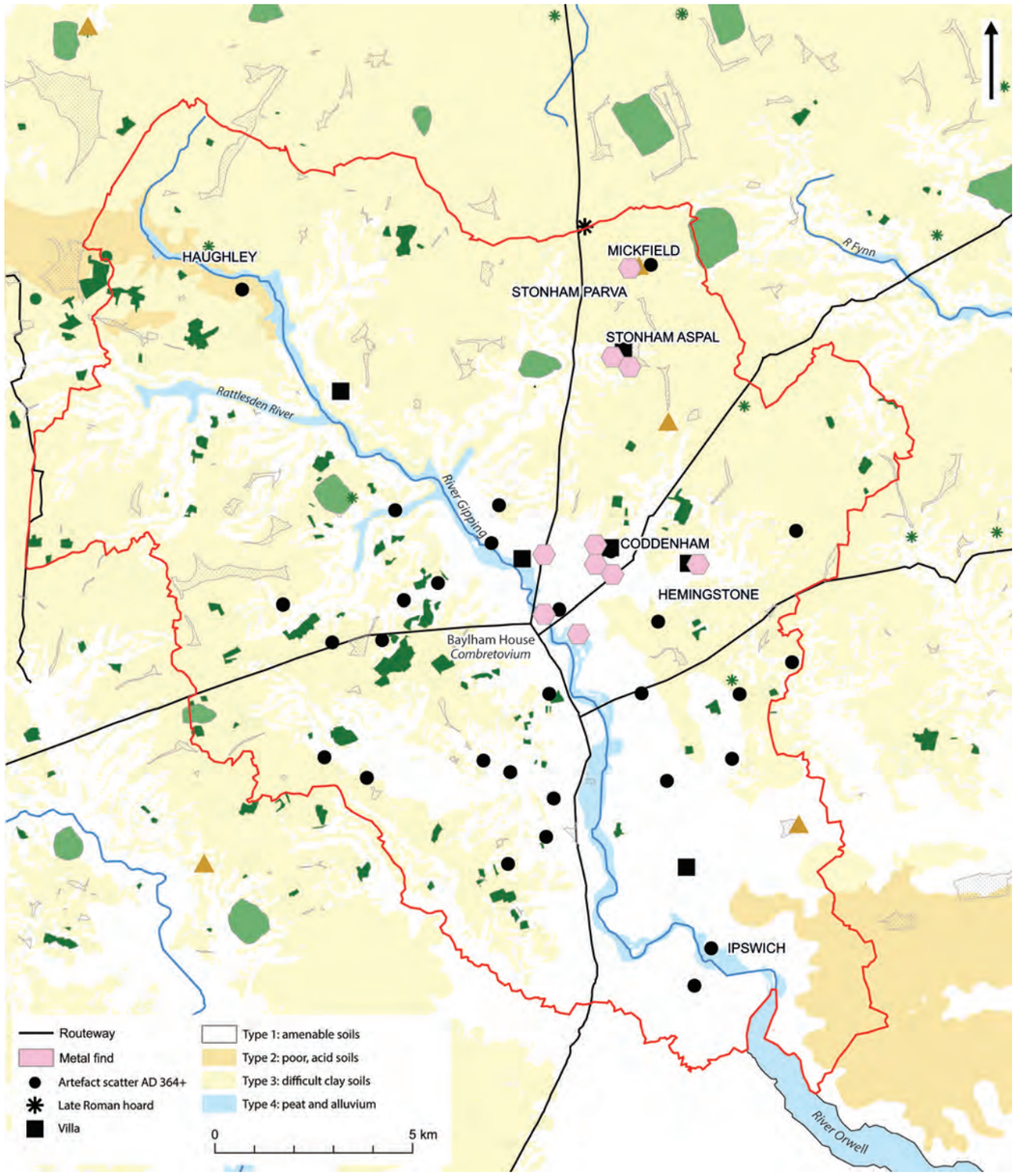

Fig 9.5.1 The Gipping: main sites and finds AD 360–410 and Phase 1 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

There has been no large-scale programme of systematic surface collection, equivalent to the South-east Suffolk Survey in the Deben valley, and so otherwise information comes from chance discoveries and surface finds: 222 metal items and eighteen finds of pottery totalling at least ninety-six sherds. These data have been integrated and plotted using the same approaches and methods as for the Deben valley case study (Ch 6.2.1.2).

9.5.1.1 The late Roman background (Fig 9.5.1)

Judith Plouviez

As with the Deben valley, the Roman assemblages throughout the Gipping study area have not been assessed in detail but the HER and PAS records have been rapidly scanned to identify the sites with the strongest

evidence for late Roman activity, specifically in the 50 years after 360.

The major Roman settlement in the Gipping valley was at Baylham House, Coddenham (CDD 003), at the intersection of other routes with the main road from Colchester to Caistor-by-Norwich (above, 9.1; Plouviez 1999). There has been little excavation but overall the evidence suggests a small town that flourished between the first and fourth centuries. The location fits with the place named as *Combretovium* in the Antonine Itinerary (Rivet and Smith 1979, 313–14), which would imply a *mansio.* A relatively small coin sample, mainly detected from fields on the east of the settlement, shows activity into the late fourth and early fifth centuries (Plouviez 2004, 84), more strongly than on many rural sites nearby and in contrast to the Roman small towns at Hacheston and Wenhaston.

The villa-type building with activity into the early fifth century at Coddenham (CDD 019) has been noted above (9.1.3.1). Surface finds in the immediate vicinity of a villa at Stonham Aspal (SAL 001, 022) suggest activity into the late fourth century, and the coin sequence from a large villa at Castle Hill, Ipswich (IPS 015), shows strong late fourth- to fifth-century activity.

In the upper Gipping valley a number of rural settlements are inferred from clusters of surface finds and excavation but only one, at Haughley (HGH 018), shows activity after 360. In the middle and lower Gipping valley twenty-five such sites show probable activity after the 360s, and eleven may continue into the early fifth century. There is excavated late Roman rural settlement evidence within the modern boundaries of the Borough of Ipswich at Speedwell Avenue (IPS 030) and Handford Road (IPS 280; Boulter 2005). A single late hoard of thirteen *siliquae* is recorded from Stonham Parva (SVA 031). There is only limited evidence for activity after 360 along the Orwell valley and on the Shotley peninsula despite fairly extensive metal-detecting.

There is evidence for continuing activity into the post-Roman period within and adjoining the area of the small town at Coddenham (9.5.1.2, below) and immediately adjacent to the Stonham Aspal villa. There was also early medieval settlement at Handford Road but with an apparent hiatus between Roman and post-Roman activity (Boulter 2005, 97).

As elsewhere, the evidence suggests substantial dislocation during the final decade of the fourth century and the first three decades of the fifth, with the disintegration of the settlement hierarchy, and continuous activity at any settlement site the exception rather than the rule. Again, the pattern is consistent with a major reduction in settlement or direct exploitation of the upland clay soils, with this trend beginning in the middle of the fourth century in some areas, such as the upper Gipping.

9.5.1.2 Phase 1 (420–70) (Fig 9.5.1)

No settlement features or burials can be dated with confidence to before *c* 470. Ten metal surface finds, all cruciform brooches of Martin group 1 or supporting-arm brooches, indicate early to middle fifth-century activity at eight locations including Coddenham 023 and 036. In addition, an early to middle fifth-century pottery bowl suggests some contemporary activity on the site of the Roman small town at Coddenham (Meaney 1964, 226; West 1998, 19–20). All the Phase 1 metalwork finds are from places or localities with evidence for continuing activity into the later fifth and sixth centuries.

As in the Deben valley, this almost certainly under-represents the density and distribution of settlement activity and a number of places where activity can only be dated with confidence to after *c* 470 may have had earlier origins.

9.5.1.3 Phase 2 (470–570) (Fig 9.5.2)

Single *Grubenhäuser* associated with other settlement features have been excavated on the line of the Stowmarket to Baylham water pipeline in Coddenham parish (CDD 068; Heard 2011) and at The Pightle, Needham Market (NDM 008; Caruth 1994). Three *Grubenhäuser* are recorded from Chilton Leys, Haughley (HGH 055; Bull *et al* 2015), and five *Grubenhäuser* and other settlement features are known from excavation in advance of gravel extraction east of Gallows Hill, Barking (BRK 104; Boulter 2002; Adams and Barlow 2013); there are cropmarks of probable *Grubenhäuser* close by (BRK 133). At least three ground-level timber buildings, five *Grubenhäuser* and other domestic features including an oven and pits are recorded from the rural settlement at Handford Road, Ipswich (IPS 280; Boulter 2005), and three pits were recorded during excavation in advance of a pipeline immediately north of Baylham pumping station (BAY 036; Cass 2009). The cemetery at Boss Hall, Ipswich (IPS 231) – predominantly inhumations with a few cremations – came into use in the later fifth century (Scull 2009a). The cemetery at Hadleigh Road (IPS 016), with 159 inhumations and thirteen cremations excavated, came into use in the middle or third quarter of the sixth century (Layard 1907; West 1988, 52–67, figs 58–95; Scull 2009a, 114–15, 269).

The distribution of chance finds and surface finds enhances this picture. In the upper Gipping valley there

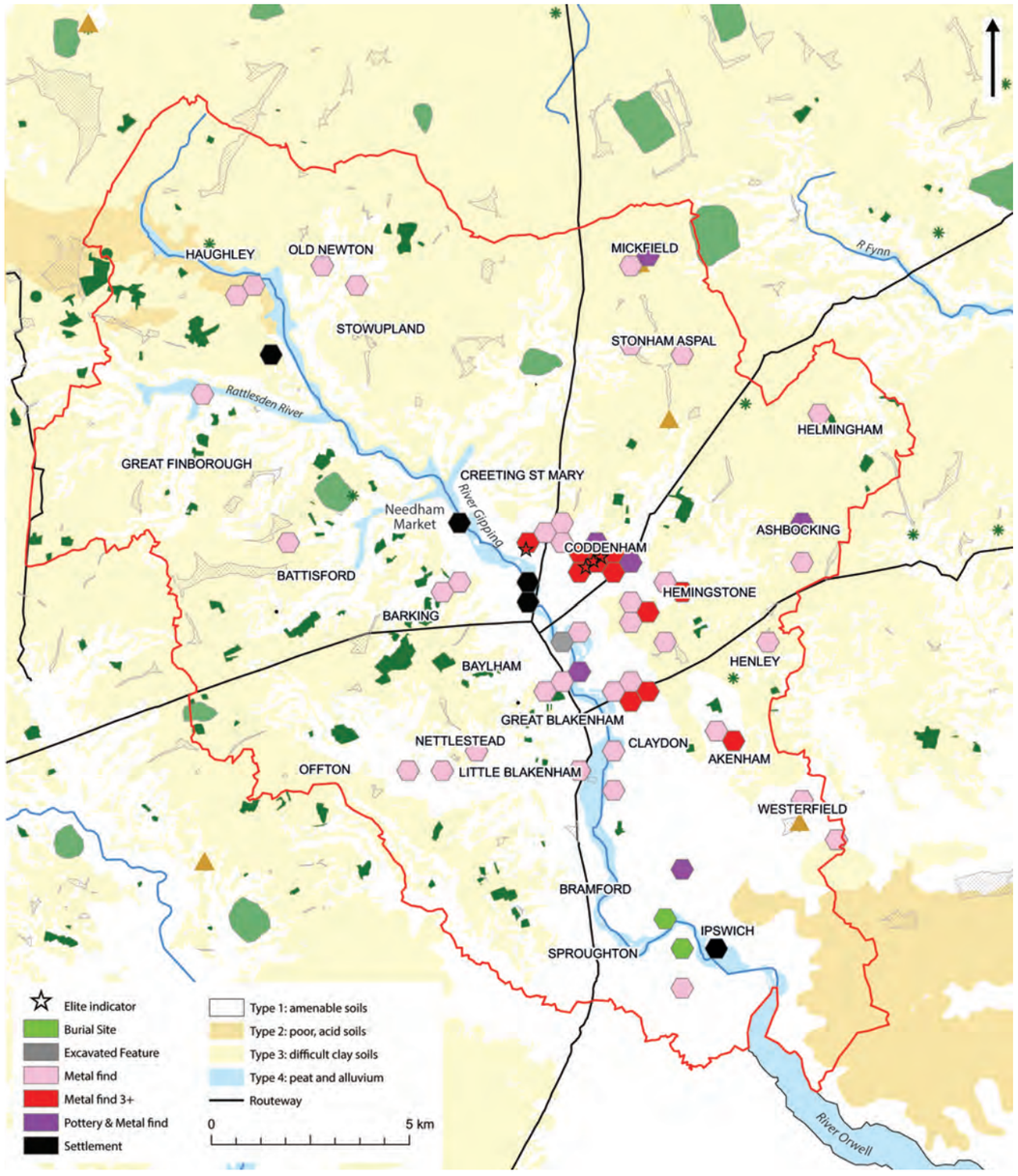

Fig 9.5.2 The Gipping: Phase 2 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

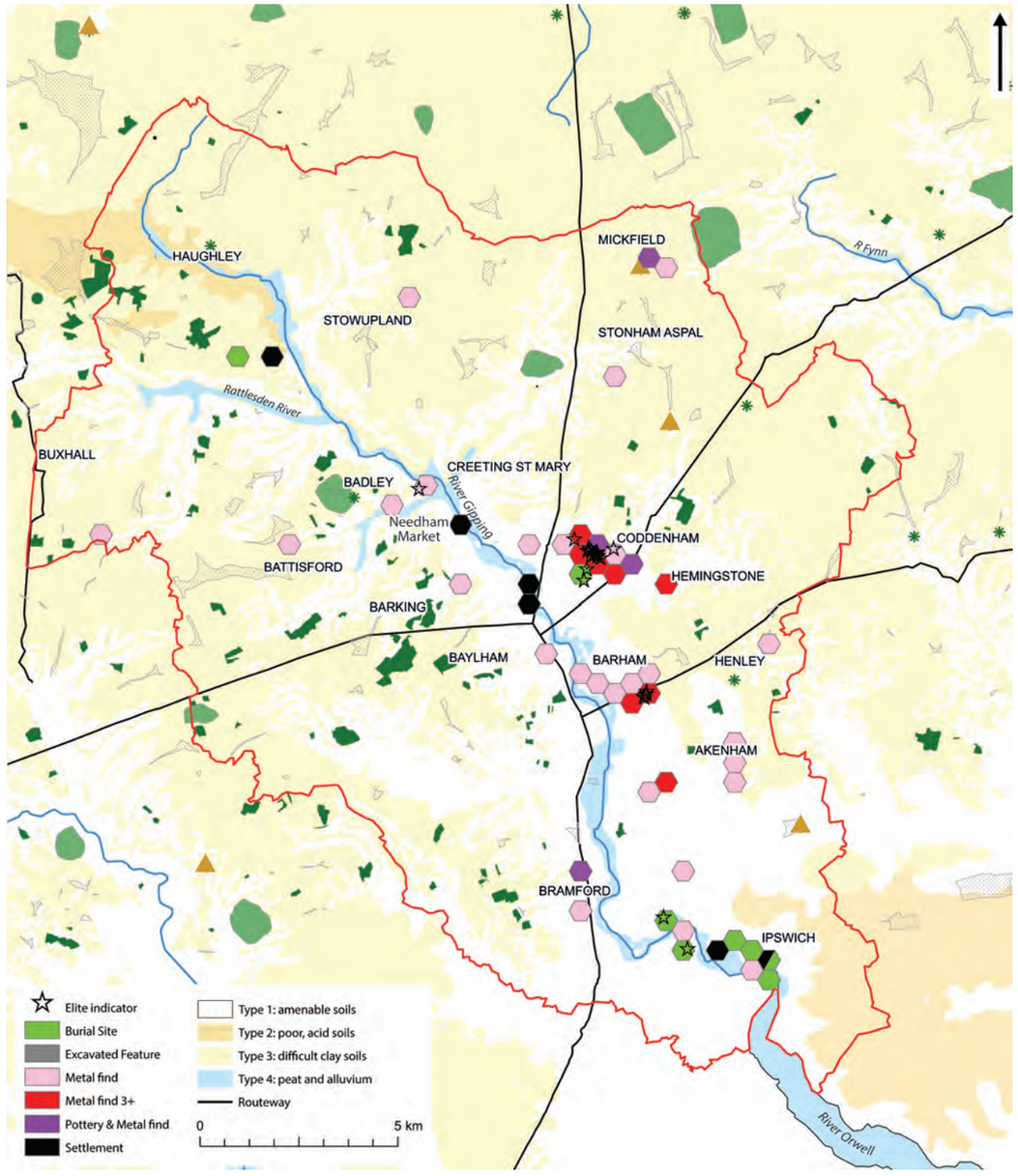

Fig 9.5.3 The Gipping: Phase 3 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

are metalwork finds from Haughley, Old Newton and Great Finborough, together with a concentration suggesting significant activity at Stowupland, while in the north and north-east of the study area there are metal finds at Stonham Aspal and Helmingham, and finds of pottery and metalwork from Mickfield. There is a clustering of findspots in the middle Gipping valley and its minor tributaries, with concentrations of material suggesting significant activity at Creeting St Mary, within the area of the Roman small town at Coddenham (CDD 003/017), in Hemingstone parish between Coddenham and Barham, and at Akenham in the valley of the tributary that flows west to join the Gipping just south of Claydon. There are other finds from Battisford, Barking, Great Blakenham, Great Finborough, Nettlestead and Offton west of the river, and from Claydon east of the river. In the lower Gipping valley there is a single metalwork find from the Chantry estate, Ipswich, and along the eastern margins of the study area are finds from Ashbocking, Henley and Westerfield.

9.5.1.4 Phase 3 (570–720) (Fig 9.5.3)

Other than Ipswich, no settlement site that came into use during this period is known from excavation but at Chilton Leys, Haughley an inhumation cemetery was established *c* 150m north of the *Grubenhäuser* (Bull *et al* 2015). The cemetery at Hadleigh Road was in use at least

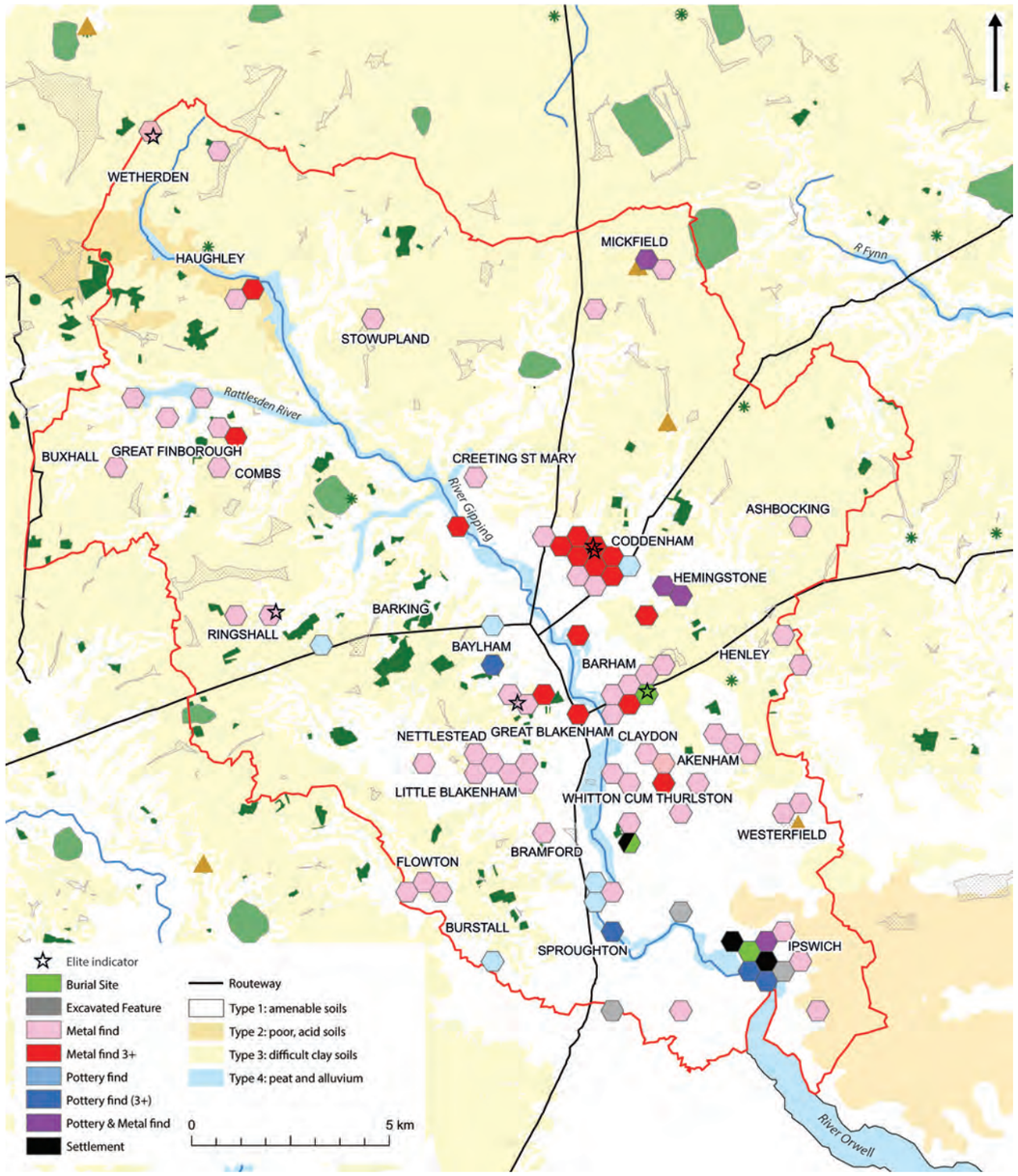

Fig 9.5.4 The Gipping: activity of Phases 4–5. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

until the abandonment of furnished burial late in the seventh century, and burials of this period from Boss Hall include the late seventh-century high-status female inhumation grave 93 (Scull 2009a; Sommers 2015). A pottery vessel from Bramford parish (BRF Misc) is of a form and decoration that suggests a later sixth- or seventh-century date and may be from a burial.

The number of metal finds is lower than for Phase 2, reflecting wider changes in material culture (Chs 3.4 and 6.2.1.2). The density distributions of chance and surface finds suggest continuing activity at or adjacent to a number of Phase 2 locations but there are also places where activity appears to diminish or cease. The marked concentration of activity in the middle Gipping valley is still evident, and copper-alloy vessels from Badley (BAD 002; White 1992; West 1998, 5, pl 1) are very probably

from an elite burial. The other major focus of activity is the developing settlement at Ipswich and its immediate environs at the head of the Orwell estuary.

9.5.1.5 Phases 4 (720–850) and 5 (850–1100)
(Fig 9.5.4)

Information on metal finds after AD 800 has not been comprehensively collated (Ch 6.2.2) and the systematic fieldwalking of the South-east Suffolk Survey did not extend into the Gipping study area. The data for Phases 4 and 5 are therefore less representative and comprehensive than for the earlier phases or for the Deben valley, but it is none the less possible to draw some general conclusions.

The overall pattern continues the trajectory of Phases 2–3, with concentrations of activity in the central and lower Gipping valleys, and in and around the *emporium* and later town at Ipswich. A pit dated by Ipswich ware is known from excavation at Chantry Vale, Sproughton (SPT 053; Hogg 2015). At Whitehouse Industrial Estate, between Ipswich and Barham on the east side of the valley, buildings and a small cemetery within a sub-rectangular enclosure have been excavated, dated to the eighth or earlier ninth century by an assemblage of Ipswich ware (IPS 247; Martin *et al* 1996, 476–9). There is more evidence for activity at greater distances from the river Gipping than in previous phases, especially noticeable in the north-west and west of the study area from finds at Wetherden, in the valley of the Rattlesden River at Combs and Great Finborough, and in other smaller tributary valleys of the Gipping at Haughley, Ringshall, Barking, Great Blakenham, Nettlestead and Flowton. This is consistent with an expansion and intensification of settlement in locations at greater distances from the major watercourse.

At the head of the Orwell estuary the expanded commercial and manufacturing settlement at Ipswich was laid out at the beginning of Phase 4.

9.5.2 Settlement patterns and mortuary geography

There is a strong correlation between evidence for fifth- to eighth-century activity and the more tractable and fertile soils, a pattern that continues into the eleventh century (Tables 9.5.1–2). This, and the selection of sheltered locations with good access to water, is seen in the marked riverine distribution of archaeological material, with a striking concentration of evidence for activity in the central Gipping valley and in the valleys of tributary watercourses. In the main valley of the Gipping there is evidence for occupation on the terrace gravels of the valley floor as well as slightly more elevated valley-side locations; in the tributary valleys, slightly elevated

Table 9.5.1 The Gipping territory: early medieval PAS finds (excluding Coddenham and Barham) and HER records (excluding urban Ipswich) and their locations relative to soil type

	Area (sq km)	%	PAS	%	HER	%
1: good soils	134.15	40.94	104	72.2	66	74.2
2: acid soils	6.67	2.04	0	0.0	0	0.0
3: difficult clay	176.03	53.72	38	26.4	18	20.2
4: waterlogged silt/peat	10.83	3.31	2	1.4	5	5.6
Total	**327.68**	**100.00**	**144**	**100.0**	**89**	**100.0**

Table 9.5.2 The Gipping territory: sites datable by early medieval pottery types and their locations relative to soil type

	Area (sq km)	%	Hand-made	%	Ipswich	%	Thetford	%
1: good soils	134.15	40.94	15	71.4	16	80.0	10	90.9
2: acid soils	6.67	2.04	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
3: difficult clay	176.03	53.72	4	19.1	3	15.0	0	0.0
4: waterlogged silt/peat	10.83	3.31	2	9.5	1	5	1	9.1
Total	**327.68**	**100.00**	**21**	**100.0**	**20**	**100.0**	**11**	**100.0**

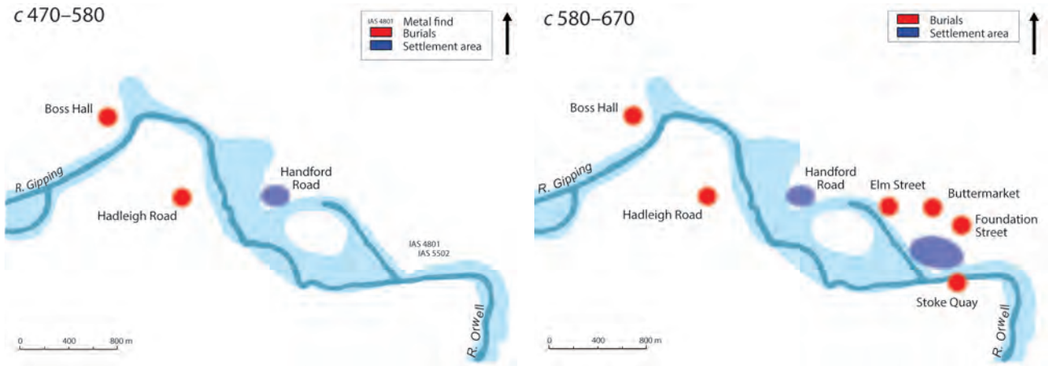

Fig 9.5.5 Settlement and burial in the lower Gipping valley c 550–670. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

valley-side locations are more usual. Barham, where the settlement focus is at an exposed high location overlooking the valley, is an exception in this respect.

The pattern of material and known sites appears to represent settlements and associated burial places at intervals of 1km–2km on both sides of the river, situated to exploit the range of resources from river to interfluve. As in the Deben catchment, this pattern was established by the later fifth century and persisted into the eighth century and beyond. Here, as there, this suggests local reconfigurations of settlement within favoured locations but fundamentally stable relationships over the longer-term between community and resource territory. The exception to this is the gateway settlement and subsequent *emporium* and town at Ipswich, located for ease of access to the waterside, and to maritime trade routes, at the head of the Orwell estuary.

It is difficult from the small number of known sites to generalise about the mortuary geography. The cemeteries at Hadleigh Road, Ipswich, and Chilton Leys, Haughley, both fit the wider fifth- to seventh-century pattern of a relatively elevated position overlooking a watercourse, and at Ipswich the Buttermarket/St Stephen's Lane cemetery was on rising ground overlooking the early settlement nucleus and the river Orwell. However, both the Boss Hall cemetery and the barrow group at Stoke Quay are on low ground adjacent to the river. At Coddenham, the cemetery at Shrubland Hall Quarry (CDD 050) was in a prominent location overlooking the elite settlement complex and may have superseded an earlier burial ground on the valley side (CDD 027). This response to the specific topography of the Coddenham complex can be seen as an assertion of elite claims to the place and to territorial lordship (above, 9.1.6).

It is possible, also, to examine in greater detail the topography and development of settlement and burial in the Ipswich area (Fig 9.5.5). The Boss Hall and Hadleigh Road cemeteries were both in use before the earliest settlement at Ipswich was established. Boss Hall served farming communities from the later fifth century. Hadleigh Road, which came into use in the third quarter of the sixth century, served a community with a substantial high-status element or enhanced access to status items from the outset which may have been involved in the direct articulation of contacts with the Merovingian Continent prior to the foundation of the Ipswich settlement. The seventh-century cemetery at Buttermarket/St Stephen's Lane, the isolated inhumations at Elm Street and Foundation Street, and the barrow group at Stoke Quay, served the gateway settlement at Ipswich and those who used it. Upstream on the north bank at Boss Hall, the high-status female burial, grave 93, suggests a later seventh-century elite establishment in the immediate vicinity that may have been involved in oversight of the gateway settlement. Across the river, any associated settlement in the vicinity of the Hadleigh Road cemetery would occupy elevated ground within a loop of the river, close to the early crossing point at Handford Bridge (Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, 64) and commanding access inland to and from the Ipswich settlement. The late sixth- and seventh-century weapon burials from Hadleigh Road (represented by at least twenty shield bosses and thirty-seven spearheads: West 1998) suggest an element of armed manpower within the population of this strategically located site.

As noted above, the distribution of pottery and metalwork finds of Phases 4 and 5 suggest an intensification of settlement at greater distances from the river Gipping from the eighth and ninth centuries, but unlike the Deben catchment there is no clear evidence for increased settlement or activity on the heavier clay soils. In Phases 4 and 5 both Whitehouse Industrial Estate and Ipswich itself show a major change in the relationship between settlement area and burial grounds, with cemeteries established within the settlement space, something seen more widely from the middle of the seventh century (Scull 2013).

9.5.3 Social differentiation and hierarchy

Apart from three silver dress accessories from sites in the Coddenham complex, the only elite material earlier than the later sixth century is a gilded silver fragment, possibly from a great square-headed brooch, from nearby Creeting St Mary (PAS SF-A67C48). This concentration in the middle Gipping valley continues through Phase 3 with the finds from the Coddenham settlement complex and the associated cemetery, the copper-alloy vessels, probably from a burial, at Badley (BAD 002), and the material from Barham. In the lower Gipping valley, the Hadleigh Road cemetery served a community with access to elite material – silver dress jewellery and a hanging bowl – from the third quarter of the sixth century (Layard 1907; West 1998, 52–67, figs 58–95) and Boss Hall, an elite female burial of the late seventh century, strongly suggests an elite establishment in the immediate vicinity. The silver jewellery components from later seventh-century burials at Buttermarket/St Stephen's Lane have been noted above (9.3). Apart from a single silver pin from Ipswich, and finds from Coddenham and Barham, the only elite material of Phases 4 and 5 are a silver pin from Baylham (PAS SF-D1FC54), a silver dress fastener from Ringshall (RGL 014) and a silver hooked tag from Wetherden (PAS SF-ECB5FE).

Although this is a small number of finds and locations, it strongly indicates that any elite presence and interest prior to the later sixth century was focused on Coddenham and its immediate area. The nearest contemporary cluster of material that might suggest another local polity or magnate territory lies not within the Gipping valley but to the east, within the Fynn valley (Ch 6.2.4). The establishment of the elite settlement complex at Coddenham in the later sixth century was thus rooted in and amplified the existing geography of power. Elite interest in the lower Gipping valley and the head of the Orwell estuary from the middle to late sixth century was almost certainly linked to the developing importance of this area as an embarkation and landing place for travel to and from the Merovingian Continent. It is plausible that an elite establishment at Boss Hall may have been involved with regulating the gateway settlement at Ipswich, and that an establishment in the vicinity of Hadleigh Road may have had some function in controlling access along the Gipping upstream of Ipswich.

The elite settlement complex established at Coddenham in the later sixth century was, like Rendlesham, an innovation intended to consolidate rulership and surplus extraction by those wielding a new regional lordship, and as such can be seen as representing the power and interests of a paramount – royal – ruling kindred. Below this level, the seventh-century settlement at Barham and the elite burial at Boss Hall grave 93 may represent the emergence and consolidation of an aristocracy, and the high-status burials at Coddenham can be seen in the same light (above, 9.1.6).

9.5.4 Carrying capacity and population

As with our analysis of the Deben valley (above, 6.2.6), defining Voronoi tessellations around foci of activity identified for Phases 2 and 3 allows us – albeit with the same caveats – to model catchments or resource territories which give some insight into relative population densities (Fig 9.5.6). The smallest catchment territories, with less than half the area of those in the peripheral zones, are concentrated in the Gipping valley between Creeting St Mary and Ipswich, indicating that this is where there were the highest densities of settlement and population. Within this core area each catchment offers access to between 3.5sq km and 11.9sq km of good-quality soils, with varying proportions of wood, wood pasture and meadow. The exception to this is

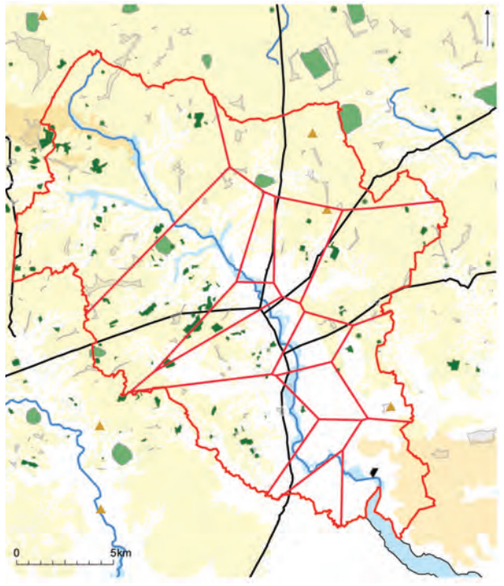

Fig 9.5.6 The Gipping: model settlement catchments for Phases 2–3. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

Table 9.5.3 The Gipping territory: population in Domesday Book TRW (*values derived from Moore 1997; † rounded to nearest whole number)

Hundred	Villagers (villeins)	Smallholders (bordars)	Slaves	Burgesses	Free Men (sokemen + *liberi homines*)	Total	+ 5%*†	x4.75*
Bosmere	168.5	279.0	44.0	0.0	558.5	1,050.0	1,102	5,236
Claydon	51.0	168.0	8.0	0.0	304.5	531.5	558	2,650
Ipswich	24.0	50.0	1.0	264.0	13.0	352.0	370	1,757
Stow	93.0	234.5	18.0	0.0	367.0	712.5	748	3,553
Total	**336.5**	**731.5**	**71.0**	**264.0**	**1,243.0**	**2,646.0**	**2,778**	**13,196**

the large catchment around Bramford, which may simply reflect low archaeological retrieval in this immediate area; the model also allows a catchment for Ipswich which – given the character of the settlement before *c* 700 – may not be realistic. Neither, however, invalidates the broad trend. Coddenham has a site catchment of 12.49sq km, of which 5.83sq km (47 per cent) is good arable land.

The population of the putative Gipping valley territory at the time of Domesday can be roughly estimated on the basis of the combined recorded populations of Bosmere, Claydon and Stow hundreds, and the half-hundred of Ipswich, minus that of the six vills in the detached northern portion of Claydon, lying outside the Gipping catchment, which later became the half-hundred of Thredling (Ashfield, Debenham, Framsden, Pettaugh, Thorpe and Winston). The resultant figure of 2,646, adopting Moore's (1997) approach, would suggest a late eleventh-century population of around 13,200 (Table 9.5.3). Although, as noted earlier, this figure does not provide any kind of direct guide to the area's population in the sixth and seventh centuries, it can, nevertheless, be usefully compared with that for the Deben valley territory, centred on Rendlesham, which at around 18,500 was some 40 per cent higher. The difference between the two would arguably have been even greater before the development of Ipswich. The town itself accounted for only 327 recorded individuals in 1086, but its presence clearly stimulated economic and demographic growth in its immediate hinterland, accounting in particular for the high population densities in the adjacent portion of Claydon hundred.

9.5.5 Conclusions

The pattern of settlement in the fifth to eighth centuries is one of small farming settlements in river valley locations and so conforms to the expectations of the 'river-and-wold' model. As elsewhere, the broader patterns of material culture and mortuary practice indicate degrees of social inequality within internally ranked communities but only limited differentiation between the central lineages or kindreds of such groups before the later sixth century. In contrast to the Deben valley, the differential distribution of elite indicators suggests only one area that might be identified as the focus of an early polity at this time, at Coddenham and Creeting St Mary. This suggests that the core of any social territory or early polity was the middle Gipping valley and that the main axis of connection to the south and east was via the putative magnate territory in the Fynn valley. A corollary of this is that the Gipping polity at this time was predominantly landward-looking. There must have been travel and communication along the Orwell estuary to other parts of south-east England and to the Continent but there is no evidence that this was on a scale that affected the geography of settlement and activity significantly before the later sixth century.

As at Rendlesham, the change in status and character at Coddenham in the later sixth century is to be explained by the establishment of an elite centre at a place of existing importance. There is evidence for the same range of social, economic and administrative functions, and Coddenham can therefore be identified as the central place of an extensive region broadly equivalent to the topographic territory defined above. This development at Coddenham is contemporary with that at Rendlesham, indicating that both represent the same processes and horizon of socio-political development, and their relative geographical proximity and striking similarities in coin profiles and elements of material culture assemblage argue that the same elite actors were responsible for both.

The other major development of the late sixth century was the increasing importance of the Ipswich area as a focus of exchange contacts with south-east England and

the Merovingian Continent, and consequent elite interest. The earliest burials at Hadleigh Road, which belong to the middle years or third quarter of the sixth century, include an unusual number of late great square-headed brooches and two silver keystone garnet disc brooches that are probably imports from Kent. This is evidence for a community with unusual access to portable wealth and status items, and probably benefitting from inter-regional contacts via the Orwell, a generation before the central place complex at Coddenham and perhaps two generations before the establishment of the gateway settlement at Ipswich and its associated cemetery at Buttermarket/St Stephen's Lane. This might represent an interest in the area from the contemporary elite groups of the middle Gipping or the Fynn valley, or a local community and lineage that for a generation or two achieved a measure of wealth and autonomy from being favourably placed to tap into developing exchange networks around and across the North Sea and Channel.

The establishment of the gateway settlement at Ipswich, and the degree of control this implies over the movement of traders and travellers from the Continent, is consistent with the new degree of territorial lordship seen in the foundation of central places at Coddenham and Rendlesham. As noted above, the evidence is that at this time exchange transactions took place not at Ipswich but at the elite or magnate centres inland where lords and their agents resided and where a landed surplus was gathered, consumed and redistributed. From the beginning of the seventh to the early eighth century the economic geography is that of an agricultural core territory focused on the middle Gipping with a gateway focus at the head of the Orwell estuary. Elements of the community burying at Hadleigh Road in the seventh century, and the elite burial at Boss Hall grave 93, may both be linked to oversight of the gateway settlement at Ipswich and control of access to the Gipping corridor via the Orwell estuary.

From the later sixth century, therefore, the evidence supports the establishment of a new level of regional lordship, and centralised jurisdiction and surplus extraction, by rulers who responded to the emergence of the Orwell estuary as an axis of developing overseas contact and exchange by regulating access by and to travellers and traders from the Continent. The settlement at Barham can be seen as a lower-order aristocratic centre, one of the establishments from which the central place at Coddenham drew dues or renders from the landed surplus, and which maintained the kindreds from which the rulers drew their retainers and armed following; Boss Hall grave 93 can be seen in the same light.

The human geography of the Gipping valley at this time, with a core zone and central place complex set inland from an estuarine gateway, is similar in these key aspects to the contemporary Deben valley. As we have seen, the evidence for a social territory and elite group focused on the middle Gipping pre-dates the emergence of the Orwell as a major focus of inter-regional exchange and, given the proximity of Coddenham to the site of the Roman small town, and the concentration of settlement in the area from late prehistory, it raises the question of the extent to which early medieval configurations of power and identity were conditioned by late Roman social and administrative geographies. There was activity at the Roman small town into the late fourth and early fifth centuries but, despite fifth- to sixth-century settlement within its area or in its immediate environs, there is no indication that it remained a significant place beyond the early fifth century. Instead, the focus of early medieval activity is in the tributary valley to the north-east, where evidence from CDD 019 suggests a villa with activity into the late fourth or early fifth century and a military or official presence in the middle to late fourth century. The relationship between this site and the small town is unclear, as are their respective functions under late Roman government, but the seat of a local aristocrat or landowner, in which some administrative or taxation functions were vested, would offer a vector for the transformation of official into magnate power over the course of the earlier fifth century as we have suggested for Rendlesham (Ch 7.2). The favourable topography of the Coddenham site as a settlement cell has already been noted, and its location commands the Roman routes to the north and north-east. As at Rendlesham, early medieval lordship appears to have been exercised at or near a centre of late Roman authority a short distance from a Roman small town. Without arguing for a simple continuity, this suggests that the emergence of a fifth- to sixth-century power centre, and the subsequent establishment of an elite central place complex, was contingent on some inheritance or claim to inheritance of Roman authority, and rooted in the inertial pull of a rural population with an existing sense of identity and place that provided the farming base and human resource for local lordship.

Like Rendlesham, Coddenham underwent a change in character and status in the second quarter of the eighth century, coinciding with the planned expansion of the Ipswich settlement and its transformation into a trading, manufacturing and market centre. Coddenham lost its position as the pre-eminent focus for coin use and long-distance exchange in the Gipping valley and its status and function as the centre of rulership for the Gipping territory – although it may have accrued a different form of central

place significance if the elite secular centre was indeed succeeded by a minster. The changes at Coddenham, as at Rendlesham, need to be explained within wider realignments of economic networks and geographies of rulership (Ch 6.3). In this context, Barham is of interest as a lower-order aristocratic establishment that remains locally important well beyond the lifetime of the central place complex at Coddenham, perhaps developing into the sort of proto-manorial centre through which, it is argued, a finer grained and more cellular territorial lordship was increasingly exercised. These issues, and the relationship between Rendlesham, Coddenham and Ipswich, are considered further below (9.7).

From the eighth century there are indications of some expansion or intensification of rural settlement on good soils in areas further away from the main course of the river Gipping. The absence of evidence for increased settlement or activity on the heavier clay soils stands in contrast to the trend seen in the Deben valley. This might be a function of the relatively small sample size and the fact that the Gipping valley has not seen systematic survey on the same scale as the Deben, but could also be explained by increased exploitation of the heavier upland soils from settlements located on more favourable soils in the numerous minor valleys that dissect the till plateau flanking the Gipping valley (above, 9.4). As discussed for the Deben valley, an expansion of settlement might be explained by a combination of increasing population, reconfigurations of landholding and tenurial relationships, and changes in agrarian and animal husbandry regimes.

9.6 Coinage and coin use in south-east Suffolk

Andrew Woods

In addition to the assemblages from Rendlesham, Coddenham, Barham and Ipswich discussed above, 151 single finds of unmounted coins of EM1–EM4 are known from the Deben and Gipping territories, and the parishes within the half-hundred of Thredling which are included here with other finds from south-east Suffolk. These are mostly metal-detecting finds but include the excavated assemblage from Burrow Hill, Butley. There are also unmounted coins from burials at Chilton Leys, Haughley; Boss Hall, Ipswich; and Buttermarket/St Stephen's Lane, Ipswich. To these can be added the thirty-seven coins, three blanks and two ingots from Sutton Hoo Mound 1.

The coin finds from period EM1 (Fig 9.6.1) are concentrated within what we have identified as core areas of the Deben and Gipping valleys but within EM1 there is a chronological dimension to the distribution. The earliest coinage from the Deben territory is from Rendlesham, with a sixth-century date, and the only similarly early coins are components of the purse collection from Sutton Hoo Mound 1. In the immediate vicinity of Rendlesham, there are two English shillings and a *tremissis* of Quentovic from Eyke, and an English shilling from Ufford. The other single finds have an easterly or coastal distribution: a very late *tremissis* from Bawdsey which sits on the cusp of EM1 and EM2, a *tremissis* of Quentovic from Aldeburgh, a mint-and-moneyer *tremissis* from the mint of Mouzon (Ardennes) from Friston, and a Frisian coin from Sudbourne. In the Gipping territory the only coins of EM1 come from Coddenham, Barham and Akenham. As discussed above, the Coddenham coins include three sixth-century coins as well as a significant number from towards the end of period EM1, overwhelmingly English shillings, whereas at Barham there is a single coin from Mainz alongside two from Quentovic. At Akenham, there is a *tremissis* from Quentovic, an English shilling and a mint-and-moneyer coin from Arvernus (Clermont-Ferrand).

The mint-and-moneyer issues from Friston and Akenham cannot be dated more precisely within the period *c* 580–660 but the only places with clear evidence for coin use in the sixth and early seventh centuries are Rendlesham and Coddenham, and it is likely that almost all the other period EM1 coinage from the Deben and Gipping territories was used and lost in the period from 630 onwards. The only exception to this pattern is the Sutton Hoo purse assemblage which, although not evidence for the active use of coinage, sits more comfortably with the earlier coin finds from Coddenham and Rendlesham than with the debased, later gold coinage from the rest of the area. This indicates that the circulation and use of coinage was tightly restricted to an elite social and economic milieu until around 630, but that in the middle of the seventh century access and use expanded rapidly to include other higher-status social groups at a wider range of places. This is in the period immediately after the burial of the Sutton Hoo purse assemblage and the wider access and uptake is likely to be linked to the debasement of the coinage: as the gold content and bullion value of the individual coins decreased, so more coins were minted and the coinage became more practically useful.

In EM2 more coins are known from a greater number of places but with a changing pattern of distribution (Fig 9.6.2). At the handful of sites where

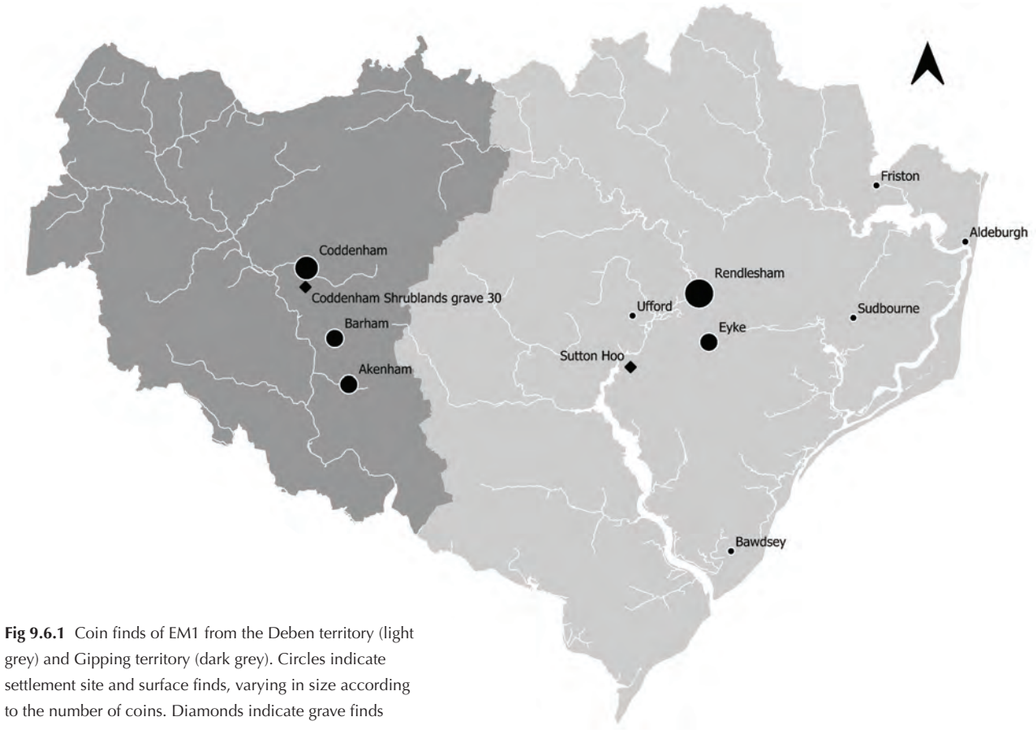

Fig 9.6.1 Coin finds of EM1 from the Deben territory (light grey) and Gipping territory (dark grey). Circles indicate settlement site and surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins. Diamonds indicate grave finds

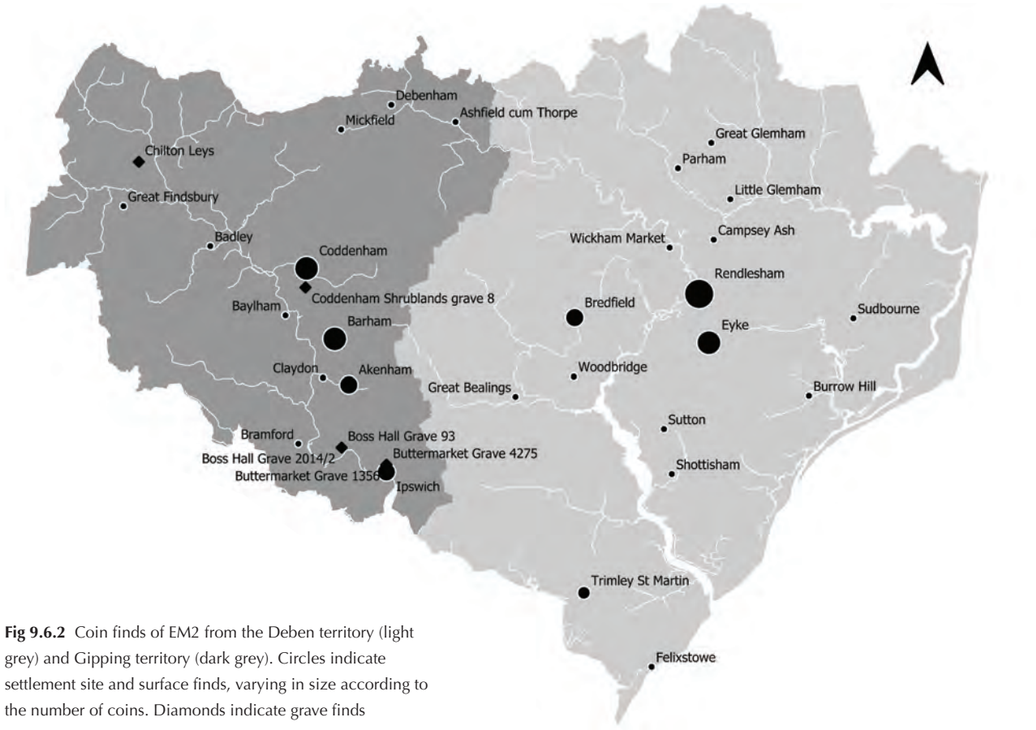

Fig 9.6.2 Coin finds of EM2 from the Deben territory (light grey) and Gipping territory (dark grey). Circles indicate settlement site and surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins. Diamonds indicate grave finds

more than one coin of EM1 is known there are significantly increased numbers in EM2, but apart from Sudbourne no site which produced only a single EM1 also has EM2 coinage. The change is more marked in the Deben territory, where the scatter of eastern and coastal EM1 coin finds is replaced by a stronger EM2 concentration in the core area around Rendlesham, but a similar pattern is also seen in the Gipping, where coin use appears centred on Coddenham, Barham and Akenham but with small numbers of finds to the north and south along the river valley.

Most sites have only small numbers of coins and there is little inter-site variation in the types present. Most common are types B and C from England and types D and E from the Continent, with most other types also represented in smaller numbers. It is during EM2 that the assemblages from Rendlesham and Coddenham, which are exceptional in EM1, begin to mirror the broader East Anglia picture (Woods 2021; Ch 11.1.7.1). This suggests a well-circulated pool of currency across south-east Suffolk, implying more regular and increasingly common use of coinage than had previously been the case.

EM3 sees a further change in the distribution of coin use and coin loss across the landscape in both the Deben and Gipping territories. In the Gipping, Ipswich became the major focus of coin use from *c* 730 (above, 9.3). Barham continued as a significant centre of coin use but when compared to EM2 the landscape distribution shows a clear reorientation southward, with coin use and coin loss concentrated in Ipswich and in the Gipping valley between Ipswich and Coddenham (cf Woods 2021; Naylor 2012). The picture is more complex in the Deben territory, where many EM2 sites have also produced EM3 coin finds. The settlement at Burrow Hill, Butley (Fenwick 1984; Gannon 2013) emerges as a significant centre of coin use. The assemblage includes a single coin of EM2 but forty of EM3 (Table 9.6.1). Its chronological structure, with a prevalence of the late sub-types of RS and coins of Beonna, suggests that the main period of coin use was late within EM3 and later than Ipswich. Coin use at Burrow Hill thus peaked late in EM3, broadly *c* 740–60, at a time when the background trend in south-east Suffolk otherwise suggests a relative decline in the intensity of circulation and coin use and an increasing focus on Ipswich in the period from *c* 730.

Period EM3 (Fig 9.6.3) saw the large-scale emergence of the East Anglian coinage – type RS – as the main circulating currency, a pattern replicated across much of East Anglia (Woods 2021). The absolute dominance of type RS seen at Ipswich is not, however, replicated at all other sites and there is a greater range and variety of other types across south-east Suffolk as a whole. This is likely to reflect a chronological pattern, with a wider circulation of a greater range of types across the region early in EM3 giving way to the East Anglian coinage, with a circulation more focused on the Ipswich area, after *c* 730.

Table 9.6.1 Summary of coin finds from Burrow Hill, Butley

Period EM2 (665–710)		
A		1
Period EM3 (710–60)		
K		1
Q		1
RQ		1
RS		
	b	4
	c	4
	d	12
	e	1
VC		1
Beonna		14
Æthelbert		1
Period EM4 (760–800)		
Offa		1
Total		**42**

The number of EM4 coins is low, consistent with the broader regional picture in which EM4 coinage appears relatively scare in comparison with EM2 and EM3 (fig 5.4.1); most are coins of Offa of Mercia.

The evidence suggests diverging trajectories of circulation and use in the Deben and Gipping territories in EM4 (Fig 9.6.4). In the Deben, all sites with EM4 coins except Bredfield also had coins of EM3, indicating a broad continuity in the places where monetary transactions took place over the middle to late eighth century. The spatial distribution is similar to the core area of previous periods, focusing on the river valley from Rendlesham to the south. In the Gipping valley, most places with EM3 coins also have coins of EM4 but there are finds of EM4 from a number of sites in the northern part of the catchment that have not produced earlier coins. This suggests an expansion of coin use and a reorientation of monetary activity in the Gipping territory in the second half of the eighth century. This may perhaps be associated with the Gipping valley becoming more significant as a communication corridor linking Ipswich with north-west Suffolk and on to the Midlands (above, 9.4). It certainly mirrors wider regional numismatic trends which emphasised this area and route in the second half of the eighth century (Woods 2021).

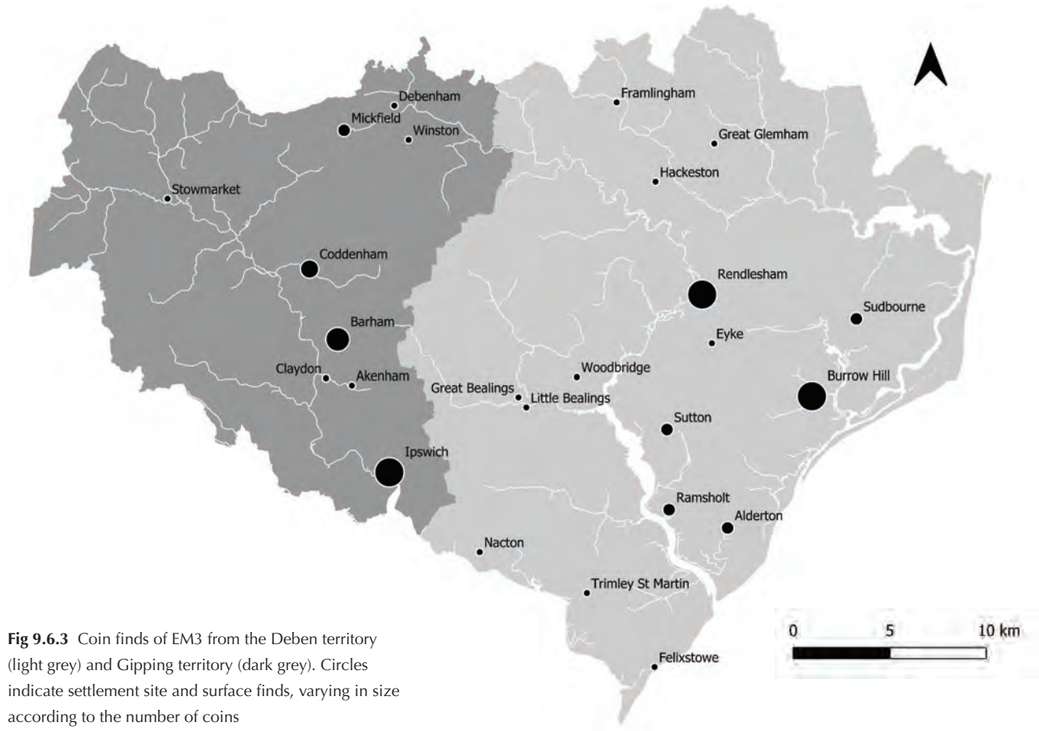

Fig 9.6.3 Coin finds of EM3 from the Deben territory (light grey) and Gipping territory (dark grey). Circles indicate settlement site and surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins

Fig 9.6.4 Coin finds of EM4 from the Deben territory (light grey) and Gipping territory (dark grey). Circles indicate settlement site and surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins

9.7 Overview: territory and socio-political development in south-east Suffolk

We have been able to identify in the Deben and Gipping two catchment territories whose topography had a long-term influence on patterns of human geography. They framed early post-Roman social territories and local lordships, appear to have been constituted as jurisdictional territories with central places from the later sixth to the early eighth century, and were subsequently more formally subdivided and bounded as groupings of hundreds. Their material culture, and geographies of settlement and burial, indicate similar cultural identities and equivalent thresholds of socio-political complexity over the course of the fifth to eighth centuries, but also some significant differences in specific trajectories of development. At what point did localised social and political groupings in these areas come under a common authority as part of a wider hegemony, and what were the social, political and economic dynamics involved?

9.7.1 Developing lordship and hegemony

At both Rendlesham and Coddenham early medieval power was exercised at or near antecedent late Roman rural centres which had both civilian status and official functions, and which were in the immediate vicinity of a Roman small town. As discussed above, the spatial and temporal proximity of late Roman activity and the settlements that became major central places offers vectors for the devolution of late Roman official authority to local elites and the subsequent consolidation of magnate power in the early to middle fifth century. This points to a long-term recognition of these core zones as areas where authority was vested and from where it was exercised. This would not be surprising in a local post-Roman British society, and would be explicable in the event of power passing to an immigrant faction if it was advantageous to retain or appropriate both the symbolic and practical geographies of rulership and surplus extraction. Regardless of the impacts of any incoming warlords or groups of settlers, underlying factors of geography, population and social inheritance helped structure reconfigurations of identity and rulership.

Over the course of the later fifth to later sixth centuries there appear to be contrasts in the geography and apparent scale of socio-political aggregates in the Gipping and Deben catchments. In the Gipping, the evidence suggests the existence of a single polity whose power centre was in the Coddenham area. It is not until the middle of the sixth century that there are indications – at Hadleigh Road, Ipswich – of a further centre of wealth and power. This could be explained as the exercise of control by the elites of Coddenham or the Deben valley, but the unusual material culture signature of the earliest burials might also suggest a short-lived autonomous group with a distinct identity. By contrast, the evidence from the Deben catchment suggests a number of local groups whose leaders lost autonomy in the later sixth century to an authority based in the middle Deben valley around Rendlesham. These include the grouping in the Fynn valley whose initial autonomy may in part have been due to their location between emerging power centres.

Seen from this perspective, a Gipping lordship centred on Coddenham may have been the largest and most powerful regional entity in the later fifth and earlier sixth centuries, with a greater area of favourable farmland and a correspondingly larger population than any of the contemporary autonomous groupings postulated in the Deben catchment. By the time hegemony had been established over the previously autonomous groupings of the Deben catchment, however, the reverse would have been the case: we estimate the probable arable area and population of the Deben catchment as a whole respectively 50–60 per cent and 40 per cent greater than that of the Gipping (above, 9.5.4; Ch 6.2.6). Taken with the fact that Rendlesham is more extensive, materially richer, and has higher levels of activity earlier than Coddenham, this suggests that the Gipping territory came under the lordship of an East Anglian ruling kindred whose original power base lay in the Deben valley rather than vice versa.

It is possible to examine when this might have happened, and some possible dynamics. At both Rendlesham and Coddenham, the evidence points to a transformation in status and character of a site of existing importance which we interpret as the consequences of actions taken by new elites to entrench and formalise fledging territorial lordship by centralising geographies of power and surplus extraction. The evidence of Rendlesham, and of the burials at Snape, Tranmer House and Sutton Hoo, puts the inception of new levels of social differentiation and political power in the Deben at around 570/80. The similarity in key respects between the material culture signatures of Coddenham and Rendlesham suggests that both were enmeshed in the same networks of power, extraction, production and exchange from the late sixth or earlier seventh century, and that both were centres of rulership for the East Anglian dynasty. Prior to this, in the middle or third quarter of the sixth century, Coddenham can be seen as the central focus of an autonomous lordship based in the Gipping valley with the single rulership over both the Deben and Gipping lordships – the final stage of peer-competition between local ruling elites – established in the final decades of the sixth century. This would chime with the evidence of the written sources, which suggest that the establishment of regional lordship by a paramount ruling kindred, and the construction around it of an East Anglian political identity, were phenomena of the decades *c* 570–600 (Ch 8.2). It is entirely possible, too, that tensions over control of the Orwell estuary, developing as a focal point for maritime contacts with Essex, Kent and the Merovingian Continent, were a contributory factor.

One aspect of the coin sequence at Coddenham might throw further light on this critical period. EM1 is represented by sixth-century Imperial or quasi-Imperial issues (pre-580) and English shillings (post-630) but with little in between. Rendlesham, however, has the full chronological range, including the expected level of Merovingian mint-and-moneyer issues of 580–630. This suggests a reduction in gold supply to Coddenham, but not to Rendlesham, *c* 580. Was this the point at which the Gipping lordship lost primacy to Rendlesham? The pattern would be consistent with a period of subordination to the overlords based at Rendlesham, followed by something closer to parity within a province of multiple regions after *c* 630. It also reinforces the link between Rendlesham and Sutton Hoo. The coinage largely missing from Coddenham is represented at Rendlesham, where it circulated and was lost during monetary transactions, and at Sutton Hoo, where it was selected for burial as portable wealth and a symbol of status and power. If we take access to the networks through which gold coinage was acquired as a proxy for elite autonomy then Rendlesham and Sutton Hoo stand as linked manifestations of a paramount lordship in the half century after *c* 580. It is tempting to see the readmission of the Gipping lordship into the gold stream after the inception of an English gold coinage, and the minting of the first East Anglian coinage *c* 640, as political initiatives aimed at consolidating royal power and integrating royal authority across the constituent regions of the province (cf Woods 2021, 53–4). If so, this could be attributed to the rule of Sigebert (Ch 11.2; cf Woods 2021, 53–4).

It is important to emphasise, however, that do we not propose a simple model of warfare between territorial statelets leading to political unification. While acknowledging the likelihood of armed conflict and the threat of force, we see both as elements of a more complex range of negotiations and accommodations between ruling kindreds whose power derived from tiered social relationships, and the associated control of resources, rooted in the Deben and Gipping valleys. There were almost certainly social and family ties between them, and they were enmeshed in other networks of peer-relationship with both immediately neighbouring elite groups and more distant rulers.

9.7.2 The Deben, the Gipping and the Orwell

At this point it is relevant to consider the respective roles of the Deben and Orwell estuaries as conduits for contact linking south-east Suffolk to the coastal polities of south-east England, the Merovingian Continent and beyond to Mediterranean, and the shifting geographies of trade that saw the emergence of the regional *emporium* at Ipswich.

From the earlier fifth century, communities in south-east Suffolk were connected, directly and indirectly, with the wider North Sea and Channel provinces. From the middle and later sixth century, alongside contacts with northern and western Britain and Ireland, there is coinage and material culture evidence for social and exchange contacts with the Merovingian Continent and the Mediterranean world and it is likely that people from the Byzantine Mediterranean were present at Rendlesham in the period *c* 580–630 (Chs 3.7.3.2 and 5.4.3). If the Menas ampulla from Woodbridge is an early medieval import rather than a nineteenth- or twentieth-century souvenir then it would add to evidence for such links (Ch 6.2.2; Anderson 2007; Bangert 2007).

There is a wide range of possible routes and networks of communication but inter-regional and long-distance maritime contacts from the Continent and south-east England aimed at polities in the Deben and Gipping valleys, and their power centres at Rendlesham and Coddenham, are likely to have been directed via the Deben and Orwell estuaries – although, as noted above, the river Alde would provide a maritime gateway into the northern parts of the Deben territory. This implies landfalls at the head of the Deben estuary in the area of Woodbridge and the head of the Orwell estuary in the Ipswich area. Both these routes, and others, must have been active through the fifth to eighth centuries and beyond but the head of the Orwell estuary in the Ipswich area became increasingly important as a focus of intensifying long-distance contacts from the third quarter of the sixth century, and it is possible that control of this area was a source of tension between the power grouping based in the Deben valley and that focused on Coddenham. Our best evidence is that the gateway settlement at Ipswich came into being *c* 600–30 (Scull

2009a, 313–16; above, 9.3), after we propose that the Deben and Gipping regions came under a single overlordship, and so it can plausibly be seen as an initiative of the new paramount rulership.

Why should the regional *emporium* be established at Ipswich and not on the Deben in the area of Woodbridge? The immediate answer would appear to be easier navigability and a more favourable location for travel onwards. Navigating the narrow entrance to the Deben estuary in a sailing vessel can be a tricky undertaking. The Orwell offers an easier passage, is the nearer river for traffic approaching along the coast from the south, and offers a much clearer coastal landmark where it joins the Stour estuary at the coast. The Ipswich area can accommodate a greater density of shipping, and gives access to the Gipping and Lark valleys – and through this routeway to western East Anglia and the Midlands. These factors need not have mattered much in the context of relatively small-scale traffic with localised and impermanent lordships, each of which would have been served by its own landing places, but would become more significant and ultimately decisive as hegemony was established over wider areas, and as wealth-generating tolls on international trade and access to the political arenas of the North Sea and Channel worlds became increasingly important for royal authority.

A further factor may have been conceptual models of appropriate geographies of power. We have already noted that the human geography of both the Deben and Gipping territories can be characterised as a core zone and central place complex set inland from an estuarine gateway, and that this echoes configurations seen in late Roman Iron Age, Migration-period and Vendel-period Scandinavia (Nielsen *et al* 1994; Fabech 1999, 42–3; Rindel 2002, 194–5). To some extent this is of course conditioned by topography and antecedent configurations of population and rural economy but the replication of this pattern suggests that it represents a contemporary understanding of how places of rulership should articulate with human and resource territories, and with wider geographical connections. It may be possible to see a scaling up of this cognitive geography in the initial relationship between the Deben and Gipping territories after they came under a single overlordship, with the Deben region and its royal ceremonial landscape constituted as the core of the Wuffing polity and the subordinate Gipping region acting as a gateway to the wider world with Ipswich the controlled point of access for most traffic.

This is not to minimise other networks and routes of communication, especially around the coast, nor to argue that the Deben estuary ceased to be significant; indeed, it might be that the Deben, as the approach to the core region of the kingdom, was used preferentially by war craft and for diplomatic traffic. However, given the scale of the East Anglian polity as constructed in south-east Suffolk over the course of the late sixth and seventh centuries there would be no need for multiple points of entry for most long-distance traffic and the combination of locational, topographic, strategic and cultural factors discussed above favoured the Orwell and Ipswich over other estuaries and locations. Elite intervention to establish Ipswich as the regulated main point of entry would have served to funnel burgeoning commercial traffic, culminating in the second quarter of the eighth century in the deliberate expansion and remodelling of the gateway settlement as an international trading port and manufacturing and market centre.

Although the major villa at Castle Hill, Whitton, saw activity into the early fifth century, Roman-period maritime communications in south-east Suffolk appear to have focused on the port and fort at Felixstowe (Ch 6.2.2). The emergence of the head of the Orwell estuary as a significant landing zone, and of the *emporium* and later town of Ipswich as a major trading and commercial settlement, represents a major shift of economic emphasis with no apparent antecedents in earlier geographies. Consistent with this is toponymic evidence for early medieval routeways in the area east of Ipswich to the head of the Deben estuary and then to the coast in an area where there are no known major Roman roads (Ch 6.2.1.1; Margary 1973, 243–77).

9.7.3 Exchange, production and power: Rendlesham, Coddenham and Ipswich

It is important, however, to remember that from the sixth until the earlier eighth century inter-regional exchange was primarily directed towards the settlement complexes at Rendlesham and Coddenham as foci of rulership and centres for the collection and deployment of a landed surplus. These elite complexes were established to consolidate and formalise lordship at new social levels and spatial scales which concentrated a new level of resource, both material and human, in the hands of the ruling elite (Scull 2019a, 395–6). The ability to deploy surplus on a new scale is seen in the upsurge in material wealth and signals of elite display from the later sixth century, and must have contributed significantly to the increasing strength and complexity of inter-regional social and exchange contacts, and developing monetisation. As places where economic, political, social and jurisdictional centralities intersected, Rendlesham and Coddenham were the engines of an extractive regime

which allowed the ruling elite to turn landed surplus and social ties into portable wealth and hard power.

Both Rendlesham and Coddenham lost this special character in the second quarter of the eighth century at a time when monetary activity at Ipswich massively intensified and the settlement was reconfigured over a larger area. We have already suggested that as exchange of high-value and luxury items previously directed towards elites or their agents became increasingly bound up with the burgeoning volume of commercial traffic around and across the North Sea, so the bulk of trading activity moved from inland centres to the coastal port at Ipswich. This can only be part of the equation, however, and does not explain why – given their prior jurisdictional and social as well as economic centrality – both sites appear to diminish in status and function. The change is broadly contemporary with a wider trend across England which sees great hall complexes disappear from the settlement record and suggests more fundamental changes in geographies of economy and power, and the articulation of rulership, in which such places no longer had a function (McBride 2020, 144–5; Scull and Thomas 2020; Thomas and Scull 2021). There are indications that the change of status at Rendlesham was contemporary with a remodelling of the site (Ch 4.3.1) and the expansion of Ipswich is most plausibly explained as a royal initiative. These changes of the 720s and 730s in south-east Suffolk can therefore be seen as responses to the consequences of longer-term economic and social dynamics, intended to shape and control new circumstances in ways that enhanced royal power and authority. We discuss this in greater detail in Chapter 11, but would argue that the key factor was the establishment and consolidation over the course of the seventh and early eighth centuries of tiered lordship, with rights to service and landed resource increasingly articulated through local centres. We would thus envisage a range of royal, magnate, monastic and ecclesiastical holdings, all of which might encompass a shifting portfolio of assets, and allow also for a substantial body of smaller landholders answerable directly to the king with – in theory at least – no intermediate overlord. Taken with increasingly monetised local and inter-regional exchange networks, and a concomitant enhancement of economic agency at a range of social levels, the effect of this would be to promote localised structures of agrarian administration and surplus extraction below the level of royal authority – and with obligations for the upward payment of royal dues – and to create a landscape of multiple lordly centres. Both Barham and Burrow Hill, Butley, can be identified as such places. Under these circumstances, the centralising economic role of the regional central place would become redundant, replaced by a network of local centres and special-purpose places such as the *emporium* at Ipswich, and its social and rulership functions could be distributed more effectively across a range of other locations and places. Consolidation of royal power through the formalising of relationships with magnates and the church may thus have created an environment in which the permanent physical centralisation of the functions of rulership at regional central places became an unnecessary anachronism.

This prompts consideration of the relationship between developing royal power and the control of long-distance exchange and trade. It has been argued that elite control of access to imported prestige items played a pivotal role in promoting socio-political stratification in the sixth and seventh centuries, and that monopolistic control of foreign trade through the *emporia* in the seventh to ninth centuries was fundamental to the establishment and maintenance of royal power (eg Arnold 1988; Hodges 1989). Neither proposition can now be accepted uncritically, and the sequence of developments apparent in south-east Suffolk points to a rather different picture. It is clear that external social and exchange relationships were maintained by higher-status and elite groups from the fifth century, and that through these were acquired the Continental gold coinage and imported status goods that were central to the materialisation of elite identity and wealth in the later sixth to mid-seventh centuries. It is difficult, though, to isolate a causal relationship. There is clear evidence for social demarcation and long-distance contacts from the middle of the fifth century, and the entanglement of inter-regional social and exchange relationships appears to have amplified, rather than precipitated, dynamics rooted in social structures and the imperative to social reproduction, with power founded ultimately in control of landed surplus and human resource (Scull 1993; 2011a). Similarly, there is clear evidence for regional hegemony and royal power more than a century before the establishment of Ipswich as a trading port and commercial settlement, and control of access by and to Continental traders implied by the precursor gateway settlement at Ipswich presupposes an existing and effective elite authority.

In the development of Ipswich we appear to see initiatives by regional rulers in response to a developing diversity and intensity of contacts across the Channel and the North Sea which they saw as beneficial if controlled but as potentially disruptive if not. The initial channelling of contacts through the gateway settlement may have been primarily for security but there is also every likelihood that levies were exacted. The later expansion of Ipswich was intended to promote trade and commerce,

and to regulate it for the purpose of raising revenue through tolls. Controlling Continental traders and travellers by limiting where they could land and do business is consistent with attitudes to strangers in seventh-century law codes and the documented regulation of foreign travellers and traders in the eighth century and later (Middleton 2005). Our understanding of East Anglian political and dynastic dynamics in the early seventh century is limited, but two possible contexts for the initial establishment of the gateway settlement at Ipswich might be identified in the light of the available historical sources (Scull 2009a, 317–18). One possibility is the reign of Rædwald, after the death of Æthelbert of Kent in 616, when it might be seen as a practical assertion of authority and a statement of the shifting balance of dynastic power in southern England. An alternative is the reign of Sigebert, who spent time in exile in Francia and who is credited with enabling the evangelisation of the East Angles, and so to whom formalising the articulation of contacts with the Christian Merovingian Continent under royal protection or oversight might plausibly be attributed. On current archaeological understanding, the physical expansion and remodelling of Ipswich can be attributed to the end of the reign of Aldwulf (663–713) or – more probably – the reign of Ælfwald (713–49), and the upturn in monetary activity to the reign of Ælfwald. It was during the reign of Ælfwald, in the 720s and 730s, that Series R became the East Anglian coinage, a regulation of the currency that stands as a statement of political ambition (Woods 2021). It is tempting, then, to see the changes at Rendlesham and Coddenham as elements of a broader reconfiguration of administrative and economic geographies instituted under Ælfwald.

It is possible in broad terms to chart a development over the course of the sixth to eighth centuries from limited socially embedded exchange directed at elites to large-scale commercial traffic articulated through market networks, but it is less easy to identify what was exchanged for Continental gold coinage and Mediterranean luxuries in the sixth and earlier seventh centuries, or for imports from northern France, the Rhineland and the Low Countries in the eighth and ninth. It seems likely that the products of domanial landed surpluses, handled by the agents of magnates and elites, were a staple of trade in the eighth and ninth centuries, and wool might be identified as a likely bulk commodity of substantial value. Given the changes in the scale of centralised surplus extraction that accompanied the establishment of regional overlordship, it seems likely that elements of a landed surplus were also traded in the later sixth and seventh centuries, and became increasingly significant, and to this extent the central place complexes integrated regional farming economies with inter-regional social and economic networks. Slaves, as a product of successful warfare, have also been identified as a traded commodity (Hodges 1982, 31–3; Fleming 2010, 190, 202, 205). Neither, though, seems sufficient to explain the scale of wealth at Rendlesham in the sixth and seventh centuries. The likelihood must be that political support and military influence – wielded at a new scale through regional overlordship – were significant or predominant factors. It is not necessary to accept that south-east England was formally part of a wider Merovingian hegemony (cf Wood 1983) to see at least some of the Merovingian gold coinage if not as subsidy then as lubrication of political and dynastic relationships between the Merovingian kingdoms and polities of south-east England, and of such relations of overlordship as those between Æthelbert of Kent and rulers of the East Angles and the East Saxons (Yorke 1990, 28–9; Kirby 1991, 17–18).

This also makes the point, which we take up in more detail in Chapter 11, that the wider cultural, political and economic ambit of the East Anglian kingdom, as a hegemony constructed from the later sixth century, was the Channel and southern North Sea, looking towards Merovingian Gaul and beyond to the Mediterranean. A heavy emphasis is conventionally laid on the supposed Swedish origins of the Wuffing dynasty – largely based on readings of Sutton Hoo Mound 1 – but without denying earlier regional links with Scandinavia, and the possibility that such connections may have formed part of an origin or legitimation myth, the broader weight of evidence suggests that relationships with Merovingian polities were key, and that it was from this direction that models of regional rulership were derived.

9.7.4 Other early territories in south and east Suffolk

The topographic boundaries between the Deben and Gipping catchment territories were comparatively narrow and subdued, and are not strongly marked in the pattern of place-names and the distribution of Domesday woodland. To the north, west and south of the two territories, in contrast, topographic boundaries were stronger, with large amounts of woodland suggested by both sources (fig 8.3.3). That this was the case for the valleys of the Stour and its major tributaries the Brett, the Box, the Glem and the Chad Brook, chimes with the suggestion that the south-west limits of the early East Anglian *provincia* – or rather the direct lordship of its rulers – did not extend beyond the watershed of the Gipping and the Stour. However, as already discussed

(Ch 8.3.1), the more wooded areas indicated by place-names and Domesday were not devoid of settlement and they contained smaller tracts of open land which tend to be obscured to varying extents by the 'blurring' effects inherent in both forms of evidence, especially where – as in south Suffolk – the river valleys tend to be narrow. There are signs that some of these areas may also have formed early territories.

Two possible smaller territories can be identified west of the Gipping territory, in areas outwith the core of the early East Anglian *provincia* but within the historic county of Suffolk. One is around the confluence of the Stour and the Chad Brook, where there is an extensive area of loamy Ludford Association soils with pockets of the more clayey, but still relatively tractable, Melford Association soils, surrounded by less tractable and hospitable clay-covered uplands (Hodge *et al* 1984). Here the Roman town of Long Melford – like Coddenham a major nodal point in the Roman road network – lies some 3.5km north of Sudbury, with a possible fifth- and sixth-century settlement at Rodbridge between them (LMD 030). Sudbury itself – the 'south *burh*' – is located beside the river Stour, the present-day boundary between Suffolk and Essex, and was partly recorded in Domesday in entries relating to the latter county. Bishop Ælfhun died here in 798 (Baker 2000, 58) and it is possible that the term *burh* in the town's name has the sense 'monastery' (Rye and Williamson 2020). St Gregory, the earliest of the town's three churches, stands on a promontory overlooking the floodplain of the Stour and, to judge from the surrounding street pattern, was originally within an ovoid enclosure of *c* 15ha, perhaps a monastic enclosure, within which there is some excavated evidence for eighth- or ninth-century activity (Newman 1990). Babergh Heath, the probable meeting place for Babergh hundred, is *c* 4km south-east of Long Melford and the same distance north-east of Sudbury. The second possible territorial core is around the medieval town of Hadleigh, which is described by Asser as the *villa regia* where Guthrum was buried in 890 (Keynes and Lapidge 1983). It is located within an area of dissected terrain, with extensive exposures of Melford and Ludford soils, lying around the valley of the river Brett. The meeting place for Cosford hundred lay some 2km to the north of the town.

The most striking and potentially significant example of an early territorial centre, however, is around Blythburgh, 25km north of Rendlesham, where the medieval church occupies a dramatic location on a promontory overlooking the western end of the estuary of the river Blyth, 4km from the present coastline. *Liber Eliensis* records that King Anna was buried at Blythburgh after his death in battle with Penda of Mercia and, as discussed above (Ch 8.2), there are other suggestions of early royal connections and archaeological evidence for eighth- and ninth-century activity. The '*burh* on the river Blyth' might refer to a lost fortification but there are grounds for believing that the term was used in the sense of 'monastery' as at Sudbury. Hinton (*Hinetuna* 1086) 'the settlement of the (monastic) community' (OE *hīwan* 'members of a (monastic) household' + *tūn*), originally a separate vill in the south of the parish, is noteworthy in this context (Ekwall 1960, 241; Warner 1996, 120). Domesday records that the church was endowed with two carucates of land, but the present structure, extensively rebuilt in the fifteenth century, has no obviously early fabric..

Whatever the precise meaning of its name, Blythburgh – as Peter Warner has established – was evidently the focal place for an early territory whose boundaries were fossilised by those of the later hundred of Blything (Warner 1996, 156–9; Fig 9.7.1). In an almost text-book example of the 'river-and-wold' model, the hundred approximates to the catchment of the river Blyth and is named for its inhabitants (Blything from OE **Blīðingas* 'the people of the river Blyth': Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, 15). Blythburgh is located fairly centrally within the hundred, the boundaries of which largely follow the watersheds and which are contiguous with the boundary of the Wicklaw hundreds, and so the Deben territory, to the south. The hundred of Blything is roughly two-thirds the size of the combined Wicklaw hundreds, and it has a much higher ratio of difficult soils – both clays and acid sands – to amenable ones, hence its effective invisibility in the maps of open and wooded districts based on Domesday and place-names. Consequently, it is also likely to have been less densely settled and to have supported a smaller population than areas of equivalent extent with a higher proportion of amenable land. The density of the recorded population at the time of Domesday was around two-thirds that of the combined Wicklaw hundreds (Darby 1972, 173).

Blythburgh lies 2km to the east of an extensive Roman settlement or small town at Wenhaston (WMH 005). Between the two and a little to the north is Bulcamp, a hamlet within the parish of Blythburgh. Its name, like that of Campsea Ash, incorporates the Latin element *campus* (Gelling 1978, 77). This close spatial association between a significant Roman settlement, a rare type of place-name and a likely centre of importance in the seventh and eighth centuries is, of course, also seen at the centre of the Wicklaw hundreds, where Rendlesham lies 3.7km from the site of the Roman small town at Hacheston and the parishes separating them, Wickham

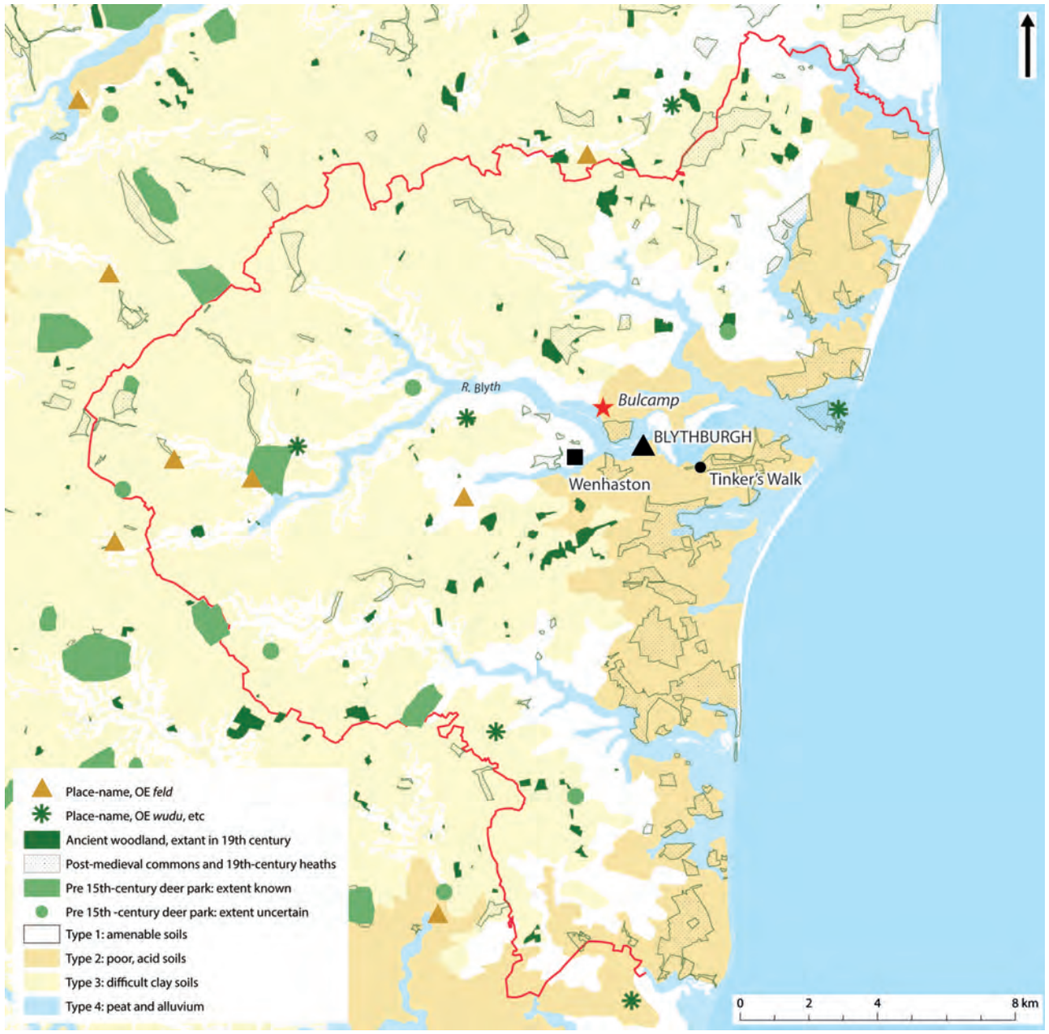

Fig 9.7.1 Blything hundred showing soils, early woodland, and places mentioned in the text. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

Market and Campsea Ash, are examples of Old English place-names containing Latin loan-words which reference Roman settlements (Ch 6.3; Fig 9.7.2). This is unlikely to be coincidental and lends support to the identification of Blythburgh as the focal place of an early territory.

There is evidence from pottery and metalwork for fifth- to seventh-century settlement and burial, and for eighth- to eleventh-century activity, within the area of the Roman settlement at Wenhaston, and a seventh-century gold-and-garnet pendant is known from south of Blythburgh (PAS SF-2C6BC4), but overall there is insufficient archaeological evidence for the early medieval period from the area of Blything hundred to allow either the comparative or landscape-scale analysis that we have undertaken for the Deben and Gipping territories. Taken together, though, the evidence of the written sources, topography, place-names and archaeology – such as it is – suggests that the Blyth catchment can be seen as the territory of an autonomous grouping that had been incorporated within a wider regional hegemony centred on the Deben territory by the seventh century. In this context it is worth noting the two surviving round barrows at Tinker's Walks, Walberswick, 2km east of Blythburgh (WLB 001 and 002). These are on elevated ground overlooking the Blyth estuary to the north, a situation similar to Sutton Hoo and Snape. Although

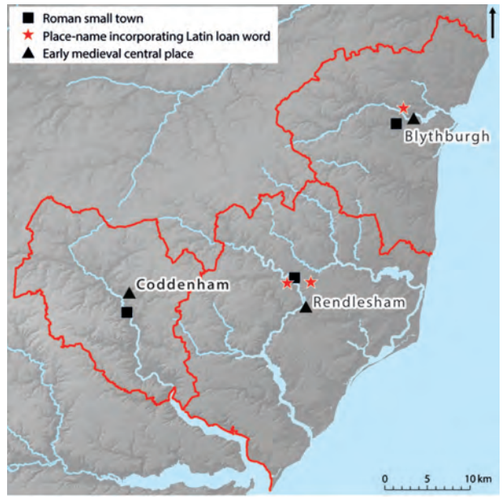

Fig 9.7.2 The proposed Deben, Gipping and Blyth territories, showing late Roman small towns, Old English place-names with Latin loan-words, and early medieval central places. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

usually considered Bronze Age, the possibility that they are elite burial monuments of the later sixth or earlier seventh centuries should not be discounted.

9.7.5 Conclusions

In considering settlement and territorial organisation in southern and eastern Suffolk, the key distinction is not between a coastal zone of light sandy soils and the till plateau of the interior but between light clays and loams on the one hand and more waterlogged clays and acidic sands on the other, with the former most extensive in the major valleys and in areas of more dissected terrain. The long-term pattern of human settlement is thus along river valleys, which offer water, favourable settlement locations, easy access to a range of environmental niches and resources, and natural communication routes. The riverine pattern of settlement and farming, governed by soils and topography and by the importance of river valleys, estuaries and the coast as avenues of communication, helped shape local social identities and networks, the interplay between environment and subsistence forging a sense of identity rooted in geographical place.

Mapping place-names and the distribution of Domesday woodland against soils and topography, and interrogating the archaeological evidence against this background, suggests that in the early medieval period most of southern and eastern Suffolk – broadly equivalent to the catchments of the rivers Deben and Gipping – comprised relatively open terrain, albeit with numerous pockets of wooded ground. Between the later sixth and early eighth century these appear to have been constituted as jurisdictional territories, looking to central place complexes at Rendlesham and Coddenham respectively, whose broad outlines appear to have been preserved in aspects of later hundredal organisation. These extensive tracts of relatively open land were bounded by more densely wooded countryside to the south, west and north. Other smaller territories can be discerned within these wooded areas, the largest of which was focused on Blythburgh, its bounds preserved not by a group of hundreds, but by just one.

Within the Deben territory there is evidence for the existence of two or more autonomous groups in the fifth and sixth centuries which by the middle or later sixth century were subordinate to rulers whose power centre was the middle Deben valley around Rendlesham. In the smaller Gipping territory the evidence suggests a single centre of power in the area of Coddenham. In both cases, the establishment of a central place complex at a centre of earlier importance suggests new levels of power, centralised surplus extraction on a new scale, and a territorialisation of authority best explained by elite groups seeking to entrench permanent lordship over formerly autonomous and broadly equal social entities. There is evidence that the dominant group in the Gipping territory came under the overlordship of the Deben rulers in the 570s or 580s, and the emerging importance of the Orwell estuary as a focus for exchange contacts with the Merovingian Continent may have been a prior source of tension or competition. It seems likely that the Blyth catchment territory had also lost any earlier autonomy by this time. By the end of the sixth century, therefore, it may be justifiable to think of a south-east Suffolk province, under Wuffing hegemony, comprised of jurisdictional territories which were rooted in earlier nested patterns of local lordship and whose centres of royal rule were Rendlesham, Coddenham and Blythburgh (Fig 9.7.3). There are good reasons for thinking that in the period *c* 580–630 the Deben valley, as the original power base of the ruling kindred, was perceived as the core area of the province, and that the central place complex at Rendlesham was a first amongst equals. From the 630s, Coddenham was part of the same network of currency circulation as Rendlesham. If this earliest East Anglian coinage and the royal interest in the Orwell indicated by the establishment of the gateway settlement at Ipswich can be attributed to Sigebert, then – taken with later traditions of early royal interest in Blythburgh – it may suggest that the

a

b

c

Fig 9.7.3 A model for the development of territorial rule in south-east Suffolk: (a) possible power centres of the middle fifth to middle sixth centuries; (b) autonomous lordships of the middle to late sixth century; (c) a province of three jurisdictional territories. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

distinction between core and subordinate territories was breaking down as royal rule was consolidated and the church became an embedded feature of cultural and administrative geographies. By the second quarter of the eighth century, changes in economy and landholding required different modes of royal jurisdiction, and both Rendlesham and Coddenham underwent a change in character and status that saw them lose their central place functions.

At a superficial level this chimes with the suggestion that a 'Sandlings Province' was the core of East Anglian royal power in the seventh century (Carver 2005; cf Scull 2019b) but the truth is more complex. There is no 'Sandlings' *pays*, in the sense of a coherent topographic region onto which can be mapped uniformities of economic and territorial organisation; rather a diversity of repeated associations between human activity, environment and affordance that frame dynamics of social identity, economy and political integration at a range of scales. Critical use of the 'river-and-wold' and 'peer-polity' perspectives allows us to model where and how early lordships emerged, how these were subsumed or integrated within the more complex nested interdependencies of extensive lordship, overlordship and regional hegemony, and how the interplay of environment and human activity influenced the later structures of landholding and territorial administration, and their inscription on the landscape.

When and how this overlordship rooted in south-east Suffolk was projected more widely across East Anglia, and relationships with other groups and territories outside south-east Suffolk, will be explored in Chapter 11. It is worth re-emphasising, however, that our model would support the idea that the southern limit of direct East Anglian overlordship did not initially extend beyond the watershed between the Gipping and Stour – there may instead have been fluctuating East Anglian and East Saxon influence over groups here, similar to the changing balance of East Anglian and Mercian ties with rulers of Middle Anglian peoples – and that drawing a formal boundary between Suffolk and Essex along the river Stour was a result of later negotiation, perhaps influenced by considerations of diocesan geography. In this context, it is also important to re-iterate that there is nothing in the assemblages studied for this project to suggest that south-east Suffolk was radically different from other parts of Suffolk, and Norfolk, in its fifth- to seventh-century material culture, and there is no evidence to suggest that any part of the Deben or Gipping territories had close cultural ties with, or was part of, an East Saxon polity.

Early medieval central places at Rendlesham and Coddenham, if not the jurisdictional territories associated with them, appear to perpetuate elements of antecedent human geographies, and the same can be argued for Blythburgh. All are close to the sites of Roman small towns, and at Rendlesham and Blythburgh there is a further connection through shared proximity to places with Old English names incorporating Latin loan-words referring to Roman settlements. As we have argued above, this does not represent some simple continuity of polity or administrative and extractive organisation, but it does raise the question of how far the influence of environmental constraints and opportunities on patterns of settlement and population may have repeatedly structured similar configurations of social aggregation and territorial organisation. We return to these issues in Chapter 11, but the complexity and diversity of the interplays between environmental affordances, human agency and inherited circumstances should not be underestimated.

That said, it is worth considering what geographical factors may have favoured emergence of a polity centred on the Deben valley region in south-east Suffolk, and why its rulers were well-placed to establish a wider East Anglian rulership. The higher wooded areas on the northern, western and southern boundaries of the Deben and Gipping catchments act as natural external boundaries; estuarine rivers and the weak topographical barrier between the Deben and Gipping territories enable good internal channels of communication and provide inland access to coastal routes. The weak topographical barriers between two adjacent early polities based in the Deben and Gipping catchments may have meant that it was easier to unite them under a single ruling kindred more completely, and at an earlier date, than others in East Anglia. The resulting territory, moreover, as well as ensuring a greater command of resources and population than possible rivals by virtue of its size, was well-situated to exploit maritime links around and across the Channel and southern North Sea, especially southwards with East Saxon and Kentish polities, and – directly or via Kent – with Merovingian Gaul. This included control of the route from Ipswich, via the Gipping valley, into Midland England.

North Folk and South Folk? 10

In south-east Suffolk we have identified Rendlesham and Coddenham as elite settlement complexes from which, over the period of the late sixth to early eighth centuries, rulership was exercised over extensive regions broadly corresponding respectively to the catchments of the rivers Deben and Alde and the river Gipping. A case can also be made that Blythburgh was similarly the centre for a region broadly equivalent to the catchment of the river Blyth. The development of these sites and territories is consistent with a consolidation of regional hegemony from smaller scale and more localised groupings and power structures.

This raises the question of whether this mode of territorial organisation, and the trajectories of development that lie behind it, are replicated more widely across the East Anglian *provincia*, or whether different processes and circumstances were in play. In order to investigate this, in this chapter we consider three early medieval sites known from ploughsoil assemblages at Hoxne in north Suffolk, Caistor-by-Norwich in south-central Norfolk and Burnham on the north Norfolk coast, and explore their contexts of landscape and territory. We then set this against a higher-level review of evidence for other possible elite centres and associated geographies of power, and for early coin use, elsewhere in Norfolk and in north-west Suffolk.

In our three case studies we have treated the archaeology and landscape, both at the scale of the individual site and the broader territorial context, in the same ways as for our analyses of the Deben and Gipping catchment territories. As with the Gipping and Deben territories, the close coincidence of the boundaries of groups of adjacent hundreds with watersheds allows us to use them as proxies for the likely limits of earlier topographic and social territories. We should stress, though, that this is an heuristic device, not a back-projection. We recognise that the earliest – tenth-century – hundredal organisation was an administrative rationalisation of a messy reality structured by, but not directly reflecting, earlier patterns of community, jurisdiction and rights to landed resource; and that its subsequent configurations, on which our mapping is based, incorporated multiple rationalisations, reconfigurations and renegotiations (cf Chs 6.1 and 9.4). None the less, as we argue in detail in the individual case studies, it offers at this scale a useful way of defining the scope of mapping and spatial analysis that has the advantage of being demonstrably rooted in long-term social responses to the physical environment.

10.1 Hoxne and the Dove valley

10.1.1 The site and assemblage

10.1.1.1 Location and fieldwork history

Location

The Hoxne site (HXN 051) is located on the south-east side of the Dove valley, *c* 3km south of its junction with the river Waveney (Fig 10.1.1). The Dove occupies a significant valley running through the central claylands of north Suffolk. It rises in Wyverstone and flows east through Finningham and Wickham Skeith to Stoke Ash, where it is crossed by the Roman road from Colchester to Caistor-by-Norwich (Margary 3d) at the site of a Roman roadside settlement (Margary 1973, 267–8). The river then turns towards the north in Thorndon and runs north and then north-east through Braiseworth, Eye and Hoxne. It is joined at Eye by a tributary stream flowing from the west, forming the 'island' from which the town takes its name (Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, 50).

The site lies between 25m and 30m OD immediately above the floodplain where a loop of the river defines a gentle promontory. The soil is classed as Burlingham 3 (572p), deep loam over chalky till and glaciofluvial drift, with less well-drained Beccles 1, deep loam to clay, immediately to the south (Fig 10.1.2).

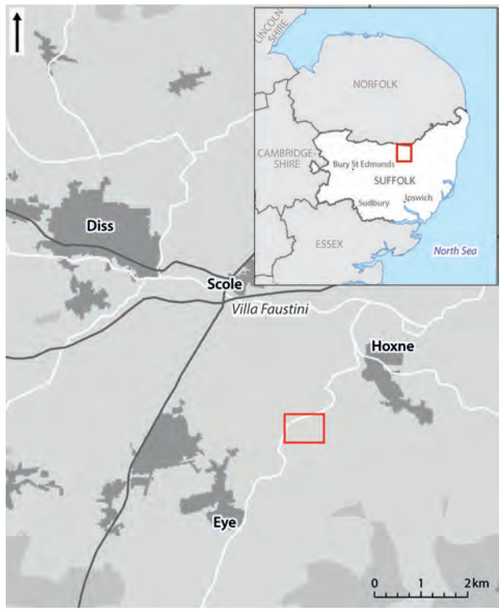

Fig 10.1.1 Location map showing the study area and major sites and places mentioned in the text. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

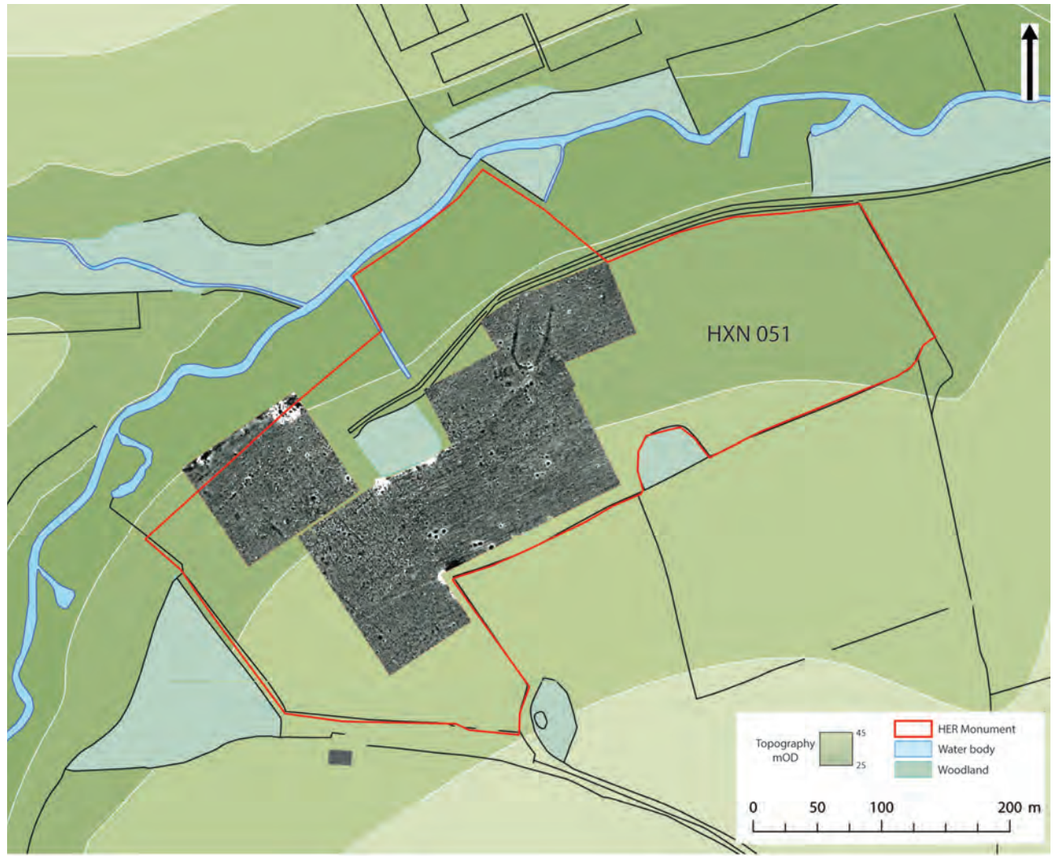

Fig 10.1.2 Hoxne: the area metal-detected and magnetometry survey 2009. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

Fieldwork

The archaeological significance was recognised as a result of metal-detecting by Alan Smith between 2000 and 2010 which recovered late Iron Age, Roman, early medieval and some later material from a single field (HXN 051) with an area of 12.8ha. Less intensive detecting in fields adjacent to the northern part of HXN 051 indicates that the spread of finds does not extend in this direction; the land south of this was not detected and so the full extent of activity is not known. Earlier finds were allocated only to the field or in batches to a six-figure NGR in the centre of the area where they were found; later finds were plotted individually using hand-held GPS. Consequently, there is only very limited potential for spatial analysis but although both Roman and early medieval material was recovered across the area surveyed the available information suggests that the main concentration of Roman finds covered an area of 1ha–2ha towards the west of the field, with the main concentration of early medieval finds covering a larger area of *c* 6ha towards its centre (Fig 10.1.3). At the northern edge of the field is a disused extraction pit which is marked on the First Edition OS Map and it is possible that at least some of the items recovered by metal-detecting come from archaeological deposits destroyed by extraction.

Magnetometer survey undertaken in October 2009 by Birmingham Archaeology for SCCAS revealed likely or possible archaeological features over an area of 4.4ha (Baldwin 2009; fig 10.1.2). An elongated U-shaped enclosure, *c* 50m by 21m internally, may be the quarry ditches of a ploughed-out Neolithic long mound; immediately south-west of this a rectilinear array of ditch-like responses *c* 14m by 5m may represent a wooden building. In the centre and west of the survey area linear anomalies probably represent ploughed-out field or enclosure boundaries. These mostly correspond to the orientation of modern or historic field boundaries but one, orientated north-west to south-east and with

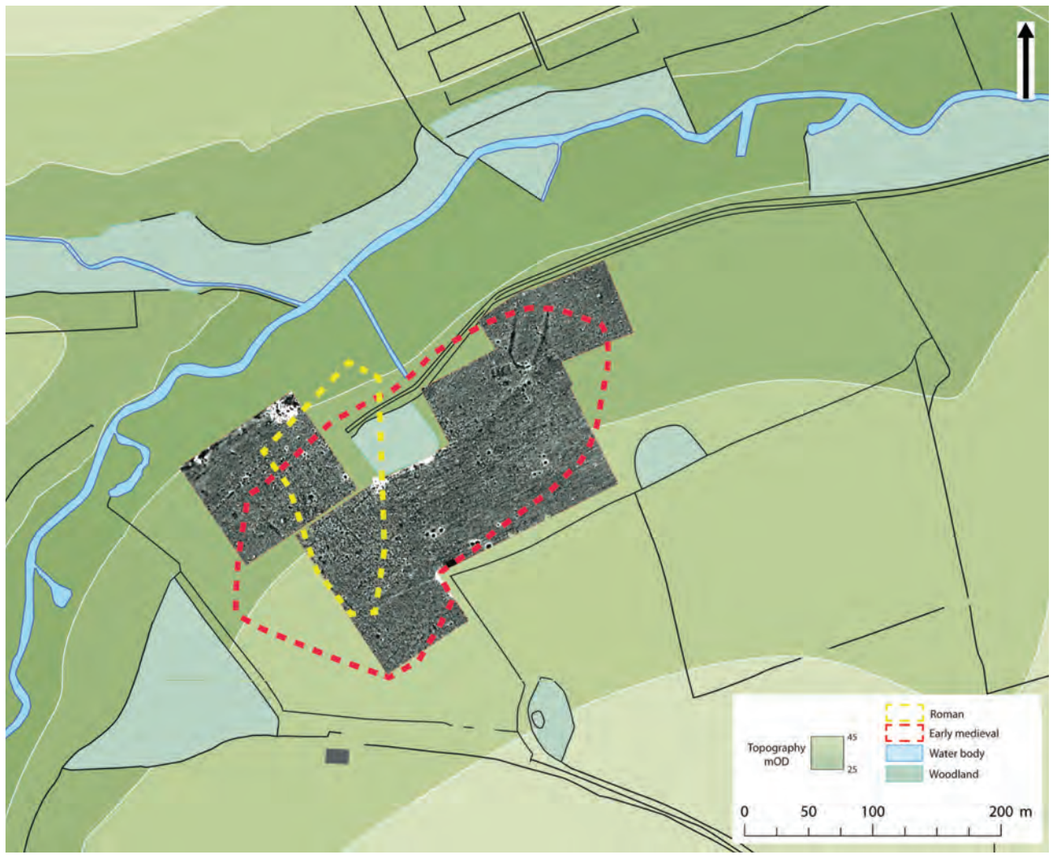

Fig 10.1.3 Hoxne: main concentrations of Roman and early medieval material. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

perpendiculars crossing north-east to south-west, probably pre-dates these: it lies within the main concentration of Roman material and so may be of the same date. There are macular anomalies representing pit-like features across the survey area and it is possible that some of the larger of these represent *Grubenhäuser*.

10.1.1.2 The metal-detecting assemblage

Recording and data quality

The material recovered by metal-detecting was acquired by Suffolk County Council in 2011 and all records integrated on a single MS Access database. This records 302 finds, more than half of which are early medieval (Table 10.1.1); most of the undated material is non-ferrous metalworking debris (mostly melt or casting sprue) which is likely to be early medieval, with a possible Roman element (below). As noted above, there is only limited potential for spatial analysis.

The early medieval assemblage

The database records eighteen coins and 160 metal finds that can be assigned securely to the period of the fifth to eleventh centuries; this includes the gold finger-ring (PAS SF-D626C7) but not two Roman coins that may have been re-used as pendants. There are also seventeen items of metalworking debris that are undatable in themselves but probably derive from early medieval activity. All of the coins were struck before AD 800 and are discussed below. The non-coin finds are overwhelmingly of copper alloy (145 items; 91 per cent of the assemblage), with eight gold and six silver items. Between 87 and 98 per cent of the assemblage (depending upon the precision of the dating) represents activity of the fifth to early eighth centuries and only two items need be dated later than the ninth century.

The assemblage as a whole is dominated by dress accessories, which make up 72 per cent of the total (Table 10.1.2). Among the ninety or so items of the fifth to later sixth centuries there are fifty brooches or brooch fragments (Table 10.1.3), nineteen wrist clasps, five girdle hangers and four tweezers; other material includes probable shield studs, a buckle, belt mount and harness mount, two bucket mounts and a silver-gilt Style I mount that may be from a drinking horn. The assemblage of late sixth- to early eighth-century material is smaller (around sixty-five items), more diverse and notably different in character. There are no brooches and only two pins; dress accessories are mainly represented by twenty-five small belt buckles, belt fittings and garter-buckles which together make up *c* 40 per cent of the assemblage. Three harness mounts include a gilded copper-alloy anthropomorphic pendant or strap fitting (HXN 051 1002; PAS SF-50B996; Fig 10.1.4a) closely paralleled at Sutton Hoo Mound 17 (Carver 2005, 230–8, fig 113 26a–d). Metal vessels are represented by two fragments of an enamelled hanging-bowl mount, along with a footring fragment, and probable rim fragment, from east Mediterranean cast copper-alloy basins.

Among the late fifth- and sixth-century material is a

Table 10.1.1 Hoxne: summary of metal-detecting finds by period

	Iron Age	Roman	Early medieval	Medieval	Undated	Total
All	8	92	178	4	20	**302**
Coins	7	40	18	0	0	**65**

Table 10.1.2 Hoxne: summary of early medieval assemblage by functional category (excluding coins)

Category	
Currency (CTJ) excluding coins	2
Dress accessories (DA)	115
Equestrian and transport (ET)	5
Household (HO)	7
Metalworking (MW)	4
Personal possessions (PP)	19
Weapons and military equipment (ME)	4
Unknown (UN)	4
Total	**160**

Table 10.1.3 Hoxne: summary of early medieval brooches

Type		Date-range
Cruciform	33	420–550
Small-long	5	420–550
Cruciform or small-long	6	420–550
Annular	2	500–600
Anglian equal-armed	2	470–550
Other (fifth and sixth centuries)	2	470–550
Disc	1	900–1000
Total	**51**	

Fig 10.1.4 (a) Anthropomorphic pendant or strap fitting from Hoxne (left) and Sutton Hoo Mound 17 (right); (b) Bird brooches from Hoxne (left) and Coddenham (right). Scale 1:1. *Hoxne and Coddenham © Suffolk County Council; Sutton Hoo © The Trustees of The British Museum under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*

copper-alloy bird brooch (PAS SF-E28B03; Fig 10.1.4b) which is very closely paralleled by a find from Coddenham (CDD 023; West 1998, fig 23.7). The two pieces are so similar in their overall form and dimensions, and in the dimensions of individual decorative elements, that it is likely that they are the work of the same crafter and possibly cast from moulds created with the same model: the only significant difference is that the Hoxne brooch has an engraved ring-and-dot to represent the eye. These examples have both wings outspread, and so differ from most types known from the Merovingian Continent and south-east England which represent the bird in profile with wings to the left and talons to the right (Soulat 2018, 175–81; Legoux *et al* 2009; Werner 1961a, 42–6, Taf 41–3; Thiry 1939). They appear to represent a local variant of scarcer forms that perpetuated the iconography of the Gothic eagle brooch, examples of which are known from burials of MA1–MA2 (AD 470/80–560/70) in northern France (Thiry 1939, 56–7, 118, Taf 22, nos 521–7). It is not possible to say that either was made where it was found, and they could equally well be products of an itinerant crafter as of a settled workshop, but they do suggest that the communities at Hoxne and Coddenham were linked into the same networks of production and acquisition in the sixth century.

The late sixth- to early eighth-century assemblage includes a small group of high-status items in gold and gold-and-garnet (Fig 10.1.5): a gold wire spacer bead, gold biconical bead and cabochon garnet pendant of the middle to late seventh century; a gold-and-garnet tongue from a large buckle of the later sixth or earlier seventh century; a circular cabochon garnet setting with a ribbed wire collar; and a cylindrical filigree mount or fitting. Perhaps to be associated with these is a gold finger-ring consisting of a hoop with filigree wire decoration that has been crudely attached to a flat ovoid bezel, also decorated with filigree wire, with a central raised setting containing a cornelian intaglio. This has been examined by Dr Catherine Johns and Judith Plouviez who conclude that it probably combines several re-used elements. The intaglio may well be second century, re-used in the third or fourth century in a setting that looks more like a pendant than a ring, which was in turn attached to a fourth-century ring hoop by flattening and joining the ends of the hoop at the back. It seems highly unlikely that this transformation into a large ring took place during the Roman period, given the quality of jewellery still available for deposition in the nearby Hoxne hoard. More probably the individual pieces were still in circulation and re-worked later in the fifth century or another hoard was discovered and re-used in the centuries immediately after deposition.

Two pins, a pair of tweezers and a strap end represent eighth- or ninth-century activity. Two hooked tags can only be broadly dated to the period of the seventh to eleventh centuries. There is a tenth-century copper-alloy disc brooch and an eleventh-century copper-alloy stirrup strap mount.

Metalworking evidence

A small assemblage of casting waste, scrap and melt represents non-ferrous metalworking. Direct evidence for manufacturing in copper alloy in the later sixth or seventh centuries is provided by an unfinished oval buckle loop with flashing and metal from the casting channel still attached (PAS SF-10C940). There are four copper-alloy casting sprues, and thirty-one pieces of copper-alloy melt and one of silver. Three fragments of silver and two of gold are probably scrap intended for recycling and it is possible that the four fragmentary silver or silver-gilt dress accessories and fittings of the fifth or sixth centuries also represent scrap metal for recycling.

Given the direct evidence for manufacture in the form of a discarded casting, the congruence with metalworking evidence from Rendlesham and the chronology of activity at the site it seems likely that the metalworking debris

Fig 10.1.5 Hoxne: elite early medieval metalwork. Scale 2:1. © *Suffolk County Council*

represents early medieval activity and this suggestion is further supported by the similarity in alloy compositions – where sampled – between the sprues and casting waste and early medieval buckles from Hoxne. However, among the Roman material from the field are two copper-alloy vessel lid handles in the form of a duck, similar to those known from first-century strainer bowls (PAS SF-3BBD70; SF-3BA2C7). These appear to be unfinished in that flashing has not been cleaned from the castings and, although found 35m apart, were originally joined at the beaks as elements of a multiple casting in a two-piece mould. Some of the copper-alloy residues may therefore derive from Roman-period metalworking.

Compositional analysis of artefacts and metalworking debris

Eleanor Blakelock, Zofia Stos-Gale and Marcos Martinón-Torres

The chemical composition of thirty-two copper-alloy objects (the majority buckles) and seven items of metalworking debris, including the four sprues and the discarded casting, was determined using SEM-EDX, with a further ten of these sampled for lead isotope and trace element analysis by ICP-MS (e-app 2; e-tabs 1–2). All the early medieval gold and silver objects from Hoxne were

also examined by XRF, as well as three gold and fifteen silver coins, and further analysis by SEM-EDX was carried out on the gold objects (e-app 3; e-tabs 3–4).

The majority of the copper alloys are bronzes (87 per cent) but four buckles and a casting sprue showed higher levels of zinc, making them gunmetals (13 per cent). Both metalworking debris and objects likely to have been made at Hoxne showed similar alloy compositions, and this pattern is consistent with the results from Rendlesham and the wider picture for fifth- to seventh-century England (Blades 1995; Pollard *et al* 2015). The two east Mediterranean vessel fragments are bronzes with higher lead levels (21 and 18 per cent) than the casting debris and Insular items. Lead isotope and trace element analysis of both artefacts and casting waste showed a similar pattern to Rendlesham, indicating a lead source in the Massif Central region of France.

Analysis of the gold and silver artefacts and metalworking debris objects showed a similar distribution of compositions to those from Rendlesham. Two fragments from silver objects of the fifth or sixth centuries (PAS SF-65C2A1; SF-67EF84), and a piece of silver melt (SF-78ED67b), have elevated zinc levels of around 3 per cent and would be consistent with the recycling of metal on site.

The fifth- to eighth-century coins

Andrew Woods

There are eighteen early medieval coins in the metal-detecting assemblage and an additional single find (an early silver penny of type Q) is recorded on EMC as from the site. Two further coins from elsewhere in Hoxne parish are excluded from this discussion but considered in the broader analysis below (10.1.3.4).

The chronological structure of the coin assemblage is summarised in Fig 10.1.6. Hoxne sees early coin use in EM1 which increases markedly in EM2 before a significant decline in EM3. The EM1 coins are two mint-and-moneyer *tremisses*, one of which (PAS SF-EE2953) can be positively identified with Bellomo (Beaumont) on the Loire, and an English shilling (SF-EE6100). Coin types in both EM2 and EM3 are typical for East Anglia: in EM2, the combination of types B, C, D, E and RP; in EM3, East Anglian types of Q and RS alongside Continental type E.

Only limited conclusions can be drawn from so small an assemblage but Hoxne's numismatic signature is closest to Rendlesham and Coddenham. Although there is no early sixth-century material, there are gold coins of mint-and-moneyer type that probably pre-date the late pale gold phase which is more commonly the earliest gold coinage at East Anglian sites. The range of types in EM2 and EM3 mirrors Coddenham and Rendlesham, and the decline into EM3 – also seen at Rendlesham and Coddenham – is unusual in an East Anglian context.

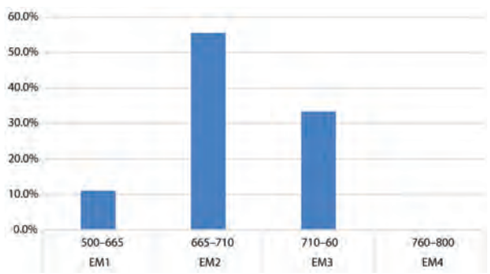

Fig 10.1.6 Hoxne: proportions of early medieval coinage by numismatic period

Fig 10.1.7 Hoxne: aoristic analysis of the late Roman and early medieval assemblage

10.1.1.3 Chronology and settlement sequence

Aoristic analysis of the assemblage (Fig 10.1.7) shows a low level of activity in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, an increased level of loss or discard from the middle of the fifth century peaking in the second quarter and middle of the sixth century, with significant activity continuing until the first quarter of the eighth century. There was a major reduction in the intensity of activity from the second quarter of the eighth century with only very low levels of loss or discard through the second half of the eighth and the ninth centuries.

Late Iron Age and Roman

A group of six Iron Age gold and silver coins might represent a hoard deposit of the first century BC, but were dispersed across a 300m-long area. The types include a gold stater of Norfolk Wolf A (Talbot 2017, 161, no. 23) and plated stater of Norfolk Wolf B. Four silver units are a Bury A, a Bury B and two of Talbot's Bury H, a subgroup related to A (Talbot 2017, 168, nos 2, 4) and found in the Waveney valley area. The whole group falls within the southern part of the normal distribution (Norfolk and north Suffolk) for the types. There is also a Roman Republican bronze *as* of 84 BC, an unusual find which might be a contemporary import or might have reached Britain in the mid-first century AD. It is remarkable that the probable hoard of Bury A and C units from Barham is also associated with an *as* of this date. A fragment of copper-alloy lipped terret ring might be contemporary or first century AD.

Activity on the site in the first century AD is indicated by early brooches (Langton Down and Colchester types), a bronze coin of Cunobelin and a coin of *c* 43–65, probably of Claudius, with brooch types continuing up to the third century. The assemblage also includes personal possessions (mirror fragment, ear scoop, cosmetic mortar), household items (box hinge, furniture nails, patera fragment) and a possible military mount, and, as noted above, there is evidence to suggest copper-alloy metalworking.

The coin assemblage is small (thirty-one identifiable to Reece period) and largely late third and fourth century, with a strong middle to late fourth-century group including one Theodosian *nummus*. Other late fourth- or early fifth-century items are a buckle of Hawkes and Dunning type IIIb (PAS SF-21A542; Hawkes and Dunning 1961, 59, fig 20, g, h; Sommer 1984, Sorte 3 Typ F, Taf 17, no. 2) and a ten-faceted silver mount fragment (SF-D25DA8), probably from a box or casket, best paralleled by the rosette mounts found with the Hoxne hoard (Johns 2010, 145). Two of the fourth-century *nummi* are pierced for suspension, very probably representing re-use in the fifth century or later. The gold finger-ring is interpreted as a fifth-century piece made from curated elements.

Overall, the coins and metalwork would be consistent with occupation from the first to third centuries and some official or military activity from the late fourth century. The silver mount suggests a high-status element and the gold finger-ring can be seen as an elite piece of the early to middle fifth century. The buckle and pierced *nummi* are types that are known from furnished burials of the fifth and sixth centuries, and may have come from disturbed graves; similarly, the ring may have been a curated piece that was finally deposited or lost at the same time as the seventh-century elite metalwork. However, taken with the early post-Roman material culture assemblage the latest Roman material represents continuous or near-continuous activity from the late fourth century, with evidence suggesting a significant elite presence in the early to middle fifth century.

Fifth to eighth centuries

Two cruciform brooches of Martin's subgroup 1.1 (PAS SF-DD2612; SF-DCF547) are evidence for activity in the first half or middle of the fifth century and, as noted above, the late Roman belt fittings and adapted coins may represent use or re-use in the fifth century. The composition of the fifth- to later sixth-century assemblage suggests that it derives in part from disturbed inhumations and it is possible that burials were destroyed in digging the extraction pit: redeposited grave goods augmenting settlement material in the ploughsoil would account for the apparent spike in activity in the first half of the sixth century. Two fragments of cruciform brooches show heat distortion and may be from cremations. The later sixth- to early eighth-century assemblage, with its evidence for coin use and metalworking, more clearly represents settlement activity but some elements may well be from burials. The gold finger-ring, gold-and-garnet buckle and fragment from an east Mediterranean vessel would be plausible components of an elite masculine burial assemblage of the later sixth or earlier seventh century, and the gold beads and cabochon pendant an elite female burial of the middle seventh century. As the case of Rendlesham shows, there is no reason why contemporary settlement and burials should not both be encountered within an area of 12ha–13ha and at present we do not know the full extent of activity at Hoxne.

Eighth to eleventh centuries

The very small number of finds shows greatly reduced activity from the second quarter of the eighth century and suggests that the site may have been abandoned by the end of the ninth century, if not before. The tenth-century brooch and eleventh-century stirrup strap mount may be seen as losses by people moving through the landscape.

10.1.1.4 Production, exchange and consumption

The ploughsoil assemblage embodies networks of procurement and access to a range of skills, with all that this implies about the generation and deployment of a landed surplus. This is apparent throughout the main period of activity in the supply of copper alloy and precious metals, and in access to metalworking expertise, but – as at Rendlesham and Coddenham – the evidence suggests a change in the scale and reach of contacts in the later sixth century with coinage from Merovingian Gaul, a hanging-bowl fitting and enamelled trumpet spiral mount from north or west Britain or Ireland, and fragments from east Mediterranean copper-alloy vessels.

There is direct evidence for copper-alloy metalworking in the later sixth or seventh centuries. Precious-metal scrap and melt indicate recycling and suggest manufacture for elite patrons. The gold-and-garnet buckle tongue may have been scrap for recycling and this may also be true of other gold jewellery items. Two small metal ingots, one silver and one copper alloy, may be linked to metalworking but will also have had an inherent metal value.

It possible that one or both of the bird brooches from Hoxne and Coddenham were made at Hoxne, and they suggest that the communities at both sites were linked to the same networks of production and acquisition in the late fifth or earlier sixth centuries. Similarly, the anthropomorphic harness mount links Hoxne in the late sixth or early seventh century to the same networks of production and acquisition as the elites burying at Sutton Hoo.

10.1.1.5 Social signatures and cultural connections

Cultural identities and connections

The range of dress accessories dating from the second quarter or middle of the fifth century to the third quarter of the sixth century are mostly typical of East Anglia and more widely of the Anglian province of material culture. As at Rendlesham and Coddenham, there is a large number of cruciform and small-long brooches in proportion to other types, but annular and Anglian equal-armed brooches are also represented and a silver-gilt fragment is probably from the headplate of a great square-headed brooch (PAS SF-69F8D8). The bird brooch suggests some cultural contact with the Merovingian Continent as well as more local social and economic networks. From the later sixth century, as at Rendlesham and Coddenham, the ploughsoil assemblage shows an Insular material culture signature common to most of eastern and southern England with little or nothing that might represent regional costume traditions. The garter buckles represent a later sixth- and seventh-century dress fashion of Continental origin but the clearest indications of inter-regional social and cultural contacts are seen in the Merovingian gold coinage and items from north or west Britain and the Mediterranean.

Social differentiation

The gold finger-ring was very likely made for a local elite patron in the fifth century but it is unclear whether it was lost or deposited at this time or as a curated item later in the sixth or seventh century. Within the material culture assemblage of the fifth to later sixth centuries there are four silver or silver-gilt items – two brooch fragments and two mount fragments, one possibly from a drinking horn and one possibly from a scabbard and possibly fifth-century – but these may be hack metal for recycling. Otherwise, the material suggests the degrees of social differentiation normally signalled in burial and material culture over this period. The late sixth- to early eighth-century assemblage has a much stronger elite signature with gold and gold-and-garnet jewellery, hanging-bowl and other fittings, east Mediterranean vessels and gold coinage. Other status items include a gilded copper-alloy roundel mount with interlace around a central inlay (PAS SF-0D3FD3) and the bird's-head terminal from a silvered copper-alloy mount in Style II (SF-0D20B0) whose beak has a Y-shaped groove down the centre of the beak seen on metalwork from Sutton Hoo Mound 1 (Speake 1980, 42). The harness fittings also indicate a high-status milieu and among these the anthropomorphic strap mount provides a direct link to elite equipment buried at Sutton Hoo. There are no elite items among the small ninth- to eleventh-century assemblage.

The proportions of elite indicators and occurrence of precious metal objects over time support the suggestion that the late sixth to early eighth centuries saw the most marked and emphatic elite activity at Hoxne. Elite indicators make up 9 per cent of the early medieval assemblage as a whole, but only 4 per cent for material of the fifth to sixth centuries against 13 per cent for the late sixth to early eighth centuries. Although the numbers are small, there is the same trend in the use of precious metal seen at Rendlesham and Coddenham: silver in the fifth to late sixth centuries and gold in the late sixth to early eighth centuries.

As at Rendlesham and Coddenham, the evidence is consistent with social ranking in the fifth and sixth centuries with new degrees of marked social differentiation from the later sixth century which were strongly signalled in material display. This coincides with the development of inter-regional social and exchange contacts of a new reach and scope, and the ability to accrue precious metal and prestige items on a new scale. The gold ring and fragments of silver items could suggest a local magnate presence in the early to middle fifth century and individuals or kindreds of local importance in the middle or later fifth and sixth centuries. There is evidence that the sixth-century community at Hoxne was linked to the same networks of manufacture and acquisition as the emerging central place at Coddenham, and that in the late sixth and early seventh centuries the elite at Hoxne had access to the same crafters, or their products, as the kindred burying their dead at Sutton Hoo.

10.1.1.6 Conclusions

Hoxne has not seen the same intensity of metal-detecting as Rendlesham, Coddenham and Barham, and the assemblage is much smaller. None the less, it is clear that the metal-detected area was part of an elite settlement of the late sixth to early eighth centuries with significant antecedent activity.

Coins and metalwork suggest an official presence in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, and the silver stud and gold finger-ring are consistent with an elite milieu of the early to middle fifth century. The possibility that we are seeing at Hoxne some official administrative functions linked to the establishment of a magnate family who wielded local power well into the fifth century is supported by the other evidence for significant late Roman wealth in the immediate area (10.1.3, below), most notably the fifth-century Hoxne hoard which was deposited *c* 1.3km downstream (north and east) of the metal-detected site on the same side of the valley (Guest 2005; Johns 2010). The silver items and bird brooch indicate a community or kindred of local power and influence in the fifth and sixth centuries with links to the same networks of manufacture and supply as their contemporaries at Coddenham. It is therefore possible to make a case for unbroken activity, with an elite or high-status element, from the late fourth century to the eighth century.

Hoxne from the late sixth to the early eighth century was a focus of elite activity, wealth, inter-regional contacts and early monetisation. There is evidence for non-ferrous metalworking, and for a direct link with the elites burying at Sutton Hoo and so, almost certainly, with Rendlesham. The coin profile and quality of the elite material indicate a site at the apex of the social and economic hierarchies, as at Rendlesham and Coddenham, rather than a second-order aristocratic centre, as at Barham. Hoxne must therefore be considered a magnate residence and estate centre, and very probably the jurisdictional centre of a wider region. The site appears to have lost this special status and character in the second quarter of the eighth century and to have been abandoned by the end of the ninth century, if not earlier.

10.1.2 Landscape and territory

Tom Williamson and Eleanor Rye

The area immediately west of the village of Hoxne appears as a small but distinct *lacuna* in the distribution of early woodland mapped from place-names and the evidence of Domesday (Figs 10.1.8–9). As this area is small its precise extent is blurred and distorted by the process of mapping (Ch 8.3.1) but it clearly extended north across the Waveney into Norfolk and corresponds with the relatively light clay soils and dissected terrain lying in the upper reaches of the Waveney and the lower reaches of the river Dove – which joins the Waveney within Hoxne parish, just below where the Dove itself is joined by a significant tributary stream, the Gold Brook. The distribution of ancient woods, post-medieval commons, early deer parks and major place-names relating to woodland and its clearance suggest that this area of confluences and comparatively well-drained soils was surrounded by more extensive tracts of ground, occupied in the early Middle Ages by areas of woodland and pasture, which extended to the main watersheds north and south with the catchments of the rivers Tas, Deben and Gipping (figs 10.1.8–9).

These watersheds form obvious topographic boundaries to the north and south but the situation is more complex to the east and west. The Waveney and the Little Ouse share the same through valley, the one draining east and the other west from sources lying only 100m apart in the Redgrave and Lopham Fens some 14km upstream from Hoxne. However, although the watershed is physically indistinct the sources suggest that the valley here was characterised by dense woodland. The low watershed and adjacent uplands thus formed a conceptual 'wold' between the two river systems, and so the western edge of the area of open country associated with Hoxne. To the east, a cluster of *-feld* place-names lying to the south of the Waveney (Metfield, Wingfield, Cratfield, Fressingfield), implying the presence of woodland (Ch 6.1), suggests that this tract of open land may not have extended far beyond Hoxne itself. The terrain on both sides of the river is less sloping and dissected here than in the immediate vicinity of Hoxne. Further to the east – in the area around where the Pulham Beck joins the Waveney – there may have been a quite separate territory associated with Mendham, the South Elmhams, or both.

This topographic territory corresponds closely to a group of four Domesday hundreds, two in Suffolk (Bishop's – later Hoxne – and Hartismere) and two in Norfolk (Diss and Earsham), the boundaries of which follow quite closely the main defining watersheds (Fig 10.1.9). Hoxne parish occupies a central location within their combined area which is most unlikely to be coincidental. While lying in Bishop's hundred the parish abuts directly on Hartismere and Earsham, and its north-western edge lies only 900m from the boundary of Diss hundred. The strong indication is that the four hundreds once formed a single territory associated with Hoxne which must pre-date the formal subdivision of

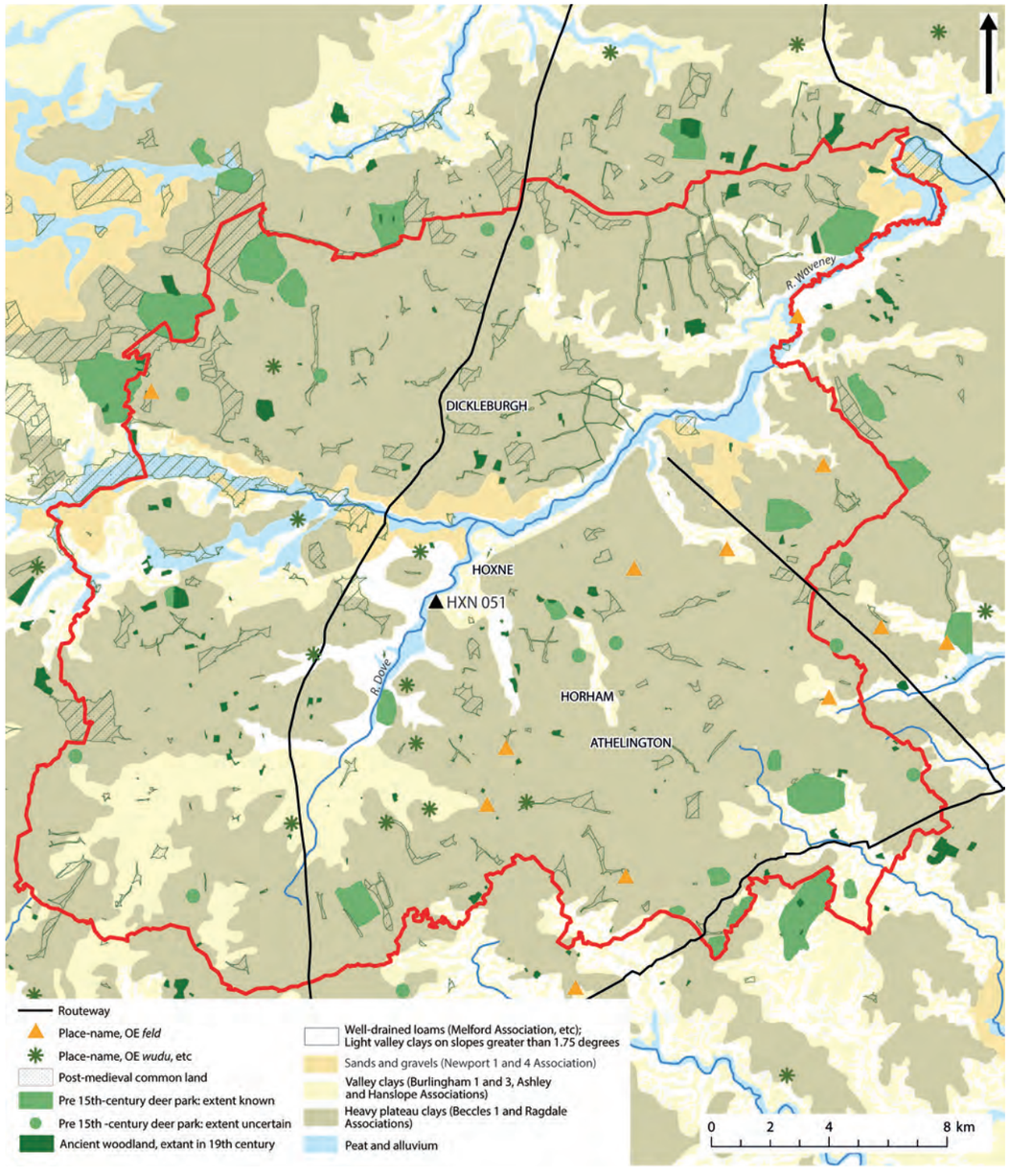

Fig 10.1.8 The Dove and upper Waveney valleys: drainage, soil types and woodland indicators. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

the earldom into two counties in the eleventh century (Ch 8.2.2.1; Williamson 1993, 82; Warner 1996, 147). Domesday treats Diss hundred as part of Norfolk but the vill of Diss itself as part of Hartismere in Suffolk (DB 1, 8).

Hoxne was the meeting place of the hundred and eventually gave its name to it, replacing the appellation 'Bishop's' used in Domesday. 'Bishop's' refers to the fact that the hundred was attached to the manor of Hoxne (Cam 1930, 82), which was itself held by the bishop of Thetford – that is, the East Anglian bishopric. The association was not new. In his will of *c* 942 Theodred – bishop of London but by implication also bishop of East Anglia – refers to his 'bishopriche' or episcopal demesne at Hoxne (Whitelock 1930, 102). This may indicate that it

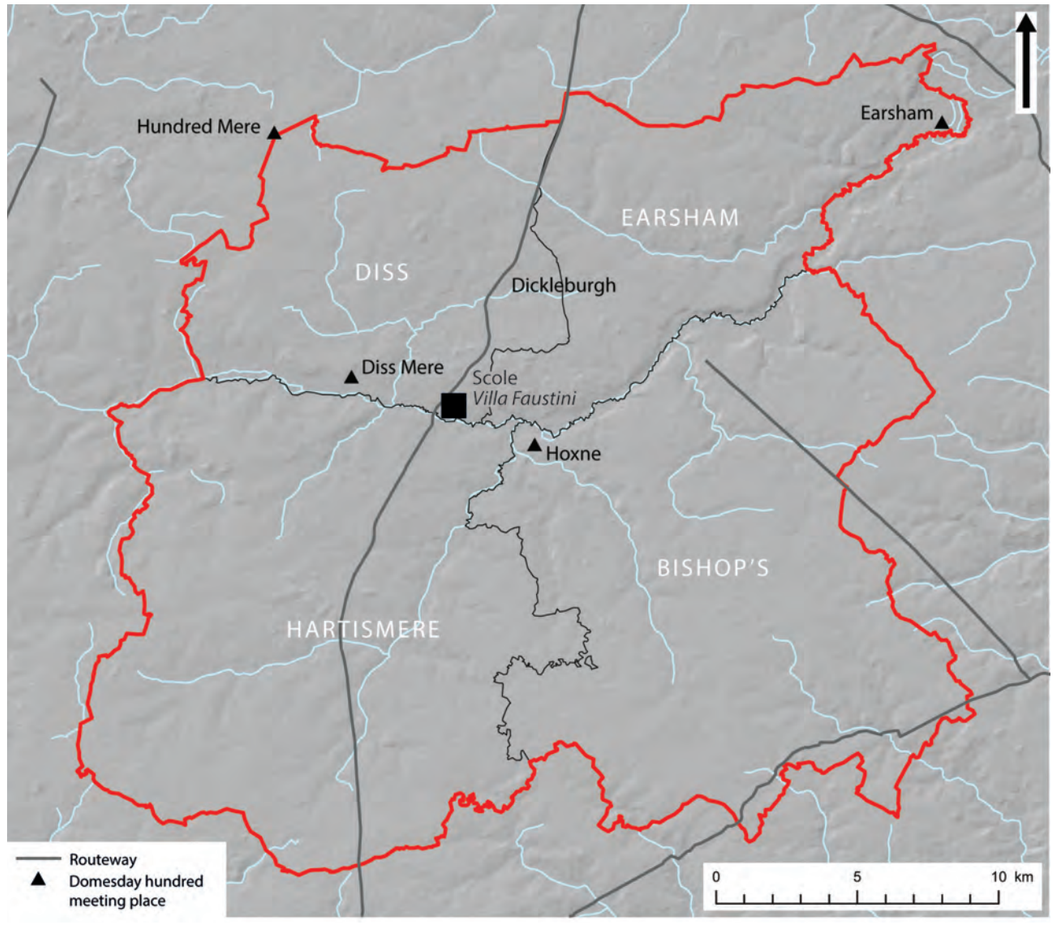

Fig 10.1.9 The Dove and upper Waveney valleys: relief; Domesday hundreds; hundredal meeting places; major Roman roads; Roman small town at Scole; other places mentioned in the text

was the main centre of the bishopric in Suffolk at this time (Ch 8.2.3.1) and in Domesday the church at Hoxne is explicitly described as having been 'the episcopal see of Suffolk' TRE (DB 18, 1). Theodred's will also refers to the *minstre* at Hoxne and to the 'community at St Æthelberht's church' there, the dedication to St Æthelbert – the East Anglian king martyred by Offa in 794 – suggesting a pre-Viking establishment and connections with the East Anglian royal house (Pestell 2004, 81). Theodred's will bequeathed a range of properties – some located outside East Anglia – to a variety of individuals and monastic houses, with bequests to the latter perhaps confirming existing rights (Hart 1992, 213; Pestell 2004, 83). If so, the fact that the two estates granted to the Hoxne community, Horham and Athelington, lay in the wooded south-eastern fringes of the suggested territory may suggest just such pre-existing rights over land in this area. There was still a community of monks here in 1040 when the bishop of East Anglia bequeathed to 'the priests at Hoxne the fenland worth a thousand [pence]' (Whitelock 1930, 72–3). Hoxne was a large and valuable manor in 1086; it had a market before 1066 but this was now in decline due to competition from the new market established by William Malet beside his castle at Eye, some 5km to the south-west (DB 18, 1).

In 1101 the church at Hoxne was granted by Bishop Losinga to Norwich Cathedral Priory, together with a chapel dedicated to St Edmund – the last king of East Anglia, martyred by the Danes in 869 – 'in the same town where the same martyr was killed' (Whitelock 1969). There is no other evidence for identifying Hoxne with the place called *Hægilisdun* where (according to Abbo of Fleury, writing in the 980s) Edmund was killed but it is possible that the previous dedication of the minster here

to an earlier martyred member of the East Anglian royal house facilitated the identification.

There are few obvious signs of Hoxne's past importance in the modern landscape. The parish church is now dedicated to St Peter and St Paul and a charter confirmation from Henry III describes it as St Peter's (*ecclesiam sancti Petri de Hoxa*) (Dugdale 1846, IV, 17). It is prominently positioned on high ground forming a spur or peninsula between the Waveney, the Dove and the Gold Brook, and with extensive views across all three. It appears to be entirely fourteenth- and fifteenth-century (Pevsner 1961, 256–7) but is a large building, and stands within a remarkably large yard of *c* 1ha, perhaps suggestive of an earlier minster status (although there are signs that it may have been extended to the east in the post-medieval period). Immediately to the west is a large moated enclosure, probably associated with the medieval Bishop's Palace, which is shown in its later incarnation – as the site of 'Hoxne Hall' – on a map of 1619 (SRO 110 40 422). Limited excavations within the enclosure in 2010 uncovered quantities of tenth- and eleventh-century pottery (HXN 041). The present-day village, which is located immediately to the south of the church, appears to have originated as a scatter of dwellings around a large triangular open space, the southern apex of which survives as a small green; this is probably the place where the pre-Conquest market was held. The present-day village and church lie 2.5km north and east of the elite site of the fifth to eighth centuries. If this is the location of the pre-Viking minster and episcopal estate centre, as seems likely, then it would appear to represent a reconfiguration of settlement geography between the eighth and tenth centuries.

Other significant pre-Conquest places can be identified within the putative territory, most notably Dickleburgh in Norfolk, on the route of the Roman Pye Road in Diss hundred. Sometime between 1044 and 1052, Oswulf and Leofrun left land at Dickleburgh and Semer (presumably near Semere Green in that parish) to the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds on condition that:

> Four priests should sing, two after Oswulf's day and two after Leofrun's day, and each week [they are] to sing twelve masses. And we desire that whosoever is abbot of St Edmunds Bury should be the guardian of the minsters (*þis minstres mund*), and their priests must never transfer or surrender them to themselves or their kin (Hart 1966, 86–9; S 1608).

The church was still held in four portions in the twelfth century, a division which survived into the eighteenth century, and so can be identified as a pre-Conquest minster (Blomefield 1805, 191–3; Blair 2005, 360). At the time of Domesday the manor of Dickleburgh was held by two priests. The first element of the name has a number of possible interpretations but one is that it is an Irish personal name, *Dícuill*. If so, it may be significant that, according to Bede, Dícuill was of one of Fursa's companions at *Cnobheresburg* (*HE* III, 19; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 274–7). There is a possible parallel in the name of Malmesbury in Wiltshire, the first element of which is generally accepted as the Irish personal name *Maildub* (Watts 2004, 394). All Saints, the parish church of Dickleburgh, has no obviously early fabric but the location of a possible early monastery towards the wooded fringes of an early territory yet beside a major transport route has strong echoes of the relationship of sites like Burgh and Iken to Rendlesham (Ch 6.1; fig 10.1.9).

There are thus multiple indications that Hoxne was an important place in the tenth and eleventh centuries and that it lay at the centre of a territory focused on the confluence of the Dove and the Waveney which was fossilised in the four Domesday hundreds of Diss, Hartismere, Earsham and Bishop's (Hoxne). Its location, and the broader pattern of contemporary settlement and activity, suggest that the fifth- to eighth-century elite site was a focal point of broadly the same area and, as discussed in detail below (10.1.4), the long-term persistence of indicators of importance in this area suggest that it perpetuated a similar territorial configuration of the Roman period.

10.1.3 Patterns of settlement, burial and economy

Stuart Brookes and Christopher Scull

10.1.3.1 The archaeological evidence

Excluding the archaeology at HXN 051, there are thirteen post-Roman settlement or burial sites of the period AD 400–800 known from the recording of *in situ* features or deposits. Otherwise, information comes from chance discoveries and surface finds: 761 individual metal items, and eighty-four finds of pottery totalling at least 179 sherds. These data have been integrated and plotted using the same approaches and methods as for the Deben and Gipping valley case studies (Ch 6.2.1.2).

The late Roman background (Fig 10.1.10)

Judith Plouviez

The Roman archaeology has not been assessed in detail but the HER and PAS records have been rapidly scanned

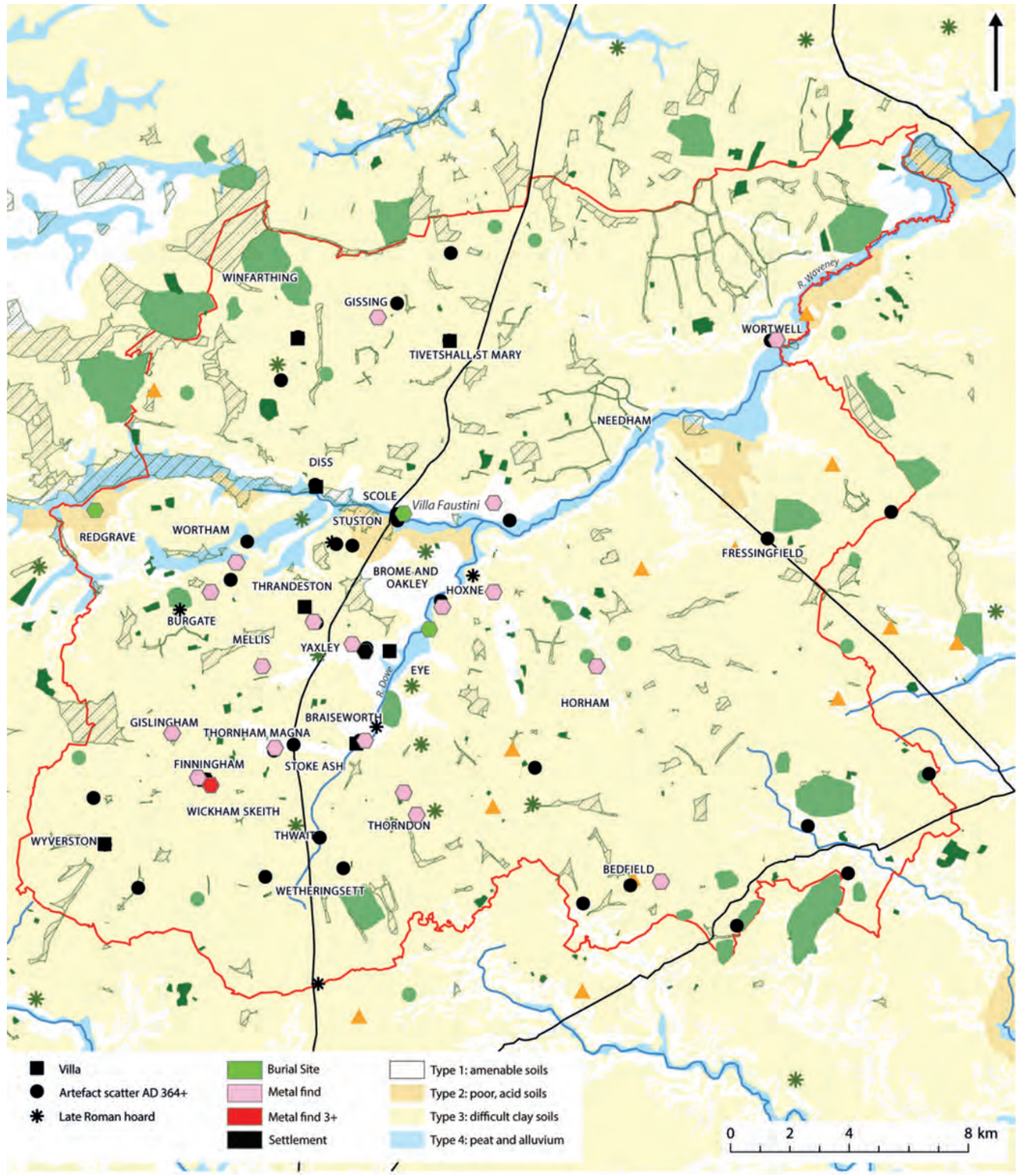

Fig 10.1.10 The Dove and upper Waveney: main sites and finds AD 360–410 and Phase 1 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

to identify the sites with the strongest evidence for late Roman activity, specifically in the fifty years after 360.

The Hoxne site lies 3km east of the Roman road that links London, Colchester and Caistor-by-Norwich (Margary 3). There were substantial roadside settlements at Scole where it crosses the Waveney and at Stoke Ash where it crosses the Dove. Scole was most likely the place named as *Villa Faustini* in the Antonine Itinerary and can be classed as a small town; activity here continues into the fifth century (Ashwin and Tester 2014). Current evidence suggests that activity at Stoke Ash diminished during the fourth century but continued at least into the 360s. Both Scole and Stoke Ash are probably also at junctions with secondary Roman routes running east–west. In the east of

the study area a second major Roman road (Margary 35) runs north-west through the parishes of Fressingfield and Weybread towards the roadside settlement at Needham, on the Norfolk side of the Waveney crossing where there is evidence for activity into the fourth century (NHER 11071; 24601; Margary 1973, 268–9).

Scatters of pottery or of metal objects indicate widespread settlement and activity across the landscape of north Suffolk and south Norfolk illustrated, for example, by fieldwalking in the largely clayland parishes of Mendham and Metfield in the east of the area. Here there is evidence of Roman activity approximately every 800m along the minor valley sides and hilltops and more occasional settlements on the interfluves (Moore *et al* 1988, 58–9). Although these settlements sometimes include fourth-century material there is more evidence for early Roman and a lack of characteristic late fourth- or fifth-century finds, with Oxford ware recorded from just one settlement (MTF 127).

There is only relatively sparse evidence for high-status buildings, all in the western half of the catchment territory. There is a record, but no details, of a villa at Diss found prior to 1914 (NHER 7926), and in 1857 what may be a hypocaust was uncovered at Eye (EYE 024). Finds of building material indicate substantial structures in Tivetshall St Mary (NHER 60191), Winfarthing (NHER 4291), Thrandeston (TDE 004), Braiseworth (BRA 005), Wickham Skeith (WKS 003) and Wyverstone (WYV 010), and at Oakley (OKY 010) on the outskirts of the Roman small town at Scole. The recorded finds assemblages suggest that some of these, such as Braiseworth, might have been primarily religious sites rather than villas. There is evidence from Hoxne (HXN 026) and Stuston (SUS 003) for buildings with flint footings and perhaps tile roofs but nothing elaborate.

The number of places that show occupation or activity during the second half of the fourth century is far fewer than for the Roman period as a whole. To some extent this may be due to small samples and retrieval biases, and a decline in coin loss in the later fourth century like that identified in east Suffolk is also possible (Plouviez 2004). However, excavation has shown that settlement on the clay plateau at Eye Airfield (YAX 040) was abandoned by the end of the third century, and the same seems true for many of the surface finds groups. A large group of surface finds from Thrandeston (TDE 004) at the head of a minor stream does not include coins later than the early 350s. By contrast, buildings at Braiseworth (BRA 005) and Wickham Skeith (WKS 003) in the Dove valley were in use until the early fifth century. Overall the number of sites producing Valentinian or later material is much lower in the eastern half of the area, east of the Dove valley and the Pye Road, in both Norfolk and Suffolk.

The latest bronze coinage and official belt fittings can be used to suggest a military or administrative presence in the later fourth and early fifth centuries. Two such belt fittings are known from excavation at the Scole settlement on the south side of the Waveney crossing (OKY 005; Ashwin and Tester 2014, 354, fig 7.21) and others from metal-detecting, often at places where evidence for late fourth- or early fifth-century activity is followed by evidence of later fifth- or sixth-century activity in the immediate vicinity, as at Hoxne itself (HXN 051), Tivetshall St Mary (NHER 11008), Wortwell (NHER 28209), Brockdish (NHER 60459 and 53857), Braiseworth (BRA 005), Stuston (SUS 029) and Fressingfield (FSF 021).

Two exceptional hoards from the Dove valley, both deposited in the earlier fifth century, represent one of the most significant concentrations of late Roman portable wealth known from Britain. The first was found in 1781 at Clint Farm beside the river Dove in the south end of Eye parish (EYE 007); it is said to have consisted of more than 600 gold *solidi* up to Honorius with a later account also including Constantine III (407–11) in the list of emperors (Robertson 2000, 404). The second is the Hoxne hoard (HXN 019), discovered in 1992 6km north of Clint Farm, which included 580 gold *solidi*, 14,630 silver coins (mainly s*iliquae*, often clipped and including issues of Constantine III), gold jewellery (bracelets, necklaces, rings) and silver table ware (spoons, strainers, bowls, cups, toothpicks) that had been carefully packed in a wooden box (Guest 2005; Johns 2010). It has been suggested that both hoards represent part of the wealth of an aristocratic family whose holdings included a significant villa estate in the area of Eye and Hoxne (Johns 2010, 59, 204–5). More modest hoards of silver *siliquae* from Stuston (SUS 029) and Burgate (BUR 002) are a further indication of early fifth-century wealth in the area.

Phase 1 (420–70) (Fig 10.1.10)

A single burial, two cremation cemeteries and a settlement site certainly or very probably represent activity in the first half or middle of the fifth century. At the Scole Roman settlement (NHER 1007), an inhumation inserted into the upper levels of a late fourth-century pit had a supporting-arm brooch with beads and an earlier Roman brooch (NHER 1007; Ashwin and Tester 2015, 92, figs 22–3, pl 2.18). The cremation cemeteries are known from nineteenth-century finds at Waterloo Plantation, Eye (EYE 003; West 1998, 35–6, figs 44, 44a) and Moneypot Hill, Redgrave (RGV 004/005;

West 1998, 91, fig 123). At Hartismere School, Eye (EYE 083/084), excavation of an area of 4.7ha has recorded settlement features which include nineteen *Grubenhäuser* and two ground-level timber buildings, representing activity from the first half or middle of the fifth century to the seventh century (Martin *et al* 2008, 518–19; Caruth and Goffin 2012). One of the timber buildings appears to represent the longhouse tradition of the North Sea coastal regions in the Roman Iron Age and Migration Period. There is evidence to suggest iron smelting and non-ferrous metalworking as well as antler- and bone-working and textile production.

Other than this, early to middle fifth-century activity is indicated by twenty-three finds of brooches or brooch fragments from eighteen locations other than HXN 051. These are four supporting-arm brooches of Typ Perlberg, nineteen cruciform brooches of Martin's group 1, and a simple bow brooch from Thorndon, Suffolk (PAS SF9408) that most closely resembles brooches of Typ Glaston. There are six cruciform brooches from the same immediate area at Wickham Skeith (Suffolk) and two from the same location at Thorndon (Suffolk) but otherwise these are single finds. Most, but not all, are from places or locations with evidence for continuing activity into the later fifth and sixth centuries. At Yaxley, Wickham Skeith and Wortham (all Suffolk) these are the earliest material at significant foci of activity in Phase 2 which very probably included burial sites. The cruciform brooch from Yaxley (PAS SF-FE1D37) shows heat damage and other material also indicates a cremation cemetery (YAX 016).

Phase 2 (470–570) (Fig 10.1.11)

In addition to Eye and Redgrave, four further burial sites can be assigned to the later fifth to later sixth centuries. In Norfolk, a single inhumation with a cruciform and an annular brooch was found in 1849 at Gissing (NHER 10961; Meaney 1964, 175), two surviving urns from cremations found in Earsham churchyard in the mid-nineteenth century and in 1906 (NHER 11110) can be dated to the later fifth or sixth centuries (Meaney 1964, 173; Myres 1977, figs 148, 338; cf Hills and Lucy 2013, 229–32, fig 3.29), and at Earsham Quarry nine to eleven furnished inhumations and a possible cremation were recorded during excavation in 2009 (NHER 44609; Gurney and Hoggett 2010, 138); in Suffolk, furnished inhumations are recorded at Thorndon (THD 051; Meaney 1964, 235; West 1998, 98). Probable settlement features are recorded from Rickinghall Superior (RKS 015) and Wortham (WTM 010). Three inhumations without grave goods and a horse burial excavated at Eye airfield (EYE 123) have been tentatively assigned this date on the basis of unstratified material in the immediate vicinity that might represent disturbed grave goods and their proximity to the settlement site at Hartismere School (Minter and Wreathall 2016, 623).

Otherwise, settlement and activity is represented by over 400 surface finds or chance finds of metalwork and pottery, mostly concentrated within the centre and western half of the proposed territory. Along the Norfolk side of the Waveney valley there are concentrations of material indicating significant foci of activity in the parishes of Roydon, Scole and Brockdish, with further metalwork finds from Bressingham and Diss, and a significant concentration of material on the Suffolk side at Brome and Oakley immediately across the river from Scole (OKY 010; West 1998, 86–7, fig 118). In Suffolk, there are concentrations of material along the Dove valley and its tributaries at Hoxne 051 itself, and in Eye, Yaxley, Braiseworth, Thorndon, Wickham Skeith, Finningham and Gislingham parishes, and along the tributary stream that joins the Waveney at Diss in the parishes of Palgrave, Wortham and Burgate; nineteenth-century finds from one or more sites in Hoxne parish that cannot be more precisely located are almost certainly from inhumations (HXN 092–095; West 1998, 44–5, fig 49).

Scatters and concentrations of finds at Cotton, Mendlesham and Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford in Suffolk indicate activity on the higher ground of the interfluve, and the same can be seen in Norfolk in finds from Bressingham, Winfarthing, Gissing, the Tivetshalls and Burston. At the Tivetshalls, Burston, Mendlesham and Wetheringsett this may be explained partly by proximity to the route of the Roman road; in the other cases activity is associated with the courses of tributary streams.

In the east of the postulated territory there is evidence for activity along the Waveney valley at Needham and Wortwell in Norfolk and Mendham in Suffolk, and in tributary valleys at Horham and Fressingfield in Suffolk and Pulham Market and Pulham St Mary in Norfolk. In the south-east, there is material from Laxfield, at the head of the river Blyth, from Badingham and Dennington at the head of the river Alde, and at Bedfield.

Phase 3 (570–720) (Fig 10.1.12)

No settlement site that came into use during this period is known from excavation but there was probably activity at Hartismere School, Eye (EYE 083/084) into the seventh century. The only burial site of the period known is an elite female inhumation of the middle seventh century at

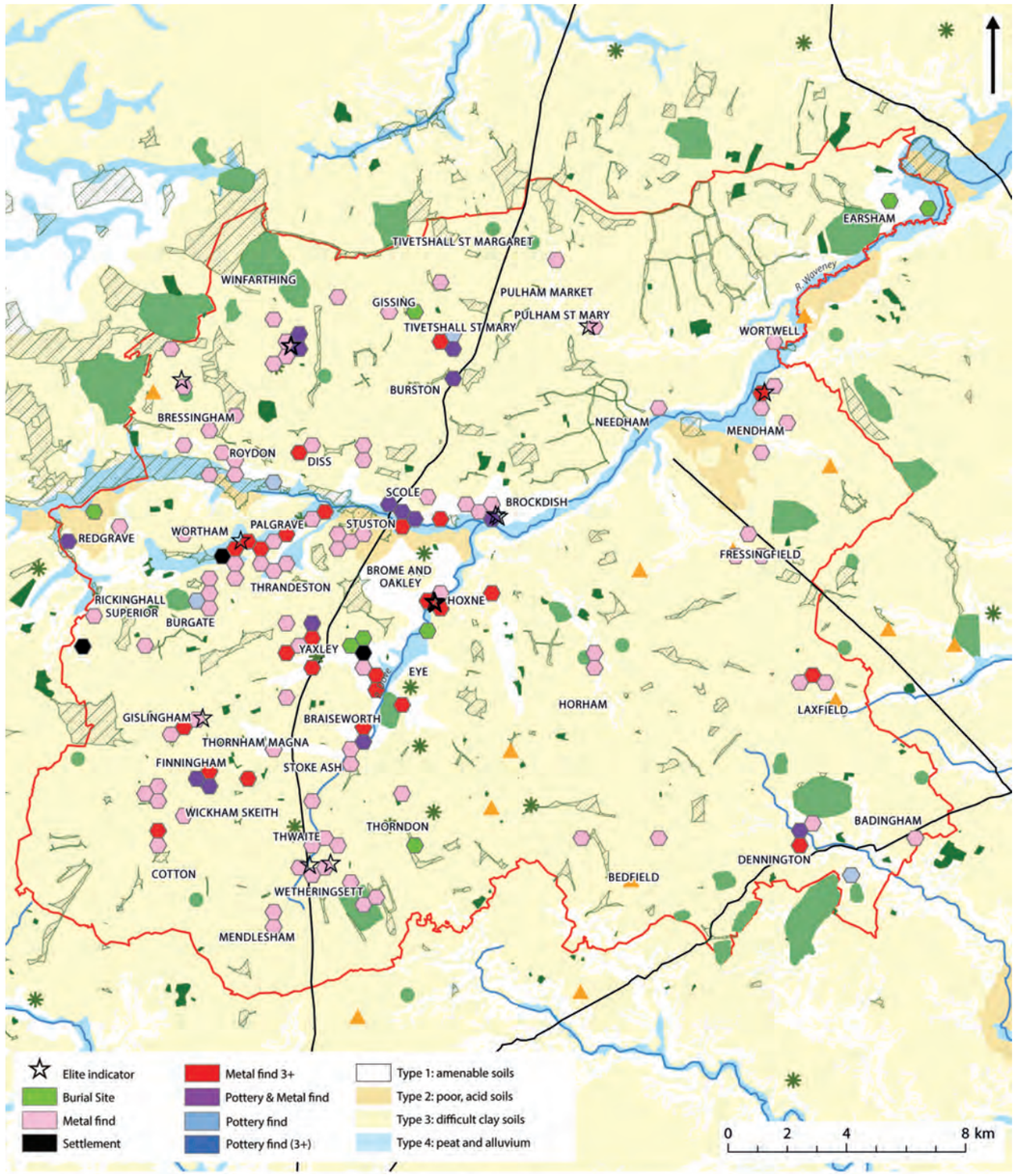

Fig 10.1.11 The Dove and upper Waveney: Phase 2 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

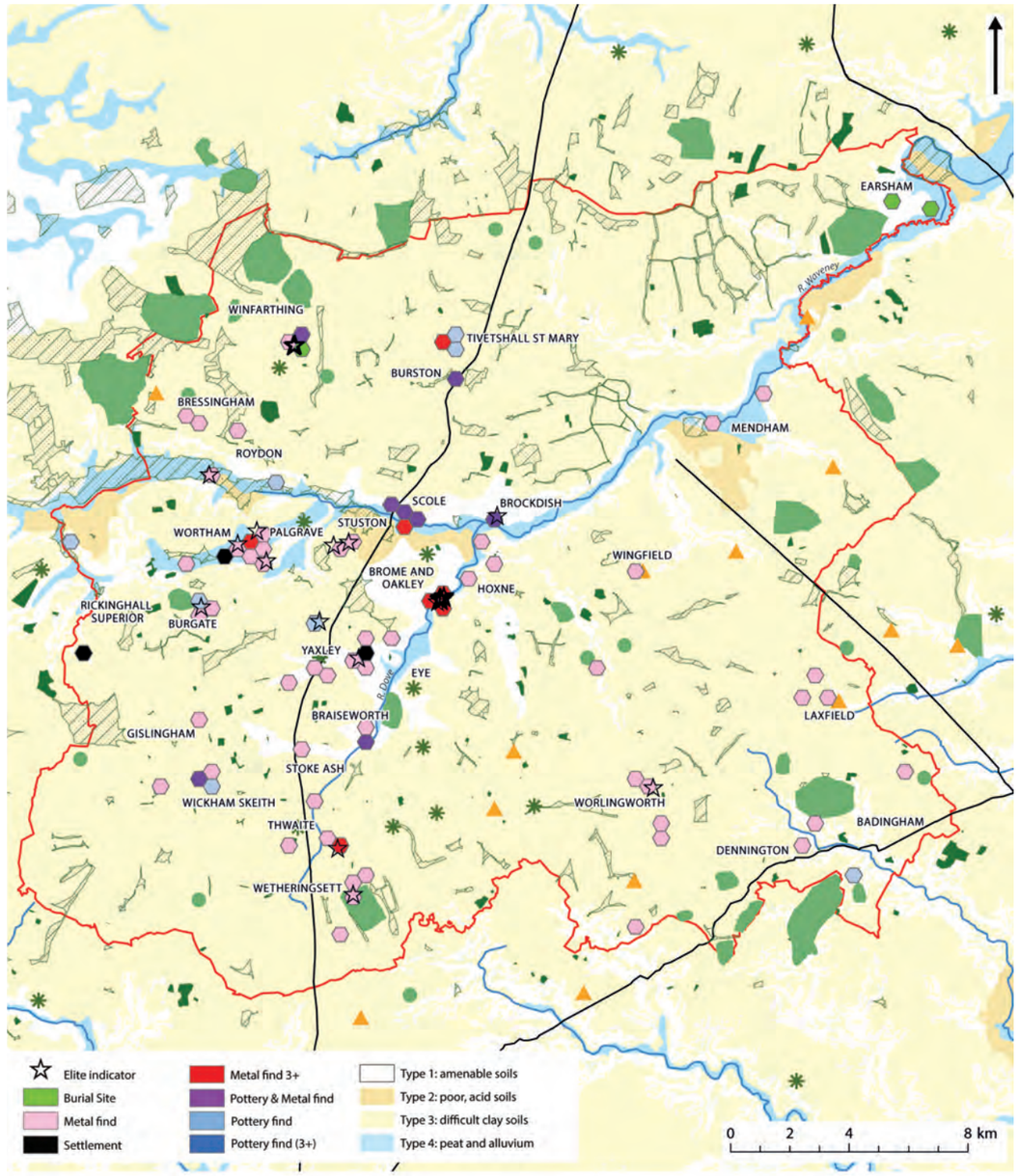

Fig 10.1.12 The Dove and upper Waveney: Phase 3 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

Winfarthing, Norfolk, at a location where other metal finds and pottery indicate both wider contemporary and antecedent Phase 2 activity (NHER 62302; PAS NMS-E95041).

As in south-east Suffolk, the number of metal finds is lower than for Phase 2, again reflecting broader changes in material culture (Chs 6.2.1.2 and 9.5.1.4). The general trend of density and distribution continues the pattern seen in Phase 2, with activity on or adjacent to most Phase 2 locations and a heavy concentration of finds in the Dove valley and its tributaries and the Waveney valley and its tributaries west of its confluence with the Dove. As in Phase 2, there is evidence of settlement or activity on the interfluves, notably at Winfarthing in Norfolk.

Phases 4 (720–850) and 5 (850–1100) (Fig 10.1.13)

Information on metal finds after 800 has not been comprehensively collated (Ch 6.2.2) and so the data for Phases 4 and 5 are less representative than for the earlier periods. None the less, some general conclusions can be drawn.

The overall pattern of distribution shows a lower intensity of activity along the Waveney valley and its tributaries east of the confluence with the Dove than in Phases 2–3, and a stronger concentration of activity in the Dove valley itself. In Phase 4, finds of metalwork and Ipswich ware suggest more widespread settlement or activity on the higher, less tractable soils in the south-

Fig 10.1.13 The Dove and upper Waveney: activity of Phases 4–5. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

west and north-west of the proposed territory. In the south-east metalwork finds from Monk Soham, Wilby and Worlingworth may show a similar trend, and there is continuing activity at Laxfield and Dennington. In the east and north-east evidence for settlement and activity is largely confined to the Waveney valley and its tributaries.

10.1.3.2 Settlement patterns and mortuary geography

The most striking feature of the early medieval settlement geography is the persistent clustering of evidence for settlement and activity in the western half of the proposed territory, and in particular in the valley of the

Dove and its tributaries, and in the valley of the Waveney and its tributaries west of its confluence with the Dove. This appears to represent a long-term concentration of population and settlement. By contrast, evidence is much sparser in the lower Waveney valley and its tributaries to the east. The same broad pattern can be seen in the Roman-period settlement geography and is to be explained by the combination of favourable soils and terrain and antecedent human geography, itself largely conditioned by the same factors of physical geography. Early medieval activity is concentrated within an area that saw a concentration of population and wealth in the late Roman period and where a significant long-distance routeway crossed a major river valley.

There is a strong correlation between evidence for fifth- to eighth-century activity and the more tractable and fertile soils, a pattern that continues into the eleventh century (Tables 10.1.4–5). This is evident not just in the core area of settlement activity but also along the Waveney valley and its tributaries to the east at Mendham, Pulham Market and Pulham St Mary, and Earlham, and in the clusters of activity at the heads of the Blyth and Alde valleys at Laxfield, Badingham and Dennington. Overall, there is some evidence for a greater degree of settlement or activity on the less tractable soils over the course of the eighth to eleventh centuries (Table 10.1.5).

That said, a feature of the western part of the putative territory is evidence for settlement and activity on less tractable upland soils from the early or middle fifth century. Although there is evidence for some expansion towards the margins in Phases 4 and 5, there was clearly significant activity in these zones in Phases 2 and 3, notably in the parishes of Bressingham, Burston, Gissing, the Tivetshalls and Winfarthing north of the Waveney in Norfolk, and in the parishes of Cotton, Thorndon and Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford in Suffolk. Closer analysis, however, reveals a more complex picture. Activity at Thorndon, Wetheringsett and Mendlesham is associated with minor watercourses tributary to the Dove, and the Norfolk sites are also associated with minor watercourses that dissect the heavier upland terrains. At Wetheringsett in Suffolk and at Burston and Tivetshall St Mary in Norfolk the evidence for activity is on the route of the Roman road, suggesting that this remained an important communication route through the fifth to seventh centuries. The apparently peripheral location of a significant place at Wetheringsett on the southern margin of the watershed territory may therefore have to do in part with oversight of the main approach route from the south.

Too few certain burial sites are known to allow secure generalisations about mortuary geography. Early cremation cemeteries at Eye (EYE 003) and Redgrave (RGV 004) are both on valley sides overlooking watercourses, and both may have functioned as focal burial places for a dispersed population or wider area; finds at Yaxley (YAX 016) may represent another such site. The Eye cemetery is on the east side of the Dove valley, *c* 1km upstream (south) of the elite site at Hoxne.

Table 10.1.4 The Hoxne territory: early medieval PAS finds (excluding Hoxne) and HER records and their locations relative to soil type

	Area (sq km)	%	PAS	%	HER	%
1: good soils	61.2	9.6	36	32.1	170	28.2
2: acid soils	11.1	1.7	0	0.0	5	0.8
3: difficult clay	543.0	84.9	71	63.4	374	62.0
4: waterlogged silt/peat	24.0	3.7	5	4.5	54	9.0
Total	**639.3**	**100.0**	**112**	**100.0**	**603**	**100.0**

Table 10.1.5 The Hoxne territory: sites datable by early medieval pottery and their locations relative to soil type

	Area (sq km)	%	Hand-made	%	Ipswich	%	Thetford	%
1: good soils	61.2	9.6	16	28.6	5	17.2	1	25.0
2: acid soils	11.1	1.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
3: difficult clay	543.0	84.9	40	71.4	24	82.8	3	75.0
4: waterlogged silt/peat	24.0	3.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	**639.3**	**100.0**	**56**	**100.0**	**29**	**100.0**	**4**	**100.0**

The Redgrave cemetery overlooks the Waveney valley from its south side, and the Yaxley site is on high ground on the north side of the tributary valley that joins the Dove at Eye. All known burial sites of Phases 2 and 3 have similar locations overlooking major watercourses, as at Earsham, or indicate settlement associated with the valleys of tributary or minor watercourses, as at Gissing, Winfarthing, Eye and Thorndon.

No site occupied at the end of the fourth century can be shown to have survived into the middle or later fifth century but there are places such as Wickham Skeith (WKS 003), Braiseworth (BRA 005) and Hoxne 051 itself where the surface finds suggest continuing activity immediately adjacent or in the immediate vicinity. There were clearly major dislocations and reconfigurations of settlement in the first half of the fifth century but, even if we allow for a fall in population, the catchments of the Dove and upper Waveney remained a focus of population, with occupation and exploitation of the same favoured terrains. A reduction in charcoal content in the immediate post-Roman sediments in the Oakley palaeochannel of the Waveney points to a fall in the intensity of human occupation that can be linked to the abandonment of the Scole settlement but the pollen record does not indicate a decline in arable farming and suggests a continuity of landscape management in the immediate locality (Wiltshire 2014, 418, 421). A relatively high population density and intensity of farming may go some way to explaining a significant early post-Roman presence on the uplands, especially if a post-Roman shift to greater emphasis on animal husbandry in an area with limited tracts of amenable arable land prompted organised exploitation of wood pasture zones.

10.1.3.3 Social differentiation and hierarchy

Apart from the gold finger-ring and – possibly – the silver-gilt mount from HXN 051 there is no elite material of the early to middle fifth century. There are, however, fragments of silver-gilt items, all brooches or other dress accessories, of the later fifth to later sixth centuries from nine locations: Bressingham (PAS SF-EAD451), Scole (NHER 53857), Winfarthing (PAS NMS-91234D; NMS-B402BB) and Pulham St Mary (NHER 56584) in Norfolk, and in Suffolk, Gislingham (PAS SF-5AEA1D), Mendham (SF-EA66C1), Wortham (SF-E06595) and Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford (SF-6A9565). These indicate individuals or kindreds able to acquire precious metals and commensurate craft skills at these places, all but two of which are in the western part of the putative territory. This trend becomes more marked in Phase 3, with a concentration of places with indicators in the Dove valley, the Waveney valley west of its confluence with the Dove, and the area in-between, at Brockdish in Norfolk (NHER 53857), and in Suffolk at Burgate (BUR 023), Eye (PAS SF-BD607D), Palgrave (PAL Misc; SF-B6EFA1), Stuston (SUS 030; PAS SF-A3C400) and Wortham (SF-E596EC; SF-E693D4) as well as the Hoxne site. The richly furnished inhumation and other finds from Winfarthing indicate a continuing elite presence here, and there are single finds of elite material from Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford (WCB 012) and Worlingworth (PAS SF-FDADFB) in Suffolk: all three places are on the upland margins of the proposed territory. There are elite items of Phases 4 and 5 from Pulham Market in Norfolk (NHER 54888) and Thwaite (PAS SF-176F05; SF-4B8CEC) and Westhorpe (WTP 006) in Suffolk.

There is clear evidence for social and economic differentiation from the later fifth or earlier sixth century, and for locally important individuals or kindreds. From the later sixth century the elite finds – gold jewellery and fittings from imported metal vessels and elaborate weapon and harness fittings – reflect the broader changes in the material expression of elite identity and the greater range and scale of elite social and economic contacts that are consistent with new degrees of social differentiation, surplus extraction and political power. In Phase 2 the evidence suggests a number of places associated with important local kindreds in the western half of the proposed territory, with finds at Pulham St Mary and Mendham suggesting autonomous groups to the east. The heavy concentration in Phase 3 of places with evidence for an elite presence in the valleys of the Dove and the Waveney west of their confluence, taken with the absence of elite indicators at Pulham St Mary and Mendham, suggests a consolidation of elite interest in this area, which on this basis can be identified as the core territory of a ruling elite and the focus of rulership for the wider region. Within this core area Hoxne stands out as a likely central place on the basis of its coin and metalwork assemblage and links to elite networks in south-east Suffolk. As well as the elite establishment at Winfarthing, the finds suggest a further high-status place at Wetheringsett, which was a centre of coin use in EM1–EM3 (below).

Inter-regional contacts are most clearly seen in the elite archaeology of the later sixth and seventh centuries, but there is evidence for earlier inter-regional cultural contacts or affiliations in, for example, fragments of silver-gilt keystone garnet disc brooches from Winfarthing (PAS NMS-91234D; NMS-B402BB) and Gislingham (SF-5AEA1D) which suggest connections with Kent in the middle of the sixth century, and the small bow-brooch from the border of Scole and Brockdish parishes (NMS-C5EBB3) which has affinities with Thuringian types of the

late fifth and earlier sixth centuries found in northern France and east of the Rhine (Böhme 1988; Legoux *et al* 2009, 256; Soulat 2018, 187, fig 118).

10.1.3.4 Coinage and coin use

Andrew Woods

In addition to the nineteen coins from the Hoxne site and the two from Hoxne parish there are sixty-four coins known from single or surface finds within the putative territory as well as two mounted coins from the elite burial at Winfarthing.

A majority of EM1 coin finds, including those from Hoxne, are from the Dove and Waveney valleys west of their confluence and the area between them, with outliers to the south and east (Fig 10.1.14). These can be divided into two broad groups according to their gold fineness and chronology. The earlier group are coins from Fressingfield, Brome and Oakley, Diss and Hoxne itself. Fressingfield has a sixth-century Byzantine copper coin (PAS SF-69E582) struck for Justinian I. The Diss coin

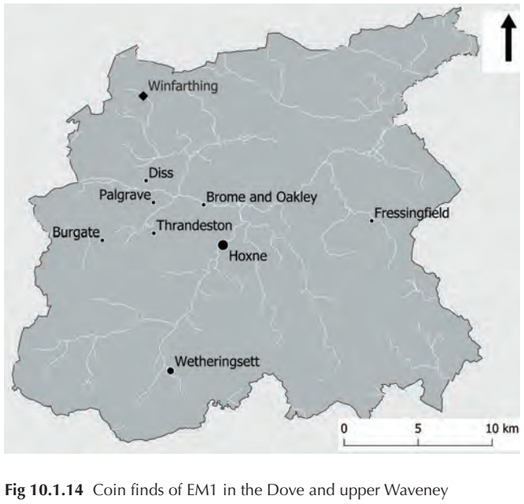

Fig 10.1.14 Coin finds of EM1 in the Dove and upper Waveney valleys. Circles indicate surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins; diamonds indicate grave finds

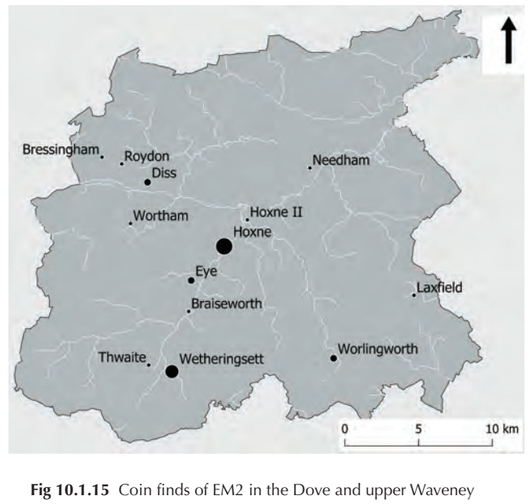

Fig 10.1.15 Coin finds of EM2 in the Dove and upper Waveney valleys. Circles indicate surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins

Fig 10.1.16 Coin finds of EM3 in the Dove and upper Waveney valleys. Circles indicate surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins

Fig 10.1.17 Coin finds of EM4 in the Dove and upper Waveney valleys. Circles indicate settlement site and surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins

(EMC 1986.8411) is a mint-and-moneyer *tremissis* with a fineness in excess of 80 per cent (Blackburn and Grierson 1986, no. 411) and the Brome and Oakley coin (OKY 010) is a Merovingian Royal *tremissis* struck for Theodebert II in the decades around 600. Later coins, dated towards the end of EM1, are two *tremisses* from Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford (EMC 2007.0291; PAS SF-F3F683) from Quentovic and Frisia, and English gold shillings from Palgrave (EMC 2018.0228), Thrandeston (EMC 2010.0008) and Burgate (EMC 2010.0009). To this group can be added the two die-linked *solidi* of Sigebert III from the Winfarthing burial, both of which were mounted with suspension loops as part of a necklace and probably deposited in the middle of the seventh century (PAS NMS-E95041).

With the exception of the Byzantine coin from Fressingfield, the small number of sites with evidence for coin use in the late sixth and early seventh centuries are thus concentrated in what the contemporary archaeology suggests was the core area of elite interest. In the middle of the seventh century the data suggest an intensification and expansion of coin use, with more finds within this core area as well as to the south at Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford. This pattern is comparable to that seen in the Deben territory, with a core of early coin use and an intensification and expansion in the middle of the seventh century. This area remains the main focus of coin use throughout EM1 to EM3, although with an increasing emphasis on the Dove valley and its southern tributary running north through Wetheringsett. This can be seen in EM2, with an increase in the number of finds from Diss, Hoxne and Wetheringsett and the first evidence for coin use at Eye and Braiseworth (Fig 10.1.15).

In EM3 (Fig 10.1.16), a number of the sites with the largest numbers of coins in period EM2 – Hoxne, Diss and Wetheringsett – all have fewer finds, from a combined total of twenty-one in EM2 to only eleven in EM3. This runs counter to the norm for East Anglia and contrasts with Eye and Braiseworth which have similar numbers of coins in EM2 and EM3. At the same time there appears to be an expansion of coin use to the south and west, with finds from Stoke Ash, Gislingham and Finningham, and to the north and north-east with finds at Wortwell and Tivetshall.

In EM4 (Fig 10.1.17), the core area of EM1 coin use is all but empty of finds with a single coin from Diss. Otherwise, the small number of coin finds are from the valley of the Dove and its tributaries south of Hoxne at Eye, Braiseworth and Wetheringsett. The significance of this shift in monetary geography is considered against the broader range of evidence for settlement and activity below.

10.1.4 Conclusions

Its location and material culture signature, taken with the wider topography and human geography, suggest that the elite site at Hoxne was an important place from the later fifth century if not earlier, and the central place of an administrative region broadly equivalent to the Domesday hundreds of Hartismere, Bishop's, Diss and Earsham from the later sixth until the earlier eighth century. The proximity of the cremation cemetery (EYE 003) may suggest that immediate locality had a focal importance for a wider community from the early or middle fifth century. There is a good case to be made, on the basis of the gold coin hoard from Clint Farm (EYE 007) and the Hoxne hoard (HXN 019), that the Dove valley was central to an important villa estate or magnate holding in the later fourth and earlier fifth centuries, and the gold finger-ring from the Hoxne site links it to an early to middle fifth-century elite milieu. There is therefore strong circumstantial evidence for continuities in the geography of power here across the fourth to eighth centuries, even if the actors and their circumstances changed.

The fifth- to eighth-century elite site lies 3.4km south-east of the Roman small town at Scole, a spatial relationship between the early medieval central place and the Roman settlement very similar to that noted at Coddenham and, in terms of proximity, comparable to Rendlesham and what we have proposed for Blythburgh. As at Coddenham, the Hoxne site lies in a valley a few kilometres from a Roman small town located at the river crossing of a major road. The Scole small town may have been an administrative centre but, as we have noted above, by the later fourth century official functions were exercised less at such places and were increasingly entwined with the authority of aristocratic landholders at rural magnate centres such as can be inferred at Hoxne. We have argued that at Rendlesham, Coddenham and Blythburgh the major early medieval places were established in localities that had long-term associations with the exercise of authority, and a feature of these landscapes at Rendlesham and Blythburgh is Old English place-names incorporating Latin loan-words (Chs 6.3 and 9.7.4). The parish name Wickham Skeith, south-west of the Roman roadside settlement at Stoke Ash, is another Old English name incorporating the Latin loan-word *vicus* (Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, 153–4) and suggests a similar persistence of local population and memories of place in the Hoxne hinterland. Thus, both geography and material culture are consistent with the proposal that Hoxne saw a devolution of late Roman official authority to local elites, and that the power vested in a local magnate holding persisted well into the fifth century and heavily influenced the configuration of a local polity and the establishment and consolidation of local rulership over the course of the fifth to seventh centuries.

It is not necessarily the case that power was exercised by members of the magnate family who owned the Hoxne villa estate. If this was one of a number of properties across the Western Empire held by a high-ranking service or senatorial family (Johns 2010, 206) then it is possible that authority was vested in stewards or local clients and that they, civil officials or military officers may have asserted and developed that power in the aftermath of the break from the Western Empire. The cremation cemeteries and material culture types suggest a substantial presence of people from the North Sea coastal areas of the Continent in the Dove and upper Waveney valleys from the second quarter of the fifth century, and it is possible that local magnate rulers were superseded by leaders from incoming groups during the course of the fifth century, or that local magnate power was not sustained in the face of new kindreds and communities with their own structures of authority. As we have argued elsewhere, though, it is equally plausible that the local elites of the sixth and seventh centuries, and their followers, included individuals of British descent.

The cremation cemeteries at Eye and Redgrave, and the probable cremation cemetery at Yaxley, may have acted as focal centres for wider communities largely composed of or descended from migrants from the Continent. The pattern of activity from the later fifth century, which indicates closer relationships between individual settlement and burial sites, would suggest that such social configurations no longer pertained, and the distribution of material indicating locally prominent individuals and kindreds in the later fifth to late sixth centuries suggests a polity in the western half of the watershed territory, focused on the Dove and upper Waveney, with smaller valley territories some distance to the east focusing on Mendham and Pulham St Mary. In the very much smaller and more restricted physical arena of the settlement cell focused on the valleys of the Dove and upper Waveney there simply was not the space or resources to support the development of several autonomous local polities as we have suggested for the Deben territory. The situation apparent in the later sixth and early seventh centuries may therefore represent a tightening and formalisation of local rulership over communities and local leaders that already had a shared social and territorial identity rooted in a tradition of local rulership stretching back to the later fourth century. Rather than the establishment of local paramountcy as a result of competition between leading kindreds of the Hoxne area, this may be the point at which an autonomous grouping was assimilated into a wider hegemony, and its leaders became clients of the East Anglian ruling dynasty.

This also has implications for the original reach of local rulership and the extent of any territory focused on Hoxne in the later sixth to early eighth centuries. What can be identified as the core zone of population, wealth and rulership lay west of the confluence of the Dove and Waveney, linked eastwards to the great estuary and North Sea along the valley of the Waveney – which appears much less densely settled until we get to the eastern limits of Hoxne and Earsham hundreds at Mendham and Earsham respectively. It is striking, too, that Hoxne hundred includes territory south of the watershed separating the Waveney from the Blyth and the Alde. This may suggest that the original Hoxne region did not extend so far to the east and was bounded by the watershed to the south-east, and that the hundredal boundaries here incorporate the results of later territorial and jurisdictional negotiations.

One noteworthy feature of the geography of wealth and power in the late sixth and seventh centuries is the existence of important places on the upland margins of the proposed territory, at Wetheringsett to the south and Winfarthing in the north-west. As already noted, both are associated with the valleys of minor watercourses and have evidence for significant antecedent activity, and Wetheringsett with the route of the Roman road and so the main approach from the south. If the Winfarthing site were an isolated example, or if activity could be shown to begin in the seventh century, then it might be possible to explain it as an exception – perhaps an outlying hunting establishment or a monastic settlement on the margins of the Hoxne territory. Neither can be ruled out, and there is no reason why one place should not encompass a range of roles and functions, but the evidence for activity from the later fifth or earlier sixth century, with a high-status presence in the middle or later sixth, taken with the wider pattern of activity on the upland margins from the middle or later fifth century, strongly indicates that its true context is longer-term and more general patterns of settlement and farming. As noted above, settlement and activity in the upland margins is likely to have been related to regimes of animal husbandry and so, whatever changes of ownership it underwent and whatever other functions may have been attached to it, this is more likely to have been a centre concerned with the management of livestock on a substantial scale. Although located physically towards the boundaries of the social and administrative region focused on Hoxne, this locality was not socially or economically marginal.

As at Rendlesham and Coddenham, the early medieval central place at Hoxne did not retain its importance beyond the middle of the eighth century, suggesting that in this region too there were significant re-adjustments to jurisdictional and administrative landscapes in the first half of the eighth century. The site appears to have been completely abandoned by the end of the ninth century, if not before. The possibility that there was a pre-Viking minster associated with the East Anglian ruling house on or near the site of the present-day parish church might suggest that royal interest in the secular central place was transferred, at least in part, to this new site 2.5km downstream to the north-east. In principle, this could be either the endowment of an autonomous establishment from royal holdings, or the establishment of a church tied to a new royal centre. However, although the Dove valley remains the regional focus of coin use and coin loss until the end of the eighth century, finds of EM4 coins cluster to the south of the elite site and along the route of the Roman road to the south in the parishes of Eye, Braiseworth and Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford, and most of the few elite metalwork finds of Phase 4 are also from this area. This suggests that there was an important place in this locality in the second half of the eighth century, perhaps a secular counterpart to a new minster overlooking the confluence of the Dove and Waveney.

This raises the question of the relationship between Bishop Theodred's ecclesiastical centre and any pre-Viking minster at the same place. Susan Kelly (2004, 92) has noted that the section of Theodred's will which deals with the distribution of ten pounds for charity within his *bishopriche* 'in London and outside London' and ten pounds in his *bishopriche* at Hoxne seems to imply that Hoxne was his only episcopal estate in East Anglia. This may be echoed by Domesday Book's reference to Hoxne as *ecclesia sedes episcopatus de Sudfolc* (where the DB scribe leaves it to the reader to supply the verb) for which James Campbell (1996, 7) has suggested the reading 'a church [which was] the episcopal seat for Suffolk'. He also suggests that Theodred's authority may have only extended to Suffolk and that Norfolk may have had its own bishop – one of the bishops known by name whose diocese is not known (ibid, 14).

One possibility then is that Hoxne had been given to Theodred by King Edmund or King Eadred to help revive the Suffolk diocese. If any pre-Viking minster here was attached to a secular royal centre one could envisage the holding having passed from royal East Anglian ownership to that of Danish leaders and then into West Saxon control. If, on the other hand, any minster held in its own right a foundation endowment granted by East Anglian rulers, then it may be that any gift to Theodred was a restitution of the former minster holdings (or some of them, or a retrospective reconstruction of them) that had fallen into Danish hands and had then passed to West Saxon royalty or their representatives. In our current state of knowledge either model is plausible, and both point to the range and complexity of transmissions and negotiations that are likely to lie behind the Hoxne area's persistence of importance across the second half of the first millennium.

10.2 Caistor-by-Norwich and the Tas basin

10.2.1 The site and assemblage

10.2.1.1 Location and fieldwork history

Location

The remains of the Roman walled town at Caistor (NHER 9786) and areas of early medieval activity in its immediate vicinity lie in the valley of the river Tas *c* 2.5km south of its junction with the river Yare and 5km south of the historic centre of Norwich (Fig 10.2.1). The walled town and most evidence for significant Roman-period activity are on the east bank of the river, which here forms the parish boundary between Caistor St Edmund to the east and Dunston to the west. There is significant archaeology of the fifth to eighth centuries on both sides of the valley and the early medieval 'productive' site (NHER 9759) is on the west bank, immediately opposite the walled town. The Roman road from Colchester (Margary 3d) approached from the south on the west bank of the Tas with access to the town via a ford or bridge.

The Roman town sits at a bend in the river where the change in direction and a slight broadening of the valley shapes local topography and sight lines to give a bowl-like settlement arena overlooked by higher ground. For this analysis we have defined a study area corresponding to this topographic entity, incorporating the valley *c* 1km downstream and *c* 1.5km upstream of the Roman town over an area of *c* 4sq km (Fig 10.2.2). The valley floor is at 5m–10m OD, its sides rising to a crest at 25m–30m OD that defines the horizon when viewed from the valley floor. Soils are well-drained clay loams of the Burlingham 3 Association giving way to heavier clays of the Beccles 1 Association, interspersed with acid sands of the Newport 1 Association, on the higher ground to west and east.

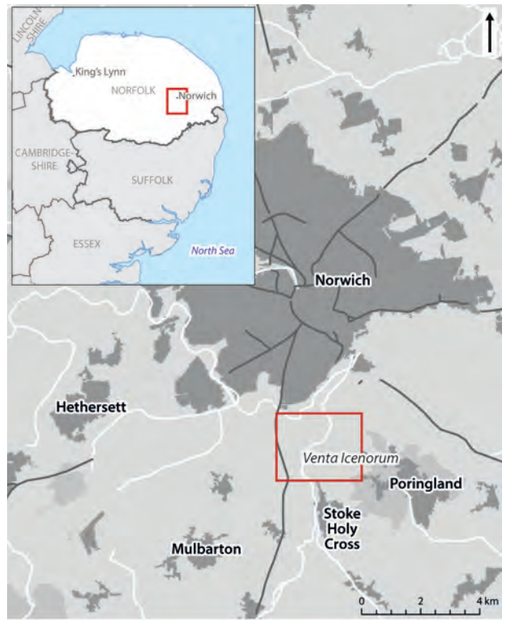

Fig 10.2.1 Location map showing the study area and major sites and places mentioned in the text. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

Fieldwork history

Caistor's Roman walled town was apparently first identified as *Venta Icenorum*, the *civitas* capital of the Iceni, by William Camden in 1579 (Bowden 2013, 145). There was no subsequent major settlement on the site, and the only standing building within the defences is the medieval parish church of St Edmund. Streets and principal buildings were recorded on air photographs in 1928 (Wheeler 1929) and this prompted excavations by Donald Atkinson between 1929 and 1935. Apart from reports on the pottery kilns and temples (Atkinson 1930; 1932), these remained largely unpublished at the time of his death in 1963 and accounts of the forum and baths, and the south defences, were published by Sheppard Frere (1971; 2005) from the surviving records and notes. Frere

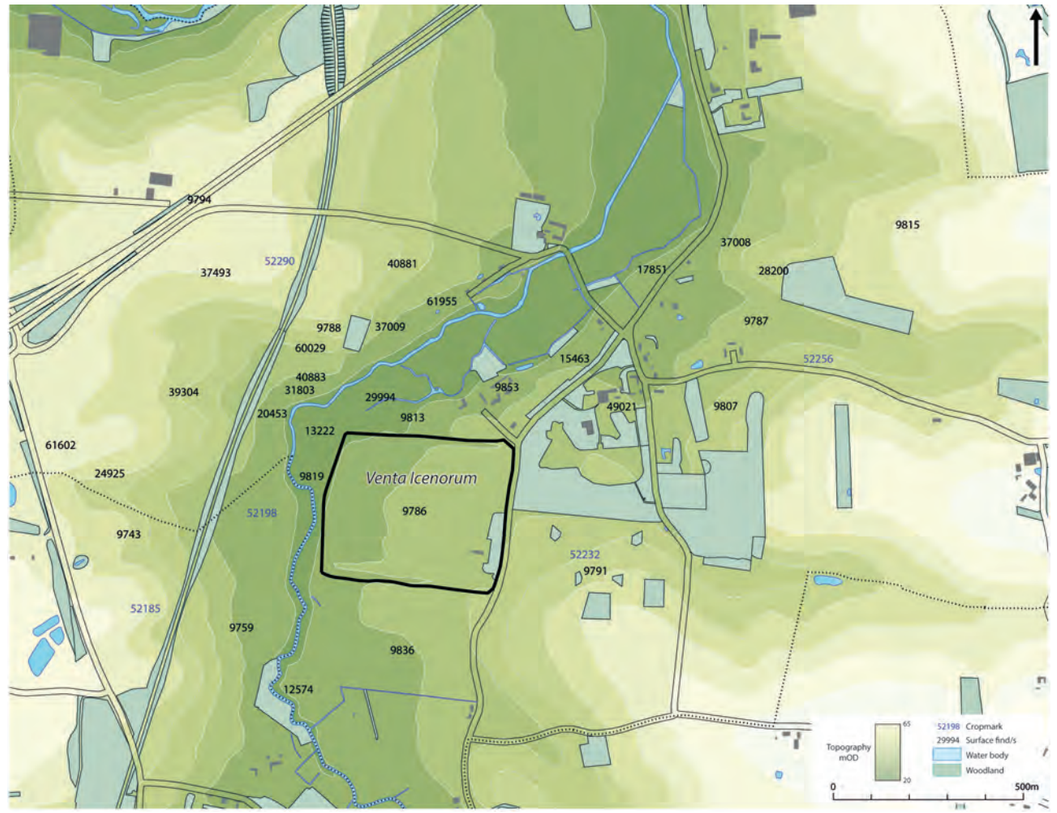

Fig 10.2.2 Caistor-by-Norwich: the study area and HER sites. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

found difficulty confirming the stratigraphy and dating evidence and did not include any descriptions of small finds in the reports apart from occasional coins used for dating; finds from Atkinson's excavations are held by Norfolk Museums Service.

Twentieth-century excavations, principally between 1950 and 1957, on the site of a Romano-Celtic temple and ancillary buildings 700m north-east of the walled town, have been published by David Gurney (NHER 9787; Gurney 1986).

Fieldwork from 2006 to 2012 by Will Bowden of Nottingham University, and subsequently since 2014 by the Caistor Roman Project (Bowden 2013), has included geophysical surveys and targeted excavations both within and outside the walled area. Individual late Roman inhumations have been excavated outside the walls (NHER 9786). There is no excavated evidence for post-Roman activity within the walls except in the immediate vicinity of the church, where limited excavation in 2009 in advance of an extension and soakaway recovered some unstratified Ipswich ware but suggests that the current building's origin lies in a tenth- or eleventh-century church, with human bone from a charnel deposit beneath the church foundations being radiocarbon-dated to cal AD 890–1030 at 95% confidence (Percival 2009). In 2012 trial excavation west of the river Tas, in NHER 9759, confirmed the presence of a *Grubenhaus* identified by magnetometer survey.

Two early medieval cremation cemeteries in the immediate vicinity of the Roman town were known from antiquarian finds at Caistor (NHER 9791) and at White's Hill (NHER 9788) in the former parish of Markshall. Excavations in 1932–8 by F R Mann 260m south-east of the walled town, on a spur overlooking the valley at 30m OD, produced evidence for more than 600 cremations, dated from the first half of the fifth century to the first half of the sixth, and for sixty inhumations of the later sixth to later seventh centuries (Myres and Green 1973; Hills and Lucy 2013, 335). This had been part of the Roman town at its greatest extent but there was little evidence for activity later than the first half of the third century within the excavated area. The cemetery at White's Hill, a spur rising to 20m OD overlooking the river from the north-west and 300m north of the Roman walled town, was investigated by G P Larwood in 1948–9 to assess its condition. It was found to be badly damaged by nineteenth-century interventions, agriculture, and tree-planting, but the remains of more than 100 urns were recovered which, taken with accounts of earlier finds, suggests several hundred cremations. There is no evidence for inhumations and the cremation pottery is predominantly fifth century; a few Ipswich ware sherds were also found (Myres and Green 1973, 235–56; Hills and Lucy 2013, 335–6). Roman pottery kilns and possible glassworking are also recorded from the site.

In 1990, two groups of seventh-century inhumations, associated with a group of prehistoric barrows, were excavated at Harford Farm (NHER 9794), in the former parish of Markshall, as part of works in advance of construction of the Norwich Southern Bypass. The two groups of graves, forty-six in total, were *c* 175m apart, and include five richly furnished female burials, four of them in the larger northern group of thirty-one graves (Penn 2000). The burials were located at 35m–36m OD on a ridge overlooking both the Tas and Yare valleys, 750m north-west of the Roman walled town and 480m from the cremation cemetery at White's Hill.

Possible *Grubenhäuser* have been identified from aerial photography adjacent to the cremation cemetery east of the walled town (NHER 52232), and east of the Roman temple complex (NHER 52256); and at three locations west of the Tas, north-west, opposite and south-west of the walled town (NHER 52290; 52198; 52185). A shallow feature partially excavated during evaluation at Caistor Hall Hotel in 2006 has been tentatively identified as a *Grubenhaus* but this seems unlikely as its size and shape are not consistent with such an interpretation, and it was associated only with Roman-period material; the only early medieval finds from the site are two sherds of Thetford ware from garden soil (NHER 49021; Emery, G 2007).

The Roman town and its vicinity have seen metal-detecting since the 1970s. Finds reported by twenty-six individuals from fields around the walled town and on the west bank of the Tas, and from the temple site NHER 9787, have been recorded since 1979. In addition, there have been three systematic metal-detecting surveys, one combined with fieldwalking. In 1985, a metal-detecting survey of part of the scheduled area of the temple site NHER 9787 recovered Iron Age and Roman metalwork (Gregory 1991). In 1993, fieldwalking and metal-detecting on the east bank of the Tas by the Norfolk Archaeological and Historical Research Group (NAHRG) recovered hand-made pottery and Ipswich ware, with a concentration to the north-west of the walled area (NHER 29994). In 1996 and 1997, fieldwalking by NAHRG on NHER 9759, opposite the walled area on the west bank of the Tas, recovered Ipswich ware, and in 2012 the area was subject to systematic metal-detecting by the Caistor Roman Project and Mark Turner prior to it being put down to grass after acquisition by the Norfolk Archaeological Trust; Mark Turner then continued systematic detecting on the field immediately to the north (NHER 31803). In 2014, an east Mediterranean cast copper-alloy bowl was found during metal-detecting about 800m west of the walled town (NHER 61602). Following the discovery, excavation of its findspot showed that the bowl lay over the slight remains of a decayed wooden vessel in a small oval pit, probably a juvenile inhumation burial (Rogerson and Ashley 2015, 320).

The study area has also seen a high level of illegal detecting. This has been tackled with considerable success by taking key sites out of cultivation and scheduling an increasing area around the walled town, itself originally designated in 1925, but continued illegal activity is known to have followed the 1985 metal-detecting survey of the temple site NHER 9787 (Gurney 1986; Gregory 1991).

10.2.1.2 The metal-detecting assemblage

Recording and data quality

Records of all early medieval material reported as a result of chance finds, survey and metal-detecting within the study area were collated in a MS Access database. Pottery apart, there is a single non-metal artefact: a segmented green glass bead from NHER 12575. Finds identification follows that recorded in the HER, checked and revised as necessary against the visual records (drawing or photography) made by staff of Norfolk Museums Service when the finds were reported. The database does not record surface finds of cremation pottery from the sites of the Caistor or Markshall cremation cemeteries. The early medieval metalwork assemblage is summarised in Table 10.2.2.

Some detectorists mapped their finds, or attributed them to 'context' areas within fields. The location of others is identifiable only to field, and it is possible to locate less than half (43 per cent) of early medieval metalwork finds more precisely than this. Thus, although it is possible to define activity areas and chronological development at a coarse grain, it is not possible to calibrate finds retrieval or undertake any fine-grained spatial analysis.

The Norfolk HER maps a complicated palimpsest of areas (polygons), findspots and interventions within the study area, reflecting the density and complexity of the archaeology and its investigation. NHER entries with early medieval material are shown in Table 10.2.1 and Fig 10.2.2.

The early medieval metalwork assemblage

Including the fifty-two coins, the database contains records of 168 metal objects that can be dated securely to the fifth to eleventh centuries. In addition, there are fifteen items of late Roman metalwork and five pierced Roman coins that may represent later re-use as pendants. All the early medieval coins were minted before 800. The non-coin finds are overwhelmingly of copper alloy (109 items; 94 per cent of the assemblage), with one lead, two iron and four silver items. Between 57 and 73 per cent of the non-coin finds represent activity of the fifth to seventh centuries, 21–34 per cent the eighth and ninth centuries, and 9–21 per cent the tenth or eleventh centuries. A majority of the fifth- to seventh-century

Table 10.2.1 Caistor-by-Norwich: summary of early medieval metal-detecting and other surface finds by site (pottery given by sherd count)

HER code	Metalwork	Coins	Hand-made	Ipswich	Thetford
West bank of the river Tas					
9759	26	34	3	4	0
20453	0	1	0	0	0
31803	11	6	0	8	0
37009	2	1	1	0	1
40881	2	0	0	0	0
40883	1	1	0	0	0
60029	3	2	0	0	0
61955	2	0	0	0	0
Higher ground to the west of the Tas					
9743	0	1	0	0	0
24925	1	0	0	0	0
37493	1	0	0	0	0
39304	1	0	0	0	0
61602	1	0	0	0	0
Walled town and fields to north, west and south					
9786	1	1	0	1	2
9813	4	1	0	0	0
9819	1	2	0	0	0
9836	4	1	0	0	0
9853	1	0	0	0	0
12574	1	0	0	0	0
13222	2	0	0	0	0
15463	2	0	0	0	0
24901	2	0	0	0	0
29994	2	0	10	112	1
East of the walled town and cremation cemetery					
9791	7	1	0	1	0
Temple area north-east of the walled town					
9787	13	0	0	0	0
9807	5	0	0	0	0
9815	1	0	0	0	1
17851	2	0	0	0	0
28200	6	0	0	0	0
37008	11	0	0	0	0
Total	**116**	**52**	**14**	**126**	**5**

finds belong to the late fifth to late sixth centuries: late sixth- and seventh-century activity is represented by 15–27 per cent of the assemblage.

Dress accessories are the predominant category of artefact, with 92 items constituting 77 per cent of the assemblage (Table 10.2.2). The fifth- and sixth-century assemblage includes thirty brooches or brooch fragments (Table 10.2.3), three wrist clasps, two buckles, a girdle ring, three belt mounts and a possible harness mount in Style I, a fragment of a copper-alloy necklet and a gilded copper-alloy pendant with a human mask, three fragments of bucket binding, a sword pommel, and an iron spearhead. The smaller group of later sixth- and seventh-century material includes small belt or garter buckles, a gilded copper-alloy mount in Style II, a fragment of a second and possibly a third, two hanging-bowl mounts, two east Mediterranean cast copper-alloy bowls, a buckle plate from the Iberian peninsula, a sword pyramid of copper alloy with empty settings for glass or garnet inlays, and evidence for metalworking in the form of a copper-alloy mould or matrix die for a human face with moustache. A copper-alloy weight is probably of the sixth or seventh century. Pins are the most common eighth- and ninth-century type, and include a spatulate silver-gilt pinhead with zoomorphic decoration; there is also a pair of tweezers, a stylus fragment, and part of an ansate brooch. Later ninth- to eleventh-century material includes strap ends, fragments of a trefoil brooch and a lozengiform openwork brooch with Borre-style decoration, five Borre-style disc brooches and a Jellinge-style disc brooch, a stirrup terminal, and a lead weight. A copper-alloy hooked tag and a copper-alloy spatula cannot be dated more closely than to the period of the seventh to eleventh centuries, and on the basis of descriptions alone a silver pin and copper-alloy finger-ring may be allocated to the ninth to eleventh centuries.

Table 10.2.2 Caistor-by-Norwich: summary of early medieval assemblage by functional category (excluding coins)

Category	
Currency (CTJ) excluding coins	0
Dress accessories (DA)	92
Equestrian and transport (ET)	4
Household (HO)	7
Metalworking (MW)	1
Personal possessions (PP)	7
Weapons and military equipment (ME)	3
Weights and measures (WM)	2
Unknown (UN)	0
Total	**116**

Table 10.2.3 Caistor-by-Norwich: summary of early medieval brooches

Type		Date-range
Cruciform	16	450–550
Small-long	5	470–550
Annular	1	500–600
penannular	1	400–600
Great square-headed	7	500–570
Ansate	1	700–1000
Disc	8	800–1000
Openwork lozengiform	1	800–1050
Trefoil	1	850–1000
Total	**41**	

Table 10.2.4 Caistor-by-Norwich: summary of early medieval coins which can be identified to type by site

HER code	Period				Total
	EM1	EM2	EM3	EM4	
9759	2	13	17	0	32
9786	0	1	0	0	1
9813	1	0	0	0	1
9819	0	0	0	1	1
9836	0	0	1	0	1
20453	0	0	1	0	1
31803	0	2	6	0	8
37009	0	0	1	0	1
40883	0	1	0	0	1
60029	0	2	0	0	2
Uncertain	1	1	2	0	4
Total	**4**	**20**	**28**	**1**	**53**

The early medieval coinage

Andrew Woods

There are slight discrepancies in the Caistor data, reflecting different recording priorities in the past. There are fifty-two coins from Caistor for which an HER location is known but for a handful of these the precise type is uncertain. There are fifty-three coins for which a type is known, recorded via EMC and other published sources, but for four of these coins the precise findspot is uncertain (Table 10.2.4). However, they are very likely to come from the study area. The similarity of the figures suggests that the reported coinage is likely to provide a reasonable assemblage for both spatial and typological

analysis. Elements of the assemblage have been previously discussed by Adrian Marsden (2013a) and Tim Pestell (2017, 211). Two grave finds from Harford Farm are considered in the context of the wider landscape (10.2.3.4, below).

The chronological profile of the assemblage is broadly typical of East Anglia (Fig 10.2.3). There are four coins of EM1 of which the earliest is a Merovingian mint-and-moneyer *tremissis* from the Paris region (EMC 1989.9002). The other three – an English gold shilling and two Dorestad *tremisses* of the moneyer Madelinus – are late within EM1.

There was a significant increase in the volume of coinage used and lost in EM2, followed by a further increase peaking in the first half of EM3 (cf Marsden 2013a, 6; Pestell 2017, 211). There are relatively few coins from late within EM3. None of the type E coins from the site post-dates 740 and type RS coins are represented more by earlier than later sub-types. Other EM3 coins are also mostly represented by earlier sub-types and there is only a single coin of Beonna. This suggests a significant decline, perhaps *c* 740, after a peak of coin use early in the eighth century. There is only a single coin of EM4.

The proportion of overseas currency is high at Caistor in both EM2 and EM3 (Pestell 2017, 211). In EM2, eleven of twenty coins are Continental issues and in EM3, eleven of twenty-eight. Caution must be exercised when interpreting such small numbers but if the figures represent a genuine pattern then they would suggest that the main period of coin use at Caistor was associated with inter-regional exchange across the North Sea. This mirrors wider patterns across Norfolk in the early eighth century (Woods 2021, 33–7).

Plotting aggregate coin finds by HER area indicates where coin use was concentrated within the area of the Caistor settlement complex (cf Marsden 2013a). The earliest EM1 coin is from immediately north of the Roman walled town but the English shilling and two Dorestad *tremisses* are from NHER 9759 on the west bank of the Tas. EM2 coinage is also concentrated on the west bank, in NHER 9759 and immediately to the north in NHER 31803, 40883 and 60029, with a single coin from the area of the Roman walled town in NHER 9786. EM3 shows a similar pattern and the single EM4 coin, a penny of Offa, is from NHER 9819 immediately west of the Roman walled town on the east bank of the Tas.

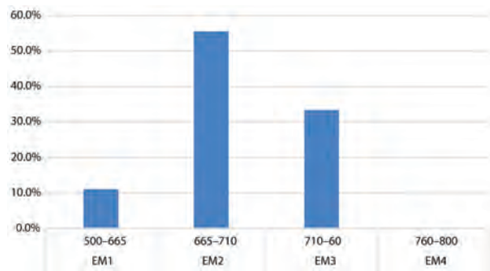

Fig 10.2.3 Caistor-by-Norwich: proportions of pre-800 coinage by numismatic period

The evidence from Caistor is in keeping with the wider East Anglian picture of developing coin use and monetisation. Caistor was not an early centre of coin use but became incorporated within networks of currency circulation as these became more established and widespread across East Anglia from the middle of the seventh century. In this respect its numismatic signature is closer to those of Burnham and, to a lesser extent, Barham, than to Rendlesham and Coddenham. There is a gap of 200 years between the last evidence for coin use at the late Roman cantonal capital and the first use of coinage in the early medieval settlement complex, and nothing to suggest that the former had any direct bearing on the latter.

10.2.1.3 Chronology and settlement sequence

Aoristic analysis of the metalwork assemblage (Fig 10.2.4) suggests a more uniform pattern of activity over time than with our other case studies. An increased level of loss or discard is apparent from the middle of the fifth century, peaking in the first half of the sixth, and there is a clear reduction in the intensity of activity from the middle of the ninth century. Otherwise, the main phenomenon is the spike in coin loss between the last quarter of the seventh century and the middle of the eighth.

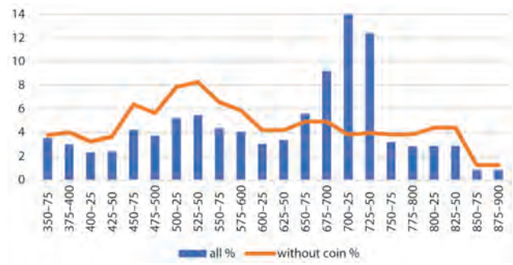

Fig 10.2.4 Caistor-by-Norwich: aorisitic analysis of the late Roman and early medieval assemblage

Late Iron Age and Roman

Judith Plouviez

There are late Iron Age coins from the detected fields around both the walled town and the temple site. In both areas a late Iron Age precursor to the Roman-period use

of the site has been postulated, though not yet verified in excavation, and Caistor has been cited as one of three possible *oppida* in Norfolk (Davies 2008, 132). Six small square enclosures excavated at Harford Farm are very probably late Iron Age square barrows.

A first-century military presence has been suggested, with pottery kilns within the later area of the walled town producing late Neronian to early Flavian wares typical of the military market (Swan 1981) and metal finds of military equipment and Claudian coinage. A triple-ditched enclosure around the later walled area had been identified as military by comparison with other post-Boudican forts in Norfolk and Suffolk but excavation has produced pottery suggesting that the ditches were backfilled in the second century and so it seems to have functioned as an urban defensive circuit (Bowden nda).

On the basis of Donald Atkinson's excavations the layout of the urban streets, covering an area substantially larger than the walled town, was dated to the later first century with contemporary timber buildings in the central area, followed in the second century by the construction of public buildings: forum and basilica, baths, two temples and a more recently identified theatre. However, recent geophysical survey and excavation, and reassessment of Atkinson's archive, have now shown that there is no evidence for any of the streets before the last decade of the first century, that they are not all contemporary, and that they vary in character; it therefore seems likely that the grid developed over the course of the second century (Bowden 2013). Public investment in the street grid and public buildings sets Caistor apart from the Roman roadside settlements and small towns in Norfolk and Suffolk. In the late third or fourth century a smaller area was enclosed by a ditch and flint wall with external bastions and a gate at the centre of each of the four sides. Unusually the forum was also rebuilt, after a period of abandonment, in the later third century (Frere 1971). The extent of extra-mural settlement at this time is not well defined and was perhaps less extensive than before.

Cropmarks, geophysics and finds show that there was extensive Roman activity around the walled town, particularly to the east and to the south where an amphitheatre has been identified. To the west of the river Tas several roads converge, including the road from Colchester, and there are small roadside enclosures. To the north-east is the extra-mural temple within a large *temenos* enclosure; finds suggest activity here from the mid-first century although the excavated structures are probably later (Gurney 1986).

Late- and post-Roman levels within the walled town were not clearly identified in Atkinson's excavations and are likely to have been plough-damaged; there is also evidence for robbing of masonry walls and hypocausts (Darling 1987, 266). Atkinson believed that Building 4 (in northern insula VII) was the site of a fifth-century massacre following a fire but the evidence for this does not stand examination. However, the bath block in Building 4 is one of several areas in the town with very high numbers of Theodosian coins, including a *solidus* of Honorius. The human skeletal material found here mainly consisted of partial skulls from around thirty-five individuals, presumably redeposited in the disused hypocaust at some time in the fifth century or later (Darling 1987, 267–8). The recent excavations have found two non-standard inhumations of very late Roman date in the northern part of the town (Bowden ndb). A small group of coins from work in 2009–10 at the medieval church also has a high Theodosian presence of over 25 per cent (Moorhead, unpublished interim report). The overall coin assemblage from the walled town shows very high coin loss in the middle of the fourth century (Reece period 17), with lower than average Valentinian (period 19) and some subsequent recovery in the Theodosian (periods 20–21) (Davies and Gregory 1991, 72, fig 2). Atkinson's excavations produced several examples of late Roman belt fittings: a type IIA buckle plate and a type IIA buckle from Building 4, as well as a tubular belt end and a disc and loop fitting from the forum (Myres and Green 1973, 41–2, fig 64).

Roman coins from metal-detecting up to 1985 in areas west, south and east of the walled town show a fairly similar fourth-century pattern, with rather more Valentinian issues and fewer Theodosian ones than the interior assemblage (Davies and Gregory 1991). The temple area, by contrast, lacks Theodosian coins; activity within the *temenos* may have ceased by the mid-fourth century although Valentinian coins (AD 364–78) do occur outside the *temenos*. A small group of late fourth- to early fifth-century *siliquae* from south of the walled town may be from a scattered hoard.

The metal-detecting assemblage includes further material indicative of military and official activity in the fourth and early fifth centuries. Fragments of six crossbow brooches are known from fields east and south of the walled town (NHER 9791; 9836), and immediately opposite it on the west bank of the river Tas (NHER 9759). There is a type IB buckle and an amphora-shaped strap end from east of the walled town in NHER 9791, another amphora-shaped strap end from south of the walled town (NHER 9836), a lancet form strap end from east of the temple area (NHER 37008) and a harness pendant from the west bank of the Tas north of the walled town (NHER 40881). A fragment of a silver finger-ring with the legend VIVAS IN DEO from east of the walled town (NHER 9791) can be attributed to a fairly high-status Christian context.

The discovery in 1983 of four bracelets and human skull fragments, also in NHER 9791, raises the possibility that there was a fourth-century cemetery to the east of the walled town, about 100m away from the fifth-century cremation cemetery.

Fifth to late sixth centuries

The two major foci of early post-Roman activity are the cremation cemeteries east of the walled town and at White's Hill. Both came into use in the first half of the fifth century, the former perhaps slightly earlier than the latter and perhaps as early as the 420s (Hills and Lucy 2013, 335). They are evidence for a substantial presence of incomers from the North Sea coastal regions of the Continent in the early to middle fifth century.

Elsewhere, the earliest post-Roman metalwork item is a cruciform brooch of Martin's group 1 from the temple site north and east of the walled town (NHER 17851), where metal finds of the fifth to seventh centuries over an area of *c* 5ha suggest a focus of activity including both occupation and burials, with a miniature iron knife from NHER 9787 very probably coming from a cremation. Otherwise, potentially the earliest find is a copper-alloy sword pommel of Holmegaard/Kragehul type (PAS NMS-C48232; Menghin 1983, 64) from the west bank of the Tas (NHER 31803). The finds from this area are predominantly of the later sixth to earlier ninth centuries, and the pommel probably represents a loss rather than a disturbed burial.

A majority of cremations in the cemetery east of the town may be of fifth-century date but cremation continued into the sixth century. There are also inhumations of the later sixth to later seventh centuries, and a small group of metal-detecting finds from this field including fragments from three cruciform brooches, one of which is of Martin's group 2, which may be from disturbed inhumations of the later fifth or sixth centuries. It is, therefore, entirely possible that the cemetery was in continuous use from the early fifth until the late seventh centuries. Equally, though, the metal finds could derive from occupation or settlement activity, and there are cropmarks of possible *Grubenhäuser* north of the cemetery site (NHER 52232). Fragments of two cruciform brooches, both fire-damaged, from the area of the White's Hill cemetery are very probably from cremations and indicate that burial here continued at least into the later fifth or early sixth centuries (NHER 60029); part of a further cruciform brooch and a bird-shaped hanging-bowl mount from an adjacent field (NHER 37009) may indicate inhumations, possibly as late as the seventh century.

There is very little material of the later fifth to later sixth centuries from the fields immediately around the walled town to the south, west and north: the foot of a cruciform brooch from NHER 9836, immediately to the south, and an iron spearhead from NHER 12574 to the south-west. Ten sherds of hand-made pottery from NHER 29994, to the south, could be of this date but could equally well derive from seventh- or early eighth-century activity. Given the substantially greater quantities of later metalwork and pottery from this zone it seems likely that the scarcity of material is not simply a sampling issue but a genuine indication that there was comparatively little activity here at that time.

The two main surface concentrations of later fifth- to later sixth-century metalwork are north-east of the walled town east of the temple area, and on the west bank of the Tas. The former location, as noted above, is likely to represent occupation and burials over an area of *c* 5ha. The finds are concentrated within NHER 9787, 37008 and 28200, and include brooches or brooch fragments of annular, penannular, cruciform, small-long and great square-headed types, wrist clasps, bucket fittings, two probable belt mounts and the probable harness mount in Style I, and the human mask pendant. The pendant and Style I mounts – gilded copper-alloy – can be considered status items, and the fragment of a silver great square-headed brooch is elite material. On the west bank of the river, a scatter of metalwork and three sherds of decorated hand-made pottery are known from NHER 9759, and a fragment of a bucket mount from NHER 31803. These could be from burials, but given the number of other certain or possible burial sites, their proximity to cropmarks identified as possible *Grubenhäuser* at NHER 52185 and 52198, and evidence for intensive activity here from the later sixth century, they are more likely to derive from settlement activity.

Late sixth to eighth centuries

From the later sixth century a shift in the focus of activity can be seen clearly in the distribution of coin finds as well as other metalwork and surface finds. North-east of the walled town, late sixth- and seventh-century material includes a sword pyramid and a hanging-bowl escutcheon. A couple of pins suggest activity continuing into the eighth or ninth centuries, and there is also what is probably the eraser from a small stylus of the seventh to middle ninth centuries. The number and density of finds, however, and the lack of coins, suggest that this had become a less significant place by the second half of the

seventh century. Metalwork finds suggest activity in the fields immediately north, west and south of the walled town. The material includes six dress pins and a fragment of a gilded copper-alloy fitting in Style II. An east Mediterranean copper-alloy bowl found *c* 1860 is likely to be from an inhumation and was reportedly found in a field north of the walled town (cf Myres and Green 1973, 230–1); the earliest gold coin is also from north of the walls. Fieldwalking in NHER 29994 north-west of the walled area recovered 112 sherds of Ipswich ware, suggesting a settlement focus here in the eighth century if not before. Some surface finds of Ipswich ware and a single early silver penny of type B (EM2) are reported from inside the walled area.

The main focus of activity from the later sixth century, though, was on the west bank of the Tas opposite the walled area (primarily NHER 9759 and 31803). As well as metalwork, which includes a fragment from a gilded copper-alloy Style II mount, possibly a harness fitting, this is the main focus of coin finds from the middle of the seventh century and, as noted above, a *Grubenhaus* dated to the late seventh or early eighth century by an early silver penny of type E has been excavated here. Fieldwalking has also recovered small quantities of Ipswich ware from the north of this area in NHER 31803. Overall, the distribution of coinage and metalwork suggests settlement and exchange activity over an area of 10ha–15ha, and the coin profile indicates an inter-regional trading place from the later seventh century which saw peak activity in the first half of the eighth century. The metalwork suggests continuing settlement activity throughout the eighth century and into the ninth century and beyond, but the coin profile shows greatly reduced monetary activity from the 730s, very probably linked to a decline in trading activity as Caistor was replaced in this respect by the emerging commercial centre at Norwich (10.2.1.6, below).

A change in mortuary geography is also apparent. There is no evidence for burial into the later sixth century at the White's Hill cemetery, but there are inhumations of the later sixth and seventh centuries at the Caistor cemetery. The east Mediterranean bowl found in 1860 may be from a burial north of the walled town. West of the Tas, a gilded copper-alloy mount in Style II (NHER 24925) has been found *c* 150m from the probable juvenile inhumation with an east Mediterranean bowl, and together these may suggest burials of the later sixth and earlier seventh centuries on rising ground to the west of the settlement and trading place. The two cemeteries at Harford Farm, plausibly interpreted as the burials of an elite household over two or three generations, were in use from the middle of the seventh century. As at Coddenham, their location overlooks the wider area of settlement and activity, and can be similarly interpreted as a statement of proprietorial interest. The Harford Farm burial site, however, also overlooks the Yare valley to north and west – perhaps a statement of this elite group's wider aspirations and serving as visual linkage in the landscape articulating two physical constituents of a wider lordship.

The Harford Farm cemeteries were in use until the end of the seventh century or the beginning of the eighth. There is no evidence for later burial arrangements of the eighth or ninth centuries, contemporary and associated with the settlement and trading place. The possibility that there was a cemetery on or near the site of the church cannot be ruled out but there is no physical evidence for burials or a structure here before the tenth century. This tallies with the marked scarcity of early medieval material from within the area of the walled town, but excavation of a soakaway trench within the churchyard in November 2020 produced an enamelled hanging-bowl fitting of the seventh or eighth century – consistent with a high-status presence within the walled area and possibly with earlier burials on the site of the later church.

Ninth to eleventh centuries

The distribution of metalwork finds points to continuing settlement activity within the study area but at a much-reduced level of intensity and it is worth noting that fieldwalking in NHER 29994, which recovered more than 100 sherds of Ipswich ware, turned up only a single sherd of Thetford ware. The only finds from the area to the north-east of the walled town that need be later than the eighth century are a fragment of a trefoil brooch of the late ninth or first half of the tenth century, and a tenth-century openwork strap end. Six items of metalwork, all dress accessories and including two Borre-style disc brooches and a Jellinge-style disc brooch, are known from fields immediately north, west and south of the walled town, and there are fragments of two disc brooch fragments from the field to the east (NHER 9791). The largest group of metalwork is from the west bank of the Tas: fourteen items, of which eleven are from NHER 9759 including two Borre-style brooches, strap ends and a copper-alloy finger-ring. A Viking-type lead weight set on the top and bottom with gilded copper-alloy plates may point to some continuing exchange or monetary activity here.

Although the surface evidence points to a progressive contraction and diminution of settlement activity, within the walled area archaeological evidence indicates that the precursor of the medieval church building was constructed at the end of the tenth or early in the eleventh century on a site already used for burial at that time.

10.2.1.4 Production, exchange and consumption

As elsewhere, the metalwork assemblage embodies access to a range of commodities, skills and networks of procurement rooted in the generation and deployment of a landed surplus. As at Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne a change in the scale and reach of contacts is apparent from the later sixth century, with gold coinage from Merovingian Gaul, hanging-bowl fittings from north or west Britain or Ireland, and east Mediterranean copper-alloy vessels. The copper-alloy weight from NHER 31803, which at 4.62g is close to the ideal weight of the Byzantine *solidus*, may be linked to the circulation of Continental gold coinage in a metal-weight economy in the later sixth century. The mould from NHER 9791, east of the walled town, suggests fine metalworking in the later sixth or seventh centuries.

The pattern of coin use in EM2 and EM3, and the quantities of Ipswich ware, show integration with networks of monetary circulation and exchange from the later seventh and earlier eighth centuries. Whereas the earlier evidence points to socially restricted monetary activity and exchange focused on an elite social group, Caistor from the later seventh century hosted an inter-regional trading place which appears to have been the principal such centre in this part of East Anglia until superseded by the emerging centre at Norwich in the middle decades of the eighth century. Thereafter, there is nothing to suggest anything more than a rural establishment.

10.2.1.5 Social signatures and cultural connections

Cultural identities and connections

The two cremation cemeteries are evidence for the presence of substantial numbers of people from North Sea coastal areas of the Continent and south Scandinavia in the first half of the fifth century. The few pieces of early metalwork from other parts of the study area – the Group 1 cruciform brooch and the Holmegaard/Kragehul pommel – are consistent with this, the pommel being a type characteristic of south Scandinavia in the fifth century (Menghin 1983, 64, Karte 1). The metalwork of the later fifth to later sixth centuries is mostly typical of Norfolk and the wider Anglian province of material culture. The later sixth- and seventh-century metalwork is broadly typical of eastern England at this time but includes items such as vessel fittings and vessels from north or west Britain and Ireland, and from the Mediterranean, which were common elements of elite material culture. The wheel-thrown rouletted shouldered jar from Inhumation 13 in the Caistor cemetery is an indicator of maritime links with northern France and the Low Countries (Myres and Green 1973, 223–4, fig 61; Evison 1979, 42) and a further indication of the reach – direct or indirect – of the long-distance networks focused on Caistor is the Hispano-Visigothic buckle plate from the west bank of the Tas in NHER 31803 (Pestell 2017, fig 10.4). Almost certainly made in the Iberian peninsula, and datable to the seventh or early eighth century (Ripoll López 1999), this is closely paralleled by an example from Navarre, northern Spain (Zeiss 1934, 51–3, Taf 21,5). Hispano-Visigothic buckles are very rare in England, but examples found by metal-detecting are known from Maidstone, Kent (Christie 2008, 324–5, fig 14) and Lincolnshire (PAS LIN-F3054B).

The later seventh- to ninth-century dress accessories, predominantly pins with a single ansate brooch fragment, fall within the expected range of Insular material culture for the period. The Scandinavian-style metalwork of the late ninth and tenth centuries is part of the wider body of evidence from Norfolk for substantial Scandinavian settlement and a widespread adoption of new material culture types and decorative styles as the region became integrated into the Scandinavian North Sea world (Kershaw 2013; Pestell 2013a).

Social differentiation

The only item dating to before the late sixth century that can be considered an elite marker is the fragment of a silver great square-headed brooch from the area of activity north-east of the walled town (NHER 37008). From this area there are also two Style I belt mounts and a Style I harness mount that can be considered status items, and a disproportionate number of fragments from great square-headed brooches, also status indicators. The Holmegaard/Kragehul pommel, from the west bank of the Tas, should also be seen as a status indicator. The fifth- to late sixth-century material culture signature therefore suggests a community or communities with a degree of social ranking but with no strong elite element. The area north-east of the walled town may have been a settlement and cemetery with a high-status element.

There is a stronger elite signature in the material of the later sixth and seventh centuries. From the area north-east of the walled town come a hanging-bowl escutcheon and the sword pyramid which, although copper alloy, would count as an elite item by our criteria if the empty settings did house garnet inlays. Otherwise, there are the east Mediterranean bowls, both of which may be from burials, and the hanging-bowl fitting from NHER 37009; the two Style II mounts can also be

considered status items. None of this material, however, is in precious metal and in many ways the strongest indication of an elite presence in the late sixth to the middle of the seventh centuries is the evidence for access to circulating gold coinage, and in the middle and later seventh century the few richly furnished graves at Harford Farm.

There are three later items of precious metal: a silver pin with faceted head of late seventh- to early ninth-century date from NHER 9836; a silver-gilt decorated pinhead of the eighth or early ninth centuries from NHER 31803; and a silver pin which, from its recorded description, can probably be attributed to the period of the ninth to eleventh centuries. The probable stylus fragment from NHER 9807 points to the presence of a literate individual or individuals during the period of the seventh to middle ninth centuries but there is no reason to attribute it to an ecclesiastical or monastic context rather than a secular exchange context or a higher-status secular household (Pestell 2004, 40–8; 2009).

The proportion of elite items supports the view that Caistor saw a stronger material expression of social distance in the later sixth and seventh centuries than before or after. Elite indicators make up 5–7 per cent of the early medieval assemblage as a whole, but only 2 per cent and 5 per cent respectively for material of the fifth to sixth centuries and eighth to eleventh centuries, against 15 per cent for the late sixth and seventh centuries. Qualitatively, however, the elite signature at Caistor appears subdued when compared with Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne: there are no gold artefacts and only four of silver, all but one of the eighth century or later.

The evidence is therefore consistent with the presence at Caistor of an elite group from the later sixth or earlier seventh century, with the corollary that this was a magnate residence and the central place of an economic and jurisdictional territory. The cemetery at Harford Farm can be seen as serving the elite household from the middle of the seventh century.

10.2.1.6 Conclusions (Fig 10.2.5)

The surface assemblage from Caistor is smaller and less responsive to detailed interrogation than those from Rendlesham, Coddenham or Hoxne. None the less, it shows that the Roman walled town and its immediate surroundings were a focus of significant activity through the fifth to eighth centuries, and that there were major changes in configurations of settlement, burial and economic activity during that time.

The extent to which major late Roman towns were truly urban centres is a matter of unresolved debate, but the coin sequence from the walled area, and the late Roman metalwork from inside and the immediate environs, together point to a significant military and official presence. It is likely, therefore, that Caistor was a major centre of administration into the fifth century at least up to the point at which the Imperial administration failed. Regardless of specific scenarios, the two cremation cemeteries point to substantial migration from the Continental North Sea coastal regions and to the Tas valley in the proximity of the walled town as a focus of population through the fifth century. This in turn argues for continuing social and economic significance, and persistence as a power centre – even if this involved the attachment of a post-Roman magnate's or potentate's personal power to a place recognised as a seat of authority in local memory. Given the number of known cremations, it is likely that either or both of the cremation cemeteries at Caistor and White's Hill served as central

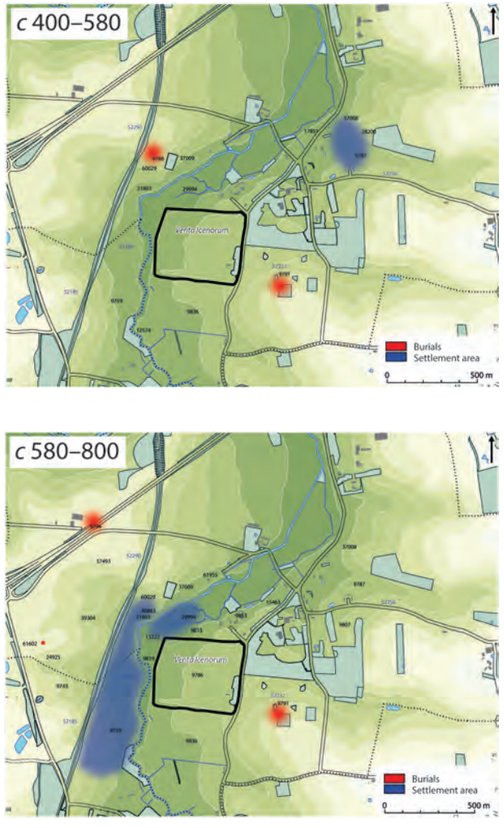

Fig 10.2.5 Caistor-by-Norwich: interpretative model of the settlement sequence from the fourth to the eighth centuries AD. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 202*

burial places for more dispersed communities. That there were two urnfields on different sides of the river may indicate that the immediate locality had a focal significance for two or more social groups.

Other than the Caistor cremation cemetery, and the possible *Grubenhäuser* nearby, there is only evidence for sporadic activity in the immediate vicinity of the walled town in the fifth and sixth centuries. It is possible that at this time the major focus of occupation – associated with a further burial ground – was to the north-east of the walled town in the area of the former temple near Caistor Hall. From the later sixth century there is increasing evidence for settlement activity around the walled town and on the west bank of the Tas, with burials on the rising ground to the west, and in the middle of the seventh century a burial ground likely to have been associated with the elite group controlling the place was established at Harford Farm. From the later seventh until the middle of the eighth century the extensive settlement area on the west bank of the Tas was also a focus of inter-regional commerce, and there was also settlement on the east bank of the Tas to the north and north-west of the walled area. This suggests a significant reconfiguration of settlement space within the study area around the turn of the seventh century, likely to be an elite initiative, with a progressive consolidation of proprietorial rights and authority signalled by the establishment of the Harford Farm cemetery. An economic and jurisdictional centre with an elite presence would act as a pull factor for inter-regional exchange, with a significant commercial trading place developing from the later seventh century – a process that is likely to have involved a mixture of individual enterprise and elite encouragement.

A major question in all this is whether at any time during the fifth to eighth centuries there was significant settlement within the area of the walled town. The location of a trading place outside the walls of a reoccupied Roman town can be seen elsewhere in England and on the Continent in the seventh to ninth centuries (Pestell 2011, 571–3; Loveluck 2013, 168, 173–4; Pestell 2017, 211). One possible sequence might be that there was an elite establishment within the walled area from some time in the earlier seventh century, perhaps superseding an establishment to the north-east in the former temple area, and that burial switched from Harford Farm to the site of the later church in the late seventh or early eighth century. There is, however, only very fragmentary evidence that might support such a scenario and to test it properly would require survey and excavation within the Scheduled area of the walled town.

Caistor is alone in our sample as a place where a significant inter-regional trading centre developed as part of, or adjacent to, an elite settlement complex. At Rendlesham and Coddenham, by contrast, earlier long-distance trade was entangled with elite exchange and peer-relationships, and with the expansion of large-scale commerce the function shifted to Ipswich. At Burnham in north Norfolk, as we will see (10.3.4, below), the seventh- to ninth-century trading place appears to have developed at a less important centre rather than at a focus of elite activity. The shift of commercial activity from Caistor to Norwich prompts a comparison with Rendlesham and Ipswich, and at some point there must have been a royal or elite decision to support or invest in the new centre. The parallel is not exact, however, in that the decline of monetary activity at Rendlesham and the corresponding expansion at Ipswich was perhaps a decade or two earlier, and Rendlesham did not develop as a commercial trading place to the extent apparently seen at Caistor. The primary reason for the change is likely to have been the greater accessibility of Norwich for an increasing volume of commercial traffic, with riverine and estuarine access to the North Sea via the Yare and Wensum. That said, although there is accumulating evidence for settlement, coin use and craft production at Norwich from the late seventh or earlier eighth century, there is nothing to suggest a centre of the size or scale of the major *emporium* at Ipswich during the eighth or ninth centuries (Williamson 1993, 79–80; Ayers 1994; Hutcheson 2009, 303–7).

Despite the relatively subdued elite signature in the material culture assemblage, the attachment of trading place to elite centre may be taken as a further indication of Caistor's importance as a central place for the surrounding territory in the seventh and early eighth centuries. When a jurisdictional role was detached from Caistor, and when it was attached to Norwich, are open questions. Although there was activity both east and west of the Tas in the fifth to eighth centuries, the area immediately focused on the Roman town comprises a coherent topographic settlement cell best seen as a single entity, and even the putative distinction between a trading settlement on the west bank and walled area on the east mirrors in part the Roman urban geography, with the approach roads and suburban development on the west bank. The Domesday tenurial pattern, however, has the two parishes of Markshall and Caistor St Edmund divided, with a parish boundary along the river. Perhaps the origins of this split are to be sought in a diminution in status of the former central place and an attendant reconfiguration of its immediate territory?

At Domesday, Caistor was held by St Edmund's abbey

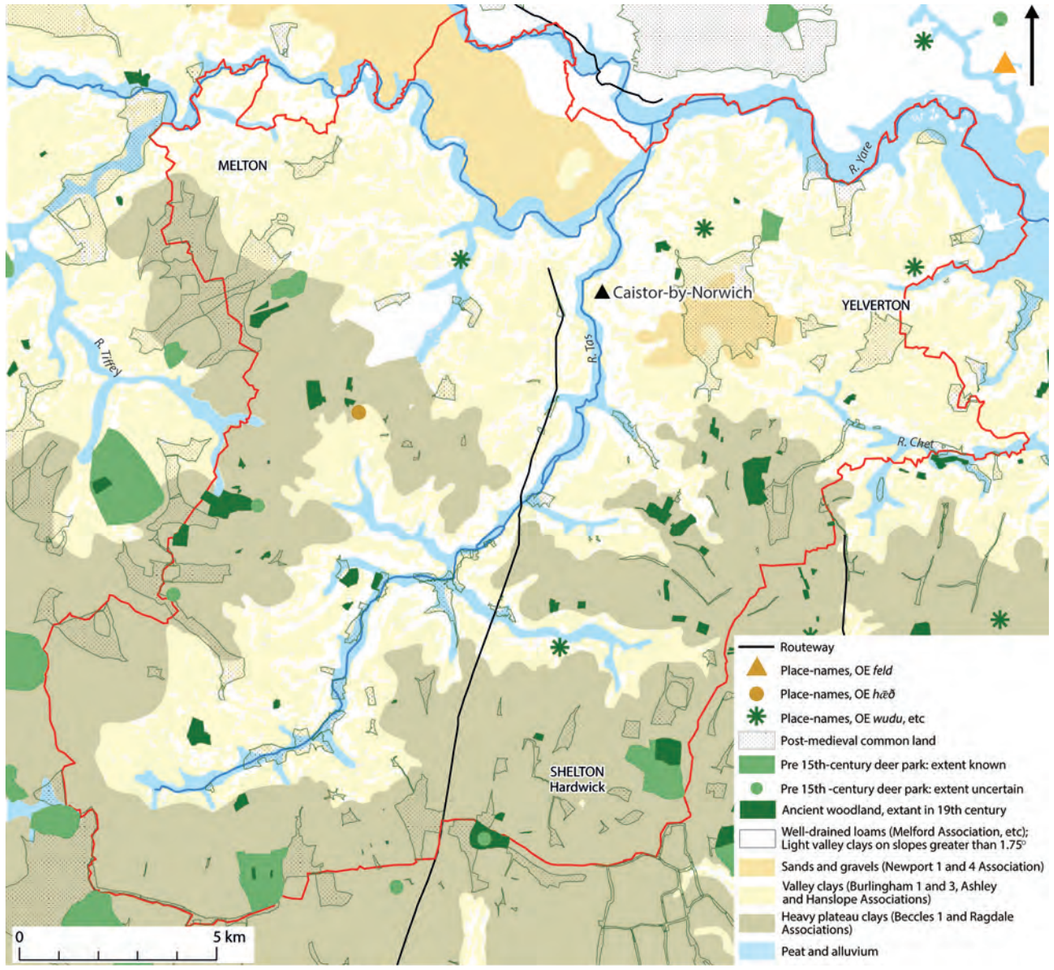

Fig 10.2.6 The Tas basin: drainage, soils types and woodland indicators. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

and Ralph Beaufour (LDB, fol 210a; 228b). The abbey's was the major holding, including the church at eleven acres worth 16d. Domesday records that the abbey 'had always held' the manor but in fact it appears to have been acquired in the middle of the eleventh century as part of the abbey's campaign to build a landed endowment after its re-foundation as a Benedictine house by Cnut *c* 1020: Bury's List of Benefactors records that land at Caistor was granted by King Edward the Confessor and that the charter survived in the abbey, although now lost (Hart 1966, 84, no. 128). The dedication of the parish church to St Edmund, clearly a post-869 attribution, should be seen in this context.

The manor of Markshall had been held TRE by Godwin, a free man of Stigand. In 1086 it was held by Ralph Beaufour; the church, despite its below-average endowment of 6 acres, was worth 12d (LDB, fol 230a). It is arguable that the land held by Stigand could previously have been associated with either the East Anglian bishopric or the Crown, and Beaufour acted as sheriff of Norfolk and was possibly brother to William Bellofago, bishop of Thetford 1085–91 (Pestell 2004, 188–9). Beaufour's holdings in both Caistor and Markshall may indicate a link between the two, and the coincidence of Markshall's dedication also to St Edmund is interesting in this respect. The Edmund dedication was not common, occurring in only twenty-seven of the thousand or more medieval churches of Norfolk and Suffolk, and could be used as an indication of ownership – as when St Edmund's abbey established a chapel and chaplain at Southwold in 1206 after wrenching the vill away from the parochia of neighbouring Wangford (Scarfe 1986, 126). It must at least be a possibility that Markshall and Caistor had an earlier tenurial link that is reflected in their shared

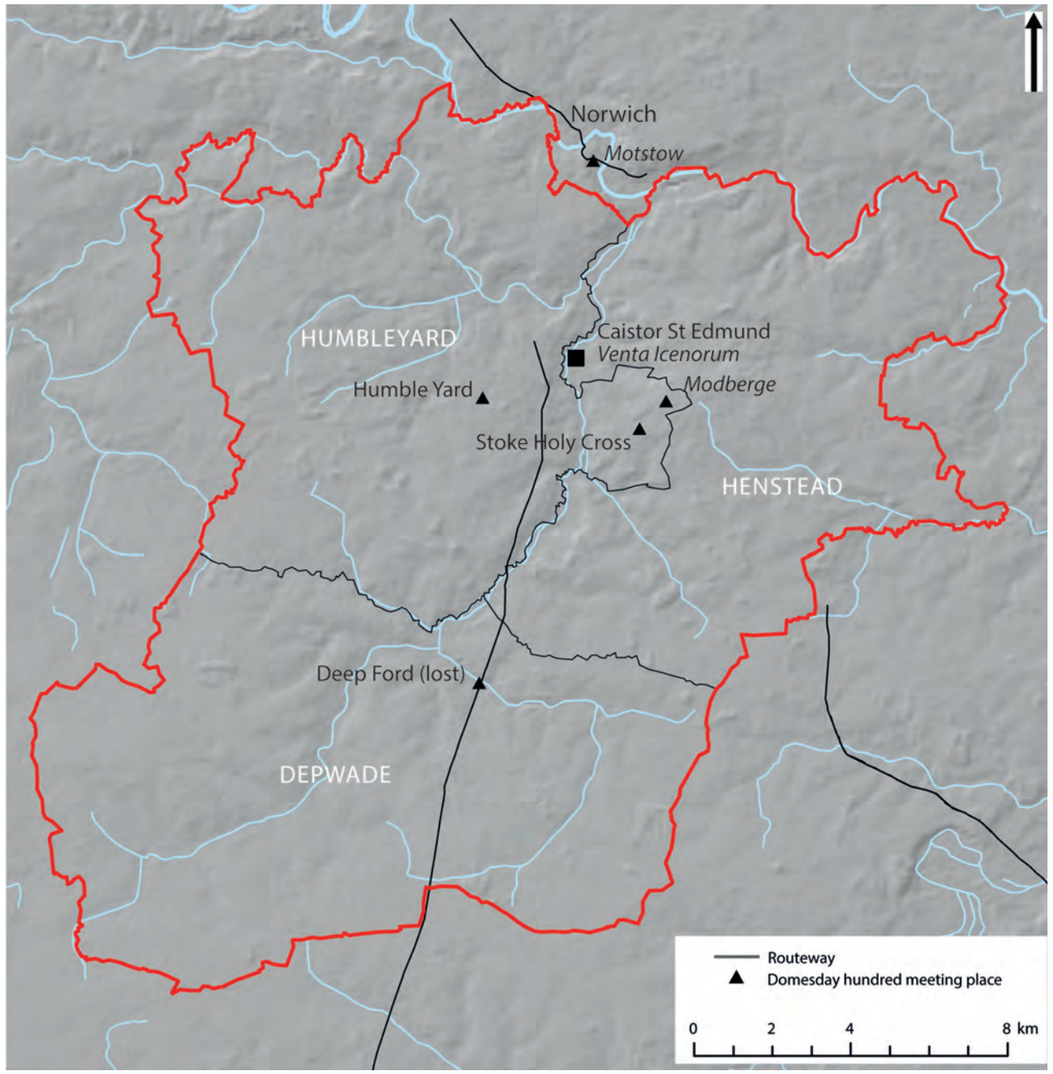

Fig 10.2.7 The Tas basin: relief; Domesday hundeds; hundredal meeting places; major Roman roads

dedication, perhaps the former as a chapelry to a minster at the latter.

10.2.2 Landscape and territory

Tom Williamson and Eleanor Rye

The area around the Roman town of *Venta Icenorum*, and the associated zones of early medieval activity, shows up clearly as a significant *lacuna* in the distribution of early woodland suggested by the evidence of Domesday and place-names (Figs 10.2.6–7). This corresponds to an extensive tract of dissected, low-lying ground, mostly characterised by well-drained clay loams of the Burlingham 1 Association occupying slopes greater than 1.75 degrees, the long-term significance of which for settlement is attested by a marked concentration of early sites and monuments, including the Arminghall henge and numerous Bronze Age barrows and ring ditches (Lawson *et al* 1981; Ashwin 1996). In topographic terms, this agriculturally favourable zone is closely associated with the catchment of the river Tas and that section of the Yare valley which extends for *c* 12km upstream, and *c* 17km downstream, of the confluence of the two rivers. To the south, south-east and south-west it is bounded by high, level tablelands occupied by poorly draining

stagnogleys of the Beccles Association, and by patches of acid, sandy gravel, which form the boundaries between the drainage basin of the Tas and those of the Waveney and the Pulham Brook to the south, the Tiffey to the west, and the Broome Beck to the east. To the north there is another natural boundary: the wide and marshy floodplains of the rivers Wensum and Yare, beyond which lie more extensive tracts of acid, sandy and gravely soils (Fig 10.2.6). Before enclosure in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries this was the location of the vast Mousehold Heath, which remained largely wooded well into the medieval period (Rackham 1986a, 299–303). Towards the north-west and north-east the boundaries of this natural region are less clearly defined by topography, blurring into wider areas of low-lying ground. This is particularly true to the north-east, where the tract of open land appears to extend not merely along the Yare valley as far as the Carlton Beck but beyond the Tas catchment, into the upper reaches of the valley of the river Chet. For the most part, however, this agriculturally attractive area sits well as a coherent entity within the broad sweep of the local topography.

The Roman town and adjacent foci of early medieval activity are located close to the boundary between the hundreds of Henstead and Humbleyard, which are both bounded to the south by the hundred of Depwade. The configuration of these three units – the way in which the western boundaries of Depwade and Humbleyard, and the eastern boundaries of Depwade and Henstead, appear continuous – suggests that all may once have formed a single territory (Fig 10.2.7). This, moreover, is for the most part neatly nested within the natural topography. Its core is characterised by dissected terrain and Burlingham Association soils while its outer boundary to the south, east and west corresponds with the higher ground and more agriculturally challenging environments, following the watersheds with the neighbouring drainage basins. To the north the boundary corresponds with the wide floodplains of the lower Wensum and Yare. Only towards the north-west and the north-east does it deviate from obvious and immediate topographic determinants. Before post-Domesday reorganisation, the eastern boundary of Henstead hundred ran some way to the east of the high ground defining the eastern side of the Tas catchment in Howe and Poringland. But what is striking is that this deviation ensures that the hundred, and thus the putative territory of which it once formed a part, embraced the same areas of low-lying land, extending across the watershed into the upper reaches of the Chet valley, as the tract of open country suggested by Domesday and place-names.

The three hundreds of Humbleyard, Henstead and Depwade thus appear originally to have formed a single territory, focused on the area around Caistor, with a core corresponding to the drainage basin of the river Tas and the connecting areas of lower ground, and with an outer perimeter largely corresponding to intractable clays, acid sands and gravels, or to wide expanses of fen. Moreover, aspects of the local landscape which have their probable origins in the early medieval period seem to reflect this same topographic framework. Parish churches, and farms or hamlets which today carry the names of Domesday vills but which never developed as parishes, are almost all located on or beside areas of sloping ground and Burlingham soils, either near the base of a valley and close to a major watercourse or above the valley on the edge of the clay plateau. Both locations reflect the need to access a reliable supply of water (the clay plateau carries a perched water table). There are, in contrast, few such sites on the Beccles soils at any great distance from their junction with those of the Burlingham Association, suggesting that the clay-covered uplands remained largely pasture or woodland until relatively late in the pre-Conquest period. Where churches are found in such locations, as at Hardwick and Shelton, archaeological material from the immediate vicinity is ninth-century or later.

This impression, of upland margins characterised by extensive woods and pastures, is strengthened by the evidence of major place-names. Those indicative of woodland or its clearance are strongly clustered on the Beccles soils and, more generally, towards the outer boundary of the territory formed by the three hundreds (Fig 10.2.7). Examples include Boyland (*Boielund* 1086); Rockland St Mary (*Rokelunda, Rokelonda, Rokelund, Rokelunt* 1086, ON *lundr* 'small wood'); Intwood (*Intewda, Intewida* 1086, OE *wudu* 'wood'); and Bixley (*Bischelea* 1086, OE *lēah* 'clearing, wood'). The presence of more open grazing land, as well as wood pasture, is indicated by the place-names Hethel (*Hethella, Hetella, Hathella* 1086 < OE *hæð*) and possibly Hethersett (*Hederseeta, Hederseta* 1086 < (perhaps) OE **hǣddre* 'heather'). Moreover, while some areas of common land could, in the medieval and post-medieval periods, be found on lower ground, mainly running along the floodplains of the principal watercourses, the majority were concentrated on the poorly draining or acidic soils of the plateau. Together with areas of ancient woodland and deer parks established before the fourteenth century, these seem to represent the remnants of what must, in pre-Conquest times, have been near-continuous tracts of wood pasture on the margins of the Caistor territory.

This core/periphery contrast is strongest and clearest towards the south, less so to the north, where the hundred boundaries cross lower ground, running towards the Yare and Wensum. But even here they are associated with extensive tracts of common land, such as Melton Common or Yelverton Heath, suggesting territorial margins; while to the north the wide strip of peat fen beside the Yare and lower reaches of the Wensum seems to have constituted an almost continuous ribbon of common land before it was fragmented in the course of the post-Conquest period by the creation (through peat extraction) of Surlingham, Rockland and Strumpshaw Broads, and by the gradual, piecemeal, privatisation of sections of fen through the process of 'doling' (Williamson 1987, 83–8).

Other aspects of place-name geography reflect the same contrast between riverine cores and upland peripheries. Those incorporating the element *hām* are concentrated in lower-lying areas around the lower reaches of the river Tas, although their relative paucity may underscore the predominance of Caistor in the early medieval period. Those featuring *tūn*, in contrast, occupy more peripheral and upland locations, especially towards the south. The first element of the place-names Aslacton, the lost Haddeston in Bunwell, and Holverston are Scandinavian personal names, *Áslákr*, *Haddr* and *Holmfastr* respectively; Apton may similarly contain the Scandinavian personal name *Api*, although OE *æppel-tūn* 'orchard' is also possible. The two Carletons (probably Scandinavianised forms of OE *ceorla-tūn* 'settlement of the free peasants') and Newton (OE *nīwe-tūn*' 'new settlement or estate') are also worth noting. All suggest places which were established at a late date, were of subsidiary status, or both. The name of Morningthorpe (*Torp, Maringatorp* 1086) in the south of Depwade hundred, perhaps **Mæringas* or 'dwellers by a boundary', may once have been applied to a more extensive area in the south-east of the territory than the medieval parish, only a short stretch of the boundary of which coincided with that of Depwade hundred.

As discussed above (10.2.1), the location of the parish church of Caistor St Edmund – aligned on the Roman street grid within the town walls, and on the site of earlier burials – may suggest minster status. Caistor was granted to the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds by Edward the Confessor in the middle of the eleventh century, possibly indicating that it was anciently royal demesne (S 1055). The present church dedication, and the second part of the village name, reflects the ownership of the Abbey. As with Rendlesham, however, there is no hint in Domesday that Caistor had ever been a place of importance, and it did not give its name to the hundred in which it lay; the major centre was Norwich, some 5km to the north. By the time of Domesday the city lay outside the hundredal system but the configuration of boundaries leaves little doubt that it was taken out of the north-eastern corner of Humbleyard: the ancient area of the city is sandwiched between that hundred and the river Wensum. It thus originally lay on the extreme northern edge of the Caistor territory and its name, the 'north *wīc*', should perhaps be understood in this sense, Norwich being named in relation to a focal place and estate centre at Caistor, to which it was originally subordinate.

10.2.3 Patterns of settlement, burial and economy

Stuart Brookes and Christopher Scull

10.2.3.1 The archaeological evidence

Apart from the archaeology of the Caistor settlement complex and its immediate landscape, there are eleven post-Roman settlement or burial sites of the period AD 400–800 known from the recording of *in situ* features or deposits within the proposed watershed territory that forms our wider study area, and cropmarks of possible *Grubenhäuser* from two locations. Otherwise, information comes from chance discoveries and surface finds: 625 metal items and seventy-two finds of pottery totalling at least 159 sherds. These data have been integrated and plotted using the same approaches and methods as for the other case studies.

The late Roman background (Fig 10.2.8)

Judith Plouviez

The cantonal capital at Caistor was linked by road (Margary 3) to Colchester and London, and to the south-east along Stone Street (Margary 36), crossing the Waveney at Wainford (Ditchingham) (Margary 1973, 269–70). A route to Crownthorpe (Wicklewood) and Saham Toney to the west was out of use by the late Roman or early post-Roman period. There was probably also a road north from Caistor to join the route from Thorpe St Andrew to Brampton.

About 13km south of Caistor on the Colchester road, roughly halfway to the crossing of the Waveney and small town at Scole (above, 10.1.3.1), there was a smaller roadside settlement at Long Stratton which has evidence for activity into the second half of the fourth century (NHER 12513; 25916; 44502; 61956).

There is an elaborate villa-type building complex in Stoke Holy Cross *c* 2km south-east of the walled town

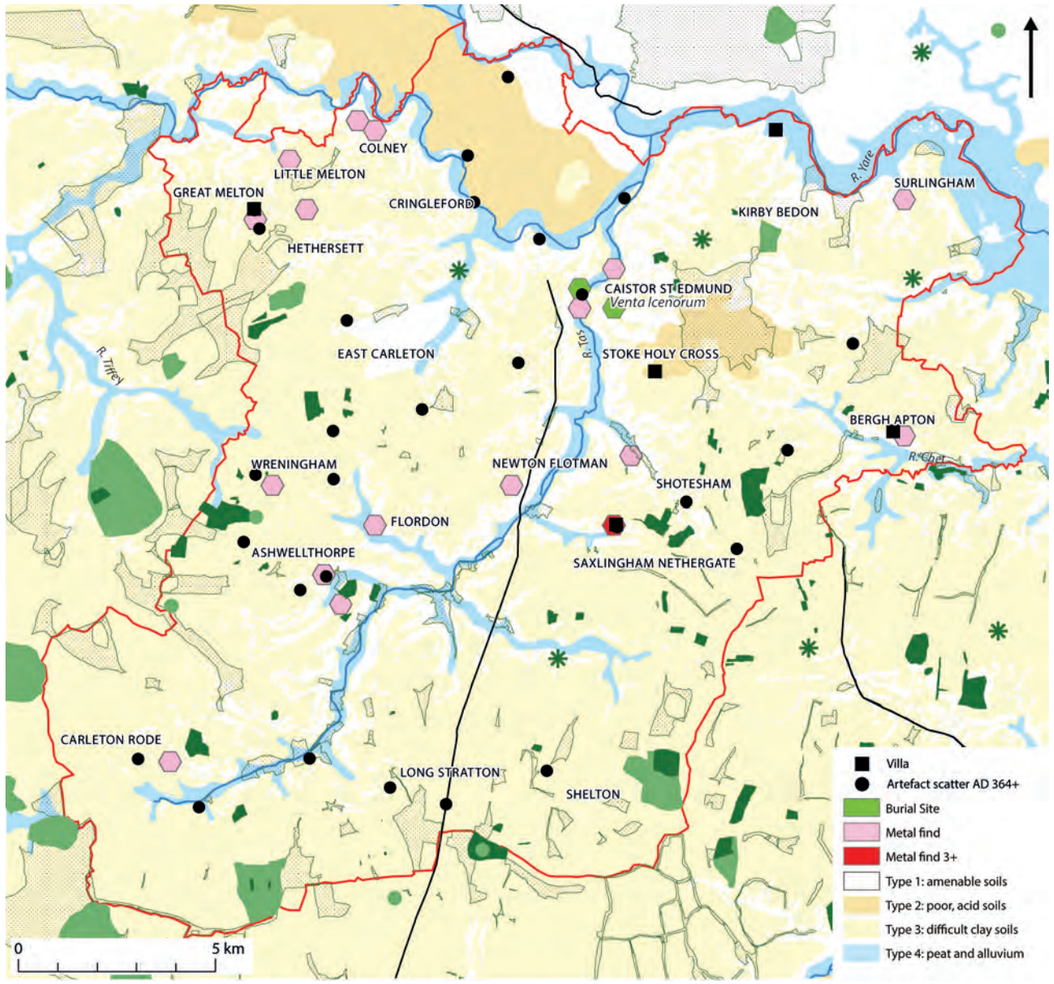

Fig 10.2.8 The Tas: main sites and finds AD 360–410 and Phase 1 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

(NHER 9732/43199) where coin finds suggest activity in the later fourth century but probably not beyond (Bowden 2011). To the west, the site of a substantial probable villa at Great Melton/Hethersett (NHER 9270) has considerable evidence for activity in the late fourth and very probably into the early fifth century; finds include a buckle with integral triangular plate and a prick spur, both suggesting a military or official presence. To the south, there is evidence for late fourth-century activity from two potential villa buildings at sites straddling the boundary between Saxlingham Nethergate and Shotesham parishes (NHER 10099) and within Shotesham parish (NHER 24537). A hoard of clipped *siliquae* from East Carleton (NMS-074379) also indicates wealth in the early fifth century. Evidence for villa-type buildings is recorded to the east at Kirby Bedon (NHER 9676) and Bergh Apton (NHER 10316) but neither has late activity.

Concentrations of surface finds indicating settlement activity in the second half of the fourth century are fairly widespread across the study area, but with fewer in the parishes east of Caistor and more in the west of the region in the upper reaches of tributary rivers draining into the rivers Yare and Tas. Apart from Caistor itself, there is little evidence for late settlement activity along the main Tas valley, despite its proximity to the major road, with more in its tributary valleys to the east, south and west. Objects indicating military or official activity, including isolated finds, are also more commonly found in the western and southern parishes and in parishes adjoining Caistor St Edmund. Examination of Roman coins recorded on the PAS database for South Norfolk District (within which the study area sits) shows that both Valentinian and Theodosian coins are relatively less common than in Norfolk as a whole: 9.1 and 1.1 per cent respectively in South Norfolk, compared to 13.2 and 1.8 per cent in Norfolk. Substantial numbers of Theodosian coins are recorded from some areas within the walled town at Caistor, but only about 20 per cent of the late Roman rural sites in the study area have coin evidence suggesting activity into the fifth century; these sites are in the parishes of Great Melton/Hethersett, Wreningham, Ashwellthorpe, Shotesham and Shelton.

Phase 1 (420–70) (Fig 10.2.8)

Other than the cemeteries at Caistor and Markshall, no excavated settlement or cemetery is known to have come into use before the later fifth century. At Myrtle Road, Hethersett, the latest fills of a well and timber-lined tank, elements of a late Roman farming settlement, contained a handful of sherds of hand-made pottery alongside a Roman assemblage of the late fourth or early fifth century, but there is no other evidence for post-Roman activity from the site (NHER 37645; Shelley and Green 2007). Otherwise, the evidence for early to middle fifth-century activity comes from fifteen metalwork finds other than those from the immediate Caistor landscape. A majority of these (twelve items) are cruciform brooches of Martin's group 1; there is also a supporting-arm brooch from Wreningham, an equal-armed brooch from Saxlingham Nethergate, and sword pommel of Martin's type Holmegaard/Kragehul from Flordon (NMS-6E5600). There are finds of two cruciform brooches from the same immediate vicinity in Ashwellthorpe parish and in Colney parish, and finds from two separate locations in Hethersett parish. Brooches from Ashwellthorpe (NHER 30205), Hethersett (NHER 32865) and Saxlingham Nethergate/Shotesham (NHER 10099) are from the sites of Roman-period settlements with activity into the fourth or early fifth centuries. In nearly all cases there is metalwork evidence for later fifth- and sixth-century activity from the same location or the immediate vicinity.

Phase 2 (470–570) (Fig 10.2.9)

The cemeteries at Bergh Apton (NHER 1011; Green and Rogerson 1978), Brooke (NHER 10132; Meaney 1964, 170) and Morningthorpe (NHER 1120; Green *et al* 1987) came into use during the later fifth century (Penn and Brugmann 2007). A single inhumation from Stoke Holy Cross (NHER 41735) can be dated to the late fifth or sixth century, and five spearheads recorded from a barrow on Poringland Heath (NHER 9898; Meaney 1964, 180) are very probably from secondary inhumations of the sixth or seventh centuries. Pits containing early medieval hand-made pottery are known from excavations in Caistor St Edmund parish, north of the detailed study area (NHER 9584; Ashwin 1991), and from East Carleton (NHER 22652). Cropmarks of possible *Grubenhäuser* are recorded from Surlingham (NHER 49581) and in Stoke Holy Cross south of the detailed study area (NHER 52006); also in Stoke Holy Cross, ditches containing Iron Age or early medieval hand-made pottery were recorded during a watching brief and excavation in 1996 at Dunston Hall (NHER 31821; Shelley 1999).

Otherwise, activity is represented by more than 300 surface finds or chance finds of metalwork and pottery, with a dense distribution on the more fertile and tractable soils along the valley of the Tas and its tributary streams. There is evidence for settlement or activity from most parishes on both sides of the Tas valley, with significant concentrations of material known at Carleton Rode, Bunwell, Tibenham and Aslacton at the head of the valley; in Forncett, Tacolneston, Ashwellthorpe, Wreningham, Bracon Ash and Newton Flotman parishes along its west side south of the Caistor settlement complex; and in Tasburgh, Hempnall, Saxlingham Nethergate, Shotesham, Stoke Holy Cross and Bixley parishes on its east side.

To the east of the Tas valley, clusters of finds as well as the cemeteries at Brooke and Bergh Apton show foci of activity in the upper valley of the river Chet. Metalwork from Holverston and Yelverton is evidence of settlement activity among the valley of The Beck, a minor watercourse that drains eastwards into the river Yare. There are also finds from Surlingham on the south bank of the Yare. To the west, there is evidence for significant activity on the south bank of the Yare valley at Keswick and Colney, and in the valleys of its tributary streams at Hethersett, Ketteringham, Great Melton and Little Melton.

Metalwork and pottery finds from Long Stratton appear to be associated with the line of the Roman road to Caistor. Otherwise there is only limited archaeological evidence for activity on the interfluves.

Phase 3 (570–720) (Fig 10.2.10)

There are later sixth- and seventh-century inhumations from the Caistor cemetery, and the cemeteries at Bergh Apton and Morningthorpe remained in use into the later sixth century (Penn and Brugmann 2007, 58–71); in the current state of knowledge this cannot be ruled out for the Brooke cemetery, and the inhumation at Stoke Holy Cross and probable inhumations at Poringland could be

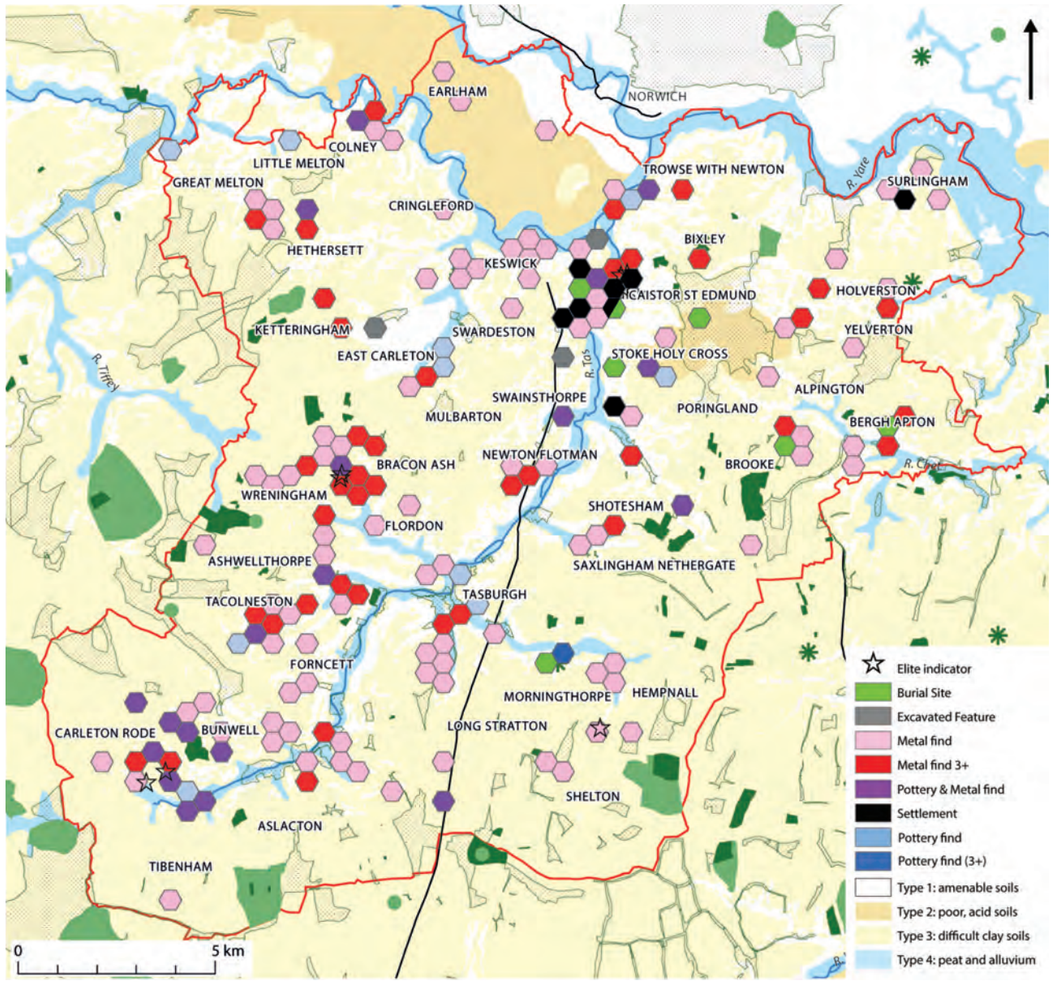

Fig 10.2.9 The Tas: Phase 2 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 202*

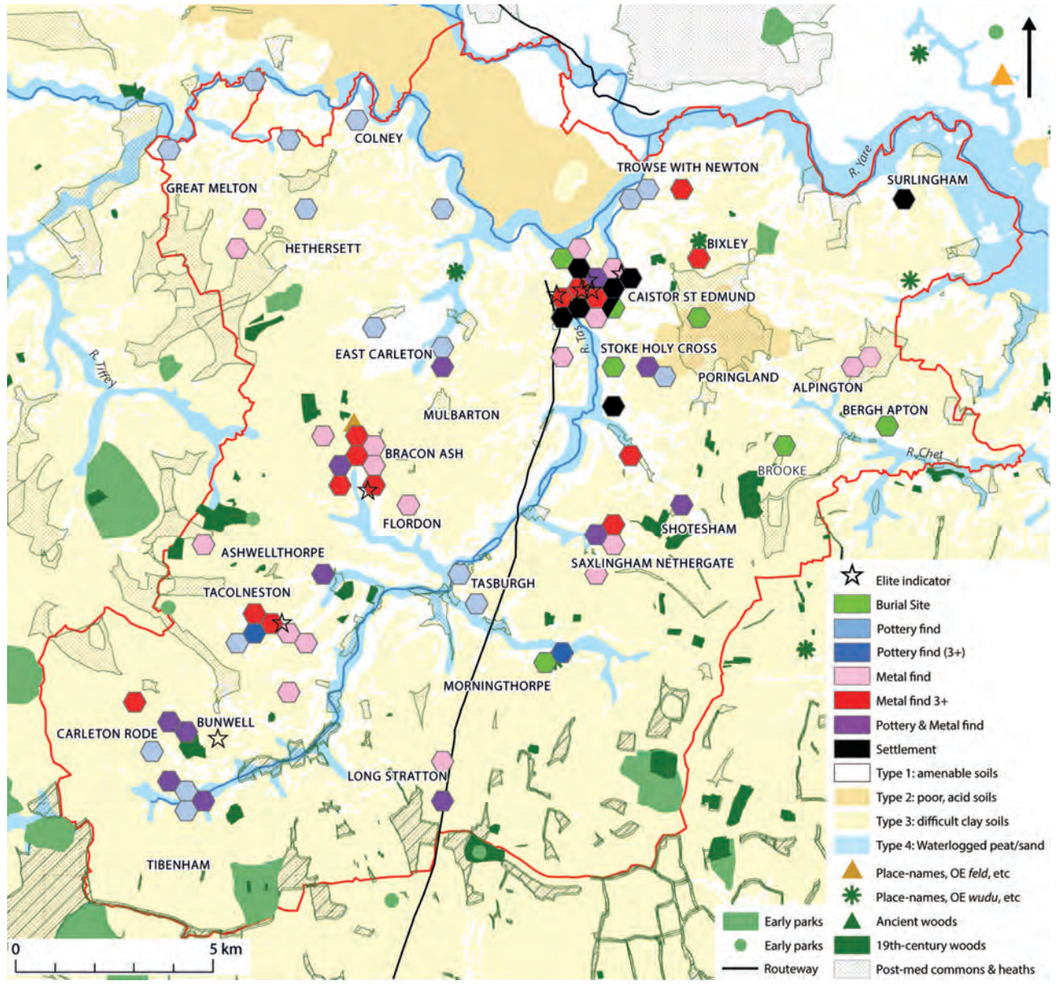

Fig 10.2.10 The Tas: Phase 3 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

this late. Apart from two sites at Caistor (the Harford Farm cemetery and the probable juvenile inhumation with an east Mediterranean bronze bowl, both discussed above, 10.2.1), no burial or settlement site known from excavation or observed stratigraphy came into use during the period.

Turning to chance and surface finds, as with our other case studies, and for the same wider societal reasons, fewer material culture items are reported for Phase 3 than for Phase 2. The pattern of distribution, however, continues that of the late fifth to late sixth centuries, with significant foci of activity at the head of the valley in Carleton Rode, Bunwell and Tibenham parishes, along its west side in Tacolneston, Ashwellthorpe and Bracon Ash, and on the east in Saxlingham Nethergate, Shotesham, Stoke Holy Cross and Bixley.

Phases 4 (720–850) and 5 (850–1100) (Fig 10.2.11)

Information on metal finds after 800 has not been comprehensively collated and so the data for Phases 4 and 5 are less representative than for the earlier periods. None the less, it is clear that the broad pattern of occupation and activity seen in Phases 2 and 3 continues through the eighth to eleventh centuries.

There is excavated evidence for settlement activity at two sites. Pits containing daub and Thetford ware were recorded during excavations at Bunwell in 1964 (NHER 10007). At Tasburgh Hillfort (NHER 2258), excavations in 1975–80 recorded an eleventh-century timber building and features associated with Thetford ware. Unstratified Ipswich ware indicates eighth- to ninth-century activity in the immediate vicinity. It is possible that the fortification is a work of the later ninth or earlier tenth century, built by Danish invaders or associated with the Edwardian reconquest (Rogerson and Lawson 1992).

10.2.3.2 Settlement patterns and mortuary geography

The evidence of surface finds, excavation and aerial photography suggests a pattern of farming settlements located to exploit the range of resource zones from valley bottom to interfluve at intervals of 1.5m–2.5km in the fifth to eighth centuries along the length of the Tas valley and those of its tributary watercourses, with a similar pattern along the valley of the Yare and the upper valley of the Chet. This continues into the eleventh century with local shifts of site and reconfigurations of settlement structure taking place within the valley-side zones favoured over the long term. There is little archaeological evidence for any expansion of settlement and activity onto the interfluves and away from river valley locations in the eighth to eleventh centuries (Tables 10.2.5–6).

There are only a few settlements where it is possible to argue for some direct continuity of activity from the fourth century into the middle or later fifth century, as at Ashwellthorpe (NHER 30205) and Saxlingham Nethergate/Shotesham (NHER 10099). More commonly, material of the later fifth or sixth centuries is known from, or from the vicinity of, sites with evidence for activity in the late fourth or early fifth centuries. Myrtle Road, Hethersett, where there is evidence for early post-

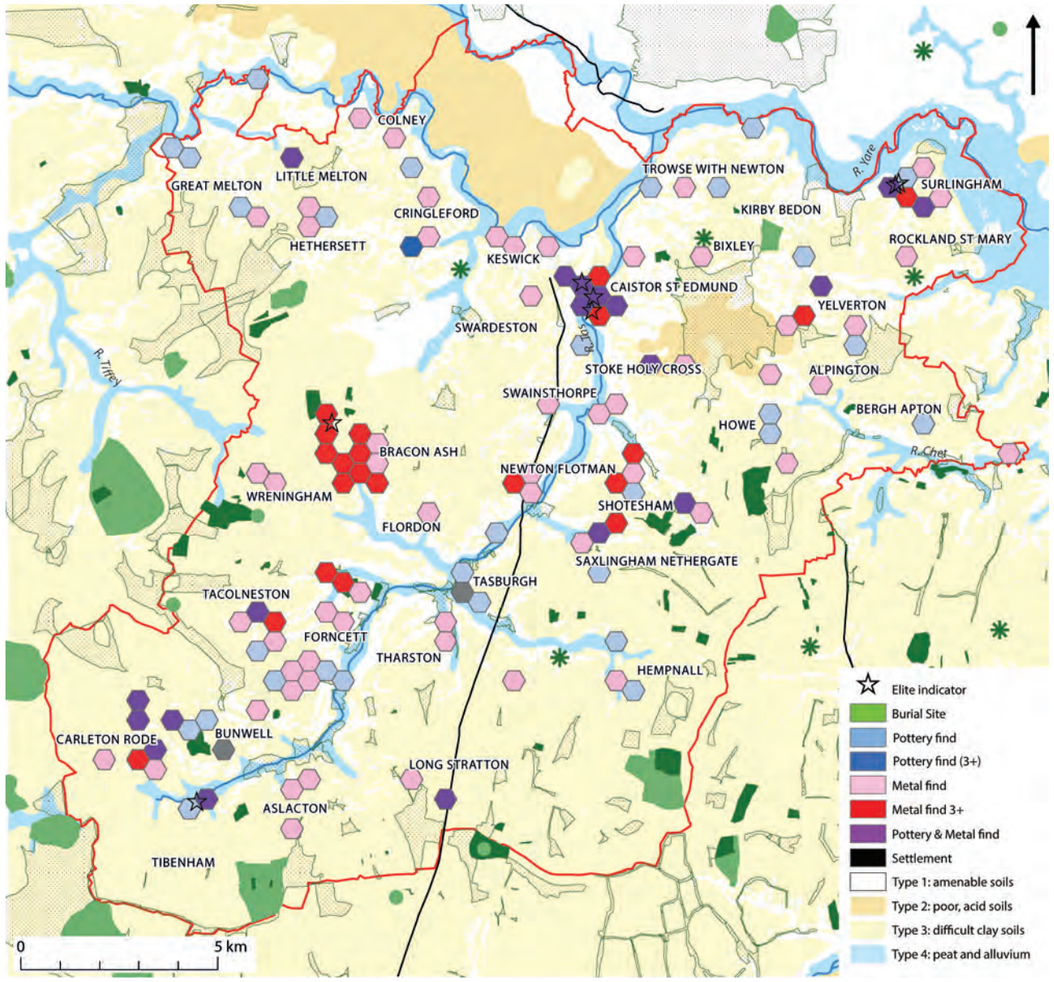

Fig 10.2.11 The Tas: activity of Phases 4–5. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

Roman activity in the vicinity but not for a continuity of activity within the excavated area, is therefore probably more representative of the wider picture. This would argue for disruptions and reconfigurations of rural settlement during the course of the early to middle fifth century but also that the Tas basin remained a focus of population and landed resource.

The mortuary geography of the immediate Caistor landscape has been discussed above. The urnfields at both Caistor and Markshall can be seen as focal burial places for a wider population in the fifth century, and it is worth noting a parallel with Coddenham in the location of the seventh-century cemeteries at Harford Farm on elevated ground at a distance overlooking the bowl-like setting of contemporary settlement and earlier burials. The site of the Brooke cemetery is not recorded, but the cemeteries at Bergh Apton and Morningthorpe are consistent with the wider pattern of location observed regionally for later fifth- and sixth-century burial sites (Ch 8.3.2). Morningthorpe is at *c* 30m OD overlooking a tributary of the Tas from the south, Bergh Apton at *c* 35m OD overlooking the valley of the Chet from the north. The probable burials at Poringland would fit with the later sixth- and seventh-century phenomenon of barrow burial, primary or secondary, on higher ground at a greater distance from settlement sites – seen, for instance, in the Deben valley at Brightwell Heath (Ch 6.2.5). Where dense or extensive scatters of surface material are likely to derive both from settlement and burial activity the locations are consistent with burial in the vicinity of the occupation site but at a more elevated location.

Table 10.2.5 The Tas territory: early medieval PAS finds (excluding Caistor-by-Norwich) and HER records and their locations relative to soil type

	Area (sq km)	%	PAS	%	HER	%
1: good soils	65.5	19.0	94	36.2	71	39.4
2: acid soils	17.6	5.1	0	0	6	3.3
3: difficult clay	233.6	67.9	158	60.8	96	53.3
4: waterlogged silt/peat	27.3	7.9	8	3.1	7	3.9
Total	**344.0**	**100.0**	**260**	**100.0**	**180**	**100.0**

Table 10.2.6 The Tas territory: sites datable by early medieval pottery and their locations relative to soil type

	Area (sq km)	%	Hand-made	%	Ipswich	%	Thetford	%
1: good soils	65.5	19.0	8	26.7	23	46.0	17	39.5
2: acid soils	17.6	5.1	3	10.0	1	2.0	2	4.7
3: difficult clay	233.6	67.9	17	56.7	25	50.0	23	53.5
4: waterlogged silt/peat	27.3	7.9	2	6.7	1	2.0	1	2.3
Total	**344.0**	**100.0**	**30**	**100.0**	**50**	**100.0**	**43**	**100.0**

10.2.3.3 Social differentiation and hierarchy

There are no elite items of Phase 1, but the two sword pommels of type Holmegaard/Kragehul from Caistor St Edmund (PAS NMS-C48232) and Flordon (PAS NMS-6E5600) can both be considered status indicators. In addition to the single fragment of a silver-gilt brooch from Caistor, there are five pieces of elite metalwork of Phase 2: the head and bow of a silver-gilt radiate-headed brooch from Morningthorpe, a silver finger-ring (PAS NMS2424; NHER 23418) and a gold bracelet (NHER 21959) from nearby locations at Carleton Rode, and two pieces of silver-gilt – what is probably a knob from a radiate-headed brooch and a mount or escutcheon – from closely adjacent sites at Wreningham (NHER 28495 and 30202). In Phase 3, apart from the five items from Caistor, there are finds of elite material from three sites: a gold pendant from Bracon Ash (NHER 28732); an east Mediterranean copper-alloy bowl from Bunwell (NHER 23091); and a gold-and-garnet scabbard fitting from Tacolneston (NHER 35664). In Phase 4 there are two fragments from a hanging-bowl escutcheon from Bracon Ash (PAS NMS-2A0ED3), a silver-gilt mount from Surlingham (PAS E90054) and a silver-gilt pin from Tibenham (PAS NMS2422), as well as the two silver pins from Caistor St Edmund. For Phase 5, there is a silver Thor's Hammer amulet from Surlingham (NHER 31655) as well as the silver pin from Caistor.

The surface finds are consistent with the model of internally ranked communities inferred from wider mortuary and settlement data for the later fifth and sixth centuries, but point to individuals or kindreds of greater wealth or power at Caistor, Morningthorpe, Carleton Rode and Wreningham. Their distribution suggests clusters of settlement and activity at the heads of tributary valleys in Carleton Rode, Bunwell and Tibenham, along a minor tributary valley at Wreningham and Bracon Ash, and along a major tributary watercourse at Hempnall, Morningthorpe and Tasburgh, which presumably represent the micro-territories of autonomous or semi-autonomous social groups with their own local leaders.

The rather different pattern of material in Phase 3 suggests that Caistor assumed a central importance within the catchment territory from the later sixth century. Of the eight elite items, five are from Caistor, with other finds suggesting some continuing elite interest in the areas of Wreningham/Bracon Ash and Carleton Rode/Bunwell. This is also seen in the eighth to ninth centuries, although with a less emphatic elite signature at Caistor. The more northerly distribution of tenth- to eleventh-century elite items, with finds from Caistor and Surlingham, might reflect the shift in economic and political gravity from Caistor to the developing urban centre at Norwich.

The elite metalwork of the later fifth to later sixth centuries is consistent with an Anglian material culture identity, but the silver-gilt radiate-headed brooch from Morningthorpe and the fragment from Wreningham do

indicate some high-level links with the Merovingian Continent. As elsewhere in East Anglia, elite identities are materialised differently in the later sixth to early eighth centuries, and express an enhanced range and greater reach of inter-regional connections, seen both in the Mediterranean imports and the Merovingian gold issues that represent the inception of coin use in the Caistor territory in the middle of the seventh century.

10.2.3.4 Coinage and coin use

Andrew Woods

Including the fifty-three finds from the immediate Caistor landscape, there are eighty-eight single coin finds from the wider study area. In addition, there are two coins from Harford Farm, Grave 18 (Penn 2000, 75) and fifty-six from the Loddon hoard (Marsden 2013b). A Byzantine *follis* of Justinian I, found in a back garden at Earlham on the outskirts of Norwich in 1985 (NHER 21635), is at least as likely to be a nineteenth- or twentieth-century souvenir as an early medieval import and so is excluded from this analysis (Moorhead forthcoming).

There are only six coins of EM1 (Fig 10.2.12) and only the mint-and-moneyer *tremissis* from Caistor (NHER 9813) can be dated as early as the late sixth or early seventh century. The other EM1 coins from Caistor, and from the wider territory at Markshall (Chapel Hill) and Saxlingham Nethergate, belong to the

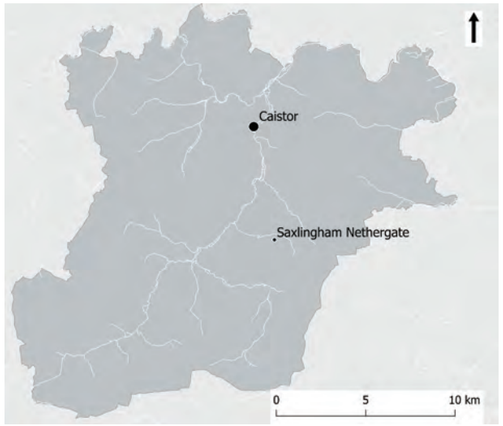

Fig 10.2.12 Coin finds of EM1 in the Tas basin. Circles indicate surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins

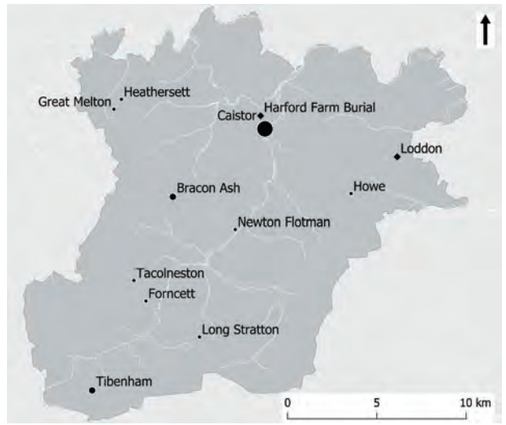

Fig 10.2.13 Coin finds of EM2 in the Tas basin. Circles indicate surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins

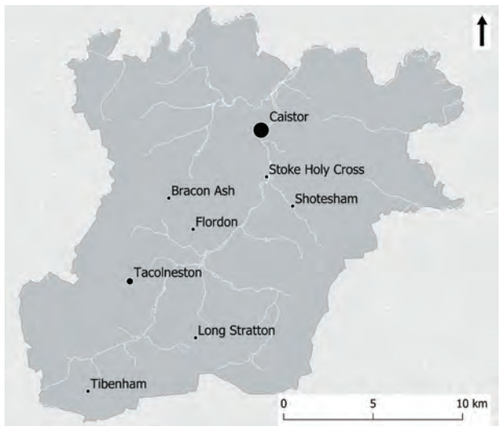

Fig 10.2.14 Coin finds of EM3 in the Tas basin. Circles indicate surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins

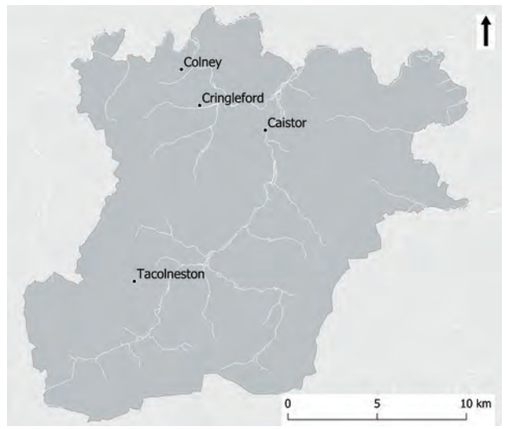

Fig 10.2.15 Coin finds of EM4 in the Tas basin. Circles indicate surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins

latest phase of EM1, in the middle seventh century, which appears to mark the inception of significant circulation and use of coinage both at Caistor itself and in the wider territory.

EM2 saw an intensification of circulation and an expansion of coin use (Fig 10.2.13) with individual finds from eleven locations of which only Caistor also has coinage of EM1. There are also two type B coins from Grave 18 at Harford Farm, Caistor St Edmund, deposited early in EM2, and the Loddon hoard (PAS NMS-FF8501), deposited towards the end of EM2. The hoard contains coins of English types A, B, C, F and RP but has a high proportion of Continental types D and E. Continental types are 61 per cent of the total against 40 per cent across the rest of East Anglia. This suggests that it incorporated a parcel of Continental currency acquired shortly before deposition and not yet fully dispersed or circulated. The geographical distribution of EM2 coins suggests that coinage was circulating across the catchment territory and that coin use was not confined to a single core area.

The geographical distribution of EM3 coins is similar to that of EM2 (Fig 10.2.14) but when finds from the immediate Caistor landscape are discounted there are fewer coins of EM3 than EM2 (ten as against nineteen). As for East Anglia more generally there are fewer coins of EM4, and their distribution shows a shift to the north and west (Fig 10.2.15). The fall in numbers from EM2 to EM3 may simply be the result of a small sample size but a decline of this scale contrasts with the trends seen in our other study areas and the wider East Anglian pattern. Taken with the scarcity of coinage of Beonna in this area, and the apparent shift in the geography of coin loss in EM4, it suggests a decline in the intensity of coin use and a change in patterns of circulation in the middle of the eighth century which is likely to be linked to realignments of economic and jurisdictional geographies.

The presence of a single Byzantine coin would be noteworthy if from a genuine early medieval context, but otherwise the numismatic signature of the wider Caistor territory is typical of the wider picture of coin use in East Anglia. There appears to have been virtually no use of coinage before the middle of the seventh century. After that, Caistor and surrounding areas saw a relatively rapid expansion, with more coinage used in more places. In the eighth century there appears to have been a peak early in EM3 followed by a decline in usage and a shift in the areas of coin use by EM4. The immediate Caistor landscape was a centre of coin use but its monetary signature is not qualitatively different from that of the wider territory. Unlike Rendlesham and Coddenham, Caistor was not an unusually early centre of coin use, nor did it lead or drive the uptake of coin use in its immediate hinterland.

10.2.4 Conclusions

The immediate proximity to the site of the cantonal capital of two large cremation cemeteries in use from the earlier fifth century prompts expectations of continuity and invites consideration of the circumstances in which people from the North Sea coastal regions of the Continent and south Scandinavia arrived and settled (Myres and Green 1973, 31–4; Williamson 1993, 67). There is no reason necessarily to identify these as mercenaries, or to assume formal settlement under Roman authority. None the less, if they represent migrations and settlement after the rupture with the Western Empire we must still envisage a range of interactions with the local indigenous population and its structures of authority (Chs 7.2 and 11.1.2).

We must be careful, too, not to let proximity to the site of the Roman town distort perceptions. There are other large early cremation cemeteries, which can also be considered focal places, which are not directly associated with major late Roman settlements. The burials at Caistor are part of wider early post-Roman settlement and mortuary landscapes. To a great extent any interpretation will be predicated on the perceived character and importance of the cantonal capital in the late fourth and early fifth centuries. The greater the importance accorded the town, the more likely it will appear that there were special circumstances governing the presence of incoming communities in its immediate vicinity. Conversely, if it is seen as an 'administrative village' in the late fourth and early fifth centuries that subsequently lost its official functions with the end of the Imperial administration then this seems less remarkable.

The artefact and coin assemblages suggest an official and/or military presence at Caistor into the early fifth century but there is a lack of evidence for it being a major population centre with other urban and market functions. The two cremation cemeteries indicate a social centrality from the second quarter of the fifth century for a population or communities with origins in, and continuing links to, the societies of south Scandinavia and the North Sea littoral of Germany. More widely, the preponderance of cruciform brooches among the Phase 1 material from the wider Tas territory, and the sword pommels of Holmegaard/Kragehul type from Caistor and Flordon, suggest strong links with south Scandinavia in the fifth century in which military leadership played a part.

Although it was the focus of a wider burial

community in the fifth century, the indications are that prior to the later sixth century the immediate area around Caistor was only one of several places associated with different autonomous or semi-autonomous groups in the Tas basin, each with its own leadership, and there is little or nothing to suggest that it was necessarily the foremost amongst them. This changed in the later sixth or early seventh centuries, when Caistor does appear to have become the main elite centre within the Tas territory, but even then it does not present as emphatic an elite material signature as Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne, nor was it an unusually early centre of coin use or a driver of monetisation in its immediate hinterland. This implies that it was not linked to the social and exchange networks of the paramount elite in the same way as the Suffolk sites.

This may reflect wider differences between south-east Suffolk and central Norfolk at this time, but the West Norfolk hoard shows that gold coinage was reaching Norfolk in substantial quantities in the early seventh century (Pestell 2017, 208), and elite items such as east Mediterranean copper-alloy vessels are present at Caistor. Alternatively, it may suggest that prior to the later sixth century any leadership faction at Caistor never exercised more than local power and that any claim to wider lordship – even within the Tas basin – was contested. This in turn raises the question of whether the emergence of Caistor as the predominant place in the Tas basin from the later sixth century was the result of a local process of peer-competition, or represents the imposition of regional external authority at the expense of a local elite or locally prominent groups.

One reading of the archaeology, therefore, would be that the former cantonal capital was the arena for a transition from state authority to magnate or personal leadership in the early to middle fifth century, and very possibly a transfer or seizure of power from an indigenous to an incoming leadership. It retained sufficient symbolic gravity to persist as a focal place for a local grouping, but was not a central place for the Tas basin until external regional rulership was imposed in the later sixth or earlier seventh century. The reasons for selecting Caistor may have included its favourable location within the Tas basin, the possibility that any leading kindred there may have allied itself with regional overlords, and the symbolic impact of locating the jurisdictional centre for a newly assimilated administrative territory at the site of a Roman walled town. The subsequent development of a trading place also sets the trajectory of development at Caistor apart from those at Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne. It is consistent with elite encouragement, and taxing, of inter-regional commerce at a place established as a client jurisdictional centre by regional rulers but which had no ancestral link with ruling kindred.

Of the case studies we have looked at so far, Caistor has the strongest prior case for a continuation of significant activity at or in the immediate vicinity of a major Roman settlement and administrative centre, but – when compared to Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne – has perhaps the weakest elite signature of the fifth to seventh centuries. Whereas the trajectories at Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne suggest the progressive consolidation of wealth and power in the vicinity of late Roman rural centres, that at Caistor suggests that the site of the former cantonal capital had lost any wider importance beyond the Tas basin by the middle of the fifth century, if not before, and that its significance as a central place for a Tas basin territory from the late sixth to the middle of the eighth centuries was as much a re-emergence, prompted by external agency, as a persistence of its importance as a late Roman centre. This would be consistent with the view that from the second quarter of the fifth century, following the disintegration of the Roman state administration, vestiges of official authority became wholly entangled with the economic and social power of local magnates, exercised from rural centres. This in turn may be seen as an acceleration of trends already apparent in the society and government of lowland Britain in the later fourth century (Gerrard 2013).

We have considered above (8.2.3.1) the question of the location of *Dommoc*, the first seat of the East Anglian bishopric. Bearing in mind the examples of Canterbury, London, Winchester and York, the old *civitas* capital – still walled and perhaps with a surviving street plan – could be seen as an obvious place to establish the see, and evidence that there was a church on the site from the later tenth or early eleventh century might appear to add weight to the claim. In this context it is, perhaps, worth considering the possibility that when Bede used the term *civitas* for the lost *Dommoc* he may have done so in an accurate, literal sense. Campbell has observed that Bede never used this term for the sites of major ecclesiastical centres 'unless their vernacular names terminated in "caestir"': the Anglo-Saxon translation of Bede rendered *Dommoc* as *Dommucceastre* (Campbell 1979b, 34). While Caistor may always have been the name of the place in the post-Roman period, it might possibly represent an abbreviation of an original, longer name: Chester in the west of England would be an obvious parallel. Against this, however, there is no evidence that Caistor was ever an early medieval see (cf Campbell 1996). Lacking any prior association with the East Anglian ruling kindred, Caistor was a local power centre and subsequently the

central place of a jurisdictional territory and a focus of inter-regional exchange but was never, in the fifth to eighth centuries, sufficiently important, or its region sufficiently significant within the new East Anglian polity, to be considered as a candidate for the seat of its first bishop. This is in turn illustrates just how radical a transformation took place in the regional landscape of power between the end of the fourth and the early seventh centuries.

10.3 The Burnhams and north Norfolk

10.3.1 The site and assemblage

10.3.1.1 Location and fieldwork history

Location

The Burnhams are a group of seven historic parishes (now four civil parishes) in north Norfolk which are clustered around the lower reaches of the river Burn as it flows north-west to the sea (Fig 10.3.1). The major early medieval 'productive' site (NHER 18496 and 28127) is situated on the west bank of the Burn near to where it is joined by the Goose Beck, a tributary stream flowing in from the west; the site extends both north and south of the beck, which here forms the boundary between Burnham Market and Burnham Overy (Rogerson 2003; Davies 2010, 111–13). The site lies within a wider concentration of archaeological evidence for early medieval activity which extends along the Burn valley to the north and south, and west along the valley of the Goose Beck to the modern village of Burnham Market, which straddles the junction of the four modern civil parishes and six of the seven historic parishes (10.3.2, below; Fig 10.3.8). The historic parishes probably originated through the division of what had been a single larger administrative unit or estate. The 'productive' site occupies a central location within this putative territory, and it is possible that Burnham – *Bruneham* in Domesday Book – is to be identified with the pre-Conquest royal vill *Bruna*, mentioned in the context of the mid-ninth century in the twelfth-century *Annals of St Neot's* (Pestell 2003, 128; 10.3.2, below). For this analysis, we consider both the 'productive' site and its immediate archaeological context within a study area of *c* 6sq km that takes in the Burn valley to the north-west and south-east of the productive site, and the Goose Beck valley to include Burnham Market village and its immediate surroundings (Fig 10.3.2).

The site lies between 5m and 15m OD, partly on damp alluvial clay soils bordering the watercourse, partly on light loams overlying chalk (Newmarket 2 Association) (Hodge *et al* 1984). The latter soils, well-drained and tractable, characterise the lower ground and valley slopes throughout the area, but on higher ground sandy drift gives rise to the more acidic soils of the Barrow Association and, in places, to those of the more challenging Newport 4 Association.

To the east, the boundaries of the Burnham parishes follow the line of the Roman road from Toftrees to the coast (Margary 39) (Margary 1973, 273–4). A possible Roman road running east–west has been identified *c* 6km to the south (Albone 2016, fig 10). The late Roman shore fort and associated settlement at Brancaster lies 6km to the west (Hinchcliffe 1985).

Fieldwork

The first recorded early medieval find from the study area is a great square-headed brooch thrown up by cultivation in 1962 (NHER 1736) within an area where metal-detecting in 1992 and 1993 subsequently recovered Roman and early medieval metalwork (NHER 29185). A trial hole excavated during examination of the site by Rainbird Clarke and Barbara Greene established the depth of ploughing but found no archaeological features. Early medieval pottery is also known from the adjacent school grounds (NHER 1737).

The earliest systematic work was fieldwalking during the 1980s, mostly undertaken by John Smallwood with his pupils from King Edward VI School, King's Lynn. This covered fields in the Burn valley both south (NHER 28127 and 21820) and north (NHER 1756 and 18496) of the Goose Beck, and later to the west (NHER 28117). It recovered Roman material of the first to fourth centuries, early medieval hand-made sherds, significant quantities of Ipswich and Thetford wares, and two pieces of Continental pottery of the seventh to eighth centuries: a sherd of North French Blackware (NHER 18496) and one of Bornheim Waldorf ware (NHER 21820) (Coutts 1991, 259–60). Systematic metal-detecting and fieldwalking was carried out by David Fox and Philip West from 1990 onwards on these same fields north and south of Goose Beck, and beyond to the north (NHER 25918, 29185 and 34280); pottery sherds were also collected while detecting. Further fieldwalking south of the Goose Beck in NHER 21820 by Gareth Davies recovered more hand-made, Ipswich and Thetford wares, along with Lincolnshire shelly wares (Davies 2011, 237–8, fig 131).

Gareth Davies undertook a magnetometry survey in

Fig 10.3.1 Location map showing the study area and major sites and places mentioned in the text. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

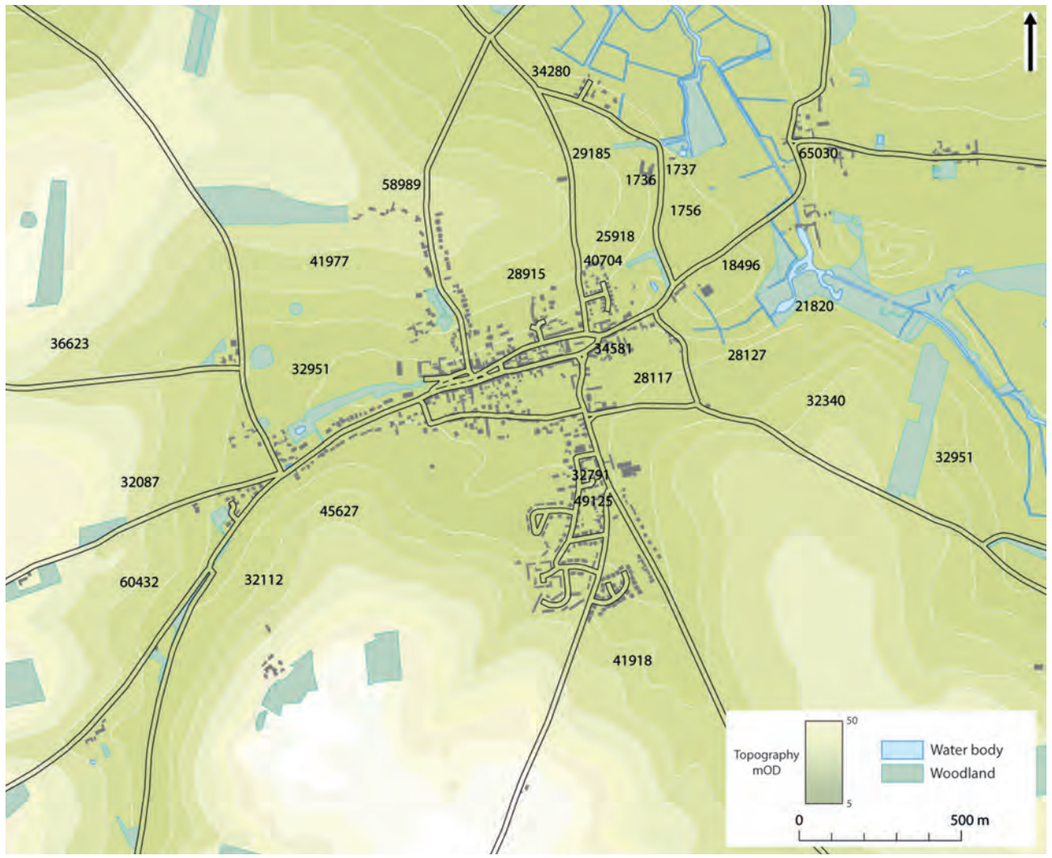

Fig 10.3.2 Burnham: the study area and HER sites. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

2007–9, covering 2.5ha at 18496 and 3.5ha at 28127. North of the Goose Beck, in 18496, this identified two rectilinear systems on different alignments, interpreted respectively as a Roman field system and early medieval settlement features. South of the Goose Beck, in 28127, possible early medieval features include an enclosure and droveway, and anomalies that may be *Grubenhäuser* (Davies 2010, 111–13; 2011, figs 131–6).

An auger survey of the deposits flanking the Goose Beck between 18496 and 28127 was carried out in 2002 by Mike Godwin; this suggests that by the fourth century an inlet existed at the confluence of the Goose Brook and the river Burn that would provide a harbour with a potential waterfront area on the north side of the stream (Godwin 2003; Davies 2011, 234).

Since the late 1980s a number of detectorists have reported finds from fields to the north and west of Burnham Market (NHER 32087, 32112, 36623, 41977, 44627, 58989 and 60432). In 1997, a further area of early medieval activity south-east of the 'productive' site (NHER 32340 and 32951) was identified following a report of illegal metal-detecting. Iron spearheads discarded at the site indicated that furnished inhumations had been robbed. Further metal-detecting finds have subsequently been properly reported from this area.

Since the late 1990s there has been development-led excavation in and around the village of Burnham Market. Evaluation and excavation in 1997–8 at the former allotment site revealed field or enclosure ditches and a corn-dryer of the second to third centuries and settlement features associated with Ipswich and Thetford wares (NHER 32791; Crowson 1997; Percival and Williamson 2005). Ipswich ware and settlement features associated with Thetford ware were recorded during evaluation, excavation and a watching brief at Ulph Street in 1999–2003 (NHER 34581; Penn 1999; Bates 2001; Penn and Percival 2003), and small quantities of Ipswich and Thetford wares were recovered during evaluation of land off Beacon Hill Road in 2007 (NHER 49125; Watkins 2007). Most significantly, excavation at Foundry Field on the north side of the village in 2012–15 has revealed an inhumation cemetery of the middle fifth to the late seventh centuries with a minimum of 438 burials (NHER 28915; Hodges *et al* forthcoming). On the east bank of the river Burn in Burnham Overy a *Grubenhaus* associated with fifth- to seventh-century pottery was recorded during excavation in 2015 (NHER 65030; Mustchin 2016; Rogerson 2019, 25).

10.3.1.2 The material culture assemblage

Recording and data quality

Records of all early medieval material reported as a result of chance finds, field survey and metal-detecting within the study area were collated in a MS Access database, with the exception of Gareth Davies' fieldwalking, which is reported in his PhD thesis (Davies 2011, 237, fig 131). Reported finds of early medieval pottery are summarised by sherd count in Table 10.3.1 and metal finds in Table 10.3.2. There are four non-metal artefacts, all from 18496: a piece of a double-sided antler comb and a fired clay loom weight are early medieval, a green glass bead is Roman or early medieval and a piece of melted glass may derive from early medieval activity. None of the material has been examined at first-hand by the current authors: finds identification follows that recorded in the HER, checked and revised as necessary against the visual records (drawing or photography) made by staff of Norfolk Museums Service when the finds were reported.

Care was taken during field survey in the 1980s and 1990s to map finds or allocate them to context areas, but neither location nor retrieval information were recorded precisely or consistently across the different episodes of fieldwork and metal-detecting. It is not possible to calibrate the density of finds distributions (the heavy

Table 10.3.1 Burnham: summary of early medieval pottery from surface collection by site (sherd count)

HER code	Hand-made	Ipswich	Thetford	Continental
1736	0	1	0	0
1737	2	3	11	0
1756	2	7	27	0
18496	46	103	135	1
21820	0	1	0	1
25918	4	1	24	0
28117	1	27	43	0
28127	29	65	77	0
29185	8	6	34	0
32340	3	0	0	0
34280	0	2	5	0
41918	0	2	6	0
Total	**95**	**218**	**362**	**2**

Table 10.3.2 Burnham: summary of metal finds by site

HER code	Late Roman	Pierced Roman coin	Early medieval	Early medieval coin	Undated
1736	0	0	1	0	0
18496	2	4	83	15	2
25918	1	0	4	0	0
28117	0	0	1	0	0
28127	0	0	29	1	0
29185	1	0	6	0	0
32087	0	0	4	1	0
32112	1	0	3	0	0
32340	0	0	10	0	0
32951	0	2	5	0	0
36623	0	0	1	0	0
41977	0	0	1	0	0
44627	0	0	3	0	0
58989	0	0	1	0	0
60432	0	0	1	0	0
Total	**5**	**6**	**153**	**17**	**2**

preponderance of material from the two fields 18496 and 28127 is at least in part an artefact of repeated episodes of collection) and while some metal-detecting finds have good locational data others can only be attributed to a field. Taken with the relatively small size of the metalwork assemblage, this constrains the potential for spatial analysis. However, it is possible to identify and characterise areas of activity with some confidence (cf Chester-Kadwell 2009, 158–9; Davies 2011, 233–51; Rogerson 2019), and the metalwork both refines the coarser chronology afforded by the pottery and offers more nuanced information bearing on social identities and on socio-economic relationships and dynamics.

The early medieval metalwork assemblage

Including coins, the database contains records of 170 metal objects that can be dated securely to the fifth to eleventh centuries. In addition, there are some items of late Roman metalwork, six pierced Roman coins that are likely to represent later re-use as pendants and two items of metalworking waste that are intrinsically undatable but may represent early medieval activity. Thirteen of the seventeen early medieval coins, all from 18496, are early silver pennies; the remaining four were all minted after 800. The non-coin finds are overwhelmingly of copper alloy (143 items; 93 per cent of the assemblage), with five lead, three iron, one gold and one silver item. Between 52 and 58 per cent of the non-coin finds represent activity of the fifth to seventh centuries, 17–35 per cent the eighth and ninth centuries, and 12–26 per cent the tenth or eleventh centuries. A majority of the fifth- to seventh-century finds belong to the late fifth to late sixth centuries: late sixth- and seventh-century activity is represented by 6–12 per cent of the assemblage.

Dress accessories are the predominant category of artefact represented (Table 10.3.3): 124 items constituting 81 per cent of the assemblage, a proportion that remains constant over time. The fifth- and sixth-century assemblage includes fifty brooches or brooch fragments, five wrist clasps, five girdle hangers, a Style I belt mount and a zoomorphic pendant as well as a bucket mount, a scabbard chape and a harness mount; a shield grip and fragments of up to four spearheads are from disturbed inhumations of the later fifth to seventh centuries. The much smaller group of material datable to the later sixth and seventh centuries includes small belt or garter buckles, a gilded copper-alloy mount in Style II with an iron backing-plate which is possibly a harness fitting, a hanging-bowl mount, and evidence for metalworking in the form of a copper-alloy patrix die for an interlace roundel and a lead matrix for a human face with beard and moustache. The most common eighth- and ninth-century types are pins, ansate brooches and strap ends, and material of this date also includes tweezers and a sword chape. Later ninth- to eleventh-century material includes strap ends; a nummular brooch and a fragment of a trefoil brooch; four Borre-style disc brooches, two disc brooches with backward-looking animal and a Jellinge-style disc brooch; and two finger-rings, one copper-alloy and one silver. An incomplete gold finger-ring is to be dated to the ninth or tenth centuries. Other ninth- to eleventh-century material includes three weights (two lead, one copper-alloy) and a copper-alloy key. There are four hooked tags that cannot be dated more closely than to the period of the seventh to eleventh centuries, and a small hinged strap or box fitting that on stylistic grounds may be ninth or tenth century.

Table 10.3.3 Burnham: summary of early medieval assemblage by functional category (excluding coins)

Category	
Currency (CTJ) excluding coins	1
Dress accessories (DA)	124
Equestrian and transport (ET)	2
Household (HO)	3
Metalworking (MW)	2
Personal possessions (PP)	12
Weights and measures (WM)	3
Weapons and military equipment (ME)	5
Unknown (UN)	1
Total	**153**

The early medieval coinage

Andrew Woods

Thirteen early silver pennies from NHER 18496 are recorded in the database. Three more, reported in 1999 and 2004, and a penny of Beonna reported in 2017, are recorded on EMC with a Burnham provenance and are included in this discussion. Although this is a small assemblage it is possible to draw some conclusions.

The chronological profile of the pre-800 coinage is broadly typical of East Anglia (Fig 10.3.3). There are no coins of EM1 but increasing numbers in EM2 and EM3. The seven coins of EM2 are an unusual combination with three coins of the comparatively rare type F (Woods 2021; cf Metcalf 2004; 2014b), and the coinage of EM3 includes a type J coin from Northumbria and two of type SS from the East Midlands, both of which are comparatively rare

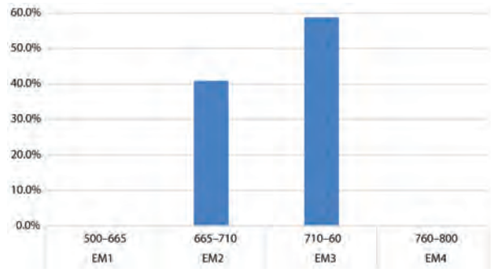

Fig 10.3.3 Burnham: proportions of pre-800 coinage by numismatic period

within East Anglia as a whole. This suggests exchange networks more focused on areas to the west and north than is typical for much of East Anglia. The chronology of coin use finds parallels with Caistor-by-Norwich, starting in the years around 700 and gradually increasing in the eighth century, and contrasts with Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne, which have a greater proportion of seventh-century material. However, it also pre-dates the emergence of significant coin use at Ipswich.

Continuing coin use and coin loss at the main activity focus in the ninth and tenth centuries is indicated by a *denier* of Louis the Pious (822–40) and a penny of Edward the Elder (North 649) from NHER 18496 and a dirham of the Samanid dynasty minted at Tashkent 908–32 from NHER 28127. There is a penny of Edmund I (North 697) from NHER 32087 at the west end of Burnham Market village.

10.3.1.3 Chronology and settlement sequence

Aoristic analysis of the metalwork assemblage (Fig 10.3.4) shows a peak in rates of loss or discard between the third quarter of the fifth and the third quarter of the sixth centuries, attributable in part to the retrieval of grave goods from disturbed inhumations. There is a clear activity signature during the later sixth and seventh centuries and a higher rate of loss or discard that indicates more intensive activity from the first quarter of the seventh century until the middle of the eighth. From the third quarter of the ninth century metalwork finds suggest a diminution in the intensity of activity.

Fig 10.3.4 Burnham: aorisitic analysis of the late Roman and early medieval assemblage

Both the proportion of Ipswich wares to hand-made wares and the coin profile are consistent with a significant expansion and change in the nature of activity in the late seventh or early eighth century. The proportion of Thetford ware, however, indicates that a reduction in the intensity of coin use and the loss of metal items from the middle of the eighth century must be seen against continuing occupation and settlement activity.

Late Iron Age and Roman

Evidence for Iron Age activity is largely confined to possible enclosures recorded from cropmarks on the higher ground north of Goose Beck. At Foundry Field a large east–west ditch was still a visible landscape feature in the early post-Roman centuries and was adopted as the northern boundary of the fifth- to seventh-century cemetery. Outside the immediate study area, a probable late Iron Age coin hoard (NHER 1787) found around 1900 on the east side of Burnham Thorpe parish is one of the many later Iron Age metal deposits in north-west Norfolk.

There are surface finds of Roman material representing manuring and settlement from all the Burnham parishes, most in Burnham Market and Burnham Thorpe with about half as many sites in Burnham Norton and few in Burnham Overy. They indicate a pattern of settlement at intervals of 1km–1.5km along the Burn valley, including the location of the early medieval productive site, and a few areas of activity on the coast. North-west of the study area, 1.3km from the productive site, surface finds of flint rubble suggest a building associated with third- and fourth-century pottery and coins up to Valentinian (NHER 20343). South-east of the study area, *c* 1km from the Goose Beck on the east side of the river Burn, another complex of findspots with fourth-century pottery and Valentinian and Theodosian coins (NHER 28279) suggests occupation up to the later fourth or early fifth century. In Burnham Overy parish, *c* 1km east of the productive site, a Roman burial mound with a chamber suggests a wealthy estate in the immediate vicinity (NHER 1788).

Within the area of the early medieval 'productive' site there is a substantial scatter of both Roman pottery and flints, suggesting a building north of the Goose Beck in NHER 18496. The material spans the entire Roman period but there is a strong late element, especially in the

area to the south of the road from Burnham Market to Burnham Overy, which includes Oxford ware, a high percentage of Valentinian and Theodosian coins (respectively 20 per cent and 6 per cent of the 181 identifiable coins recovered) and a propeller belt mount. It therefore seems probable that the rectilinear enclosure system identified by Gareth Davies' magnetometry is of Roman date. South of the Goose Beck, a smaller assemblage of Roman material from NHER 28127 contains some late pottery including Oxford ware and eighteen coins which feature a similarly high percentage of Valentinian issues and a *siliqua* of Honorius.

Metalwork finds from fields immediately to the north of NHER 18496 (25918; 29185) include a small coin assemblage of issues up to 360, a fourth-century bracelet, a propeller-shaped belt mount and a buckle of Hawkes and Dunning type Ib. Along the Goose Beck valley there is second- and third-century activity on the south side of Burnham Market village at the former allotment site (NHER 32791) and a buckle of Hawkes and Dunning type IIc from NHER 32112.

Fifth and sixth centuries

There is no post-Roman metalwork that need be dated before the middle or third quarter of the fifth century. Stylistically, the earliest piece is the foot and lower bow of a cruciform brooch from NHER 18496 datable to the later part of Martin's phase A or the earlier part of his phase B. A copper-alloy equal-armed brooch of Berinsfield type, a single find from NHER 36623 west of Burnham Market village (Gurney 2002, 156–7, fig 4A), is to be dated to the middle to late rather than early to middle fifth century (Evison 1977, 134–5; Inker 2006, 43).

Both pottery and metalwork indicate that the main focus of activity from the third quarter of the fifth century was the land north and south of the Goose Beck on the west bank of the river Burn in NHER 18496 and 28127. Conventionally, the later fifth- to later sixth-century metalwork, with its high proportion of dress accessories, would be interpreted as coming predominantly from disturbed burials (Ch 4.3.1). However, as with the other sites we have examined, the nature of much of the material (brooch fragments or detachable elements such as knobs from cruciform brooches) would be as consistent with settlement debris as disturbed inhumations, and the quantities of eighth- to eleventh-century metal finds – also predominantly dress accessories – that cannot be explained as deriving from furnished burials caution against assuming that the earlier material must derive from funerary contexts. The quantity of undecorated and so probably domestic hand-made pottery, the identification of possible *Grubenhäuser* in the magnetometry, and the presence of at least two contemporary cemeteries in the immediate vicinity also strongly suggest that although there may have been burials here this was primarily an occupation focus. Lighter scatters of pottery and a few metalwork finds in fields to the north and north-west suggest a wider spread of activity along the valley side above the floodplain, although mainly perhaps the manuring of arable land (NHER 1736; 1737; 25918; 29185). There is also physical evidence for occupation on the east bank of the river Burn in Burnham Overy (above, 10.3.1.1).

The small cluster of metalwork finds at NHER 32340/32951 can be confidently identified as deriving from inhumations and indicate a cemetery centred at *c* 22m OD on the west bank of the Burn *c* 500m south-east of the settlement focus. In addition to an iron shield grip and spearhead fragments dug up during looting, ten copper-alloy items of the later fifth to mid-sixth centuries have been recorded, representing four cruciform brooches, three small-long brooches, two wrist clasps and a scabbard chape. The cemetery at Foundry Field, which came into use in the later fifth century, also has an elevated position at 15m–16m OD on the north side of the Goose Beck valley, *c* 600m west of the settlement focus. Taken altogether, the evidence indicates a settlement complex covering 10ha–15ha at the junction of the Goose Beck and the river Burn, with some wider activity and arable land to the north and west over a similar area again, and two burial sites to the west and south-east. The topographic setting is striking, the settlement focus sitting within a bowl-like widening of the valley at the intersection of two watercourses, overlooked by cemeteries on the higher ground.

Away from the main concentration of settlement activity there are single finds of late fifth- to late sixth-century metalwork from fields north and west of Burnham Market: a copper-alloy harness mount (NHER 58989); an Anglian equal-armed brooch (NHER 36623); and a cruciform brooch. Outside the study area, there is a cruciform brooch from NHER 20343 which has also produced late Roman material.

Seventh to eleventh centuries

There is less metalwork that can be securely dated to the period of the later sixth to early eighth centuries, but its distribution suggests continuing activity across the fifth- and sixth-century settlement focus. The distribution of Ipswich wares, Thetford wares and eighth- to tenth-century metalwork suggests an intensification of settlement activity over much the same area, again with

less dense scatters of material to the north-west representing the manuring of arable land, but there also appears to be some westward expansion of the settlement area south of the Goose Beck into NHER 28117. The later sixth- and seventh-century assemblage includes two items indicative of fine metalworking: the lead matrix from NHER 18496 and the patrix die from NHER 28127. The presence of Ipswich wares indicates integration with regional exchange networks, and the two sherds of seventh- or eighth-century Continental pottery are evidence of access to maritime exchange networks around the North Sea and Channel.

There is no clear evidence for later sixth- or seventh-century burials at NHER 32340/32951, and the Foundry Field cemetery appears to have gone out of use towards the end of the seventh century. A feature of the Foundry Field cemetery, however, is the relatively high number of 'deviant' burials, including decapitations, which raises the possibility that the community cemetery had an afterlife as an execution place. Such visible exercise of rulership may indicate that by the end of the seventh or early eighth century – if not before – the Burnham settlement had some function as a jurisdictional centre (Reynolds 2009; Hodges *et al* forthcoming).

There is securely datable ninth- and tenth-century material, but although some types that cannot be closely dated might be as late as the eleventh century there is no metalwork from the early medieval assemblage that need be this late. There is evidence for activity to the west in the valley of the Goose Beck on the site of the present-day village of Burnham Market from the eighth century (above, 10.3.1.1). Settlement activity west of the village is suggested by groups of eighth- to tenth-century metalwork at NHER 32087, 32112 and 44627, and there are single finds of eighth- to tenth-century metalwork from fields west and north of the village (NHER 60432; 41977). It appears, therefore, that the main focus of early medieval settlement was abandoned during the eleventh century and that occupation shifted to the site of Burnham Market. A reconfiguration of settlement on this scale argues for seigneurial intervention and the subdivision of an estate centred here would provide a plausible context.

It may be possible to trace different trajectories of development for the settlement areas immediately north and south of the Goose Brook over the course of the later seventh to tenth centuries (Davies 2011, 111–13). All the early silver pennies are from NHER 18496, suggesting that this was the main, if not exclusive, focus of monetary exchange from the late seventh to the late eighth century. If the later rectilinear system identified by magnetometry is of early medieval date then this would suggest a deliberate reconfiguration of settlement space, with the implication of elite agency. Although it is impossible to demonstrate without excavation, the layout of planned settlement with a waterfront might plausibly be attributable to the late seventh or early eighth centuries. The area saw continuing occupation and activity through the ninth and tenth centuries with coin use and exchange indicated by coins and weights. Gareth Davies (2011, 112–13) has argued that the group of Scandinavian-style metalwork and Arab dirham from 28127 may indicate the tenth-century development of a separate focus of economic activity south of Goose Beck, perhaps under Scandinavian control.

The settlement focus north of the Goose Beck in NHER 18496 might appear a likely candidate for a pre-Conquest royal vill (Davies 2010, 113) but neither of the two pieces of elite metalwork of ninth- or tenth-century date (the silver finger-ring from 28127 and the gold finger-ring from 29185) is from this area.

10.3.1.4 Production, exchange and consumption

On account of its favourable access to coastal seaways the Burnham settlement has been characterised as a maritime trading site (cf Pestell 2004, 96; Davies 2010, 111–13). Some items in the fifth- to sixth-century ploughsoil assemblage, and from the Foundry Field cemetery, indicate connections with other English regions and the Merovingian Continent (10.3.1.5, below), but there is little or nothing to suggest significant or sustained inter-regional exchange contacts or access to a range of skills and networks of procurement unusual for a rural community at this time. There are indications of fine metalworking in the later sixth or seventh centuries and some of the fragmentary fifth- and sixth-century items may represent scrap metal for recycling. If the patrix die was used to make Style II bracteates this would imply high-status patrons and access to precious metal. There is, however, no indication of coin use before the later seventh century (EM2).

Coin use in EM2 and EM3, and the quantities of Ipswich ware, show connections with monetised and regional exchange networks from the later seventh and earlier eighth centuries. The coinage indicates connections to the west and north which, like the acquisition of Ipswich ware, are likely to have been mediated by coastal trade. Two early pennies of type E indicate monetary connections with the Netherlands or Rhine mouths in EM2 and EM3, and the two sherds of pottery from northern France and the Rhineland confirm access to long-distance exchange networks around the North Sea. In both cases, however, the proportions

suggest connections to the mesh of local and regional exchange networks – and coastal cabotage chains – through which the products of inter-regional exchange were redistributed, rather than direct overseas trade. Some of the coinage is also likely to represent local commercial transactions and jurisdictional payments. Coin use declined dramatically after *c* 760 but the ninth- and tenth-century coin loss is broadly in line with the wider pattern for rural sites in East Anglia (Ch 3.7.4.3). Ipswich ware and Thetford wares show continuing access to local and regional markets, and the tenth-century dirham is evidence for connections with Scandinavian-controlled trade networks to the Baltic and beyond. Lincolnshire shelly wares show regional exchange with another area of the Danelaw in the tenth century but this can be seen as a continuation of connections to the north and west seen in the eighth-century coin assemblage.

The ploughsoil assemblage, therefore, suggests a community or communities grounded in a farming economy in the fifth to seventh centuries, albeit well-placed to access regional and inter-regional networks through coastal trade routes. From the late seventh to tenth centuries the evidence would be consistent with an estate centre integrated into the monetary economy and regional exchange networks rather than a settlement largely or primarily engaged in manufacture and trade, but which also had a function as a local entrepôt and market.

10.3.1.5 Social signatures and cultural connections

Cultural identities and connections

A large majority of fifth- to later sixth-century dress accessories are typical of north or central Norfolk within the broader Anglian province of material culture. The brooch assemblage is dominated by cruciform and small-long brooches, with annular, Anglian equal-armed and great square-headed brooches also represented (Table 10.3.4). There are, however, indications of wider affinities and contacts. The button brooch and two cast saucer brooches are types less common in East Anglia and more typical of the Thames catchment and England south of the Thames. The equal-armed brooch from NHER 36623 is only the second known example of a rare Insular type otherwise seen only from grave 8 at Berinsfield in Oxfordshire (Boyle *et al* 1995, 30–1, 81–2, fig 54) and suggests some direct link with the Upper Thames valley in the later fifth century. Other items indicate links with Kent and the Merovingian Continent. Fragments from three radiate-headed brooches, from NHER 18496, 28127 and 25918, may be Insular copies (Soulat 2018, 158–62) but an 'S'-shaped brooch of Legoux *et al* type 226 from NHER 18496 is a rare form in England and more likely to be an import (Legoux *et al* 2009; Soulat 2018). The copper-alloy sword chape from NHER 32340 (NMS-751713) appears to emulate elite fittings of Menghin's Typ Flonheim-Gültlingen (Menghin 1983, 352; Legoux *et al* 2009, type 91). Even if all are Insular rather than Continental pieces they indicate a familiarity, and some affiliation, with Merovingian material culture of the later fifth and earlier sixth centuries. Three items of probably Continental material from sixth-century burials at Foundry Field tell a similar story (Lucy forthcoming).

This impression of a local community with some inter-regional connections is less evident in the smaller metalwork assemblage of the later sixth and seventh centuries, which is consistent with an Insular material culture signature common to most of eastern and southern England. There are, however, a few material culture items from seventh-century burials in the Foundry Field cemetery that suggest links with Kent and the Merovingian Continent (Lucy forthcoming). The later seventh- to ninth-century dress accessories, especially pins and ansate brooches, are characteristic of Insular material culture in a region connected with the broader North Sea world. The Scandinavian-style metalwork of the late ninth and tenth centuries needs to be seen in the context of evidence across Norfolk for substantial Scandinavian settlement and widespread adoption of new material culture types as the region became integrated into the Scandinavian North Sea world (Kershaw 2013; Pestell 2013a).

Table 10.3.4 Burnham: summary of early medieval brooches

Type		Date-range
Cruciform	26	450–550
Small-long	10	470–550
Annular	1	500–600
Anglian equal-armed	3	470–550
Button	1	470–550
Equal-armed	1	450–500
Great square-headed	2	500–570
Radiate-headed	3	470–570
Saucer	2	470–570
Other (fifth and sixth centuries)	1	470–570
Ansate	9	700–1000
Disc	9	800–1000
Nummular	2	800–1050
Trefoil	1	850–1000
Total	**71**	

Social differentiation

There is evidence within the metalwork assemblage for social differentiation but very few if any indications of an elite presence before the ninth or tenth centuries: elite indicators comprise only 2–3 per cent of the metalwork assemblage, and precious-metal items only 1.3 per cent. The fifth- and later sixth-century assemblage includes status markers consistent with the range of identities usually recognised in burials of this period – a Style I belt mount, a Style I pendant, a great square-headed brooch and fragment of a second, a scabbard chape – but no silver or silver-gilt dress accessories and fittings. By our criteria, the only elite indicators would be the small garnet inlays – if they are garnet rather than red glass – on the headplate fragment from a copper-alloy radiate-headed brooch and the copper-alloy Style I pendant. This is equally true of the later sixth- to early eighth-century assemblage, from which a plain hanging-bowl fitting is the only elite indicator, although the gilded Style II mount from NHER 29185 is a status item and the patrix die may suggest manufacture for high-status patrons. The only two precious metal items are the silver and gold finger-rings of ninth- to tenth-century date from NHER 28127 and 29185.

The evidence suggests a ranked community in the fifth to seventh centuries with perhaps some hints of more marked social differentiation in the later sixth and seventh centuries but nothing before the ninth or tenth centuries to indicate any direct elite presence or elite interest. This would imply that any lordship or authority exercised here in the seventh and eighth centuries was essentially local or that it was exercised remotely. That the only two precious metal items are personal adornments of the ninth or tenth centuries would be consistent with status as a royal vill at this time. Although the weight of evidence points to NHER 18496 as the main focus of settlement activity, the gold finger-ring from 29185 might indicate that any manorial residence was situated here, north-west of the main settlement. The gilded Style II mount is also from this field, and might suggest a higher-status establishment here from the late sixth or seventh century.

10.3.1.6 Conclusions (Fig 10.3.5)

The Burn valley around the junction of the river Burn with the Goose Beck was a significant settlement place from the middle or late fifth century until the tenth or eleventh century, with a core settlement area of 10ha–15ha within a wider activity zone of 20ha–30ha. There is evidence for zonation and changing configurations of settlement and activity, and hints that any higher-status residence or later manorial centre may have been situated to the north-west of the main focus of settlement activity, but the overall extent and location of the settlement complex remained largely stable over five centuries. It is entirely plausible that this was the main population centre of an early post-Roman social territory, and that it became the focal settlement of an administrative entity and estate whose territory was broadly equivalent to that of the historic Burnham parishes.

The main focus of early medieval activity is in areas where there is evidence of occupation up to the late fourth and early fifth century. It is not clear whether this represents some continuity of activity or the abandonment and subsequent re-use of a favourable location. The late Roman belt fittings and late coinage might represent continuing activity into the first half of the fifth century, and the pierced coins curation or re-use beyond that, but although there is a clear late Roman material culture signature, with indications of an official presence, the absence of any metalwork types that can be considered characteristic of the early to middle fifth century suggests a diminution if not a hiatus in activity.

The metalwork profile suggests settlement activity from *c* 460/70 or perhaps a little before. This early settlement is likely to have been an aggregation of ancestral farms. There is evidence for social differentiation, and direct or indirect inter-regional contacts, but no evidence for unusual wealth or unusually powerful or influential kindreds. Any overseas contacts were not mediated by elites here, nor is there evidence to suggest that mediation of inter-regional contacts promoted social differentiation or local lordship. Although some of the Foundry Field burials have evidence for links with the Merovingian Continent in the seventh century there are very few indications of high-status inter-regional contacts in the settlement assemblage and, tellingly, no direct evidence for precious metal nor for the circulation or use of gold coinage.

From the later seventh century the Burnham settlement was linked to monetised regional exchange networks. There is no indication that there was a corresponding expansion of the settlement area but there may have been a greater intensity of settlement and activity. At no time, however, does the coinage, metalwork or pottery, or the extent of the settlement, suggest that the site was a major inter-regional commercial or trading centre. Although there is evidence for contacts with the Low Countries and the Rhineland in the late seventh and eighth centuries, and access in the tenth century to long-distance exchange networks

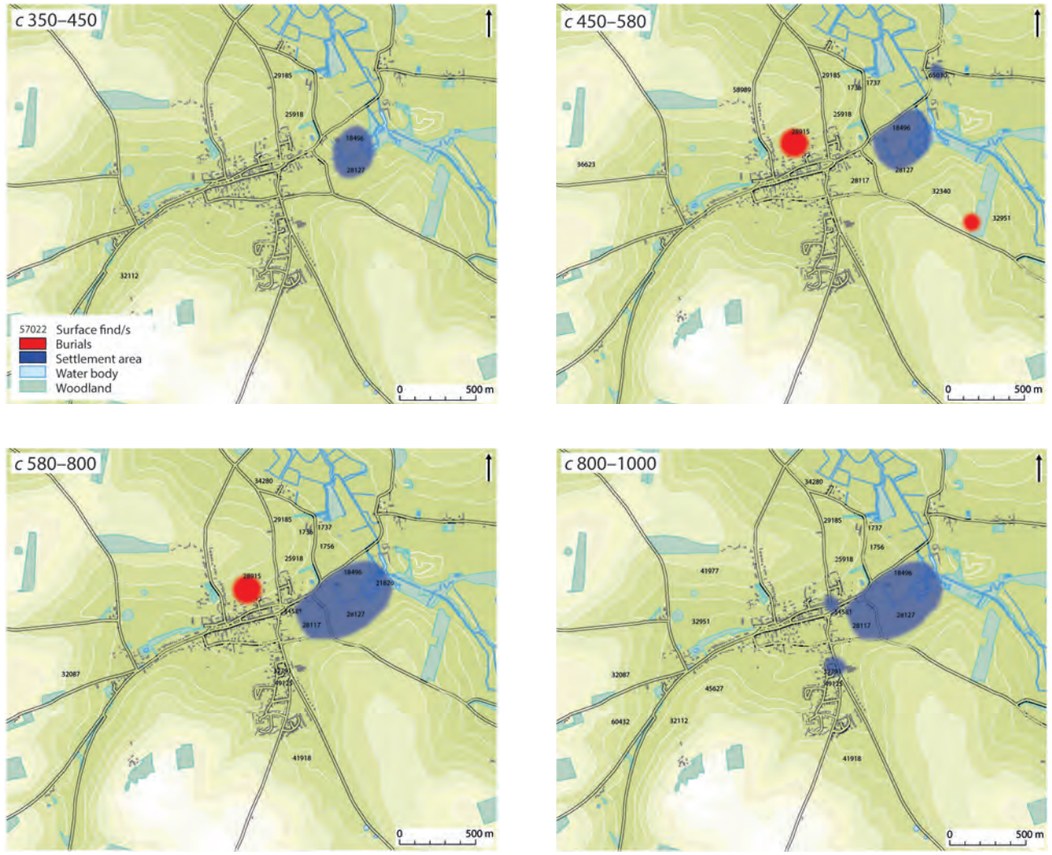

Fig 10.3.5 Burnham: interpretative model of the settlement sequence from the fourth to the eleventh centuries AD. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

ultimately linking eastern England with the Baltic and beyond, these are at a level that indicates the redistribution through local and regional networks of long-distance trade goods from major centres such as Ipswich. This would argue that throughout the eighth to tenth centuries Burnham was primarily a rural estate centre disposing of a landed surplus, with access to international trade though local networks and coastal cabotage.

There is an argument to be made for a reconfiguration of the settlement area north of the Goose Beck at some time between the seventh and tenth centuries, and we suggest that the late seventh or early eighth century – the time at which the place becomes integrated into wider monetised exchange networks – offers a plausible context. This would argue a directing authority, more likely local lordship or elite interest exercised remotely than a communal enterprise. It seems likely, too, that the threshold of economic integration was linked to some extent to a centralising of the ability to extract and deploy a landed surplus. If so, the later seventh century might mark the point at which the Burnham territory had transitioned from a social territory to a jurisdictional entity or an estate, with the formal establishment of the main settlement as a centre for the collection and processing of renders, agrarian administration, and a local port and market centre.

If this was the royal vill *Bruna* did it come into the hands of the East Anglian ruling family at this time, or at a later date before the middle of the ninth century? What evidence there is for an elite presence would favour the latter scenario but, as we have noted above, an earlier royal interest may have been exercised through a royal retainer or some local intermediary. It is also entirely possible that any reconfiguration of the settlement might relate to a change of ownership or the imposition of more direct royal interest in the later eighth or ninth centuries. In any event, the place retained its importance as a local centre into the tenth century. It is possible that there was a direct Scandinavian interest in the area south of the Goose Brook, and it is probable that local lordship passed into Scandinavian hands.

The concentration of parish churches around the site of the early medieval settlement complex, if they are pre-Conquest foundations, would support this being a focal area and important settlement and population centre (10.3.2, below), but by the end of the eleventh century, if not before, the site had been abandoned and the main focus of settlement had shifted to Burnham Market. Its location at the junction of the main historic parishes, and the later configuration of settlement around parish churches, argues both its prior centrality and that it had lost this importance. Gareth Davies has argued that silting of the waterway connection to the North Sea may have been a factor (Davies 2010, 113), but the river remained navigable at least as far as this well into the post-Conquest period (10.3.2, below) and it is not clear why this in itself would make Burnham Market the more attractive occupation site. A reconfiguration of settlement on this scale at this date argues seigneurial intervention, and the reason is probably to be sought in the factors governing the breaking-up of the Burnham territory into multiple holdings and parishes and the concomitant balance of competing seigneurial interests.

10.3.2 Landscape and territory

Tom Williamson and Eleanor Rye

North-west Norfolk shows up clearly in the distribution of early woodland, derived from Domesday and place-names, as an extensive tract of relatively open countryside. This corresponds, in broad terms, to an area of light, freely draining soils formed on chalk, which is bounded to the south and south-east by the heavy clays of the till plateau and to the west and south-west by a band of acid sands and gravels lying beside the Wash, associated with the Lower Greensand: the latter area is still characterised by tracts of heath and extensive conifer plantations (Figs 10.3.6–7).

Although largely corresponding to configurations of soils and geology, this 'natural territory' is not neatly nested within topographic structures and does not correspond with a single drainage basin. Much of its area lies within two catchments, those of the Burn and the Stiffkey, draining north into the sea, but to the south it embraces the headwaters of the Wensum, which a little further to the south cuts a relatively narrow valley through the till plateau and its associated woodland band. These valley systems, while hydrologically and topographically distinct, are in some respects interconnected, thanks to unusual circumstances of topography arising from geological history. The headwaters of the three rivers are all linked to each other by dry valleys and other ribbons of low ground which are less than 2.5km in length and within which the ground never rises above 50m OD.

There is thus no single river-based territory, separated from adjacent territories by high and well-defined watersheds, but instead a more complex pattern, albeit one still shaped by environmental constraints. Across this broad area, however, elements of the familiar 'river-and-wold' pattern are apparent. Most evidence for early medieval settlement is concentrated in the principal valleys where there is also a marked concentration of villages with names featuring the elements *-hām* and *-ingahām*. In these locations the rivers provided a reliable supply of water while the lower ground bordering them is occupied by moderately fertile and tractable soils of the Newmarket 2 Association which, by the thirteenth century, were characterised by near-continuous areas of open-field arable (Hodge *et al* 1984, 268–9; Wade-Martins and Williamson 1999, 9–12; Belcher 2020; Hassall and Beauroy 2012). The higher ground is less inviting. Water can only be accessed where small areas of boulder clay carry a perched water table and the Barrow soils which otherwise dominate are formed in acid drift (Hodge *et al* 1984, 107–11). Most villages here have names featuring elements like *-tūn*, *-wīc* and *þorp* which do not have a particularly early character (although Bircham is a notable exception), and early maps show extensive areas of outfield 'breck' and heath (eg Holkham, 1580, NRO BL 14/32; South Creake *c* 1630, NRO MC 691/1; North Creake, *c* 1600, NRO DN/ADR 10/1; Stanhoe, 1752, NRO MS 21596). Most of this was reclaimed in the earliest phases of agricultural 'improvement' during the early and middle decades of the eighteenth century by large, landed estates like Holkham, Houghton and Raynham, and the fact that these had come to dominate the landscape of the 'uplands' is, in itself, a clear sign of its relative agricultural marginality. The familiar contrast between valleys and upland interfluves is thus apparent and although the area stands out in Domesday, and in the distribution of place-names, as a tract of largely open countryside there are suggestions of the former existence, at some point in the pre-Conquest period, of some areas of woodland on the higher ground. A map of North Creake, surveyed in *c* 1600 but surviving only as an eighteenth-century copy, describes two large blocks of heathland lying above the valley of the Burn as 'the East Frith' and 'the Fold course called the Frith' (ME *frith* (< OE *ge-fyrhð*(*e*)), 'a wood,

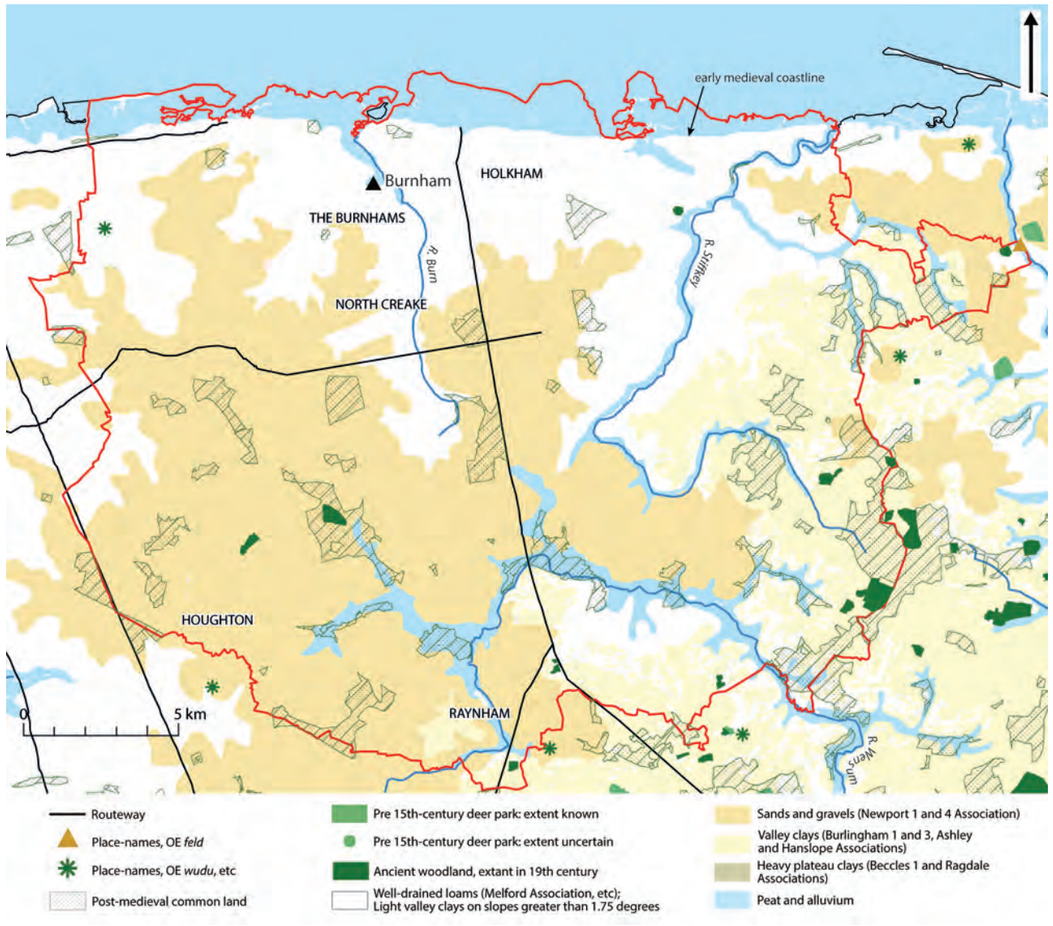

Fig 10.3.6 North Norfolk: drainage, soil types and woodland indicators. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

wooded country') (NRO DN/ADR 10/1). The tiny vill of Choseley (OE *ceosul-lēah* 'gravel wood or clearing') in Docking hundred lay on high ground (Ekwall 1960, 107); the lost Domesday vill of *Murlai* (perhaps OE *mōr-lēah* 'moor wood or clearing') was similarly located in what was later the parish of Egmere. But for the most part, the intensity of prehistoric and Roman settlement in this area of tractable soils seems to have ensured that upland woods had largely degenerated to heath by the early Middle Ages (Fryer *et al* 2005; Lawson *et al* 1981; Ashwin 1996).

The impression presented by topography, of local fragmentation within a broader unity is, to an extent, mirrored in early patterns of administrative organisation. The tract of open countryside corresponds quite closely to the combined area of the four Domesday hundreds of Gallow, Brothercross, Docking and North Greenhoe, many of whose boundaries have an artificial, arbitrary appearance perhaps indicative of late creation (Fig 10.3.7). The Burnham parishes were thus divided between Gallow and Brothercross, as were the vills of Great and Little Ryburgh. The two hundreds were always closely associated. In 1373 they were treated as one, *Galowebrothyrcros*; and the boundary between them was altered in the course of the Middle Ages (with North and South Creake, Burnham Thorpe, and the three Raynhams passing from Brothercross to Gallow) (Anderson 1934, I, 66; Cam 1930, 109; Barringer 2005). As the eighteenth-century historian Blomefield put it, 'the towns of these hundreds are now strangely intermixed; many that were then in *Brothercross* hundred, are now in *Gallow*' (Blomefield and Parkyn 1807, 1). He also states that the meeting place of Brothercross hundred was at a cross which stood beside the ford over the river Burn below Burnham Overy church, on the western edge of the hundred and close to the boundary with Gallow, perhaps

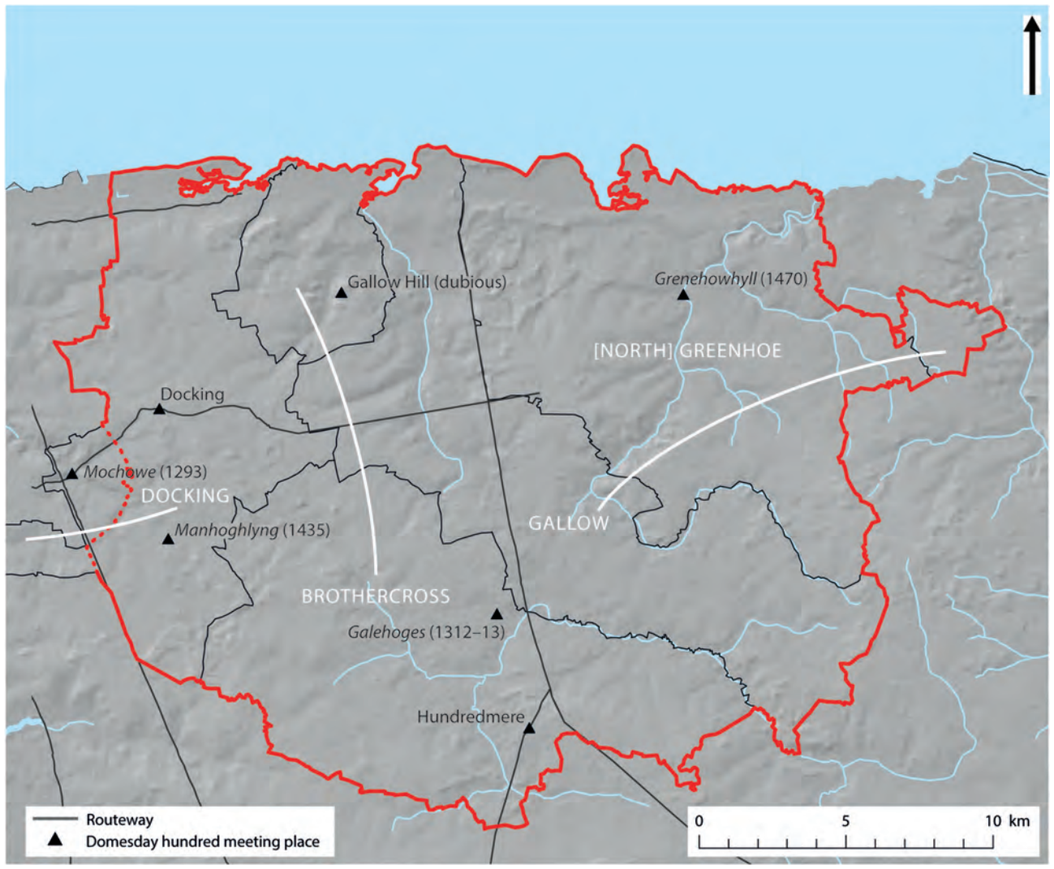

Fig 10.3.7 North Norfolk: relief; Domesday hundreds, hundredal meeting places, major Roman roads. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

indicating that the two administrative territories were once one (Blomefield and Parkyn 1807, 2). If so, a new meeting place for Gallow may have been created following division, some 12.5km to the south in Dunton, where the name *Galehoges* (1312–13) field provides a good match for the hundred name. There were also anomalies in the boundary between Gallow and North Greenhoe: the vill of Little Snoring lay in Gallow hundred but Great Snoring in North Greenhoe, while Saxlingham formed an isolated portion of Gallow on the far eastern edge of North Greenhoe. Moreover, these hundreds were far from being neatly nested within the three river valleys. Docking mainly comprised vills on the 'uplands' to the west of the Burn, although extending down to the coast. Brothercross and Gallow occupied the western and eastern sides of the Burn valley respectively, and to the south both extended into the upper reaches of the Wensum. Gallow also included vills in the upper sections of the drainage basin of the river Stiffkey. Territorial complexity and fluidity seem to mirror the poor definition and permeability of topographic structures.

Within the principal valleys, some medieval settlements have topographic and documentary indications of early significance which are, for the most part, echoed in the recorded distributions of archaeological material. The most interesting are the Burnhams (*Bruneham, Brunaham* 1086, *Burneham* 1121), '(the) stream settlement or estate'; forms with spellings <Brun-> probably derive from metathesis of earlier <Burn->, a very common change in Old English affecting /r/ + short vowel combinations, especially before /n, s/ (Hogg 1992). Seven parishes bearing this name occupy the lower reaches of the river Burn: Burnham Deepdale, Burnham Norton, Burnham Overy (also known as Burnham St Clements), Burnham Sutton (church in ruins, its parish united with Burnham Ulph), Burnham Thorpe, Burnham Ulph (also known as Burnham All Saints), and Burnham Westgate (Burnham St Mary). Their churches stand alone, associated with

small clusters of houses or, in a few cases, within larger nucleations of settlement. The churches of All Saints (Ulph) and St Mary (Westgate) occupy positions at either end of the largest settlement in the group, known since the thirteenth century as Burnham Market, which until the post-medieval period contained two additional parishes with churches dedicated to St Andrew and St Edmund respectively (their probable sites are known). Burnham Thorpe also contained an additional church, dedicated to St Peter (Blomefield and Parkyn 1807; Pevsner and Wilson 1999, 227–36; Batcock 1991, 53, 146). Burnham Deepdale stands apart from the other Burnhams, and probably never really formed a part of their history. It is located on the coast near Brancaster Staithe, 3.5km north-west of Burnham Market, and is named in Domesday and other early documents simply as *Depedala* '(the) deep valley' (< OE/ON *dēop*/*djúpr* 'deep' + ON *dalr* 'valley').

Domesday distinguishes by name only 'Burnham Thorpe' (*Bruneham torp*) and 'Burnham' (*Brunaham)*. The former contained two separate holdings (perhaps the origins of the two medieval parishes here), the latter seven, some with dependent holdings. Some of these can be tentatively associated with particular parishes but an absence of early manorial records makes it hard to assess, in general, how the Domesday holdings relate to later documented manors. It seems probable, however, that the main manorial focus was, at an early date, associated with the one of the parishes based in Burnham Market, not only because this is the largest settlement but also because several of the other parishes are named in relation to it: Burnham Norton, 'the north settlement at Burnham', Burnham Sutton, 'the south settlement at Burnham', and Burnham Overy (OE *ofer* 'over' and *ēa* 'river' – over the river from Burnham Market), although the former two affixes are only recorded from the thirteenth century and the last only from the mid-fourteenth century.

Leaving aside Burnham Deepdale, the nine present or former churches of the Burnhams all stand within an area of *c* 2.5sq km, the highest density of rural parish churches in East Anglia. The combined area of the parishes, however, is nearly 40sq km, so the churches are very tightly clustered (Fig 10.3.8). The shared name implies that all these parishes once formed a single unit and there are strong hints that this may have been a centre of royal power. The dedications of two of the churches are noteworthy: St Edmund (one of the lost churches in Burnham Market) and St Æthelbert (in Burnham Sutton). Dedications to Edmund are thinly if widely spread across East Anglia; those to Æthelbert (martyred at the hands of Offa of Mercia at Hereford in 794) are rather rarer and concentrated towards the south of the region (Pestell 2004, 95). To find two dedications to members of the East Anglian royal family in close proximity – 600m apart in adjacent parishes – is unlikely to be a coincidence. Moreover, the church of the nearby parish of Holkham, less than 900m beyond the western boundary of Burnham Overy, is dedicated to St Wihtburh (d 743) – reputedly the daughter of King Anna and the founder of a monastery at Dereham. This is one of only two such dedications in East Anglia and might mark the site of an early religious foundation on the upland margins of the Burnham territory. The early twelfth-century *Annals of St Neots* record that Edmund was crowned in 856 *in villa regia qui dicitur Burna* 'in the royal estate which is called *Burna*' (Dumville and Lapidge 1985, 51; Pestell 2003, 128). By the time the story of Edmund's early life was being told by Geoffrey of Wells in the middle of the twelfth century this name was rendered as 'Burum' and the place described as being on the river Stour in south Suffolk, clearly indicating the modern village of Bures St Mary; Matthew Paris in 1230 actually gives the name as Bures. However, there is no other evidence that Bures ever had the status of a *villa regia* and Domesday renders Bures as *Bura*. We should not push such late and tentative evidence too far but there are multiple indications that Burnham had a pre-Conquest importance. There may also be some significance in the lost *Wardonhill* (1468), OE *weard-dūn* 'look-out hill', in Burnham Westgate (OE *weard* 'watch' + *dūn* 'hill').

The loss of four of the Burnham churches in the period between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries (St Peter in Burnham Thorpe, St Andrew and St Edmund in Burnham Market, and St Æthelbert in Burnham Sutton) led to a significant redrawing of parish boundaries in the area. A survey made in 1796 describes how 'the Parish of Burnham Sutton has no particular boundaries, but is included or taken in by the Parishes of Burnham Westgate and Burnham Ulph' (NRO MC 1830/1, 852x7). The early medieval settlement area straddles the modern junctions of Burnham Thorpe, Burnham Sutton and Burnham Overy with each other and with Burnham Norton and Burnham Westgate, and nine of the parish churches lie within 1.4km (Fig 10.3.8).

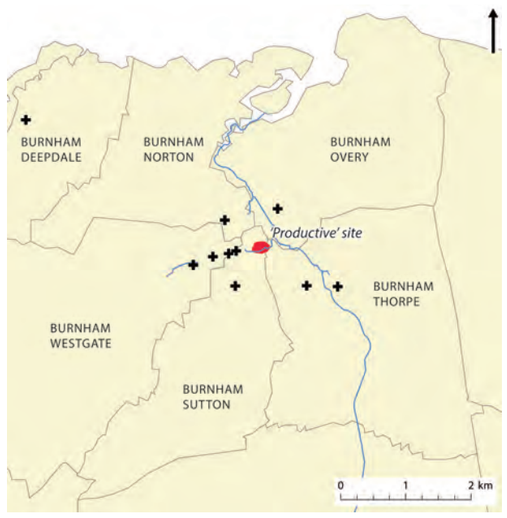

Fig 10.3.8 Burnham: parishes, churches and the early medieval 'productive' site

Burgh is recorded from the fourteenth century as a place in Burnham Norton, Westgate and Sutton. Although we do not know the precise configuration of the various parishes at this time, and whether they then met near the early medieval settlement, this place-name might preserve a memory of it, given that the meanings invoked by OE *burh* might include a place where trade was protected (Blake and Sargent 2018).

If Blomefield's identification of the meeting place of Brothercross is correct, it lay beside the ford immediately to the east of the settlement complex, and the boundary between the hundreds of Gallow and Brothercross, which splits the Burnhams, runs along the river. The settlement site thus lay near the centre of the combined area of the two hundreds and adjacent to what may have been their original meeting place, with the clear implication that a single territory associated with this place was subdivided after it had lost its importance. Access to the Burn from the sea is now restricted by mudflats and post-medieval reclamations and associated embankments, but the river probably remained navigable at least as far as the productive site well into the post-Conquest period. The parish church of Burnham Overy, which lies *c* 300m to the north-west, is dedicated to St Clement, characteristic of churches located near wharfs on navigable rivers, while as late as 1327 there is a reference to *Brunhamhith* (OE *hȳð* 'landing place'), probably slightly upstream as it is recorded in Burnham Thorpe (Jones 2007, 153).

10.3.3 Patterns of settlement, burial and economy

Stuart Brookes and Christopher Scull

Following the conclusions set out in the previous section, our study area approximates to the Domesday hundreds of Gallow, Brothercross, Docking and North Greenhoe. In defining a western limit, we have included the modern civil parishes of Docking and Bircham but it is likely that the limits of any early post-Roman territory lay towards the east of the modern parishes, closer to the watershed.

10.3.3.1 The archaeological evidence

Excluding the archaeology at Burnham discussed above there are eleven post-Roman settlement or burial sites of the period 400–800 known from the recording of *in situ* features or deposits. Otherwise, information comes from chance discoveries and surface finds: 857 metal items and 129 finds of pottery totalling at least 777 sherds. These data have been integrated and plotted using the same approaches and methods as for the other case studies.

The late Roman background (Fig 10.3.9)

Judith Plouviez

To the west of the study area, the major Roman route of Peddar's Way (Margary 33b) runs north-west along the Greensand escarpment to the coast, where there was probably a ferry link to Lincoln; to its west is the older route of the Icknield Way (Margary 1973, 258–63). Within the study area, there was a north–south road between Dunton and Holkham (Margary 39) which met two others, from the south-west and south-east, at Toftrees (Dunton) (Margary 1973, 273–4). The line of an east–west route in South Creake, the Holgate Road, may have linked the Snettisham area to the west with Walsingham/Wighton in the east although this road is not accepted by Albone (2016, 362). There is very little evidence for a suggested east–west route along the coast to Brancaster.

There is evidence for settlement activity in the 360s and later throughout much of the study area, with a clear locational preference for river valleys. Even allowing for gaps in survey or metal-detecting coverage, the modern parishes bordering the coast seem to mostly lack late Roman material. The exception is the Saxon Shore fort at Brancaster, but even here latest activity appears restricted to the fort itself, where coin loss continues at least into the 390s, while coin loss in the extra-mural settlement suggests diminishing activity from the middle of the fourth century (Davies and Gregory 1991; St Joseph 1936; Hinchcliffe 1985, 190–3). This may suggest deteriorating security along the coast or, as argued for Ingoldisthorpe/Snettisham west of the study area, an increased risk of flooding in marginal areas (Flitcroft 2001, 80). It has been suggested that there was a coastal military installation at Warborough Hill, Stiffkey (eg Davies 2008, 221) but there is currently no certainty that signal stations were part of the shore fort system in East Anglia.

Material indicating substantial villa-type buildings is recorded from Stanhoe (NHER 1903), North Creake (NHER 1913), East Rudham (NHER 30883) and Warham (NHER 1826). As noted above, there are late Roman

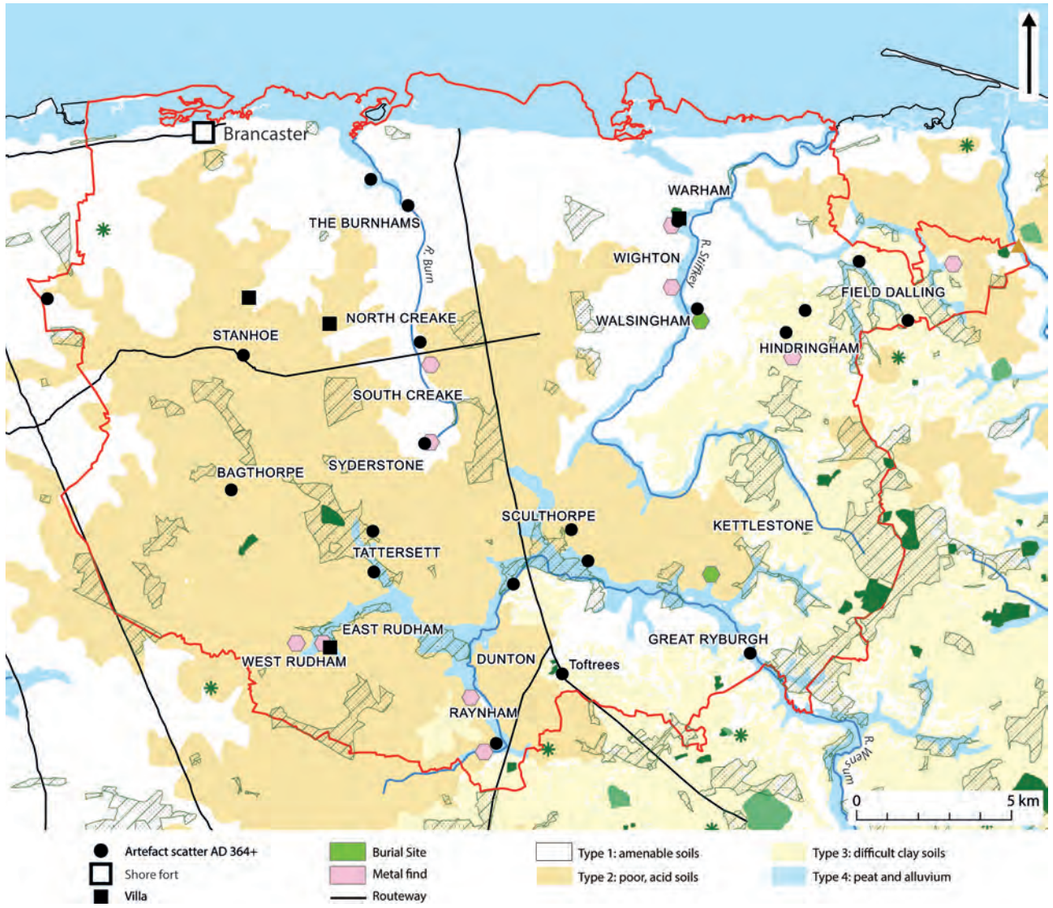

Fig 10.3.9 North Norfolk: main sites and finds AD 360–410 and Phase 1 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

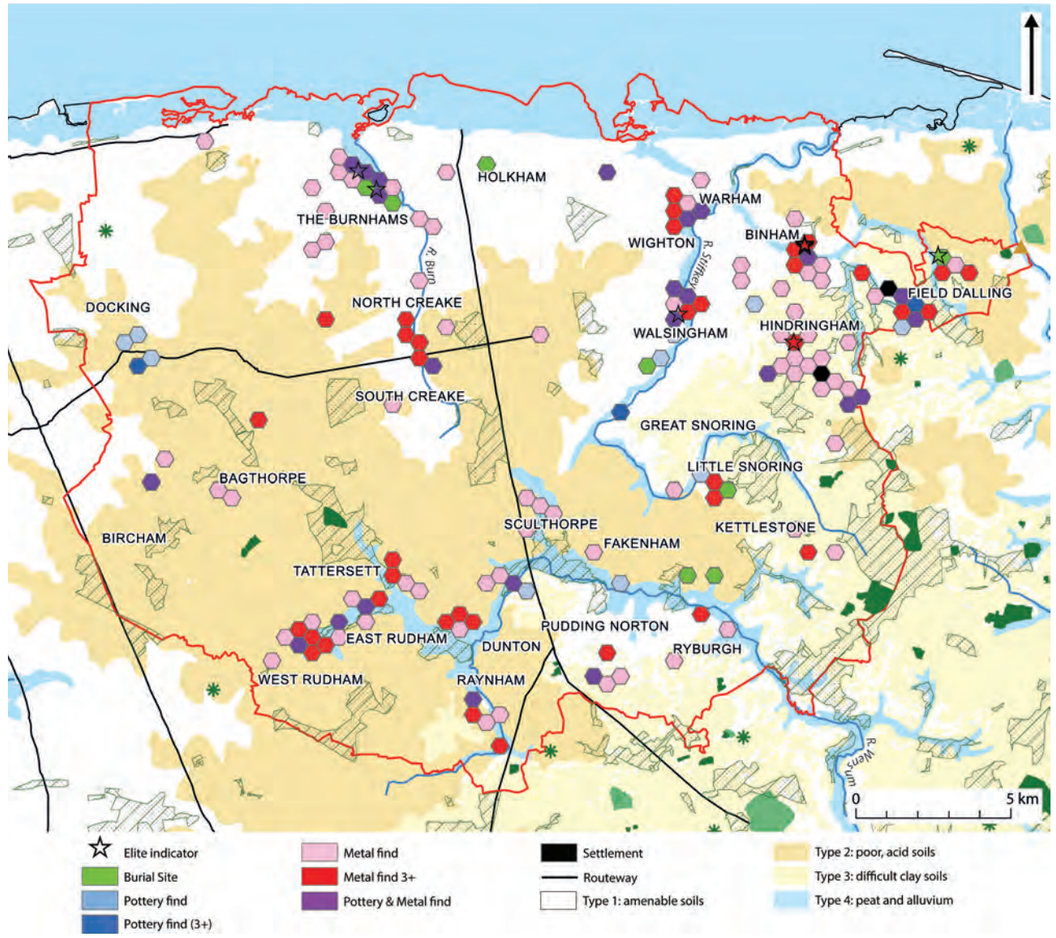

Fig 10.3.10 North Norfolk: Phase 2 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

settlements along the Burn valley south of the Burnham settlement complex. There is a similar pattern of settlement along the Stiffkey valley, and the upper reaches of its tributaries in Hindringham and Field Dalling, both parishes with activity extending into the early fifth century and finds of late Roman official belt fittings. The main centre in the Stiffkey valley, however, is the large settlement or small town straddling the boundary of the modern parishes of Walsingham and Wighton (NHER 42850). This site has been extensively and thoroughly metal-detected (Gurney 1995, 57–9) and includes Wighton Camp, a defended enclosure of 8.75ha constructed within the settlement area in the late Roman or early post-Roman periods (Lawson 1976; Gregory 1986). The settlement area also includes a probable temple and other buildings with evidence of industrial activity as well as a large votive collection (Bagnell Smith 1999). The large coin assemblage includes a very high percentage of Valentinian coins, with some Theodosian issues indicating activity into the early fifth century (Davies and Gregory 1991). Finds include late Roman official belt fittings: a buckle from the settlement area and a strap end from an area of predominantly post-Roman activity on the west side of the valley.

In the southern part of the study area there is a substantial settlement, possibly a small town, at Toftrees in Dunton parish (NHER 7112), at the junction of Margary 39 with routes from the south-west and south-east. The coin sequence extends into the later fourth century, and finds include a late Roman official buckle fragment. Other late Roman settlement sites have been identified in Bagthorpe, East Rudham, Tattersett, Dunton, Raynham, Sculthorpe and Great Ryburgh, mostly situated in the upper Wensum valley.

Phase 1 (420–70) (Fig 10.3.9)

It is likely that the cremation cemeteries at Walsingham, known from seventeenth-century finds (NHER 2030; Browne 1658), and Kettlestone, Pensthorpe, known from a series of nineteenth-century finds (NHER 44367; Meaney 1964, 117), were in use by the middle of the fifth century if not earlier. Cremations at Field Dalling (NHER 6164, formerly in Saxlingham parish) might also be from a cremation cemetery that came into use at this time. Otherwise, early to middle fifth-century activity is indicated by thirteen finds of brooches or brooch fragments from twelve locations. There are four supporting-arm brooches, seven cruciform brooches of Martin's group 1, and two equal-arm brooches of Typ Sahlenberg (Böhme 1974, 16). There are two cruciform brooches from the same site in Walsingham but otherwise these are all from different locations, with two findspots of cruciform brooches in Raynham parish. All except a cruciform brooch from Syderstone (NHER 41795) are from places with metalwork of the later fifth and sixth centuries on the same site or in the immediate vicinity.

Phase 2 (470–570) (Fig 10.3.10)

In addition to Kettlestone, Walsingham and Field Dalling, four burial sites can be assigned to this phase. Early eighteenth-century finds from Holkham are almost certainly from furnished inhumations of the late fifth to later sixth centuries (NHER 1781). A single inhumation with a spearhead and possibly a sword is recorded from Fakenham (NHER 2133), a single inhumation with a pair of annular brooches, a small-long brooch and a knife is known from Little Snoring (NHER 2154), and a single

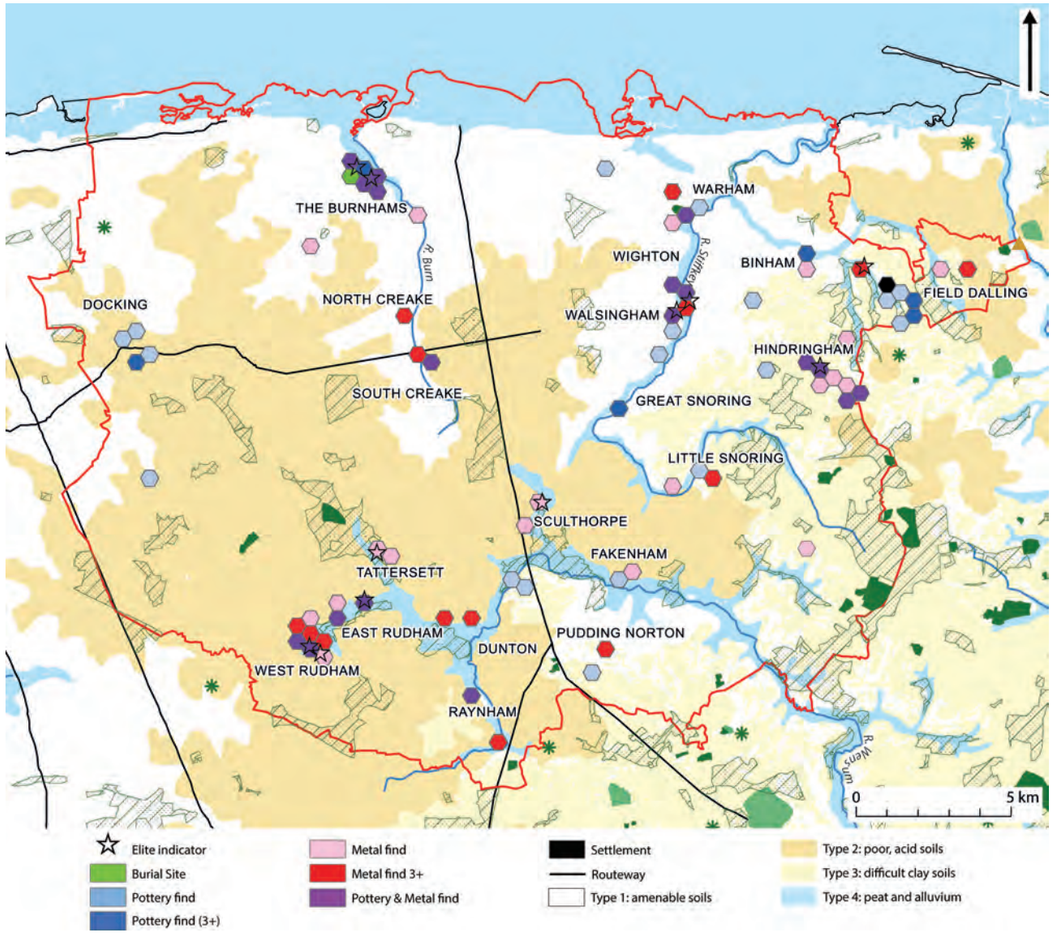

Fig 10.3.11 North Norfolk: Phase 3 activity. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

inhumation with a cruciform brooch, two annular brooches and a pottery vessel from Little Walsingham (NHER 2031).

Otherwise, activity is represented by over 400 surface finds or chance finds of metalwork and pottery, mostly concentrated to the north in the valleys of the rivers Burn and Stiffkey and to the south in the upper valley of the river Wensum. In the Burn valley, apart from the Burnham settlement complex, there are finds of metalwork from Burnham Norton, Burnham Market and Burnham Thorpe, and evidence for a settlement focus on the boundary between the modern parishes of North and South Creake. In the Stiffkey valley, multiple finds of pottery and metalwork indicate foci of settlement at Warham, at Walsingham and in the south of Wighton parish. To the east, in the valley of the tributary Binham Stream, metalwork and pottery indicate settlement and burials at Binham, where a hoard including bracteates and other precious-metal items is known (Behr and Pestell 2014), and two areas of activity, including the known cemetery, in Field Dalling. South of this, spreads of pottery and metal finds along the valley of the Hindringham Stream suggest another significant focus of settlement in Hindringham parish, and there is a further concentration at the head of the Stiffkey valley in the parishes of Great and Little Snoring.

At the head of Wensum valley, surface material indicates significant centres of settlement and activity in West and East Rudham (Rogerson 2003, 116–18), Tattersett and Raynham. Continuing eastwards downstream, there is further evidence for settlement and activity at Tattersett, Dunton, Sculthorpe, Fakenham, Pudding Norton and Ryburgh. There is little from the higher terrain of the interfluve to the west of the territory

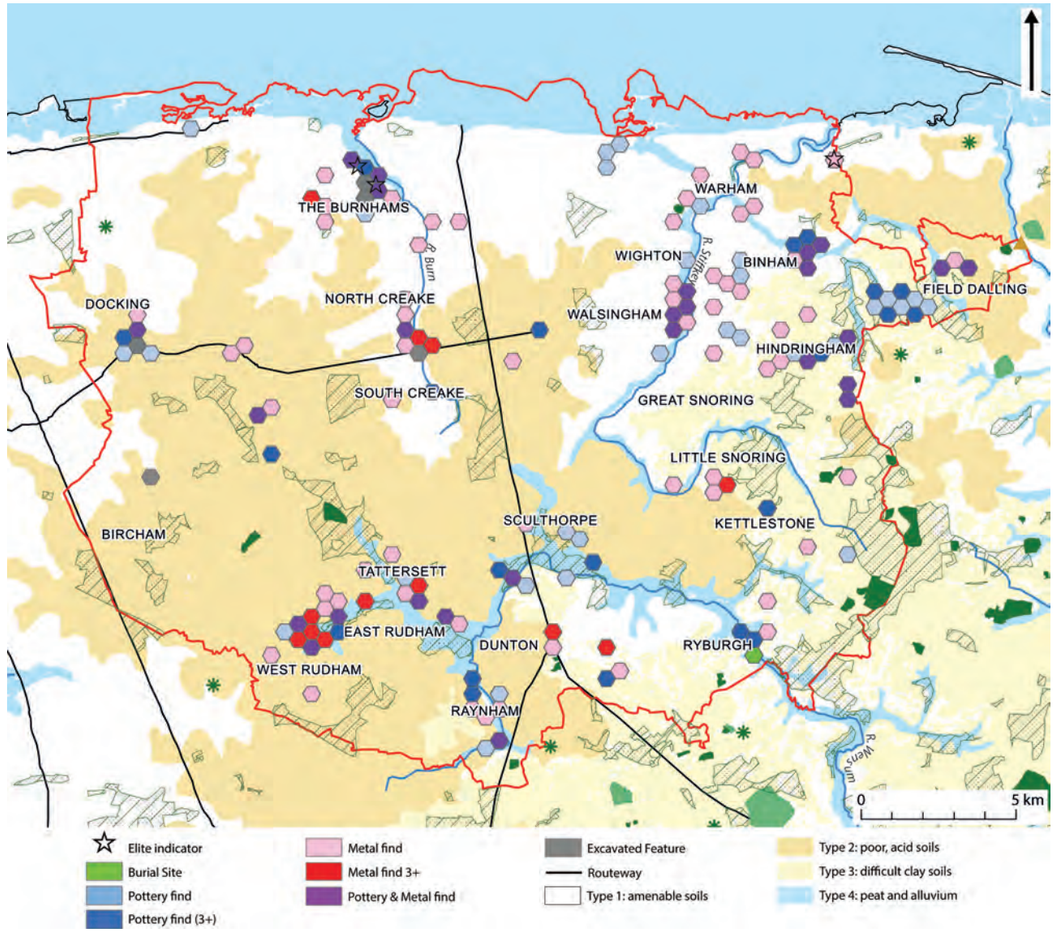

Fig 10.3.12 North Norfolk: activity of Phases 4–5. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

but pottery suggests settlement at Docking, and there are metal finds from Bagthorpe and pottery and metalwork from Bircham.

Phase 3 (570–720) (Fig 10.3.11)

No settlement or cemetery for which there is evidence from excavation came into use during this period. The number of finds of diagnostic metalwork is lower than for Phase 2, as in our other case studies, but the general river-valley distribution remains much the same. There is evidence for continuing activity at many of the Phase 2 locations, as at Burnham and the Creakes in the Burn valley. In the Stiffkey valley and its tributaries the more significant concentrations of material are at Walsingham and Hindringham, with less emphatic activity signatures at Warham/Wighton, Binham and Field Dalling. The concentration of finds from Rudham stands out among the evidence for activity along the upper Wensum.

Phases 4 (720–850) and 5 (850–1100) (Fig 10.3.12)

Information on metal finds after 800 has not been comprehensively collated and so the data for Phases 4 and 5 are less representative than for the earlier periods. None the less, some general conclusions can be drawn. The overall river-valley pattern of distribution continues, with most of the main Phase 2 and Phase 3 locations showing continuing activity. In Phase 4 there is evidence for significant places at Walsingham, Binham, Field Dalling and Hindringham in the Stiffkey valley; at Burnham and the Creakes in the Burn valley; at Rudham and Raynham in the upper Wensum; and at Docking in the west of the study area. In Phase 5 there appears to be comparative

fall-off in activity at Creake and Raynham. There is little archaeological evidence for an expansion of activity on the higher, less fertile terrains of the interfluves during the eighth to eleventh centuries.

Apart from interventions at Burnham noted above, there is excavated evidence for activity at four sites. At Ryburgh (NHER 6237; Hilts 2017), eighth-century burials and an associated timber structure, possibly a chapel, appear to belong to a bounded settlement complex which may have been a monastic establishment. At Bircham (NHER 6062), a kiln producing Thetford-type wares, a ditch, postholes and unstratified Ipswich ware were excavated in 1975 (Rogerson and Adams 1978). Excavations and a watching brief at North Creake in 1997 revealed two tenth- to eleventh-century crop-drying kilns, structural features and evidence for ironworking (Shelley 2001), and at Church Place, Docking (NHER 36960), evaluation in 2002 recorded pits and ditches associated with Thetford wares and a single sherd of Ipswich ware (Hobbs 2002).

10.3.3.2 Settlement patterns and mortuary geography

The most marked feature of the settlement geography is the concentration of evidence for fifth- to eighth-century occupation and activity in valley-side locations and in close proximity to watercourses, a pattern seen in the Roman period and continuing into the eleventh century. In the catchments of the Burn and Stiffkey there is a near-exclusive correlation between evidence for occupation and activity and more tractable and fertile soils. This is less marked in the upper Wensum, and the concentration of activity at the Rudhams, Tattersett and Raynham, where headwaters dissect the less tractable upland terrains, may suggest that animal husbandry exploiting wood pasture played a significant part in farming regimes here. There is, however, little archaeological evidence for significant expansion of activity in these upland terrains in the eighth to eleventh centuries (Tables 10.3.5–6).

As at Burnham, there is fifth- and sixth-century material on or immediately adjacent to a number of sites with late fourth- or early fifth-century occupation but no conclusive evidence that any significant late Roman settlement is occupied into the middle or later fifth century. As elsewhere, the evidence suggests a significant dislocation and reconfiguration of settlement over the course of the fifth century but within the same framework of favourable locations and terrains. The catchments of the Burn, Stiffkey and upper Wensum thus constitute three major long-term aggregations of settlement, population and landed resource.

There are too few known burial sites to characterise mortuary geography with confidence but the configuration observed at Burnham in the late fifth to seventh centuries – a settlement complex with associated burial sites on higher ground – fits with the broader regional and national patterns, and the broader location of surface finds is generally consistent with this. The exact locations of the Walsingham cremation cemetery and the Fakenham inhumation are not known, and the Holkham cemetery lies within the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century planned landscape of Holkham Park, but the other known burial sites fit the pattern. The Field Dalling cemetery lies at *c* 40m OD overlooking a minor watercourse, Kettlestone is at a similar elevation overlooking the north bank of the Wensum, the Little Walsingham inhumation lies at *c* 30m OD overlooking the Stiffkey river from the west, and the Little Snoring inhumation is at *c* 50m OD overlooking a minor waterway running into Stiffkey river. By contrast, the later cemetery at Ryburgh is on the floodplain of the Wensum rather than a more elevated valley-side location, and may have been immediately adjacent to, or integrated within, settlement space as at Bloodmoor Hill, Carlton Colville, Suffolk in the middle to late seventh century, and Brandon, Suffolk in the eighth century (Lucy *et al* 2009; Tester *et al* 2014).

Table 10.3.5 The north Norfolk territory: early medieval PAS finds and HER records (excluding Burnham) and their locations relative to soil type

	Area (sq km)	%	PAS	%	HER	%
1: good soils	162.6	32.3	116	37.8	73	35.6
2: acid soils	220.5	43.8	102	33.2	60	29.3
3: difficult clay	67.5	13.4	39	12.7	44	21.5
4: waterlogged silt/peat	52.6	10.5	50	16.3	28	13.7
Total	**503.2**	**100.0**	**307**	**100.0**	**205**	**100.0**

Table 10.3.6 The north Norfolk territory: sites datable by early medieval pottery and their locations relative to soil type

	Area (sq km)	%	Hand-made	%	Ipswich	%	Thetford	%
1: good soils	162.6	32.3	17	37.0	19	31.7	3	18.8
2: acid soils	220.5	43.8	11	23.9	16	26.7	8	50.0
3: difficult clay	67.5	13.4	12	26.1	14	23.3	2	12.5
4: waterlogged silt/peat	52.6	10.5	6	13.0	11	18.3	3	18.8
Total	**503.2**	**100.0**	**46**	**100.0**	**60**	**100.0**	**16**	**100.0**

10.3.3.3 Social differentiation and hierarchy

There is no elite material of Phase 1 but copper-alloy equal-armed brooches of Typ Sahlenberg from South Creake (NHER 53948) and Warham (PAS NMS-647B60) can be considered status markers. As discussed above, there are two status items of Phase 2 from Burnham that might qualify as elite indicators by our definition if their insets are garnet. Otherwise, all elite material of the later fifth to later sixth centuries, and all precious metal items, are from sites in the Stiffkey valley and tributaries. There are fragments of a silver brooch from Field Dalling (PAS NMS-E48FB4) and a silver-gilt brooch from Hindringham (PAS NMS-20C7A3), but the outstanding assemblage is the dispersed hoard of bracteates and other precious-metal items from Binham (Behr and Pestell 2014), where metal-detecting and test-pitting has established that this was not an isolated deposit but situated within an extensive area of activity likely to include settlement and burials. In Phase 3, elite items from sites in Stiffkey catchment are a sword pyramid from Field Dalling (PAS NMS-E48FB4), hanging-bowl fittings from Hindringham (PAS NMS-20C7A3) and Wighton (NHER 3980), and a silver-gilt radiate brooch of the late sixth or earlier seventh century from Walsingham which may have been made in northern Italy (Ager *et al* 1993); two early gold coins are also known from Walsingham (10.3.3.4, below). From the later sixth century an elite signature is also apparent in the upper Wensum, with hanging-bowl fittings recorded from West and East Rudham (NHER 28131, 31816; PAS NMS-753832) and Tattersett (NHER 32606), and a gold filigree mount from Sculthorpe (PAS BUC-925F98). In Phases 4 and 5, apart from the gold and silver finger-rings from Burnham, the only elite material in our sample is a silver hooked tag from Binham (PAS NMS-0085D1).

For the most part, material of the later fifth to later sixth centuries suggests communities with the degrees of social identity and differentiation seen widely in the contemporary mortuary record. However, the evidence for important individuals or kindreds from sites in the Stiffkey valley, and the valleys of its tributaries, and the absence of comparable material elsewhere, suggests a local elite based here that may have wielded power or influence over neighbouring groups in the Burn valley and upper Wensum. From the later sixth century, material culture markers associated elsewhere with emerging regional rulers and their clients are apparent in the archaeological record. This signature of lordship is seen in the upper Wensum, where there is a focal place at Rudham, as well as in the Stiffkey catchment, where evidence suggests that Walsingham may have become the major centre. The Phase 3 elite signature, though, is nowhere as emphatic as in Phase 2 at Binham, nor in our other case study areas. A possible explanation for this is that the nascent hegemony of an elite group located in the Stiffkey valley was superseded by higher level regional overlordship, and that Rudham and Walsingham were focal places for client lordships based on previously autonomous groupings in the Stiffkey and upper Wensum catchments.

At Burnham there is evidence for inter-regional contacts and connections, although not at elite level, in Phase 2, and the Binham hoard argues linkage with elite social and exchange networks around the North Sea in the earlier sixth century. By contrast, the evidence for long-distance elite connections in Phase 3 is comparatively subdued: the hanging-bowl mounts indicate connections with north and west Britain but material pointing to Continental contacts is limited to the silver brooch from Walsingham and a handful of gold coins. This implies relatively limited connections, mediated by other groups, and would again be consistent with the proposition that an emergent paramount lordship in this region lost autonomy in the later sixth or earlier seventh century.

10.3.3.4 Coinage and coin use

Andrew Woods

Fifty-eight coins are recorded from sixteen places within the broader study area, in addition to those from Burnham.

There are three coin finds of EM1 (Fig 10.3.13), two of which can be attributed to the later sixth or early seventh century. A pseudo-Imperial *tremissis* from Brancaster (EMC 2001.1302) appears to be the product of a southern Gaulish mint, and there is a Merovingian *tremissis* of Royal type, converted to a pendant by the addition of a gold loop, from Walsingham (EMC 2003.0001). Also from Walsingham is a middle seventh-century *tremissis* of Quentovic (PAS NMS-281204). These early coins are relatively rare in East Anglia and, as here, have a broadly costal distribution (Woods 2021).

There are more finds with a wider distribution in EM2 (Fig 10.3.14). As well as Burnham, this sees the first coin use at a number of other places, notably Ryburgh and the Rudhams in the upper Wensum, and at Bircham. Despite the concentration of finds from Burnham, no coins are known from its immediate hinterland. Period EM3 (Fig 10.3.15) sees peak coin use across the widest area but with evidence for comparatively greater activity in the Stiffkey valley and its tributaries, with finds from Walsingham, Binham, Hindringham and Barsham. There are only three coin finds of EM4 (Fig 10.3.16), reflecting both a reduction in the quantity of coinage and the places where it was used.

The two early gold coins are noteworthy, although one has been adapted for use as jewellery. Otherwise, coin use and coin loss in the study area conform to broader East Anglian patterns.

Fig 10.3.13 Coin finds of EM1 in north Norfolk. Circles indicate surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins

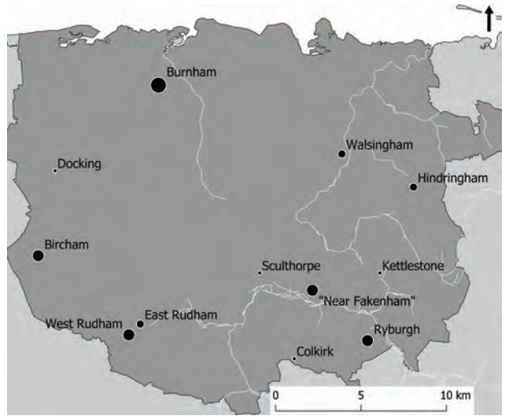

Fig 10.3.14 Coin finds of EM2 in north Norfolk. Circles indicate surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins

Fig 10.3.15 Coin finds of EM3 in north Norfolk. Circles indicate surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins

Fig 10.3.16 Coin finds of EM4 in north Norfolk. Circles indicate surface finds, varying in size according to the number of coins

10.3.4 Conclusions

The study area encompasses three constituent catchment territories which represent long-term aggregations of population and settlement but which show differing trajectories of development in the post-Roman centuries.

Of the three, the Stiffkey catchment is the best candidate for a social territory whose leaders may have exercised some wider hegemony, with clear evidence at Binham for marked degrees of social differentiation and connections with inter-regional elite networks from the later fifth or early sixth century. The cremation cemeteries at Walsingham and Field Dalling, if they came into use during the first half of the fifth century as we suggest, could be seen as focal burial places for wider communities largely composed of incomers from the North Sea coastal areas of the Netherlands, Germany and south Scandinavia. Finds of Phase 1 metalwork of Continental traditions from Walsingham, Warham, Field Dalling and Hindringham support the idea that the Stiffkey catchment may have seen a substantial incoming population in the early to middle fifth century.

The concentrations of evidence for significant areas of activity in the later fifth to later sixth centuries at Warham, and at Wighton and Walsingham, are respectively close to a possible villa site and to a possible small town, both with evidence for activity in the fourth and early fifth centuries. The first element of the place-name Wighton may derive from the Latin *vicus*, making it comparable to the *wīc-hām* names discussed by Gelling (1978, 67–74): although rendered *Wistune, Wuistune, Westune* in Domesday it is given as *de Wyctone c* 1130 and as *Wichton* in 1169. Although far from conclusive, this coincidence of evidence might suggest that the Stiffkey valley was the arena for a transition from late Roman authority to early post-Roman power centre in a way similar to what we propose for Hoxne, Coddenham and Rendlesham. Wighton camp, as a late or early post-Roman fortification, would be consistent with the place retaining an importance into the fifth century (Gregory 1986; Scull 1992, 15).

The different foci of settlement in the valleys of the Stiffkey river, the Binham Stream and the Hindringham Stream might be seen as representing the micro-territories of the kindreds from which leadership emerged, but on the basis of the evidence available, Binham – which can be identified as the seat of an important kindred with connections to wider elite networks – is the best candidate for a centre of rulership in the later fifth and early sixth centuries. Perhaps significantly, its location is similar in some ways to that of the central place at Coddenham, in the valley of a tributary watercourse rather than in the main river valley, and *c* 3km from the main late Roman settlement. There are also echoes here of the locational relationship of the Hoxne elite settlement to the Roman town at Scole. The apparent shift of importance to Walsingham, where there is the best evidence for an elite presence and elite-level inter-regional contacts in the later sixth and seventh centuries, might be related to the establishment of an external overlordship.

Early metalwork of Continental tradition at Rudham and Raynham, and a concentration of evidence for settlement and activity from the later fifth century, suggests a grouping in the upper Wensum that was distinct from the proposed social territory centred on the cremation cemetery at Spong Hill in the fifth and sixth centuries (Chester-Kadwell 2013) and any subsequent jurisdictional region linked to a central place at North Elmham (Williamson 1993, 65–6, 92, 99–100). Rudham, a place with evidence for an elite presence in Phase 3 and subsequently a significant centre of activity through the eighth to eleventh centuries, has been proposed as the central place of an administrative territory similar in extent to the Burnhams (Pestell 2003, 128–9, fig 11.2). Exactly how far Rudham's social, jurisdictional or economic reach might have extended eastwards along the upper Wensum valley is unclear, but in addition to the site at Ryburgh a concentration of coin finds reported through EMC suggests a centre near Fakenham in the eighth century. To the west, coinage also suggests an eighth-century centre in Bircham parish.

There is then an argument to be made that three catchment territories – two directly maritime facing and the third looking towards the North Sea coast rather than south and east to the middle and lower Wensum valley – comprised an embryonic polity which lost autonomy to a wider hegemony at some point in the later sixth or seventh century. This model would see political dominance vested in an elite group based in the Stiffkey valley and its tributaries. Late Roman inheritance, population density and a location giving marginally better access to coastal connections to the east and south may have been factors favouring the Stiffkey faction, but this might also be rooted in the circumstances of migration from the Continent if, for example, the Stiffkey valley saw earlier and larger-scale migration or military leadership played a significant role (cf Scull 1995). Within this configuration it is tempting to identify Burnham as the favoured hub for coastal exchange. Absorption into wider structures of regional lordship may have acted to crystallise the relative status and character of the constituent groupings and their focal places and this in turn might lie behind any – admittedly hypothetical –

elite-driven reconfiguration of settlement space at Burnham and its formal constitution as a coastal trading site.

If Burnham was the pre-Conquest royal vill *Bruna* then it may have risen to importance at a relatively late date, with royal administrative and residential roles attached to an existing estate centre and trading place in the ninth century. By Domesday, though, its significance had waned. None of the vills or manors here were particularly wealthy, and only one – perhaps identifiable with Burnham Overy rather than with anything in Burnham Market – was in royal hands in 1086, and this apparently a recent development. By contrast, Wighton in the Stiffkey valley was a major royal property TRE and the hundredal manor for North Greenhoe (DB 1,32 and 42; Pestell 2003, 129–30). But Burnham's decline may have been relatively recent. Archaeology indicates a major reconfiguration of settlement in the eleventh century and the unique constellation of closely packed rural parish churches around the early medieval settlement complex – nine within an area of just over 2.5sq km – argues importance. A similar density of churches can be seen elsewhere in East Anglia only at Ipswich, where four churches were probably established by the eighth century and a further eleven by the time of Domesday within an area of *c* 1.5sq km. Burnham may, therefore, have been on its way to becoming an urban centre when – for whatever reason – it failed or was curtailed.

The 'productive' site at Burnham is very different from the elite centres identified at Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne, emphasising again that the term does not usefully discriminate between places diverse in date, longevity, character and sequence of development. Detailed study and contextualisation, however, reveals broader coherences and relationships within a putative early lordship. These are consistent with the 'peer-polity' model, and structured by relationships between topography, terrain and social aggregates at the level both of the individual catchments and the broader region they constitute.

10.4 Other major centres and territories in Norfolk and Suffolk

We have argued, in the preceding chapters, that it is possible to identify some elite centres in East Anglia in the late sixth to earlier eighth centuries from their material culture signatures – principally metalwork from the ploughsoil – and to reconstruct their associated jurisdictional territories. Such territories were nested, to varying degrees, within river basins or drainage systems, corresponded to tracts of relatively open, sparsely wooded countryside indicated by place-names and Domesday, and were fossilised – more or less exactly – within the configuration of later hundreds. We have also, however, noted the presence within these hypothesised territories of other probable elite sites, frequently located in tributary valleys and often – like Shottisham within the Rendlesham territory – in places with names containing the Old English element *-hām.* Some of these may represent client groups or lineages, formerly autonomous but under the overlordship of regional rulers by the seventh century, others secondary centres of the ruling group. But we would emphasise that what we have presented are case studies – examples that represent the complexity and range of dynamics that lie behind the archaeological phenomenon of 'productive' sites, and which highlight congruences and differences both in the trajectories of their development and in the relationships between terrain and human geography at nested scales. Our case studies were selected for their potential to address the research aims of this project and do not represent the totality of such sites or territories in Norfolk and Suffolk. Most of the places and areas which were *not* chosen for analysis similarly pose their own specific questions and problems of interpretation while in general appearing to conform to the broad parameters of the model we have presented (Fig 10.4.1).

The map of suggested woodland density (Fig 8.3.3) shows an extensive but discrete tract of open land in north-west Suffolk and south-west Norfolk which corresponds to the drainage basins of the Little Ouse and the Lark and embraces both the southern Breckland and the area of light soils and dissected terrain around Bury St Edmunds traditionally called the 'Fielding'. No significant early 'productive' site is yet known within this putative territory. The metal-detecting assemblage from Freckenham, Suffolk (principally FRK 038), was assessed as part of this project but has nothing to suggest a settlement of unusual size, status or character. The excavated aristocratic or monastic settlement at Staunch Meadow, Brandon, Suffolk – located on a raised 'island' within the floodplain of the Little Ouse – might be considered a potential candidate for a territorial focus. However, unlike our case studies, it flourished in the eighth and ninth centuries, with no evidence for significant activity before the middle to late seventh century (Tester *et al* 2014), and so would appear to belong to the geographies of lordship and associated configurations of settlement that superseded the territorial central places of the later sixth to early eighth centuries with which we are concerned. Two references in *Liber Eliensis* raise the possibility that there was a seventh-century religious house at Bury (Ch 8.2.2–3; tab 8.2.2). There is no other evidence that it was a significant centre before the ninth century (Carr 1975; Warner 1996, 173–4; Hoggett 2018, 149–54), but it is worth noting the possibility that earlier archaeology is masked by the medieval abbey precinct and surrounding built-up area.

Thetford, situated more centrally within the putative territory than Bury, was an important place by the ninth century but likewise has, as yet, produced no archaeological evidence for major wealth or power at an earlier date (Atkins and Connor 2010). There is, however, a small group of metalwork finds from Tostock, Suffolk, which may indicate a significant place of the later sixth

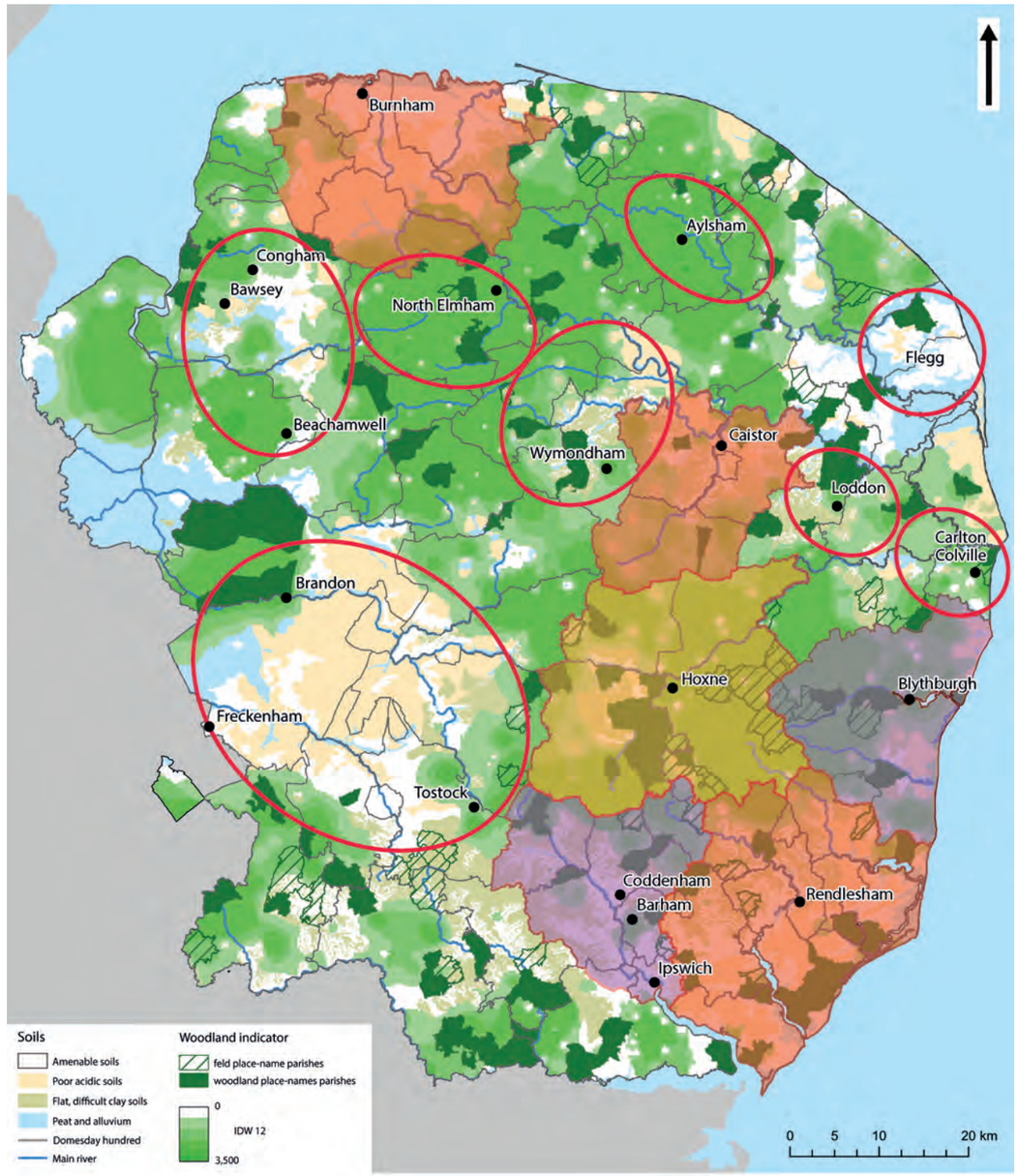

Fig 10.4.1 Map showing other possible major centres and early territories discussed in the text. *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024*

and seventh centuries. The material includes a gold-and-garnet casing from a sword pyramid (PAS SF5196) with a marked similarity to that from Rendlesham, an English gold shilling of 'two emperors' type (PAS SF-84A6C8), and a piece of hack gold (PAS SF-BB29DC) as well as the gold-and-garnet buckle found in the nineteenth century (West 1998, 98, fig 128). Tostock is at the south-east extremity of the tract of open land at the head of the Lark valley. An elite centre here, on the watershed of the rivers Gipping and Lark, may have been intended to command the Gipping–Lark corridor, and contacts to the north and west, on behalf of an elite group or polity in south-east Suffolk (Ch 9.7).

To the north, a belt of well-wooded land running through Methwold, Northwold and Hockwold separates this large open region from one of several smaller, less distinct and often less continuous tracts of open land which seem to have characterised much of northern East Anglia. Its core corresponds with an area of light chalk soils in the valley of the Nar and on the denuded escarpment to the north and south, extending as far north as the proposed territory of Wighton and Burnham. A territorial focus of the sixth and seventh centuries may be indicated at Congham, close to the headwaters of the Babingley river, by an extensive spread of fifth- to ninth-century material (Rogerson 2003, 115–16). The finds include three Continental *tremisses*, one of Godomar II of Burgundy (524–34), indicating that this was an early centre of coin use. There is also evidence of early coin use from the area of Beachamwell in the valley of the river Wissey. The 'productive' site at Bawsey appears to have flourished from the late seventh to the ninth centuries (Rogerson 2003, 112–14; Pestell 2014). Its date, and its location on a former island in the valley of the Gaywood river to the west of King's Lynn, invites comparisons with Brandon and Burrow Hill, Butley.

South of Lowestoft in north-east Suffolk, a possible princely burial and metal-detecting finds of gold dress accessories at Bloodmoor Hill may indicate a focal place associated with a relatively limited area of open land, although the adjacent excavated settlement site does not show an elite signature (Scull 1992, 21; Newman 1996; West 1998, 40–1, fig 47; Lucy *et al* 2009). For the most part, however, identifying such centres and their associated territories is problematic across much of northern East Anglia, for a number of reasons. One is that the smaller tracts of open countryside often lack visibility or definition on our map, given the 'blurring' effect of the sources used to reconstruct them (Ch 8.3.1). This is especially true of places located in valleys cutting through the arc of very densely wooded land running from north-east Norfolk, through the centre of that county, and on through northern and north-eastern Suffolk. The likely importance of North Elmham in the middle Wensum valley, for example, is signalled both by the fifth- to sixth-century cemetery at Spong Hill, which in its earlier phases at least is likely to have acted as the focal burial place for a wider area, and by its probable status from the 670s as the seat of the northern East Anglian bishopric, but there is no clear trace of a corresponding *lacuna* in woodland.

Another possibility – already noted in the case of Bury St Edmunds – is that some major elite centres were at places that became medieval and modern towns, with the result that the archaeological signature that allows the identification of 'productive' sites on farmland has been destroyed or is masked by development. Thus, the woodland mapping shows a tract of open land lying to the west of the territory based on Caistor-by-Norwich, corresponding closely to the drainage basin of the river Tiffey and with the parish of Wymondham – the largest in Norfolk and plausibly seen as representing the *parochia* of a minster and perhaps an early secular territory (Williamson 1993, 96–8, 166). In a manner reminiscent of our case studies at Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne, the core of the medieval town of Wymondham lies *c* 2.3km south-east of the Roman-period settlement and temple complex at Crownthorpe, the coin finds from which indicate activity into the later fourth century (Rogerson 2007; Williamson 2007b). Similarly, another open area lying to the south-east of Caistor corresponds with the basin of the river Chet and has, centrally placed within it, the town of Loddon: a place which is again a possible minster site and which derives its name from the earlier name of the Chet, the *Ludne*, and lay in the hundred of Lodingas, 'the people of the *Ludne*' (Williamson 1993, 64, 144). Other examples of places, often with names ending in *-hām*, with such associations could be cited: one such is Aylsham, a major royal manor and hundredal centre in the Bure valley some 4km north-west of the Roman small town at Brampton (Williamson 1993, 101–3). But there remain some tracts of open land for which, so far, there are no obvious candidates for sixth- to seventh-century focal places. Particularly perplexing in this respect is the former island of Flegg, to the north of Great Yarmouth on the east coast of Norfolk. Flegg has some of the best arable land in East Anglia and, by the time of Domesday, had one of the highest population densities in England (Darby 1972, 149; NE 2014, 26). As an island, it might be predicted as a topographically defined social and jurisdictional territory in the early post-Roman period. However, although the dominance of places with Scandinavian names suggests significant settlement from the later ninth century there is only sparse evidence for earlier settlement activity. That said, there are concentrations of sixth- to eighth-century metalwork from Martham which include an escutcheon from a hanging bowl (NHER 24405).

In summary, both the archaeological and landscape-historical evidence suggest the existence of a range of territories and focal sites in East Anglia in the period with which we are concerned, other than those we have considered in detail in our case studies. Their configuration appears to have been likewise structured by environment and topography, and they were related and ranked in diverse and shifting ways. In some instances, as with the cemetery at Spong Hill, North Elmham, we may also be seeing in a central burial place a manifestation of earlier social groupings and group identities that underlay the configurations of overlordship materialised in the central places and their associated territories of the later sixth to earlier eighth centuries. This is one of the themes that we will examine in the final chapter of this book.

11 Lordship and landscape in East Anglia

In Chapter 1 we set out the specific research questions guiding our investigation of the settlement complex at Rendlesham and its contexts, and summarised our understanding of the current state of knowledge against which our research was undertaken in two interrelated areas: the dynamics of social hierarchy, lordship and hegemony; and the ways in which these entangled social relationships found material and spatial expression.

In this concluding chapter we consider first how our results inform these wider issues, and explore the implications for our understanding of social and political developments in this part of England, and more widely, in the period between the early fifth and the later eighth centuries. Building on this, we then offer our view of how the early East Anglian kingdom was established and in what circumstances, how local rulership was translated into regional hegemony, and the ways in which regional rulership was constituted, negotiated and consolidated.

11.1 Pathways to lordship

11.1.1 Trajectories of social and political development

Rendlesham was a significant place from the first half of the fifth century but although it was long-lived it was not unchanging, and we can identify two major thresholds of change: around 570/80, when its incorporation as a jurisdictional centre and the associated foundation of an elite residence established it at the apex of the emerging settlement hierarchy; and around 720/30, when the social, jurisdictional and economic centralities of the place were dispersed among other locations and the royal establishment abandoned.

The late sixth-century developments were part of a wider horizon of changes – including the ostentatious and monumental materialisation of elite identities – associated with new levels of social and political differentiation, and with the establishment of regional overlordships. From this time, until the early eighth century, Rendlesham can be identified as a royal residence and the main centre for a jurisdictional territory broadly equivalent to the Deben catchment. Local lordship over leaders and communities within the district was already established and embedded, but the need to assert and articulate wider regional hegemony prompted the establishment of residence and central place as a focus and physical embodiment of rulership. Through the network of such places, paramount – royal – authority was exercised over the constituent groupings of the East Anglian *provincia*, and although lordship was exercised primarily over people and only indirectly over territory, this can be seen as a significant step towards the territorialisation of authority.

It is important to remember, though, that the royal establishment was founded at a place that had already been a significant settlement focus for a century and a half. It was the home of locally important individuals, with evidence for social differentiation and leadership from the early to middle fifth century. During the fifth and sixth centuries, Rendlesham was a significant place because locally powerful kindreds lived there, but until the middle of the sixth century it was one of several places or localities within the Deben catchment that can be seen plausibly as representing autonomous or semi-autonomous groups. That it was chosen as the place for a royal residence and jurisdictional centre in the later sixth century, and that it appears to have been pre-eminent among the comparable places we have analysed, both argue strongly that the elite faction whose ancestral holdings were at Rendlesham was the one that established both local lordship and then regional hegemony.

There was disruption and reconfiguration of settlement and activity over the first half of the fifth century at and around Rendlesham, and the main focus of settlement from the fifth century was on a new site, but there is evidence for a late Roman official or military presence, and a degree of civilian wealth, in the last decades of the fourth century and beginning of the fifth. We argue that this represents a nexus of Imperial authority and the social power of a landed elite that provided the vector for transition from state to magnate power in the aftermath of the collapse of Imperial authority, and that Rendlesham's significance in the early post-Roman centuries was rooted in part in the legacy of late-Roman administrative geography as a centre for administration and exaction.

Although there is no single simple trajectory of development, and considerable individual variations in the ways in which the sites we have selected as case studies developed, there are broader similarities which indicate that the sequence at Rendlesham represents a common pattern of developments. Coddenham and Hoxne, the other top-level elite sites, manifest extreme wealth and an emphatic elite presence from the later sixth century and a radical change in status – at Hoxne possibly total abandonment – in the early eighth century. The elite signature is less emphatic at Caistor, but again it becomes apparent in the later sixth or early seventh century, when there may be a deliberate shift in the focus of settlement from the temple area to that of the walled town and its immediate environs. At Barham, a local aristocratic rather than a regional elite centre, a high-status signature is apparent from the middle of the seventh century. Of our case studies only Burnham does not show an elite or high-status profile at this time, but we have shown that it is not a comparable site and the evidence from sites in the Stiffkey valley, which appears to be the main power centre in our north Norfolk area, again show a new and emphatic elite signature from the later sixth and earlier seventh centuries.

Taken with the landscape-scale evidence from our wider study areas, which generally show a progressive concentration of wealth and elite indicators at fewer places, and with the wider archaeological evidence for developing socio-political distance such as aristocratic and princely burials, this argues both that leading kindreds were establishing and reproducing lordship over the populations of increasingly wide areas, and that among the ruling groups there was a consciousness of new social hierarchies and a concern to assert these. This would support a trajectory of development over the fifth to seventh centuries in which a fragmentation of power and authority in the fifth century was followed by the establishment of new, larger-scale polities, rather than some continuity of regional or inter-regional rule from the early fifth century.

Approaches that model the dynamics of peer-competition and competitive exclusion go a long way towards explaining the establishment of rulership at increasing scales, culminating in regional hegemony. However, as we have already noted (Ch 1.6.1), this was not a simple linear outcome of conflict by which territorial micro-polities gobbled up their neighbours, but a very much more complex, contingent, multi-dimensional and entangled process, rooted in social structures, motivations and relationships, and in human agency and opportunity. We should envisage fluctuating political landscapes in the fifth and sixth centuries, in which local leaders were sometimes able to establish impermanent wider power or influence, but we should not underestimate the degrees of social differentiation and potential for leadership in these societies, nor the extent to which early polities may have been associative, nor the extent to which consent was critical to rulership.

None the less, the evidence from all our study areas points to the later sixth century as a watershed for socio-political stratification and the establishment of supra-local rulership – even if it is not clear in all cases whether this is to be attributed to the consolidation of power by local elites or subordination to an external overlord – with further radical shifts in the geographies of economy and power in the early eighth century. Important matters for consideration in explaining the trends we have identified include how authority rooted in the household, kin group and local area was translated into permanent lordship over increasingly distant communities or their leaders; how new elites responded to the challenges of rulership at a distance; how this may have helped prompt an incipient territorialisation of authority; and what changes governed the transformations in geographies of jurisdiction and economy in the first half of the eighth century. Our case studies enable us to take a comparative view of these questions from different perspectives, at a range of scales, and in the light of broader contextual understanding.

11.1.2 (Dis)Continuities: the late fourth and fifth centuries

The major early medieval elite centres discussed in this volume, all with fifth-century origins, are all in the vicinity of former Roman small towns or – at Caistor-by-Norwich – the former cantonal capital. Only at Caistor, where the fifth-century cremation cemeteries are in the immediate environs of the former cantonal capital, can it be argued that there was a direct relationship between the Roman urban place and a sequence of early post-Roman activity that culminated in the establishment of the elite settlement complex and central place. Rendlesham and Hoxne are respectively 3.5km and 3.2km from the small towns at Hacheston and Scole, and Coddenham is 2.5km from the small town in the same parish. In all three cases there are indications of a late Roman official or military presence and of civilian wealth at or close to the site of the early medieval central place, and at Hoxne a case can be made that it is close to a major rural magnate centre of the late fourth and early fifth centuries. In north Norfolk, evidence for an emergent power centre in the Stiffkey valley is in the locality of a villa and small town with activity into the fifth century (Ch 10.3.4). We have argued that this reflects a fourth-century shift in the geography of administration from towns to rural centres, and that this provided a vector of transition from state to local magnate power, and one element of this is worth exploring further. A major element of administration was the collection of taxes, and in the fourth century these were largely paid in kind, in the form of the grain, livestock and other commodities required by the army (Jones 1964, 448–69; Esmonde Cleary 1989, 8–10; Gerrard 2013, 75–6, 97–9). At Hoxne, Coddenham and Rendlesham we can hypothesise local tax collection centres moving out of towns in the later fourth century to the rural estates of landowners, reflecting the declining social and economic importance of the small towns themselves as well as the increasing autonomy of local officials drawn from tribal aristocracies (Chs 7.2, 9.1 and 10.1). By contrast, the cantonal capital at Caistor is likely to have retained its administrative functions, no doubt backed by a military presence, up to the point at which Imperial government in the province ceased to function.

With the collapse of state structures, and with no field army to maintain, both the need and the means to exact taxation diminished or disappeared. We have already noted that this may have precipitated a change in farming to less intensive arable production and a greater emphasis on animal husbandry. The collection of taxation may have ceased altogether at urban locations such as Caistor, but the entanglement of social and state power at rural magnate centres may have allowed some landowners to appropriate and perpetuate aspects of taxation, as tribute or renders, although at a smaller scale and without the coercive power of the state. These locations continued to function as centres of authority, and places where renders were received, well into the fifth century and beyond, their positions fixed by custom and difficult to move very far in this administratively less complex world. The key feature was, perhaps, less the people than the place and the tributary tradition attached to it, and this may explain why Coddenham, Rendlesham and Hoxne were significant settlements from the early to middle fifth century whereas Caistor appears to have been a burial focus that only became important again as a focal settlement in the late sixth or early seventh century. Somewhere like Rendlesham might be controlled by a single lineage over time, or taken over by an entirely new group, as it continued to function as the location where tribute was rendered, a continuity structured not just by the patterns of geography, familiarity and custom but perhaps by rituals and ceremonies associated with the seasonal delivery of produce, and by other functions, including jurisdictional ones, accruing to places of political power. We may hypothesise something similar in the Stiffkey valley hinterland of the Roman small town at Walsingham and Wighton in north Norfolk, and in east Suffolk for the putative early medieval elite centre at Blythburgh, 2.3km east of the small town at Wenhaston.

This is not to argue for any direct continuity of late Roman administration, or of economic and political geographies, and we consider below how the long-term interplay of physical and human geographies may have affected the emergence and re-emergence of congruent configurations of administrative or social territory. Rather, it is to recognise that apparent continuities may be complex outcomes of contingent responses to circumstance and opportunity, and may represent multiple reconfigurations or renegotiations. The broader picture is one of discontinuity and reconfiguration of patterns of settlement over the first half of the fifth century, and so the coincidence between centres of authority in the late fourth and early fifth centuries and fifth-century settlements that became major centres in the late sixth century strongly indicates that these places continued to be recognised over the long term as foci for authority and surplus extraction, even if their geographical hinterlands and the extent of authority exercised from them had shrunk, and the socio-economic relationships centred on them transformed. In this respect they might be seen as centres of relative stability in profoundly changing landscapes.

There is overwhelming archaeological and biomolecular evidence for substantial migration and settlement in eastern Britain of people from the Continental North Sea coastal areas of what are now the Netherlands, north Germany and south Scandinavia over the course of the first half and middle of the fifth century (Hines 1990; Hills 2003; Gretzinger *et al* 2022; Scull 2023b), and the material culture sequence at Rendlesham and other key sites points to a substantial presence of individuals from the north European Continent. The impacts of migration across the North Sea were upon British societies adapting to the aftermath of empire; but among the triggers of migration were profound dislocations within northern European societies beyond the *limes* whose social relations and elite value systems had been dependent on relationships with the Roman Empire (Gebühr 1998; Halsall 2007, 35–62; Scull 2023b, 188). From this perspective, eastern Britain can be seen as part of a broader North Sea coastal region undergoing accelerated socio-economic and political changes, in which migration and subsequent contacts across the North Sea were a factor in complex and locally contingent dynamics. The development of new political configurations and identities in early post-Roman Britain needs to be seen in this broader context, with the players – dynasts, warlords and local polities – embodying a range of affiliations and identities rather than being participants in a conflict fought along some simple cultural or ethnic fault line.

This perspective offers insights into two ways in which personal and group mobility may have introduced new agents, new structures of power, and new pathways to power in the second and third quarters of the fifth century. Military leadership was one factor. It would be wishful thinking to deny that raiding and armed land-taking were very probably features of the migrations, especially in the early stages. Additionally, British landlords or magnates who were privatising power would need experienced fighters and, echoing the narrative of Gildas, may have lost out to hired military adventurers who overstayed their welcome. Fragments of silver-gilt belt- and scabbard-fittings from Rendlesham suggest the presence of a warrior elite with links to south Scandinavia in the fifth century; other rare finds, such as the two pommel caps of type Holmegaard/Kragehul from Caistor-by-Norwich and Flordon, and the ancestral scabbard mount in Sjörup style from Spong Hill, inhumation 40 (Scull 1992, 18–19) also point in this direction. The broader dynamics of migration and settlement will also have introduced new axes of social differentiation and authority. Given what was involved, travel and settlement must have been a group rather than an individual undertaking. These were people from societies with their own internal structures of authority. Whether initially autonomous or settled by accommodation with post-Roman British communities or their leaders, their presence would have set up networks of influence and authority parallel to those of indigenous post-Roman British society. These communities, incorporating multiple agencies, embodied information flows back across the North Sea that enabled and structured subsequent migration, and a status as 'first comers', perhaps with a degree of control or influence over subsequent settlement, may have allowed prominent individuals or influential kindreds within incoming communities to assert local leadership in Britain. These are points on a spectrum of possible actions and interactions, but the network of contacts and affiliations embodied in these new communities drew eastern Britain into the North Sea world, and conflict and accommodation between Insular society and incoming groups precipitated new political, cultural and social identities aligned with that world. The seventh-century regional rulers are recorded as kings of the East Angles, not the Iceni or Romani, and they (at least according to those who set down their genealogy in the eighth century) claimed Continental Germanic (and divine) descent. But they also claimed descent from Caesar, and it seems at least as likely that the leading families of their kingdom included the descendants of British leaders who had been able to retain some local rulership as it does that the entire elite of post-Roman British society had been totally eradicated in warfare.

11.1.3 Petty kings? The fifth and sixth centuries

We have characterised the societies of the middle fifth to later sixth centuries as relatively 'flat', at least by comparison with the socio-political structures of the later sixth and seventh centuries: internally ranked communities in which the basic social unit was the household, focused on and embodied in the ancestral farm, with kin groups holding a balance of proprietary rights in farmland and interests in resources held in common. This is not to say that these were egalitarian societies, or that they were not capable of sustaining local socio-political identities and affiliations which may sometimes have supported the projection of wider authority or claims to lordship by dominant individuals or kindreds. There is material evidence for military leadership or a warrior elite from the middle of the fifth century at Rendlesham and elsewhere, and we can interpret the large cremation cemeteries of the fifth century as central places for burial communities dispersed across the landscape in small aggregations of ancestral farms (Faull 1976; Williams 2002; Hills and

Lucy 2013, 293–4), with the implication that these kindreds shared a sense of local group identity. Local pre-eminence may have derived from military leadership, from first-comer status, from temporary leadership bestowed within associative groupings in response to specific circumstances, from the inherited status or memory of these, or from the subsequent interplay of social strategies and economic dynamics. There is clear evidence for marked social differentiation across all our study areas by the later fifth and earlier sixth centuries, and it is possible in a number of areas – in particular the Deben catchment, the Tas catchment and north Norfolk – to identify clusters of elite material suggestive of micro-territories that might indicate local polities focused on leading kindreds at this time. There is also evidence for access to extensive social, exchange and procurement networks that argue contacts and affiliations beyond the immediate locality or social group. Striking examples of this are the bird brooches which show that the same metalworkers were supplying the communities at Coddenham and Hoxne, and the bracteates from Rendlesham. Lacking from the archaeology, though, is any evidence for expression of paramount elite identities indicative of sustained lordship on a supra-local or regional scale.

We have argued that increasing social stratification over the course of the later fifth to later sixth centuries, and a commensurate increase in the power wielded by influential individuals or kindreds, arose primarily from the internal dynamics of these fundamentally agricultural societies. Conventionally, pressure on the resource base arising from population increase has been seen as a driver of social hierarchy and complexity (Boserup 1965; 1981; Carneiro 1970), but it is difficult to see how this could be so at the time in question. If anything, there is likely to have been a fall in population in eastern Britain in the aftermath of the collapse of Roman state institutions, and the extent to which this may or may not have been offset by migration from the Continent is currently unknowable. In any case, incoming populations from the north European Continent would not experience the effects of demographic change in the same ways as established indigenous populations. It is probably safe to say that there may have been an increase or recovery of overall population levels in the later fifth and earlier sixth centuries, but the much greater and wider spread of evidence for activity at this period in comparison to the early to middle fifth century is largely due to the increased visibility resulting from widespread adoption of characteristic material culture types, and it is not until the late seventh or eighth century that we have evidence for an increasing settlement presence on the upland margins of catchment territories that might suggest significant population growth. In the current state of knowledge it is not possible to model to any useful level of accuracy the impacts on overall population levels in Britain of the volcanic winter of AD 536 and its aftermath, nor of plague from the middle sixth to later seventh centuries (below).

If, however, we view rights in land as a social as well as an economic resource, with the reproduction of individual status linked to a minimum threshold, then it is possible to envisage ways in which only a small increase in the higher social segments of a population might increase the number of individuals in relationships of subordination, triggering the development of new degrees of social distance and degrees of lordship (Scull 1993, 77–9). If landed inheritance, or inherited rights in landed resource, are insufficient to reproduce status this might motivate individuals to put themselves at the service of others, increasing the numbers of individuals in client : lord relationships, and increasing both the human resource and through that the call on landed resource and landed surplus available to the lord or patron. The need to reward or recompense followers and retainers, and to consolidate and reproduce advantage, will have acted to promote competition between emerging lordships. This would be played out through a range of strategies for social reproduction by the individuals and kindreds around which local factions centred, including cultivating relationships with client groups, alignment and affiliation with peer entities, alliances cemented by marriage links, and – at the most extreme – armed conflict. The outcomes of violent confrontation might range from the obliteration of one party, with the appropriation of wealth, landed interests and client relationships, to the acknowledgement of lordship. Power relations were nested and polycentric, and open to challenge or renegotiation – for example, when the death of a central individual left relationships vulnerable to established rivals – and we may envisage a fluctuating succession of impermanent supra-local hegemonies. The overall trend, though, through the social mechanisms of peer-competition and competitive exclusion, was towards wider and more permanent configurations of lordship, culminating in the regional hegemony of the Wuffing dynasty. Why a kindred based in south-east Suffolk should have been able to establish regional overlordship is something we consider in the second half of this chapter (11.2, below).

We noted in Chapter 1 the persistent view that control of imported prestige goods was critical in promoting the development of socio-political hierarchies in sixth- and seventh-century England, and that subsequently, from the seventh century, monopolistic elite control of long-distance trade was a major factor in the establishment of

kingdoms and royal authority. As we have seen (Chs 1.6.1 and 9.7.3), the second proposition finds little support in the archaeology: although elites caused trade to be regulated and taxed to their own benefit, regional royal power was established before the upsurge in commercial traffic around the North Sea in the late seventh and earlier eighth centuries, and by the time the settlement at Ipswich was remodelled and expanded as a trading port and manufacturing centre, the kings of the Wuffing dynasty had ruled the East Angles for a century or more. The prestige goods model is similarly problematic. Status and prestige items were being acquired by leading individuals or kindreds from the fifth century onwards. The specific artefact types and materials changed over time, but status and prestige items – and the precious raw materials they embodied – were always fundamental to the materialisation of central or elite identities, and both their acquisition and redistribution within restricted social networks were always important to the construction and reinforcement of unequal social relations. The materialisation of elite identities was amplified from the later sixth century, and a significant element of this was the incorporation of imported items from a far wider geographical range as items of elite kit. However, this represents a difference of degree rather than a causal factor or something entirely new. The ability to acquire such material was a result of new status, power and social reach, and the related control of a proportionately greater share of landed surplus and human resource in fewer hands. We consider the contacts and mechanisms acquisition through which they were acquired further below (11.1.7).

When modelling social and economic dynamics over the course of the sixth century, we also have to be aware of the possible impacts of the volcanic winter of AD 536 and the so-called Late Antique Little Ice Age that followed (Dark 2000, 22–5; Büntgen *et al* 2016; Toohey *et al* 2016; Dull *et al* 2019), and of bubonic plague: the so-called 'Justinianic Plague' of the 540s was the first outbreak of a pandemic that lasted until the eighth century, and which saw a further serious outbreak in Britain in the 660s (Little 2007; Keller *et al* 2019; Mordechai *et al* 2019; Sarris 2022). The impacts of the climate event on the societies of southern and eastern England are currently unclear, but they were devastating for north Scandinavian societies and it is argued that the effects on agrarian economy and population precipitated major social change from which a significantly more ranked and hierarchical society emerged (Høilund Nielsen 2005; Price and Gräslund 2015; Stamnes 2017; Iversen 2017; Price 2020, 74–82). The effect on the agricultural economy is not likely to have been as severe in eastern England as in Scandinavia, but it may have been sufficient to induce social and economic stress, and to promote or accelerate markedly unequal social relationships as those most impacted put themselves and their resources at the disposal of the better off, and as those able to command followers or retainers were able either to offer greater security or to impose power and sequestrate resource. It may also be possible that cooler conditions prompted changes in crop regimes and perhaps a greater reliance on animal husbandry (cf Dark 2000, 22–5; Banham and Faith 2014, 4, 141–4; van der Veen 2022, 335–7). The effects of pandemic are also unclear, but the additional element of uncertainty and demographic stress may have further amplified the dynamics of developing social distance. The impacts of mortality on leading lineages may have had significant political consequences when the death of key individuals decapitated a ruling group and offered an opportunity to rivals. It is possible that the inhumations at Spong Hill represent such a group (11.2, below), and there is evidence that may indicate a decline in population in the second half of the sixth century among the communities burying at Eriswell in west Suffolk (Caruth and Hines 2024, 467–9).

Our case studies all show variations in trajectory and scale. The Deben catchment, like that of the Tas, appears to have had several local factions in the late fifth and earlier sixth centuries. By contrast, the Coddenham faction may always have been dominant in the Gipping catchment before the possible establishment of a short-lived local polity in the lower Gipping valley and the integration of the Gipping territory into a wider south-east Suffolk polity dominated by the Deben faction. It is possible to identify an emerging polity in north Norfolk, and there is a case that Hoxne was always the dominant locality of the Dove valley territory. But although there is no steady-state linear progression, the trend is in one direction. Our evidence is that by the third quarter of the sixth century, the leading kindreds of some local social groupings across what is now Norfolk and Suffolk had established patchworks of wider rulership or influence, and that it was through the subordination or replacement of these leaders – by force or diplomacy – that regional rulership was projected over what became the province of the East Anglian kings.

11.1.4 Regional rulership: the late sixth to eighth centuries

The evidence of the sites we have studied indicates that the period of the late sixth and early seventh centuries saw a sea change in structures of social hierarchy and the

scale of lordship. This was accompanied by changes in the materialisation of power and in settlement geography, reflecting new modes of rulership and surplus extraction. These changes can be seen all across south and east England, and can be attributed to the establishment of regional hegemonies by ruling kindreds, the creation of elite political identities, and the concomitant strategies of legitimation and consolidation. Increasing social distance between rulers and retainers, and between retainers and followers, acted to foster the emergence of an aristocratic class which included formerly autonomous local leaders. The new regional rulers presided over nested hierarchies of lordship.

A key and novel feature of the period was the establishment of elite centres functioning as central places for extensive territories. The elite establishments of the late sixth to early eighth centuries at Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne all had antecedent settlements, but these were components of landscapes with multiple autonomous centres of power and wealth, with no clear settlement hierarchy, and with other and antecedent centralities – such as the use of large cremation cemeteries by multiple kindreds or communities with a sense of common identity at some level. These central places represent new strategies and modes of power, enabling and consolidating the projection of rulership at a regional scale by attaching royal centres of jurisdiction and surplus extraction to places of existing importance – including the seats of formerly autonomous local leaders – and so in effect upscaling the structures of local lordship. In some cases this may have involved imposing new local leaders under the authority of the ruling dynasty, which would be a way of rewarding kindred and supporters; in other cases leading local kindreds may have accepted the overlordship of the ruling dynasty and remained in place as subordinate rulers. We have already discussed in detail how this might have played out in south-east Suffolk (Ch 9.7.1). In north Norfolk, the Stiffkey valley appears as the power centre of a nascent polity, similar in some ways to that which we propose for south-east Suffolk, which may have been incorporated *in toto* within the Wuffings' regional hegemony, but there is a case to be made that the re-emergence of Caistor-by-Norwich as an elite centre may have coincided with the establishment of regional rulership over the communities of the Tas catchment and their leaders. In all cases, though, these were the focal places around which new geographies of rulership and jurisdiction coalesced.

The establishment of regional hegemony by a paramount ruling dynasty – the Wuffings – in the later sixth century is consistent with the later written sources (Ch 8.2). This was also a period in which the materialisation of elite identities changed, with the adoption of Style II, a shift from silver to gold as the precious metal of choice, the use of gold-and-garnet, and acquisition of luxury items from the Byzantine world and the British north and west. The source of gold behind the upsurge in its use must have been the Merovingian coinages, which start to appear in south-east England in quantity from *c* 580. Broader changes in material culture, including an upsurge in the quantity of imported glass bead types, suggest closer contacts with the Merovingian Continent from this time, part of a shift in cultural geography from affiliation with the North Sea and Scandinavian world to closer alignment with the Merovingian Continent and through that with the Mediterranean world (Geake 1997, 129–36; Peake 2013, 511–15). The threshold of transition from limited and temporary supra-local lordships to a permanent regional hegemony represented a step change in the scale and articulation of power in early England, and in view of the closer cultural and ideological connections with the Continent it seems likely that among the bundle of factors in play was adoption by English elites of models of rulership derived from perceptions of Merovingian kingship.

Views of early East Anglian kingship are sometimes too heavily dependent on the assemblage from Sutton Hoo Mound 1, with emphasis on the Scandinavian character of the helmet and shield. Leaving aside the question of who was buried here – and it need not have been Rædwald, or indeed any of the few members of the royal kindred whose names have come down to us in the written sources – it is important to remember that the burial assemblage was a single point-in-time selection from the dynastic treasure in the 620s, and that links with Merovingian Gaul and the Mediterranean world are strongly indicated in the items of portable wealth chosen to emblematise the power and social identity of the deceased. Indeed, it can be argued that the helmet and shield were heirloom items acquired by a forebear during service in the retinue of a south Scandinavian warlord, and were two or three generations old when buried (Høilund Nielsen 1999, 198–200; 2008, 312–14; Marzinzik 2007, 33–5; Price and Mortimer 2014, 519). Bede's statement that Rædwald initially converted to Christianity at the behest of Æthelbert indicates political linkage to Kent, with its long-standing links to Merovingian Gaul, and the evidence of the coinage indicates increasingly strong connections with Merovingian Gaul through the last decades of the sixth and first decades of the seventh centuries. Sigebert's exile in Gaul suggests pre-existing personal and dynastic contacts, and the consecration of the Burgundian Felix as

first bishop of the East Angles – whether instigated by Sigebert or accepted by him – suggests a regnal project influenced by his experience of Merovingian ideas and practice. It is possible that the first minting of coinage in East Anglia was instigated by Sigebert and should almost certainly be seen as prompted by Kentish and Merovingian exemplars. There are also indications in naming traditions that the Wuffings had kinship ties with Frankish families or looked to Merovingian Gaul for traditions of kingship (Ch 8.2.1.2). While recognising both the complexity of the cultural relationships of elite groups around the North Sea, and the evidence of a former Scandinavian connection in the assemblage from Sutton Hoo Mound 1, it seems likely that construction of the early East Anglian elite political identity and models of regional rulership – like those of Kent and other polities of south-east England – owed more to increasingly close alignment with the Merovingian world than to Scandinavian models.

We can identify a number of strategies through which the new regional elites sought to consolidate and replicate their novel status and power. The progressive crystallisation of social hierarchy and the social relations of lordship, with degrees of aristocracy precipitating out in the increasing social distance between paramount elites and the bulk of population, was reinforced by the commensurate ability of elites to maintain and reward followers and with this to influence or coerce through the threat of force. We can envisage an increasing formalisation of dues and renders from landed surplus, and of military and labour services, going hand-in-hand with the creation or recognition of individual heritable rights to landed resource – reinforcing any trend towards linking rights and dues to bounded landholdings or territories. Alliances with other regional elites would provide mutual reinforcement in peer relationships and help cement perceptions of distinction between regional overlords and their subordinates, and should dynastic relationships break down then resorting to armed conflict was a high-risk but high-reward strategy that offered overlordship, prestige, and opportunities to reward followers. We should also consider the sanction of supernatural authority. Pre-Christian cult played an important role in reinforcing aspects of rulership, but accommodation with the new religion of Christianity may have significantly enhanced the power and permanence of the ruling family, in effect offering divine sanction for what may have been a novel model of kingship in exchange for secular support for mission (Campbell 1973; Blair 2005, 59–78; Yorke 2006, 122–8). Finally, the regulation, taxation and protection of foreign trade generated revenue and was a sphere in which practices of royal administration were developed. The expansion and formal layout of the *emporium* at Ipswich is attributable to royal initiative, and the emergence of significant trading places at Caistor-by-Norwich and Burnham from the later seventh century can also be attributed to elite if not royal initiatives.

Our evidence is that the elite centres at Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne lost significance and underwent a transformation and reduction of status in the second quarter of the eighth century. These were multi-functional, poly-valent, places, and so the changes are likely to reflect a bundle of inter-linked developments. We have argued that Coddenham and Rendlesham ceased to be foci of inter-regional exchange because the luxury trade focused on elites became bound up with burgeoning commercial bulk trade which was better handled through coastal or estuarine *emporia*, with onward trade articulated through monetised market networks. If, as we argue, a proportion of the monetary activity represents jurisdictional rather than commercial transactions, then the scale of the decline in monetary activity would suggest that these places no longer had significant administrative functions. Further, the loss of the broader elite material culture profile indicates that they were no longer aristocratic or royal residences, though of course they may have remained within the holdings of the royal kindred. This is consistent with the broader pattern recognised across England for great hall complexes (McBride 2020, 144–6; Scull and Thomas 2020, 63–4; Thomas and Scull 2021, 6–9), and is probably to be explained through the distribution and devolution of administrative functions via a range of more local places – the centres of estate holdings in royal, magnate or church hands, or special-purpose places with a single function (Blair 2018, 193–219). At Caistor-by-Norwich, it can be argued that the importance of the trading place may have offset for a decade or two the diminishing usefulness of the elite establishment as a jurisdictional centre for the Tas territory. An altogether more complex sequence is apparent in north Norfolk, where Burnham, interpreted as a subsidiary trading place in the geography of an emergent local polity prior to its absorption into the wider East Anglian kingdom, appears to have developed a greater importance in the late eighth or ninth century.

There is an argument that a common, if not the usual, afterlife of such places was transfer as endowment to minsters. There is no evidence that this was the case at Rendlesham, and although it has been argued on the basis of its size and plan that All Saints church at Eyke, 1.3km south-west of St Gregory at Rendlesham, was the site of a significant pre-Conquest church (Warner 1996, 117–18), there is no corroborating evidence for this. It is

possible, but unproven, that there was a pre-Viking minster at Coddenham. Hoxne appears to have been abandoned, and any later pre-Viking ecclesiastical establishment was probably located at the new site of the current church, 2.5km away. The evidence for a pre-Conquest church at Caistor-by-Norwich is suggestive, but again there is nothing that need indicate a pre-Viking minster. It seems safest to accept that although land attached to secular central places might be alienated in endowments to the church, there is no evidence that major secular central places, when outmoded, were necessarily or invariably transferred to ecclesiastical hands. The strongest evidence is in fact for something rather different on a grander scale – the transfer of the Wicklaw hundreds, or the entire jurisdictional territory centred on Rendlesham as we would argue it, to the abbey of St Edmund at some time before the Conquest. This does not, of course, preclude the possibility that small churches established at secular elite centres – as may have been the case at Rendlesham – might have continued in use and eventually become parish churches.

11.1.5 Settlement hierarchy and Central Place

Although it was the most extensive, and in its time probably the most important, Rendlesham was one of several similar settlement complexes with elite components whose material character, small numbers and locations point to them being the focal places of extensive jurisdictional and economic territories, themselves bundling together antecedent social aggregates and local hegemonies.

As we have already noted, these were new elements of the landscape. They were established at places with existing settlements, but there is no evidence that the antecedent settlements were in themselves invested with a wider significance – rather, they were important because a locally important individual or kindred lived there. We argue that from the later sixth century the new elite complexes were specifically constituted as venues for the practical transactions of rulership and as theatres for its performative aspects: these were places where the delegated functions of jurisdiction, such as agrarian administration and the collection of dues and renders, were exercised, and where the bundle of relationships centred on the person of the ruler were periodically acknowledged and renewed, and his authority enforced and enacted. This aggregation of functions and significances at specific places is best explained by the need to project power, and manage surplus extraction, beyond the immediate heartland of the ruling faction and its social relationships with immediate followers and client groups. As such, these places were the product and expression of social, economic and political relationships specific to the construction of a regional polity, and the subsequent strategies and negotiations whereby rulership was legitimated, consolidated and reproduced. By investing places with these significances, a link was created between territory and lordship.

This is very different from the centralities expressed in the mortuary geography of the fifth and earlier sixth centuries. We have argued that the large cremation cemeteries were focal places for a burial community dispersed across a wider area – the centrality here has to do with performative affirmation of identities and beliefs in common rather than hierarchies of lordship. It seems likely that in the early to middle fifth century such urnfields were physical elements of the strategies of distinction and affiliation by which incoming communities defined themselves and their relationships with indigenous societies. They may have lost this significance in the later fifth century as new Insular identities and socio-political relationships were constructed, consolidated and renegotiated, and new burial practices adopted. Certainly, from the third quarter of the fifth century a far greater number of burial sites is recognisable in the archaeological record, with furnished inhumation the majority practice, each probably serving a single farmstead or group of farms rather than a wider population. There is no evidence of significant hierarchy or functional diversity within this settlement landscape, beyond the indications that some coastal or estuarine locales, such as the Ipswich area and Burnham, were becoming foci for a greater intensity of inter-regional maritime exchange contacts from the middle of the sixth century. This all points to the essentially local scale of any leadership, managed and manageable through direct personal relationships with immediate clients and followers, with any wider personal influence being temporary and periodic.

This changes with the establishment of central places by the ruling elite, and from this point on there is clear evidence for both developing hierarchies and developing diversity in the settlement record. The elite complexes at Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne were clearly at the apex of social, administrative and economic hierarchies. Caistor-by-Norwich, although its elite signature is less emphatic, is comparable. At Barham, though, the evidence suggests a second-order aristocratic establishment – the residence and estate centre of a magnate family – and in north Norfolk it is possible to interpret seventh-century activity at Burnham in the same way. With the granting of holdings to minsters, rulers created over the course of the middle and later seventh century the ecclesiastical equivalent of secular magnate holdings. It may be possible, too, to identify elite centres with a special purpose that were subordinate to the main central places. The evidence for an elite presence at Sutton has been discussed in the context of the Deben territory (Ch 6.2.4). Winfarthing, on the north-west margin of the Hoxne territory, may represent a hunting establishment or, more probably, an estate centre associated with large-scale transhumance animal husbandry, or both. From early in the seventh century, the settlement at Ipswich was a gateway through which access to and by foreign traders was regulated, becoming, towards the end of the seventh century, progressively a place where commercial trade was transacted. Specialised trading places were established or regularised at about the same time at Caistor-by-Norwich and at Burnham.

Thus, over the course of the later sixth and seventh centuries the greater degrees of social and political distance discernible within the elite segments of society were mirrored by the emergence of a settlement hierarchy and greater settlement diversity. Nested lordship and rights to landed resource created foci and centralities – spatial and conceptual – at a range of scales, which might sometimes overlap. A complex such as Rendlesham functioned as a central place for a jurisdictional territory, and a focus for royal rule, but was also a magnate centre with its own estate and dependencies. This was a complex social and tenurial landscape, in which the relationship between free landholders and the regional ruler might be mediated through intermediate tiers of lordship or might – at least in theory – remain direct.

Over the course of the later seventh and eighth centuries an acceleration and consolidation of these trends is apparent. Places such as Burrow Hill, Butley, and Brandon – whether seen as secular or ecclesiastical – are best interpreted as the foci of estates rather than regional central places, and a settlement such as that at Whitehouse, Ipswich, can be seen as the farmstead of a free landholding family or the centre of a small estate. Our contention is that over the course of the seventh and eighth centuries, as a result of the social and political dynamics outlined above, lordship became identified to a greater extent with rights to land as an alienable resource, and that an increasing proportion of the countryside was allocated to territorially defined estate holdings. Rather than the break-up of great royal domains, this represents the reorganisation and formalisation of family, magnate and royal holdings within jurisdictional regions, linked to the emergence and consolidation of a social hierarchy, and precipitated by the projection of royal power through the devolved structures of local lordship, with the additional factor of a new institutional player in the form of the church. We argue that as royal power was consolidated, legal and administrative instruments formalised, and lordship increasingly institutionalised, it became more effective to tax and rule through the distributed network of local estate centres than through a system of regional central places, making the latter redundant. At the same time, changes in the scale and character of international trade meant that the majority of bulk transactions were best handled at coastal and estuarine trading ports rather than at inland elite centres.

Rather surprisingly, in view of conventional narratives that would see a broadly unilinear progression towards centralisation and settlement aggregation in post-Roman Britain, we find regional hegemony in the late sixth and seventh centuries articulated through extensive central place complexes which integrate a range of roles and functions, and which represent substantial settlement aggregations, followed in the early eighth century by a disaggregation of functions across a range of special purpose sites and places, and an abandonment or downsizing of the former extensive settlement complexes. These are expressions of two modes of rulership, and represent thresholds of developing social, economic and jurisdictional complexity towards the end of the sixth century and early in the eighth. As the exercise of royal jurisdiction became administratively more complex and more embedded, it left a more complex but less emphatic signature on the settlement record.

Finally, it is important to recognise the less tangible conceptual and cultural impacts of central places. They would inevitably foster a sense of territorial identity – even if this was sometimes nothing more than a grudging acceptance that communities were required to render dues and services to a particular place. The co-location of different skills, the presence of foreign traders and envoys, the hosting of assemblies and fairs or markets, would all mean that places such as Rendlesham acted as foci for enhanced intellectual and cultural interaction, and so as engines of innovation across a range of practice and thought. This might include stylistic innovations in, for example, metalwork and building traditions (Thomas and Scull 2021, 9–14), but also in the ideological, economic and jurisdictional spheres: Rendlesham was a place of royal baptism, a driver of coin use and monetisation, and in itself a jurisdictional innovation.

11.1.6 Territory and polity

We have sought to identify and investigate the jurisdictional territories associated with early medieval central place complexes through two complementary approaches: the systematic analysis and mapping of the

archaeological material known from a wide area around the sites in question; and critical application of the 'river-and-wold' model (Everitt 1977; Phythian Adams 1987; Fox 1989; Williamson 2013a, 45–51), which has also allowed us to test its validity and refine its applicability. Systematic mapping of medieval and post-medieval land-use data, place-name patterns, and the evidence of Domesday has allowed us to identify areas of relatively open and relatively wooded land – arable cores and grazed peripheries – in the early medieval period, and to confirm the correlation between these and both soils and topography, with open ground corresponding to the principal river valleys and woods and pastures to the interfluves and watersheds. This contrast is confirmed by the analysis of archaeological distributions – both at a detailed local level at Rendlesham, and at wider landscape scales – and appears to have been stronger in the early medieval period than it was in the Roman, when in general there is evidence for a greater intensity of settlement and farming activity on the interfluves (cf Rippon *et al* 2015, 169–81).

The idea that early medieval societies existed within a spatial framework comprising islands or ribbons of well-settled open land, separated by more sparsely inhabited and more wooded terrain, is not new. Our model is closely aligned with the concept of *Siedlungskammer* long employed by Continental researchers, but given a greater topographic emphasis and an enhanced cognitive dimension. In particular, we have adopted aspects of the 'river-and-wold' model which relate to patterns of social interaction and territorial organisation, based on the notion that wooded uplands constituted zones of reduced social interaction and that, over time, social territories tended to approximate to drainage basins. We have accordingly attempted to model the territories associated with late sixth- to early eighth-century elite sites not merely on the basis of topography, but using the patterns displayed by much later administrative units, the hundreds that we first see clearly in the pages of Domesday Book. We have suggested that individual hundreds, or groups of hundreds, nested within the major structures of the topography, may perpetuate in broad terms the jurisdictional territories attached to the late sixth- to early eighth-century elite sites lying within them.

It is important to be clear what is being claimed about these putative territories, and with what degree of confidence. We acknowledge that in East Anglia the pattern of hundreds only came into existence in the tenth century but suggest, in line with much recent scholarship, that it had in part older roots in earlier social territories and administrative regions (eg Brookes 2019; 2020; Scull 2019a). The very close relationship often exhibited between hundred boundaries and major watersheds suggests something early, local and organic rather than a late and arbitrary imposition from outside. This relationship between the location of elite site, topography and the outer boundary of groups of hundreds is particularly compelling in the cases of Rendlesham, Caistor-by-Norwich and Hoxne, and in the relationship between a single large hundred and a putative elite centre in the case of Blythburgh.

While our approach is not without its issues and complexities, it is preferable to models based on arbitrary assumptions or a simplistic characterisation of soil type. For example, Rendlesham seems more at home in the Deben valley, within a territory preserved by the Wicklaw hundreds (their outer boundary picking a long course along the river's watershed to the north), than it does within some more arbitrary 'Sandlings Province', lacking topographic integrity or any later territorial correlate (Carver 2005, 494–7). It is important to emphasise that our model envisages late sixth- and seventh-century jurisdictional territories as spatial expressions of their constituent social aggregates, in turn governed by the long-term relationship between social territories and topography noted above. Spatial demarcation between them may initially have been fluid and more in the nature of border zones than precise linear boundaries, but even when territorial boundaries were crystallised they will not have survived unchanged into the tenth or eleventh century, and – as the case of Coddenham and the Gipping valley territory suggests – quite significant alterations may have been effected, with a number of communities and lands being moved from one side of a boundary line to another. In some areas of East Anglia it is possible that most sections of hundred boundary may be the consequence of administrative decisions made in the two or three centuries preceding Domesday. But to varying degrees all the sites studied here can be plausibly placed within territories corresponding to hundreds or groups of hundreds nested within major valleys and drainage basins.

There are, none the less, theoretical and methodological dangers in applying this approach rigidly or uncritically. It might be argued, for example, that too determinist an adherence to the model might encourage a neglect of evidence for sixth- and seventh-century activity in 'wold' locations, but we do not mean to suggest that the upland wolds were vacant wildernesses – rather, they were zones with their own particular range of activities and meanings. We have noted that the three possible early monastic sites in the Deben region were located peripherally to the arable core, perhaps to be explained by limits to the landed resource that rulers could or were

prepared to alienate in the heartland of their power and support, and we have argued that the elite establishment at Winfarthing, in a 'wold' location on the north-west margins of the putative territory focused on Hoxne, may have been involved in the management of large-scale animal husbandry. That said, the distribution of known sites and artefacts leaves no doubt that most sixth- and seventh-century settlements were located, and most activities occurred, within the principal valleys, close to major watercourses, and that it was here that the major centres of wealth and power were located.

Perhaps a more compelling objection to our approach is that by emphasising the influence on social contact, and thus patterns of territorial development, of valleys and watersheds we largely ignore factors which might have encouraged other patterns of communication and affiliation, independent of topographic structures or cutting across them. Transport by water can, to an extent, be accommodated within the model. Seaborne travel along the coast might create a zone of enhanced interaction and affiliation among maritime-facing communities (Loveluck and Thys 2006), but the funnelling of communication up estuaries and along the lower reaches of rivers would enhance the centrality of major valleys and the marginality of interfluves. Rivers as landscape features and the riverine pattern of settlement and farming, taken with local knowledge of how to get from place to place, would – in an age when the mindset of travel was the itinerary – also act to channel travel along valleys. But roads, especially the surviving Roman roads, frequently cut across the grain of the topography, running over wolds and, arguably, encouraging patterns of contact and affiliation not envisaged in the 'river-and-wold' model. However, in no case in East Anglia does a Roman route appear to have deflected a hundred boundary over a watershed, and in none of our case studies is there evidence that either the elite centre or the wider geography of human settlement and activity correlates with land routes across the grain of the topography. In any case, our broader socio-political model envisages – and indeed depends on – wider social interactions, connections and affiliations. Then, as now, people of all kinds lived their lives within complex, multiple geographies, but the evidence reviewed here strongly suggests the dominance of topography in the structuring of social territories. The approach is not perfect, and it cannot capture all aspects of interaction in the past, but it is certainly a *useful* approach and allows us to model the jurisdictional territories attached to elite centres of the late sixth to early eighth centuries in ways that are also consistent with the evidence for the earlier circumstances of the fifth and sixth centuries, and with subsequent developments in the definition of territorial administration over the course of the ninth to eleventh centuries. It is also clear that where topographic structures were most strongly defined, with clear contrasts between the resources afforded by valleys and uplands, and a pattern of relatively discrete and circumscribed catchments, then the spatial expression of social aggregates conformed most closely to terrain.

This approach allows us to address apparent long-term continuities in aspects of settlement geography from the fourth to the eighth centuries. As we have discussed above, there are clear if complex spatial relationships between the major elite sites discussed in this volume and a range of late Roman urban settlements. In some cases there is also evidence to suggest that there was some understanding of what these settlements had been when place-names were coined in Old English.

Margaret Gelling's *wīchām* names, which combine a Latin and an Old English element, are rare in England as a whole and vanishingly so in East Anglia, with perhaps fewer than a dozen generally accepted examples (Gelling 1978, 67–78). Of these, two – Campsea Ash and Wickham Market – are now attached to settlements and parishes on either side of the river Deben between the Roman small town at Hacheston and Rendlesham, while one – Bulcamp – lies in close proximity to both the extensive Roman settlement at Wenhaston and Blythburgh. To these we might add the name of Wighton, deriving from *wīc-tun*, where the first element *wīc* in close spatial association with the Roman settlement again suggests a familiarity with terms for places employed in late Roman Britain (Gelling 1978, 70; Coates 1999, 107–11).

The 'river-and-wold' model would predict the re-emergence of central places within the same localities, topography and soils influencing long-term concentrations of population and landed productivity as well as accessibility and communication routes. Proximity, therefore, might simply result from the fortuitous re-establishment of a central place at or close to an earlier one after a fifth- and sixth-century hiatus characterised by an absence of significant, permanent centres of power or authority. However, the situation was more complex and contingent than this. At Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne, we argue that the entanglement of state authority and the social power of local landowners was exercised at rural centres in the immediate locality of small town sites, rather than at the towns themselves which may have been in terminal decline, and that these places remained foci of magnate power in the immediate post-Roman period and were subsequently the seats of locally prominent kindreds from

the middle or later fifth century. As such, they were at least as likely as not to be chosen as the places from which a wider authority was exercised when new paramount elites were able to project supra-local and regional hegemony. Their continuing significance as gravitational centres in local geographies of power was an inheritance from late Roman demographics and configurations of authority, albeit heavily renegotiated, but the jurisdictional territories attached to them from the later sixth century arose from the interplay of post-Roman social dynamics and the long-term influence of topography and environment on human geography, rather than from any simple continuity of fourth-century territorial structures.

Something similar might also be proposed for sites in the Stiffkey valley in north Norfolk, but Caistor-by-Norwich offers a different trajectory of development. Although the cremation cemeteries suggest a continuing importance into the fifth century there is little evidence for fifth- and sixth-century occupation in the immediate vicinity of the town. It is possible that the former cantonal capital and its immediate environs were significant as a mortuary focus for much of the fifth and sixth centuries, and that it was re-appropriated as an elite residence and jurisdictional centre in the late sixth or early seventh century – perhaps because there was a consciousness among new elites that a Roman walled town was an appropriate place from which to exercise authority.

These different trajectories support the view that a town such as Caistor, which by the end of the fourth century may have been overwhelmingly a centre of taxation and administration rather than a recognisably urban population centre, was more vulnerable to the collapse of Imperial state structures than rural centres where state authority was entangled with the power of local magnates. Some persistence of such local geographies of exaction and jurisdiction, if not the specific systems and institutions themselves, may to some extent underlie the perception of long-term regional identities which some researchers identify in the archaeology of lowland Britain but which are more challenging to explain (eg Dark 1994; Rippon 2018; 2022). It is clear, however, that there was no regional territorial continuity in the sense of a direct development from *civitas* to kingdom. The fifth century saw political fragmentation with autonomy devolving to local leaders and social aggregates – a process accelerated by the impacts of migration from the North Sea coastal societies of Continental Europe. By the time a new form of regional rulership was established in the later sixth century it was based on a new geography of wealth and power and when, in 630/1, the East Anglian king Sigebert invited Felix to establish his bishopric the site chosen was not – as in the case of Kent – the old *civitas* capital, but almost certainly the Saxon Shore fort at Walton near Felixstowe, the nearest walled Roman site to Rendlesham.

We have avoided using the coinage 'folk territory', being more likely to obscure than assist understanding of the period in question. As most recently formulated ('a district within which communities had a common sense of identity, but which were not owned by an individual or institution': Rippon 2022, xv) it is overly reductive of more complex webs of identities and relationships, and likely to mask complexity in both the synchronic picture and diachronic trajectories of socio-economic development. Further, the implict evocation of the uncommon Old English term *folcland* – whose meaning remains unclear – is anachronistic and unhelpful. Although we argue that topography and environment act to structure human geography and social aggregates, we do not argue that they necessarily dictate in any simple way social relations or links between place and nested social identities. If 'folk territories' in the sense intended, which appears to derive from the idea of an egalitarian society of self-governing free peasant cultivators tilling land in common, did ever exist then it was likely to have been very local in scale, or relatively short-lived, or both, and subject to some form of higher lordship or hegemony – we have seen that there is clear evidence for ranking and leadership even within the relatively flat societies of the later fifth and earlier sixth centuries. The best candidates for such groupings in the archaeology of the region are perhaps the notional burial communities focused on large urnfields of the fifth century, but even here we may only be seeing an expression of some cultural affiliations in common among incoming segments of the population – which may have encompassed people of a range of origins and identities, and whose holdings may have been interleaved with indigenous British farmers and landholders rather than constituting a coherent block of territory. Moreover, differential provision of artefacts and animal remains within cremation practice indicate wealth and status distinctions, as would be expected among people from Continental societies which demonstrably had their own social hierarchies and structures of authority. The territories that we identify looking to central places in the late sixth to early eighth centuries were jurisdictional rationalisations, for the purposes of rulership, of more complex networks of landed rights and social obligations, and within these territories we have been able to identify a number of places or localities that might represent earlier micro-polities or lordships focused on locally prominent individuals or kindreds. The clearest example

of a relationship between group name and administrative territory is Blything hundred, but the group-name **Blīðingas* from which Blything derives – denoting those living in a particular area like the *Pēacsǣte* or *Sumorsǣte* – need not refer to any shared sense of identity but could simply be an externally applied jurisdictional definition based on locality (Baker 2017). It may even be the case that if there ever was a shared sense of identity as people of the Blyth then this may have been sparked or reinforced by jurisdictional designation and the subsequent crystallisation of territorial administration.

For similar reasons we have resisted the temptation to label the late sixth- to early eighth-century territories that we have modelled as *regiones* or 'early shires' (cf Warner 1996, 152–65; Rippon 2022, 49–51). They may have been, or become, both or either; but it is not clear that the baggage and associations carried by the term 'early shire' are appropriate to the period we are dealing with, or that the term *regio* was necessarily specific to the entities that we propose. Some or all may at some point have been considered *regiones* or constituents of *regiones* within the East Anglian *provincia*, but appropriating the term runs the risk of investing heuristic models with a spurious historicity, and of masking complexity and change. We therefore refer to jurisdictional territories as constituent elements of the regional East Anglian kingdom.

11.1.7 Material resources and social relations: acquisition, production, consumption and exchange

We argue that the processes of peer-competition and competitive exclusion that governed increasing social stratification and establishment of supra-local and regional lordship were amplifications of the dynamics and motivations – for example, to social reproduction – that were integral to the unequal social relations embedded in the structures of contemporary societies (eg Scull 2011a). At the highest social levels these were played out, and renegotiated, through networks of ever-increasing reach and over geographies of expanding scale. These were complex social dynamics, the aggregates of individual acts of agency across multiple axes of affiliation and competition at a range of scales. Aspiration, affiliation and status were materialised in a range of ways, but material resources were needed to underpin and consolidate any new advantage or novel configuration of power. The intangible social relationships through which lordship and rulership were articulated relied heavily on reciprocal expectations of material reward or benefit.

There is a pervasive view that control of prestige goods, acquired through quasi-monopolistic control of external exchange contacts by elite factions, was a critical driver of socio-political stratification and kingdom formation in the later sixth and seventh centuries (Ch 1.6.1). However, this is to over-privilege a single element of a far more complex and entangled network of factors, and risks misidentifying what was essentially a materialisation of elite status, and so a product of developing elite identities and social power, as a primary causal element. This is not to deny that material symbols, and social restrictions on access, were important in the construction and reproduction of elite identities and in the articulation of the social relationships of power, but it is possible to identify status objects and modes of material expression linked to social prominence throughout the period of the fifth to eighth centuries. In other words, this was a constant element of societies we are dealing with: changing suites of status items and prestige goods reflected dynamic networks of peer and exchange contacts, both direct and mediated, whose range, reach and geographical focus were the products of cultural and ideological affiliation as well as degrees of developing socio-economic hierarchy.

Similarly, it is difficult to argue convincingly that the inception of regional rulership and kingly power was a result of elite or royal control of commercial trade. Regional hegemony was established and consolidated a century before the upsurge in commercial trade around the North Sea and the flowering of permanent specialised trading places. Rulers had an interest in the revenues generated by regulating trade, and elites benefitted from revenues generated through trade by surpluses from landed holdings, but monopolistic elite control of long-distance exchange cannot explain the emergence of new degrees of social distance, paramount elites, and regional overlordship in the later sixth century. Underpinning any degree of lordship – in the sense of authority over, and a call on, individuals from social groups outside the immediate kindred – must involve a degree of consent, even if initially coerced, the ability to project and back up authority through human resource, and the economic base to sustain this. Fundamental, therefore, was the ability to extract and deploy a landed surplus, and in this sense land was a social as well as a fundamental economic resource.

The social dynamics we have outlined above would act progressively to put a call on a proportion of landed surplus from increasingly large areas, and a call on armed manpower and other human resource, under the control of a smaller number of elite factions and their leaders. In itself, this would not require a significant population increase, or a significant intensification or expansion of farming, to deliver a situation where these elites were able

to deploy landed surplus and human resource on an unprecedented scale. However, as regional elites consolidated their new status, and looked for ways to reproduce and consolidate their new power, new scales and configurations of lordship and landholding would provide opportunities to intensify and expand farming production and this, as well as some population increase, may lie behind the evidence for increasing activity in some upland 'wold' areas from the late seventh and earlier eighth centuries. From the later sixth century we can discern this operating both at the level of regional rulers, extracting surplus and service through central places such as Rendlesham, and at the level of an emergent regional aristocracy through their holdings centred on places such as Barham. It seems likely that the ability of rulers and magnates – secular and ecclesiastical – to dispose of a significant landed surplus was a factor in the development of larger-scale commercial exchange over the course of the later seventh and earlier eighth centuries.

It is important to remember, though, that at no point are we dealing with purely subsistence economies. Immediately post-Roman British societies may have adjusted to the radically changed extraction regime through agricultural abatement, and it has been argued that extreme material poverty and de-skilling accompanied economic disruption attendant upon rupture with Empire (Fleming 2021). It is clear, however, from the production of quoit-brooch-style fittings, that metalworking skills and capacity were not wholly lost (quoit-brooch-style metalwork: Swift 2019), that some silver coinage continued to circulate (clipped *siliquae*: Guest 2005), and that precious-metal coinage could still sometimes be acquired from the Continent (Patching, Oxburgh: Abdy 2006; 2009). Moreover, such disruption is unlikely to have affected in the same way incoming groups from the North Sea Continent, from societies with long-established craft skills and networks of procurement. Similarly, the range of knowledge and skills fundamental to farming and land management was not lost.

Silver-gilt status or elite items of Continental types dating to the middle or third quarter of the fifth century can be explained as arriving with incomers. There is evidence for degrees of social demarcation and distance within the incoming population and migrant communities from the outset, and the example of the fragmentary buckle elements and scabbard fittings from Rendlesham points to elite military identities. As imports, access to such items and the materials from which they were made was through networks of social contact and procurement within the societies of the Continental North Sea coast and south Scandinavia, and it is worth noting here that silver was the predominant precious metal from this time until the later sixth century. It is clear, though, from the material deposited in burials as well as from settlement excavations and metal-detecting that from the third quarter of the fifth century the fundamentally agrarian societies of East Anglia had access to a wide range of raw materials and skills that demonstrate far-reaching procurement networks, the ability to foster and support specialists, and inter-generational transmission of craft traditions and other skills.

Some of these were directly related to farming and the processing of a landed surplus. Textile production is a good example, but we should not make the mistake of equating domestic production with low skill levels or necessarily assuming that production was only for the immediate family and household; and, as with all craft skills, we need to be mindful of the infrastructure of related procurement and expertise – dye stuffs, for example – needed to turn farming produce into cloth and clothing. Iron smithing, like carpentry, is likely to have been represented in most farming communities, but the skills needed to manufacture weapons, for example, are also in evidence. Recycling alone would not supply metal of sufficient quality, and so smelting and a trade in iron must be inferred (Blakelock and McDonnell 2007; Blackmore *et al* 2019, 316). Non-ferrous metalworking shows access to very widespread flows of recycled copper-alloy, as well as to precious metal. Glass and amber beads, glass vessels, elephant ivory and copper-alloy vessels such as *Perlrandbecken*, *Gotlandkesseln* and *Westlandkesseln* were acquired as manufactured items through long-distance exchange. Commodities such as mercury, needed in the gilding of silver and copper-alloy, must also have been acquired through long-distance exchange networks.

What all this illustrates is that the societies of the later fifth and earlier sixth centuries, with relatively flat social structures and a limited capacity to project or sustain lordship beyond the immediate locality, none the less had the capacity to generate a landed surplus, the ability to deploy this, and the capacity both to sustain specialists and to acquire raw materials and finished goods from considerable distances. It is unarguable that to a considerable extent acquisition was entangled with the social networks critical to both biological and social reproduction. It has long been recognised that marriage alliances might explain the presence of imported items of dress jewellery (Harrington 2011), and elite networks were the vectors of distribution for prestige items such as bracteates. Chains of linked local networks could provide indirect contacts across long distances but with the advantage accruing to participants in each transaction remaining essentially local. Precious metal – coin, plate or bullion – might enter the system as subsidy or diplomatic gift from Byzantine rulers to the leaders of societies north of the Alps, and then be passed down the line, but diplomacy, gift-exchange and social transactions cannot alone explain the range and quantity of items and commodities circulating at local, regional and inter-regional scales. Some form of commercial exchange must have existed alongside social exchange networks, and it seems likely that the development of long-distance trading links and the acquisition of imported markers of elite status were intimately connected, and had been for a century or more by the middle or third quarter of the sixth century when the Orwell estuary was becoming a zone of enhanced contacts south-eastwards with Kent and the Merovingian Continent, and we see the first indications of sustained monetary contacts with Merovingian Gaul.

The surplus being traded in return for gold and luxury or prestige goods at this time is unlikely to have comprised bulk cargoes like grain but rather some processed or manufactured goods such as hide or leather, wool, leatherwork or – in particular – woollen cloth. The quality of English cloth, and its importance as an export to the Continent, are not clearly suggested in the documentary record before the later eighth century, when a charter from St Bertin's Abbey refers to the purchase of English cloth, and Charlemagne in a letter to Offa famously complained about the lengths of English cloaks (Whitelock 1979, 848–9, no. 97). But already, in the fifth and earlier sixth centuries, textile production was the principal craft activity attested archaeologically on settlement sites in eastern England and is, indeed, the only form of craft activity, other than metalworking, directly attested at Rendlesham itself. The period from the middle of the sixth century, moreover, saw significant changes in patterns of sheep husbandry in East Anglia, apparently associated with an expansion in wool production (Crabtree 2012, 40–2; Crabtree and Campana 2015; Walton Rogers 2018), and it is possible that cloth of sufficient quality to appeal to Continental consumers was already a significant export from the area. The light soils of the extensive upland 'wolds' to the east of the Deben valley made good grazing for sheep, their use in this way encouraging the progressive degeneration of wood pasture to the open heaths which characterised the landscape by the eleventh century.

As we have seen, changes in material culture and the material expression of elite identities from *c* 570 were linked to a wider realignment of cultural affiliation. Gold was acquired from the Continent as coinage, garnet from Sri Lanka and Afghanistan was acquired through Mediterranean and Continental intermediaries along with material culture items from the Mediterranean world such as Byzantine copper-alloy vessels and silver. At the same time, patterns in the acquisition of lower value items such as glass beads point to closer and more intense exchange contacts across the Channel and North Sea, and hanging bowls show links with north and west British societies. The greater reach of elite contacts, and the intensification of non-elite links, is consistent with the emergence of regional kingdoms whose rulers found themselves dealing with leaders of peer polities, and whose wider spheres of authority would allow those in a position to do so to trade directly with overseas counterparts rather than contacts being mediated through multiple local lordships. One effect of the concentration of landed surplus and human resource in the hands of regional rulers and local magnates would be to stimulate the commercial element of exchange by making available greater quantities of commodities through fewer places and a smaller number of actors – in effect offering enhanced volume and economies of scale. In this respect, as well as being social and jurisdictional foci, central places such as Rendlesham can be seen as engines for transforming landed surplus into portable wealth and human capital.

This is likely to have operated at a number of levels. At base, food renders allowed the maintenance of retainers, retinue and household. Processing in bulk at a collection point would make it an obvious focus for the range of skills and specialisms dependent on or linked to products and by-products of farming – textiles and clothing, bone and horn, hide and leather. In particular, a concentration of materials and activity at a domanial and territorial central place may have enabled the production of high-quality woollen cloth in greater quantities. Economic and jurisdictional centrality would make such places attractive as permanent or semi-permanent bases for skilled metalworkers, many of whose products were co-dependent on these other crafts – buckles for belts and bags, scabbards and hilts for swords and sheaths and handles for knives, metal fittings for shields of wood and hide. The presence of elites and their agents, in whose hands the disposal of surplus ultimately rested, would have made these obvious destinations for Continental traders offering luxuries and coined bullion, and the periodic presence of ruler and household, assemblies, and foreign traders was in turn likely to have fostered markets or periodic fairs, cementing economic central-place functions. The evidence from Rendlesham and Coddenham is that some skilled metalworkers may have been attached to the peripatetic royal household but that in effect they worked primarily at one or other of the elite

residences, and that these may have become centres of production for a wider population.

Thus, in the same way that the jurisdictional functions of places like Rendlesham linked the social relations of rulership at local, regional and inter-regional scales, so these places also acted as foci that integrated local economies with regional and inter-regional exchange networks from the later sixth until the earlier eighth century. The entangling of social, jurisdictional, diplomatic and economic transactions at these places is what made them centres of early coin use and monetary activity. They were not necessarily the only places where inter-regional exchange was transacted, but they were the major foci in the economic landscape.

There were, though, other mechanisms of acquisition and redistribution: raiding and warfare. It is argued that slaves, a product of successful raiding and warfare, were one of the commodities being exchanged out towards the Continent and it is entirely possible, too, that military adventure by individuals and groups, serving in retinues and warbands on the Continent and in Scandinavia, generated both important social alliances and significant wealth. Elements of the Sutton Hoo Mound 1 assemblage may be interpreted in this way (Høilund Nielsen 1999, 198–200), and some Byzantine material in western Europe might have come back with individuals who fought in the Italian wars or with Byzantine armies (Werner 1961b, 321–4; Koch 1980; Drauschke 2007, 70–3). By the late sixth and seventh centuries we have to consider the possibility that diplomatic contacts between eastern English regional rulers and their Merovingian counterparts involved subsidy for political and military support. Raiding and military adventure were factors in fifth-century contacts across the North Sea that culminated in widespread settlement. Thereafter, armed conflict was a dimension of peer-competition, a mechanism through which goods and wealth were redistributed within early English societies, and a recourse that was central both to a leader's ability to reward an armed following and to the ideological underpinning of warrior identities and obligations (Campbell 1979a, 7–10). Over the course of the later sixth and seventh centuries, increasing trade may in turn have fuelled peer rivalries, with attempts to dominate neighbouring territories further motivated by the need to acquire direct access to Continental trading networks or to obtain, through tribute, the kinds of commodities with which gold and luxury imports could be obtained. The former may go some way towards explaining the clashes between Mercian and East Anglian rulers in the middle of the seventh and the later eighth centuries, the land-locked Mercians seeking access to North Sea and Channel maritime networks.

Our evidence is that Rendlesham and the other major central place complexes finally lost their special economic character in the second quarter of the eighth century, probably in the 730s. We argue that their jurisdictional functions, including taxation and surplus extraction, were distributed across other places, and that the increasing volume of bulk trade led to commercial transactions and shipments being handled at specialist coastal and riverine trading places – primarily Ipswich, but with other centres such as Caistor-by-Norwich and Burnham. An increasing territorialisation of lordship over the course of the seventh century, with domanial production and elite extraction of surplus on a regional scale, will have afforded magnates – or, more probably, those who administered and managed their holdings for them – to increase landed productivity through rationalisation and intensification, fuelling the volume of trade. By the early eighth century, the evidence is suggestive of an increasing population and greater economic exploitation of previously marginal upland areas. At the same time, the increasingly widespread use of money – especially after the switch to a silver coinage – opened access to developing market networks for smaller producers lower down the socio-economic scale, and to craft manufacturers. Greater economic complexity, with bulk commercial activity transacted at specialist trading and manufacturing centres, and wide access to monetised market networks at most levels of the social and settlement hierarchies, rendered regional central place complexes such as Rendlesham economically as well as jurisdictionally redundant.

11.1.7.1 Coin use and production in East Anglia c 550–800

Andrew Woods

The following draws upon the numismatic analysis elsewhere in this volume as well as an East Anglian-wide study published elsewhere (Woods 2021). Rather than following the numismatic subdivisions utilised above it articulates patterns in production and use which cut across these periods.

550 to 640

Coin use in East Anglia in the middle to late sixth century was geographically restricted to coastal areas and to a handful of unusual inland sites in Suffolk, most notably Rendlesham and Coddenham (Woods 2021; Ch 9.1). These sites were unique within East Anglia and, as Moorhead has shown with reference to the Byzantine

coinage, southern Suffolk was highly unusual across Britain as a whole (Moorhead forthcoming). These coins all came from overseas, most via a western route from southern and western Francia (Ch 5.4.3), and copper Byzantine coinage suggests direct contact with the Mediterranean world. In the opening decades of the seventh century there was a shift to an eastern route for coinage, focused increasingly upon Francia and less upon the Mediterranean world beyond. Coinage can be viewed alongside other high-status materials as evidence for long-distance elite-focused exchange.

The circulation of these coins was socially restricted, and their occurrence at a handful of places at the apex of the settlement hierarchy is evidence for elite or royal connections. At Rendlesham, coin finds were not restricted to the core of permanent occupation but were widespread across the whole area of the settlement complex (Ch 5.4.1). Periodic assemblies, with some attendees from overseas, are the likely context for much of this coin use and coin loss. Those attending used coinage at Rendlesham but not elsewhere (Chs 9.6 and 9.7.1). This would suggest that coin use was associated with a restricted range of activities transacted within elite social spheres and at special places, and likely to be focused on the regional rulers, their kindred and clients.

640 to 680

From *c* 640 networks of coin circulation became progressively more regular and regionalised, with coinage increasingly coming from north-east Francia and the Low Countries. There is little to suggest a continued monetary connection to the Mediterranean world. Continental currency was supplemented by coins struck in southern Suffolk. The raw materials for this East Anglian pale gold coinage and its silver successors can only have been the Continental coinage which made up the remainder of the circulating currency. In Suffolk, a significant proportion of these Continental coins was melted down and turned into English coins, something which did not occur in Norfolk (Woods 2021).

These gold shillings were not struck at a single permanent mint site. Naismith (2019) has argued for peripatetic production in this early phase when the scale of coinages was relatively small, and the distribution patterns of the coinage strongly suggests that coinage was struck at Rendlesham, Coddenham and Hoxne in this period (Woods 2021). The striking of coinage at these places indicates that coin production was linked with elite secular power in East Anglia, in contrast to some other areas where the church appears to have had a significant role (Abramson 2019; Naismith 2019, 425).

The precise mechanisms by which Continental currency was re-issued as East Anglian coinage are uncertain, but it is highly likely that reminting involved profit-taking by both the issuing authority and the moneyer, and that a degree of compulsion was involved. Given the evidence for production at elite or royal centres, it seems likely that transactions with the king or his agents was the driver. There may have been a requirement that payments to or under royal authority – taxes, rents, fines or similar – were to be paid in the king's own currency (cf Naismith 2014). The king may also have initiated issues of coinage for distribution to others, as gifts or alms for example.

During this period the use of coinage became progressively more common and more widespread in East Anglia, and can be seen for the first time at places and in areas other than those which were centres of the earliest coin use (Chs 9.6 and 10.2). The changing scale of coin use is often associated with the inception of silver coinage from the 660s but can now be seen as beginning a decade or two earlier. This pattern is broadly applicable across all of East Anglia but Suffolk remained very much at the heart of coin use, with Norfolk much less significant in this period (Woods 2021). Coinage was increasingly being used for a wider range of transactions outside a narrow royal or elite sphere, and the adoption of coin use across a much wider social segment can be seen in the changing provision of coins as grave goods in furnished inhumations (Scull and Naylor 2016).

680 to 730

In the period *c* 680 to *c* 730 East Anglia's inter-regional exchange networks were focused on the near Continent and southern England. This is reflected in a well-circulated silver coinage which is drawn from the Low Countries and south-east England, with an increasing – if minority – component of East Anglian issues. Coin finds are much more widely spread across East Anglia than in previous periods, with Norfolk becoming steadily more prominent in the finds record (Woods 2021). Southern Suffolk dominates evidence for the use of coinage in earlier periods but this is not so from the late seventh century onwards. There is a corresponding shift in the evidence for production which suggests that coinage was being struck in Norfolk in the decades around 700. This suggests a reorientation not only of monetary and economic networks, but also of the royal or elite authority that sanctioned the issuing of coinage.

Across East Anglia, and within each of our study areas, the impression is of a significant growth in coin use. Areas and sites with no previous evidence for coin

use produce finds indicative of coin use in this period, and these are often some distance from previous centres of coin use, implying that coinage was used by more people at a greater range of places for a widening range of transactions.

730 to 750

Around 730 major shifts are apparent in both the production and use of coinage, suggesting a much more active role for royal authority than in the immediately preceding period. East Anglian coins became the dominant currency of the kingdom and appear to have been struck at a number of mint sites, perhaps four or five, across the kingdom using a relatively defined iconography that differentiated them from the coinages of other English kingdoms (Woods 2021). The coins were struck using a debased metal standard and it seems likely that their value is to be associated with guarantee by the issuing authority, presumably King Ælfwald, rather than the intrinsic bullion value.

The pool of currency circulating within East Anglia was dominated by these locally struck coinages, with those from other parts of England and the Low Countries making up only a minority component (Ch 5.4.3). It seems likely that coinage from outside the kingdom was excluded, with East Anglian types mandated for use. This is consistent with the pattern of coin finds which shows the East Anglian-struck types circulating almost exclusively within the kingdom.

The debased coinages of this period are found widely across East Anglia. In Norfolk, the distribution mirrors that of coinage of the early decades of the eighth century (Ch 10.2–3). In Suffolk, the emergence of Ipswich as a major commercial centre coincides with a realignment in the distribution of evidence for coin use (Woods 2021; Ch 9.3). The largest part of this coinage was struck at Ipswich and the distribution of finds across southern Suffolk suggests that Ipswich became a centre for monetary transactions at the expense of other places. Monetary activity at Rendlesham and Coddenham dwindled as activity at Ipswich expanded.

750 to 800

From *c* 750 the coinage of East Anglia differs significantly from that which came before. Under King Beonna, the form, weight and fineness of the currency was altered. How rapidly the change was effected is unclear and although it is usually assumed that it was accompanied by a demonetisation of older, debased early pennies the evidence is partial at best. It is, however, clear that coinage under Beonna and later under Offa became more overtly royal in its iconography, particularly in naming the king on the obverse (Naismith 2012b). These coins were larger, struck in smaller numbers in finer silver, and with sometimes elaborate iconography. This suggests a coinage with a greater political and propagandist function, discernible in the issues of Beonna but more readily apparent under Offa.

There are fewer coins than in preceding periods (Ch 5.4.2) and both the number of finds and the number of findspots decrease markedly. There appear to have been fewer coins, struck in good silver rather than the alloys with less than 10 per cent silver typical of the early pennies of the 740s. The regional distribution of finds also changes, with coins more common in inland areas, and focused on west Suffolk (Woods 2021), and in the hinterland of Ipswich there is an increase in coin finds in the upper Gipping valley (Ch 9.3). This is in clear contrast to earlier eighth-century patterns and suggests a reorientation of economic networks towards the west. This trend begins with the coinage of Beonna, and it is explicable as a result of entangled economic and political engagement with Mercia and its culmination in formal Mercian overlordship under Offa from 793.

Summary and conclusions

The use of coinage expanded dramatically between 600 and 750. Highly unusual in most of East Anglia in the sixth century, it became more widely available and used in the century and a half which followed. Coin use appears to have peaked in the 730s and 740s, with type RS, in particular, found in a large number of parishes across East Anglia giving the impression of a widely dispersed and extensively used coinage. This chronological pattern is not unique to East Anglia but is mirrored across much of England (Blackburn 2003; Naismith 2013b). The general trend – from a small number of coins in a few special places to large numbers of coins in many places – is clear, but given the chronological resolution of the evidence it is not possible to say whether it represents a gradual, steady progression or a more episodic trajectory with fits and starts.

The evidence suggests that the expansion of coin use was driven by bottom-up demand rather than any form of top-down imposition. At most times from the middle of the seventh century onwards the demand for coinage appears to have outstripped its availability, with coinage consistently drawn into the region, and indeed south-east England more generally, from overseas (cf Metcalf 2014a). Bullion supply was the major limiting factor, with coins being struck from poorer alloys and to lower weight standards in order to issue larger volumes of currency from limited supplies of precious metal. The exploitation of new supplies of silver in the middle seventh century helped prompt the switch from pale gold to silver currency (Loveluck *et al* 2018), and copper alloys were added to eke out silver in the eighth century.

The coin finds indicate significant shifts in networks of contact and exchange. The small number of early finds, found only at a small number of East Anglian sites, indicate long-distance exchange contacts and ultimately connections with the Mediterranean world. The main axes of these networks shift initially to Francia in the early seventh century and then to the Low Countries in the middle of the seventh century. Exchange contacts with other areas of England become increasingly evident in the coin finds of the seventh and eighth centuries and some variations within the region are apparent, with north Norfolk having stronger connections to Lincolnshire and central England (Ch 10.3), and southern Suffolk closer links to Kent and the south-east (Ch 5.4). By the late seventh century, however, the overall impression is of a well-circulated pool of currency at most places. There was a major reorientation of monetary and exchange networks in the middle of the eighth century with overseas exchange increasingly difficult to detect in the coin record and a greater focus on inland and western areas. This probably reflects changing political circumstances and in particular the growth of Mercian power.

In the late sixth and early seventh centuries coinage arrived in East Anglia as a part of a suite of material culture associated with long-distance elite exchange. It was used primarily at royal or elite sites by those engaging in transactions with members of the ruling elite and their agents. The striking of coinage in Suffolk in the middle seventh century may have been prompted by a concern to exploit and formalise control of such transactions through a requirement that they be paid in the king's own coinage. At the same time, however, coin use was expanding to enable monetary transactions between other actors in economic spheres independent of royal authority – between other members of the elite in the middle of the seventh century, and amongst an ever greater range of people from the late seventh century onwards. The relatively small numbers of coins struck in East Anglia between 680 and 730, as a proportion of the circulating coinage, might provide a proxy for the scale of monetary transactions directly involving royal authority. If so, it would suggest that such transactions played a progressively less important role within the wider monetary economy with commercial exchange at all levels of society driving the increasing levels of coin use.

This changed *c* 730 when there appears to have been an attempt under King Ælfwald to prescribe the use of local currency for a far greater range of – conceivably all – monetary transactions in the kingdom. Mandating the use of East Anglian currency for 'private' as well as 'public' transactions represents a step change in the East Anglian rulers' approach to the control of coinage and can be seen as prefiguring the more overtly political coinages of Beonna and Offa later in the eighth century. Both coinages include the name of the king and raise the weight and silver standards. This allowed for a hugely impressive array of imagery to be deployed but ultimately meant that there were far fewer coins struck and available to be used, as is reflected in the huge contraction in the number of coin finds.

11.1.8 Vectors of power: lordship and hegemony

There was a major rupture in patterns of authority and rule in the first half of the fifth century, consequent on the withdrawal of the field army and with it the ability to enforce patterns and practices of government, administration, landholding and taxation based on state authority, military force and Roman law. The greatest impacts were felt by those most closely aligned with or dependent on Roman military and civil structures, and we have argued that local leadership devolved to rural landholders – whether the senatorial aristocracy or curial classes drawn from cantonal aristocracies – or their agents, and to the leaders of any garrison troops. Landholders may have appropriated rights of taxation, but their position would also depend on existing social ties and relationships, unfree labour, and rents due from tenants. If these could be maintained, and armed force collected for defence, coercion or aggression, it is possible to envisage how the basis for autonomous leadership of local social groups might be established.

Breakdown of the state taxation system should, in principle, have lessened the burden on agricultural producers and allowed tenant farmers and small farmers owning their own land to retain more of their own produce (Esmonde Cleary 1989, 145). Private taxation exacted by local elites may have supported retainers but is unlikely to have been sustained at the level of Roman taxes in kind, if only because without the army and state institutions to support there was a limit to what could be done with an agricultural surplus (cf Gerrard 2013, 100–1). We see this as prompting a degree of abatement in agricultural production and a greater emphasis on animal husbandry, and it can be argued that loosening the cycle of surplus extraction would allow peasant

farmers greater freedom and autonomy. Progressive failure to observe legal restrictions on occupational and personal mobility, and – presumably – their eventual abandonment, would also have acted to this end. Some landowners may have found themselves unable to consolidate or even enforce authority without the backing of the Roman state, and some tenants may have banded together to declare autonomy or put themselves under the protection of neighbouring leaders who had been able to better establish themselves in local power games. It is possible to envisage myriad specific circumstances in which individuals, kindreds and communities might establish greater autonomy, and others in which individuals and families at all levels of society may have lost autonomy. The trend, though, was towards a changing environment for landed power in which the emphasis for probably a majority of the rural population shifted from bound tenancy on a magnate estate, legally enforced through state structures and coercion, to one in which personal relationships, however unequal, assumed greater significance and the peasant farmer gained heritable interests in land and landed resource.

Into this world of changing social and economic relations came incomers from the societies of the Continental North Sea coastal zone, with their own structures of affiliation and authority. The processes of settlement and accommodation were complex, but it is impossible to pretend that they did not include violence, usurpation of the position of indigenous leaders or elites, and land-taking that may have reduced cultivators to unfree or semi-free labourers on what had been their own holdings, any and all of which would set up further axes of unequal social relations alongside those already existing within and between indigenous and incoming societies.

There are further aspects of migration and settlement in the early to middle fifth century that are relevant to subsequent dynamics of power. We have already mentioned 'first comer' status and military leadership as engendering inequality and relationships of power amongst incoming groups, and the ability to deploy armed force must have been a factor in the consolidation of magnate power in post-Roman indigenous societies. Raiding and military adventure leading to conquest and settlement need to be seen in the context of the politically fissile tendencies of North Sea coastal societies that had lost the outlet for military service with the Empire and the networks of exchange with the Empire that underpinned their own internal social relations. Britain and the North Sea littoral represented a new arena, and – as discussed above (11.1.3) in the context of land as a social resource – social reproduction and the maintenance of birth status were strong motivations for individuals to attach themselves to the faction of successful warrior or leader, and for leaders to compete in attracting and retaining followers. Relevant here is the institution of the retinue, which formalised the relationship of lord to retainer while simultaneously imposing the obligation to reward followers and providing the means to do this through conflict and expropriation. It may be relevant, in explaining why regional power in England was eventually taken by kindreds which stressed Germanic ancestry, that incoming societies may have been better organised for conflict than post-Roman societies of eastern Britain, among whom bearing weapons had been illegal under the Roman state and which had been largely stripped of specialist military force and expertise. But against this, client relationships were a feature of late Roman society, and fifth-century British leaders are unlikely to have been unfamiliar with the idea of an armed retinue (Winterbottom 1978, 29). We should also recognise that it was very likely in the self-interests of communities and groups of communities, in fluid and fragmented political circumstances, to organise for defence, or to affiliate with a local ruler or leader, or both.

Such factors, as elements of the broader social dynamics already discussed, contributed to the establishment and consolidation of overlordship across what is now Norfolk and Suffolk by a single dynasty by the late sixth century. This was not, however, an integrated territorial entity, but rather an acknowledgement by local elites of paramount rulership which may have ranged from tight control, domanial holdings and a client aristocracy to near nominal recognition of overlordship by semi-autonomous potentates. It is therefore justifiable to consider the early East Anglian kingdom a regional hegemony, constituted of nested relationships of lordship and overlordship, each with their own social and territorial dimensions. This is reflected in the evidence for periodic joint or shared kingship in both the seventh and eighth centuries, and in the first half and middle of the seventh century this could be interpreted as the ruling kindred's response to fissile tendencies among formerly autonomous constituent groupings – the senior partner exercising devolved rulership through a sibling or close member of royal kindred on the spot.

We argue that the establishment of local dominance or lordship by a leading individual or kindred was fundamentally an amplification of existing social dynamics, and that up to a point it could be accommodated within existing social structures and geographies of economy and settlement. However, with the scaling-up of obligations and exactions embedded in the reciprocal social relations of lordship, and their replication across multiple relationships centred on the person of the ruler, new jurisdictional arrangements were needed and developed to project authority, and to collect surplus and tribute. This is what lay behind the establishment of elite complexes at places of earlier importance in the later sixth and earlier seventh centuries, and this novel articulation of rulership and surplus extraction on a new scale should be seen as marking a step change in the territorialisation of authority that – through the linkage of obligations to a specific place, and surplus extraction to tiers of lordship – also promoted the formalisation of rights in landed resource. Given the new scale of relationships and resource management, this is also likely to have required the development of new administrative roles and structures, which would very probably have grown from roles familiar in the management of the household, farm and estate – providing, at the higher levels, outlets other than military service for clients and retainers, and perhaps even regional aristocrats. Such arrangements would be replicated, at smaller scales, through the holdings of regional magnates and aristocrats, but this model of tiered lordship also envisages some free landowners farming familial holdings who – theoretically at least – owed no obligation to anyone other than the king.

The economics of regional hegemony, as established by the end of the sixth century, were founded on the acknowledged right of kings as overlords to exact renders and services, directly or through a range of intermediaries. At the same time, kings – like magnates and other landholders – could exact surplus directly from their personal or ancestral holdings, the difference being that unlike other magnates and landholders, kings did not feed royal exactions up through the tiers of lordship. Although the precise mechanisms are not documented, it seems likely that the practice of commuting some renders in kind to monetary payments became increasingly common over the course of the seventh century, and this may in part underlie both early monetary use at major central places and the expansion of monetary activity after the switch to a silver coinage. It is also likely that, alongside an increasing formalisation of landed rights and territorial jurisdiction, rulers progressively developed service and labour obligations. Surviving texts give good reasons for thinking that by the eighth century rulers levied land tax in silver on arable land (geld), labour tax calculated in man-days on arable land tax units, and transit taxes and tolls (Maitland 1897, 156–64, 235–6, 294–5; Stenton 1971, 287–92; Brooks 1971; Abels 1988, 146–8; Kelly 1992; Faith 1997, 94–116; Williams, A 1999, 32–48; Middleton 2005). It is in this context, probably during the reign of Ælfwald (713–49), that we envisage construction of the Devil's Dyke in Cambridgeshire as the major western boundary work of the East Anglian kingdom (Ch 8.3.3).

A new element in the seventh century was the church. As an institution outside the traditional structures of society, it offered ideological sanction and support for the new regional kings and dynasties, but introduced potentially disruptive alternative networks of affiliation to those of secular lordship. As an institution outside kinship structures it was also able to build up and maintain property portfolios unaffected – in theory – by the dynamics of descent and inheritance. The tensions generated by this during the seventh and eighth centuries are well known, and it is clear that some elite individuals and families, and indeed rulers, saw church institutions as avenues for personal aggrandisement or for the advancement of the interests of family and kin (Brooks 1971; Blair 2005, 92–8; 100–8; Yorke 2006, 182–8). It is likely that in the East Anglian province there were the same tensions between kings and holders of land granted by charter that are recorded for Northumbria (Grocock and Wood 2013, 123–31) and Mercia (Brooks 1971). It is possible that some of the changes in royal administration that we have detected for the reign of King Ælfwald involved compromises over royal and ecclesiastical rights in land comparable to those recorded at the synod of Gumley (749) in Mercia during the reign of his contemporary, and possible ally, Æthelbald. In the absence of any surviving charters we do not know the extent of monastic or episcopal holdings (or, indeed, secular holdings) during the seventh and eighth centuries, nor how they developed. This does, though, have the benefit of freeing us from biases inherent in reliance on ecclesiastical records, and so for the purposes of our study – while acknowledging genuine piety and the specifics of monastic and ecclesiastical provision – we consider bishops, abbots and minsters as magnates and magnate institutions equivalent to secular lords and landholders.

From the second quarter of the eighth century, if not before, regional rulership was exercised through a more complex network of local centres and special purpose places. We must envisage devolved administration through royal officials (including the port reeves of the major trading settlement at Ipswich); taxation rendered in coin where it was not required in kind as food rents; the establishment of smaller proto-manorial estates alongside larger domains, overlordship of which might be held multiply by the king or great magnates; and the

development of a market in land (Naismith 2013a). The extent to which this was impacted by Scandinavian settlement and rule is unclear, although there is evidence that the so-called St Edmund memorial coinage indicates a fragmentation of political authority within East Anglia during the late ninth and early tenth centuries (Porter 2021), and there is the further complication of what adjustments might have been made after the submission to West Saxon authority in the tenth century. But in any case we should not overstate the extent to which East Anglia became a society dominated by local lords, controlling manorial estates occupied by a servile or semi-servile class. Even in the later eleventh century, to judge from the evidence of Domesday Book, nearly 40 per cent of the peasant population were classed as socmen or free men, owing little in the way of manorial obligations, farming on their own account and with at most a handful of tenants and, in the case of free men certainly, with liberty to alienate their land (Darby 1972).

Following Faith (1997, 4), we have adopted the term 'extensive lordship' to denote political authority buttressed by a 'complex of rights to services and renders from the people of a given territory'. It has at heart a call on the resources of others who owe acknowledged service as well as a direct call on the ruler's own landed resource. The idea was formulated with respect to medieval Scotland (Barrow 1973, 25), but none the less usefully characterises the fundamental social and economic relationships of rulership in seventh- to ninth-century England, to which the term is now commonly applied (Faith 1997; Blair 2018, 4–5). The projection and consolidation of regional hegemony put in place configurations of extensive lordship across the East Anglian province by the later sixth century and, given the long-term social and political dynamics of peer-competition and competitive exclusion, formulations of authority that would meet the definition were almost certainly exercised more locally and impermanently as early as the later fifth or earlier sixth century. However, although we can accurately characterise the exercise of authority from the late sixth to the end of the eighth centuries as extensive lordship, this period – as we have shown – saw considerable social, economic and political change. We argue that the jurisdictional territories focused on central places such as Rendlesham were initially defined primarily by rights over social groups and aggregates, but that increasingly they came to be defined by the land that these groups occupied. By the early eighth century the proliferation of defined landed holdings each with their own central settlement, the concurrent formalisation of services and renders and their increasing linkage to landholdings, and the major changes in monetary usage and patterns of commerce, made the territorial central place complexes redundant and prompted a reconfiguration of administrative geographies. Faith's specific model of extensive lordship in early medieval England is based largely on sources bearing on the period after this major shift. From this we have to allow that, as a general model, extensive lordship can embrace different modes and developmental trajectories which could be exercised through different economic and administrative geographies.

11.2 Building a kingdom: the East Anglian polity to AD 800

By the middle of the fifth century, eastern Britain had undergone a fragmentation of political authority, with power devolving to magnates and local military leaders, and these societies faced substantial settlement by people from the Continental North Sea littoral. Given the very different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, there is likely to have been a clear sense of different identities between indigenous communities and incomers, but it would be a mistake to over-emphasise some simple ethnic fault line between indigene and incomer: the latter were from a range of parent societies, and the material evidence points to a range of group identities. The conventional narrative of migration and settlement derived from Gildas envisages incoming war leaders working initially for indigenous potentates before establishing autonomous power, and depending on local circumstances we should envisage competition, alliances and conflicts between local leaders, kindreds and social groupings across ethnic and cultural boundaries.

Initially, the arena for such activity would have been post-Roman British societies but as links with the embattled Western Empire diminished and attenuated so generations grew up who had no direct memory of life within the Empire. At the same time, links of contact and mobility across the North Sea brought increasing numbers of settlers and shifted the gravity of cultural affiliation towards the North Sea world, and the new Insular identities that can be discerned in the archaeological record from the third quarter of the fifth century were clearly rooted in, and derived from, parent societies in Scandinavia and North Sea coastal areas outside the former boundaries of the Roman Empire. This is hardly surprising: the cultural identities and practices of first generation settlers would be renegotiated and moderated by experience and circumstance when transmitted to the second and third generations, but this would happen in the context of continuing intense contact and communication across and around the North Sea. By contrast, key aspects of cultural identity and the socio-political legitimacy of indigenous British leaders would have derived from elements of a Roman state that no longer existed and was shifting across the threshold from memory to tradition. Even if we take the lower end of the likely scale of settlement across the North Sea, individuals of indigenous descent were likely to constitute a decreasing proportion of the population. This is not to advocate total population replacement. We have already noted that it is entirely possible that some seventh-century elite families may have been of Romano-British descent, and the inclusion of Caesar as well as Woden in the East Anglian genealogy can be taken to reflect a later consciousness of some need to legitimise authority over people of Romano-British descent (although an alternative reading would be a co-option of Roman authority to give secular rulership an equivalent legitimacy to that of the Roman church). But it would explain why the broader cultural identities signalled by the later fifth- and sixth-century population, and the materialisation of elite identities from the fifth to the seventh centuries, were so clearly embedded in the non-Roman North Sea and Merovingian worlds. In this respect, East Anglia was no different to most of lowland eastern Britain.

We can identity early centres of power and influence that later became major central places – notably Rendlesham and Coddenham – where the power of kindreds of North Continental descent may have been based on the conquest or takeover of post-Roman British magnate polities which in turn were rooted in part on the extractive and tax regimes of the late Roman state. It is also possible to postulate areas which may have seen intense early settlement and where large cremation cemeteries may have acted as burial foci for incoming population groups. Significantly, Rendlesham may have been both an early power centre and an area of early colonisation. At Caistor-by-Norwich there were major cremation cemeteries in the immediate vicinity of the cantonal capital but there is only limited evidence that the place retained any importance as a power centre into the later fifth or sixth centuries. The early cremation cemeteries at Eye and Walsingham also suggest significant early settlement in the locality of important late or immediately post-Roman settlements, but given the density and distribution of population and settlement in the fourth century, and the physical constraints on settlement and farming imposed by topography and terrain, proximity is to be expected and may not be significant. The evidence of our case studies is that the first half of the fifth century saw very significant reconfigurations of settlement pattern within the frameworks afforded by favourable topography and soils and the inertial pulls of inherited practice and cognitive landscape.

Beyond our case studies, there are a number of large cremation cemeteries that may be seen as archaeological proxies of early social aggregates. Lackford, *c* 750m south-west of the extensive late Roman settlement at Icklingham in the Lark valley, lies within a dense late Roman and early medieval settlement landscape (Lethbridge 1951; West and Plouviez 1976). In Norfolk, Spong Hill, North Elmham, is just under 3km west of the Roman roadside settlement at Lodge Field, Billingford (Chester-Kadwell 2013), but Illington is not associated with any significant late Roman settlement (Davison *et al* 1993, 2–4; figs 3–4) and neither is Castle Acre. If these are to be seen as indicative of fifth-century social groupings, then when taken with our case studies they indicate new configurations of settlement geography and social aggregates, some elements of which in some places were clearly structured by those of the late fourth and early fifth centuries, others of which are very different. It is worth considering briefly here the paucity of diagnostic fifth- to seventh-century material from Flegg in east Norfolk and the Blyth valley in north-east Suffolk. It is possible that Flegg was a sparsely inhabited grazing area prior to the ninth century (Williamson 1993, 91), but it seems unlikely that the Blyth catchment was sparsely populated, given the extensive Romano-British settlement at Wenhaston and the evidence for Blythburgh as a significant centre in the seventh and eighth centuries. This may well simply be an archaeological retrieval bias, but the possibility has to be considered that the apparent absence of evidence represents a past cultural reality, and that a substantial proportion of the population in these areas – and in particular social leaders or influential kindreds – retained into the later sixth century some sense of a post-Roman British cultural identity which, as with contemporary British societies in western Britain, were expressed through different burial practices and female dress fashions.

From this mosaic of leadership and social aggregates, local and supra-local lordships were established through the interactions and dynamics discussed above, and we have considered in detail how these may have played out in our study areas. A supra-local hegemony or polity may have been established in south-east Suffolk in the middle of the sixth century, perhaps with a faction based in the Gipping valley, a power centre at Coddenham initially being the more powerful, but with the Deben faction emerging as dominant. By the third quarter of the sixth

century we can envisage a local polity with its core area in the Deben, central places at Rendlesham and Coddenham, and an emerging focus of trading contacts across the Channel and North Sea at the head of the Orwell estuary. In north Norfolk, it is possible to identify a similar emerging polity across more than one catchment with its focus of power in the Stiffkey valley and a trading place at Burnham. In our other case studies, we are able to argue that a single kindred or faction was able to establish lordship over previously autonomous social groups within a single catchment territory. We envisage that these were the cores or constituents of wider groupings or affiliations, even if impermanent, but have been unable to test the proposition because to look at the entire landscape of Norfolk and Suffolk in detail was beyond our scope and resources. Hoxne, for example, may have been the centre of an autonomous lordship until the later sixth century, but metalwork links indicate that it was within the same social and economic networks as Coddenham in the late fifth or sixth century, and that in the late sixth or early seventh century its elite inhabitants had access to the same metalworkers as the kindred burying at Sutton Hoo (Ch 10.1.1.2). We would envisage similar structures in north-east Suffolk and east Norfolk, in west Norfolk, and in north-west Suffolk in the catchment of the Lark valley and along the fen edge. In central Norfolk, the cemetery at Spong Hill, North Elmham, may offer insights into an early social aggregate and its emerging leadership. The urnfield can be seen as a focal place for a dispersed rural population that over the course of the fifth century developed a local group identity. The establishment of the inhumation cemetery in the late fifth or early sixth century can be read as a strategy of distinction by a leading kindred who may – judging by a curated Sjörup-style scabbard fitting in a weapon burial of the early to mid-sixth century – have claimed Scandinavian ancestry or affiliation. The inhumation cemetery may have been in use though for as little as two or three generations, and the latest burials include richly furnished inhumations in chambers within barrow ditches – one of which, Inhumation 40, is the weapon grave with the Sjörup-style fitting (Hills *et al* 1984, 91–4, figs 95–7; Penn and Brugmann 2007, 42–71; Hines and Bayliss 2013, e-figs 6.6, 7.3). One possible explanation is that this was a locally prominent group who were the losers in warfare, and that the abandonment of the inhumation cemetery represents the liquidation of a local ruling kindred by rivals and the subjugation of local autonomy. An alternative might be that this community or lineage was seriously affected by the climate event of AD 536 and its aftermath, or the plague pandemic, or both – bringing stresses that may have led to economic and political dependency on a neighbouring group.

An important corollary of all this is that societies of the late fifth to middle sixth centuries were more sophisticated, and had a greater capacity for political integration, than has been allowed in the past. Power at this time may have been essentially local, and rooted in local social relations and farming capacity, but it was exercised within wide-reaching social networks of affiliation and distinction, and networks of acquisition and exchange, that might be manipulated for social advantage. We have seen how, throughout the period we are dealing with, differential access to skills as well as to commodities and imported luxuries might be used both to procure advantage and to articulate social relationships of lordship. It is also likely that the leaders of dominant lineages bolstered their position, and assured their succession, both by selectively rewarding members of their own group with sequestrated land or rights to landed resource and by allowing leading members of subordinate groups to retain a proportion of dues owed. The permanence, and the authority, of such minor local lords may also have been gradually bolstered over time by the development of debt obligations, as members of subordinate lineages, afflicted by the kinds of random misfortune – harvest failure, animal disease – to which agricultural communities are prone, found it impossible to meet their customary obligations or provide for dependents. We have discussed above how pressure on land as a social resource might propel individuals into client : lord relationships or motivate individuals to join a warband or retinue. This is a reminder that the vicissitudes of ordinary life could also have similar effects, and that under such conditions the subordinate would probably be more vulnerable.

The archaeology is broadly consistent with what can be gleaned from later traditions enshrined in the written sources, that a single kindred – the Wuffings – was able to claim kingship and regional hegemony from some time in the last two decades of the sixth century (Ch 8.2). There has long been an implicit consensus that the ancestral holdings of the Wuffings, and their initial power base, were located in south-east Suffolk – largely because of Bede's mention of Rendlesham as a royal centre, and the superstructure of speculative interpretation built up around the identification of Sutton Hoo Mound 1 as the burial of King Rædwald (Scull 2019b, 128–9). However, it can be argued that early East Anglian kingship and the early East Anglian kingdom have too often been viewed through the distorting lens of Sutton Hoo. We have shown that Rendlesham was only one of a number of archaeologically identified centres of royal rulership, and

there are almost certainly others still to be found. Similarly, the future discovery of a princely burial of the late sixth or early seventh century elsewhere in Suffolk or Norfolk – which our model would predict, and which cannot be considered unlikely given the material from Winfarthing, the quality of some of the finds from Hoxne, and the unexpected discovery of the princely burial at Prittlewell in Essex in 2003/4 – would significantly alter current perceptions of regional geographies of power. Nevertheless, although none is in itself conclusive, there are several other mutually complementary strands of evidence to suggest that the original power base of the ruling dynasty, from which regional hegemony was projected across what is now Norfolk and Suffolk, was indeed in south-east Suffolk.

The geography of power as we model it for the late sixth and early seventh centuries is consistent with the view that the Deben valley was conceptually a core zone of royal power, and that it was physically inscribed as an elite landscape – with the major residence and jurisdictional centre broadly equidistant from the two estuarine gateways, each marked with burials of the ruling kindred. The likelihood that the first seat of the East Anglian bishopric – *Dommoc* – was the former Saxon Shore fort at Walton Castle, Felixstowe, would also suggest that the heartland of royal power was in south-east Suffolk. If Botwulf's *Icanho*, one of the two earliest monastic sites known in East Anglia from documentary sources, was – as seems likely – at present-day Iken, then this too might suggest that in the middle seventh century the royal kindred felt it easiest or most appropriate to alienate land for such places within their homelands. The possible early monastic sites at Burgh, and at Burrow Hill in Butley, should also be noted in this context. The numismatic evidence also points to south-east Suffolk as the major focus of power and wealth within East Anglia as a whole in the century or so before 660/70, with Rendlesham and Coddenham standing out as unusually early centres of coin use and monetary exchange.

Two further strands of evidence are discernible in Domesday geography. Major shifts in systems of social and economic organisation, and their corresponding spatial configurations of settlement and activity, between the seventh and the eleventh centuries mean that Domesday Book is an unreliable guide to the places of power and importance in the sixth, seventh or eighth centuries, and the Domesday entries for Rendlesham give no hint – in values, obligations owed by the inhabitants of neighbouring places, or the status of its church – of its earlier importance. That said, the patterns of administrative units – hundreds – within which Domesday is partly framed provide a strong echo of the configuration of the territories associated with Rendlesham and the other elite centres we have considered, while other kinds of information it contains may preserve traces of the processes of kingdom formation. Within East Anglia individuals described as free men – small proprietors with no feudal lord other than the king – were strongly concentrated in south-east Suffolk, especially within what we have argued were the territories associated with Rendlesham and, to a lesser extent, Coddenham. Further to the north and west higher proportions of socmen and villeins are recorded, embedded in forms of manorial organisation dominated by local lords. It is hard to explain this pattern other than as a long-term reflection of the relative advantages enjoyed by lineages in the original core territories of the kingdom, and the more variable fate of those dwelling in lands which these subsequently came to dominate. The complexity of hundredal geography in the Wicklaw hundreds, very much more interdigitated than in other potential early territories, may perhaps be explained in a similar way: the early regional kings were able to some extent to rationalise landholdings and jurisdictional territory in areas where they had established lordship over previously autonomous groups and leading kindreds, but did not see the need – or could not risk alienating support – by interfering to the same extent in the complexities of landholding and obligation in their core territory. It can also be argued that the later alienation of the Liberty to the abbey of St Edmund suggests that the East Anglian royal dynasty had particular interests in, or authority over, this territory (Warner 1996, 155–6).

As a model, we suggest that the power base from which regional hegemony was established in the later sixth century comprised subordinate territories of the Gipping and Blyth looking to a royal core in the Deben, and that within this polity the formerly unregulated cross-Channel contacts focused on the Orwell estuary and the lower Gipping valley were becoming formalised with a traders' enclave at Ipswich, a development which can be seen as marking a significant threshold of centralising authority. If we accept that Rædwald became king around the year 600 (Ch 8.2.1.2), then the consolidation of the south-east Suffolk polity, and the establishment of regional rulership, can be attributed to the activity of his two predecessors, who can be identified with varying degrees of confidence as his father, Tyttla, and his grandfather, who may or may not have been Wuffa. Bede's statement that Rædwald, after Æthelbert of Kent, had a paramount status among the kings of the southern English would be consistent with him consolidating and building on a regional power base established by his predecessors. That Æthelbert acted as

baptismal sponsor to both Rædwald and to Sæbert of the East Saxons indicates that at that time there was an acknowledgement of overlordship at some level in the relationship between the rulers of Kent and the East Angles, and suggests that the construction of an elite East Anglian political identity may have been influenced by the examples of Kent and the Merovingian Continent. This aligns with the broader evidence from the third quarter of the sixth century for intensifying links with the Merovingian and Mediterranean worlds, and a switch in the geography of cultural affiliation from the northern North Sea world.

The relative proximity to Kent and the Merovingian Continent would allow an elite faction in south-east Suffolk preferential access to the material, political and ideological advantages flowing from contacts and alignment with powerful and established peers. But other more fundamental geographical advantages contributed to the development of a political entity powerful enough to take advantage of this. The extent of good quality, easily worked soils on the gentle slopes of the valleys of the Deben and the Alde, and their tributaries, was rivalled only in the Gipping valley. Unified lordship over the two areas would have given their rulers control of a territory which in agricultural terms, at least as indicated by our reconstruction of the extent of open land, was much greater than that of any other polity in East Anglia. This would have ensured the command of greater landed resources, yielding a greater farming surplus, and greater manpower than was available to rivals. Moreover, the through valley of the Lark and the Gipping, cutting diagonally across the centre of Suffolk from south-east to north-west and bounded to either side by clay-covered uplands, was then, as now, a key communication route. In the fifth and sixth centuries, command of this route would have allowed control of contacts between communities in western East Anglia – and beyond them in the south and east Midlands – with the North Sea and English Channel via the Orwell estuary. As we have seen, this may have been a factor in the possible early primacy of the Gipping/Coddenham faction in south-east Suffolk (Ch 9.7.1–2). The establishment of the traders' enclave and the subsequent *emporium* at Ipswich would thus have allowed control of trade from and to a hinterland extending beyond East Anglia – a source of further wealth, in the form of tolls and dues exacted at Ipswich and along the inland route.

The contest for power in sixth-century East Anglia was not, therefore, a struggle between polities all beginning with roughly equal advantages and endowments. Geography always favoured south-east Suffolk. But, as already intimated, political ascendency need not have rested solely on direct military superiority. Æthelthryth's marriage to Tondbert of the South *Gyrwe* *c* 652 is unlikely to have been the first or only arrangement of its kind. The allegiance of local rulers could have been bought with gifts and subsidies, interventions could be made where successions were disputed, and attacks from neighbours could encourage weaker groups to seek the protection of the more powerful polity emerging in the south-east of the region. It seems clear, however, that by the early seventh century the Wuffing kings had an impressive military capacity that enabled Rædwald to defeat the powerful Northumbrian ruler Æthelfrith in 616 and make himself overlord of both the southern and Anglian confederations of peoples.

One indication that dominance was not achieved only, or perhaps even mainly, through success in battle is the location of the Deben territory within what became the East Anglian kingdom. While its rulers might have enjoyed some inherent economic and therefore military advantages over their neighbours, random outcomes in the battlefield could have led to territorial expansion in one direction just as easily as in another: in principle, the kingdom might have come to extend southwards into what is now Essex, rather than northwards into East Anglia, or could have embraced equally parts of both (Williamson 2008, 138–41). That the power of the Wuffing rulers was imposed *only* to the north and north-west may partly be due to southwards expansion being blocked by a politically consolidated kingdom of the East Saxons, whose rulers had close links with the Kentish royal family, or at least by a substantial subdivision of that polity (Blackmore *et al* 2019, 341–4, 361–4; Rippon 2022, 17–34). However, it must be significant that Rendlesham, and both the Deben and Gipping territories, occupied a position not only at the southern edge of what became the East Anglian *provincia* but also on the southern margins of the Anglian province of material culture (Hines 1984; Høilund Nielsen 1997; Williamson 2013b). Although the social realities behind them were complex, the differences in material culture and cultural practice that allow the archaeological recognition of Saxon and Anglian provinces of material culture in the later fifth and sixth centuries were real, and must have been meaningful. The southern boundaries of the kingdom were co-terminous with a cultural frontier, and this supports the idea that dominance was achieved in ways other than outright conquest. The Wuffing rulers established supremacy *only* over groups – or their leading kindreds – with whom they had in common some shared sense of wider cultural identity. Gifts, bribes, subsidies, aid, hospitality, marriages and networks of familial links – as well as violence and threats of violence – assured their

recognition, by the later sixth century, as paramount leaders of 'Anglian' people living to the east of the Fens.

The later sixth century saw the first major threshold of kingdom formation, and if our reading of the historical sources is accepted then the elite establishment at Rendlesham was very probably established as a royal jurisdictional centre by Rædwald's predecessor or his predecessor, and the same is probably true of the other major central places. Nevertheless it seems likely that, well into the seventh century, the early East Anglian kingdom was less an integrated territorial unit than a patchwork of local entities over which a regional hegemony was exercised and recognised to varying degrees, with sites like Rendlesham the key centres for the exercise of royal authority. Regular tribute may have been exacted, and the attendance of warbands on military campaigns expected, but local elites may otherwise have been left considerable autonomy. References to joint rulership, with the implication of senior and junior partners in the middle of the seventh century, are very much consistent with this (Ch 8.2.1.3), without necessarily implying that such arrangements would leave permanent territorial configurations. The metalwork and coins recovered from the principal central places, and from the lesser sites in their hinterlands, as well as the wealth from such burials as Winfarthing, does not suggest that the hegemony of the Wuffings was associated with any reduction of wealth outside south-east Suffolk. Overall, as we have seen, both the settlement and burial evidence suggest that the establishment of paramount power by a single kindred helped precipitate the emergence and consolidation of an aristocratic class. Their status was expressed through a suite of commodities and artefact types common to elite groups across England and northern Europe, but there are elements that suggest the development of specifically East Anglian identities and ideologies. It can be argued that the circulation of *solidi* of the Merovingian king Sigebert III, and their conscious use as pendants in aristocratic female necklets, may have been emblematic of affiliation with the East Anglian monarchy – perhaps specifically alluding to the East Anglian king Sigebert – and a symbol of continuing links with Frankish elites (Pestell 2017, 195–6). Elements of the Staffordshire Hoard are sufficiently distinctive stylistically to suggest that they are products of an East Anglian royal workshop, and that they may have found their way into a Mercian treasure during the intermittent periods of Mercian overlordship in the middle decades of the seventh century (Fern *et al* 2019, 276–80). The deaths of Sigebert, Ecgric and Anna in battle with Penda and their aftermaths provide a possible context for their transfer.

From the second quarter of the seventh century, regional rulership was buttressed by the relationship of kings with the church which, according to Bede, was permanently established in the kingdom after the accession of Sigebert and appointment of Felix in 630/1. Without underplaying the complexity of the relationships between secular rulers and churchmen, or denying the integrity of individual acceptance of Christianity, when viewed transactionally the Roman Church offered divine sanction for kingship and aristocracy in return for the ruler's protection and support for mission and conversion. The adoption, as an exclusive public rite, of a monotheistic religion centring on a saviour, at the expense of selective adherence to a range of cults, may also have helped to re-frame expectations of what was appropriate in rulership, in particular with the implication of greater emphasis on the power of a single paramount individual. The first minting of East Anglian gold shillings *c* 640 can be seen as intended to assert and signal the strengthening of royal prerogatives, and represents – consciously or implicitly – an adoption of Kentish and Merovingian practice; as such, it may be attributed plausibly to the reign of Sigebert. The uptake of coin use may suggest an increase in jurisdictional and social payments – including royal gifts – centred on the person of the ruler and enacted at central places. This would be broadly indicative of a consolidation of royal power and of the practices and institutions of regional rulership, and hints at a monetisation of jurisdictional transactions – tribute, dues, and renders. It is worth noting that the dynastic vicissitudes during the conflicts with Mercia, and the short period of Mercian over-kingship implied by the death of the East Anglian king Æthelhere in Penda's army at Winwæd in 655, have left no recognisable trace in the archaeological record as we see it beyond the possibility noted above that this was the context for the inclusion of some East Anglian items in the Staffordshire Hoard; everyday matters of rural economy, and the systems of surplus extraction, rulership and jurisdiction went on. Æthelhere of the East Angles may have been in a tributary relationship to Penda of the Mercians, but was ruler within his own kingdom. His successor, Æthelwald, freed from Mercian over-kingship, sponsored the baptism of the East Saxon king Swithhelm at Rendlesham – an action that implies the mutual recognition of some degree of overlordship. Æthelwald's successors Aldwulf (d 713) and Ælfwald (713–49) were able to protect the Mercian royal princes Guthlac and Æthelbald from Penda's grandsons, and Crowland is explicitly said to be within the East Anglian kingdom in the *Life of St Guthlac* commissioned by Ælfwald. When Æthelbald succeeded to the Mercian throne in 716 he

may have felt some obligation for the support he had received from the East Anglian rulers, and relationships between the two provinces were notably more peaceful than under his predecessors, or his immediate successor Offa.

The historical and numismatic evidence suggests that there may have been a threshold of regional integration around 670. The division of the East Anglian bishopric, with the establishment of a northern see at North Elmham, implies the pre-existence of a significant internal subdivision (even if not on the line of the later county boundary: Ch 8.2.2), but formalising ecclesiastical provision in alignment with constituent elements of the polity can be seen as indicating that the territorial reach of the authority of the East Anglian rulers – which had survived the conflicts with Mercia – was widely established and recognised. This is also the time of the transition from gold to silver currency, which saw regional patterns in the use and production of coinage shift significantly. South and east Suffolk no longer dominated the use of coinage, and there are indications that coinage was now being struck in Norfolk. If this coinage was issued by kings or their agents, rather than bishops, it would suggest a greater exercise of royal power from centres in the north of the kingdom than hitherto.

These changes occurred during the reign of Aldwulf (663/4–713), and it is interesting to speculate to what extent they were related to the effects of the plague outbreak of 664 and subsequent outbreaks through to the 680s (Maddicott 2007). The division of the bishopric was in part precipitated by the sickness of Bishop Bisi. If mortality impacted key local elites or magnate dynasties this may both have disrupted local power structures and afforded opportunities for the East Anglian ruler to mediate succession or appropriate lordship. But while episodes of epidemic could be devastating at the level of the family and household, as shown by Bede's account of the effect on some monastic communities, there is no evidence of a significant long-term impact on overall population levels or economic productivity (Naismith 2021, 354–6). The increasing volume of transactions involving coinage points to the development of monetary and commercial networks accessed by a range of people at many places. It was during this period of the late seventh century that the trading place at Burnham may have been remodelled and brought under official oversight, and that the trading place adjacent to the elite centre at Caistor-by-Norwich was established. At Ipswich, the high-status female burial of the late seventh century at Boss Hall may indicate an elite establishment in some way involved with oversight of the traders' enclave.

Over the course of the seventh and early eighth centuries, a series of entangled social and economic dynamics rendered the major central places of the late sixth and seventh centuries redundant. The reign of Ælfwald saw major reconfigurations of the geographies of jurisdiction and economy within the kingdom, including the expansion and remodelling of Ipswich as a trading port and manufacturing centre. There is evidence for an assertion of royal authority through greater control of the coinage from the 730s, and this would support the view that royal or elite initiative was a driving force behind other jurisdictional and administrative changes. The reign of Ælfwald also appears to offer the best context for the construction of the Devil's Dyke in Cambridgeshire as marking the western boundary of the East Anglian kingdom: a monumental marker of territorial jurisdiction, raised by a ruler able to deploy very substantial labour service (Ch 8.3.3).

We do not argue that this represents a threshold of transition from extensive lordship to a countryside of small proto-manorial estates, but rather a change in modes of extensive lordship. Places like Rendlesham in the seventh century were centres of royal jurisdiction, established at places where the Wuffings and other elite families had ancestral holdings, and the territories looking to them encompassed a tiered range of rights and obligations with the highest level of free landholder – whether the head of a peasant household or a magnate with extensive holdings and followers – being responsible for the render of royal dues and services. Over the course of the seventh and early eighth centuries both alienable rights of ownership in land and the precise physical extent of such holdings became increasingly formalised, with tax and service obligations increasingly attached to the holdings themselves. The centres of significant holdings and estates, enmeshed in agrarian production and management, provided a more fine-grained settlement network – facilitated by increasing access to monetised exchange – that allowed distributed administration and surplus extraction across a range of special-purpose settlements and places. The usefulness of the extensive territories as coherent units of surplus extraction and jurisdiction, and of the central places they had looked to, therefore diminished as the importance attached to the defined rights and holdings within them – at scales which might vary from multiple magnate holdings to single farms – increased. At the same time, the special-purpose luxury trade that had been directed to elites or their agents at places like Rendlesham became bound up in the much greater volume of burgeoning commercial exchange which was more effectively handled, and taxed, at coastal or estuarine trading and manufacturing centres. The integration of local with regional and inter-regional economies at elite centres for the benefit of elites gave way to wider and deeper access, for those who could afford it, to the products of manufacture and trade through monetised market networks.

Rendlesham had become a normal farming settlement by the middle of the eighth century, and the elite centre may have been deliberately dismantled. The other central places considered in this volume seem to have declined in importance around the same time, although at Caistor-by-Norwich the process was perhaps more gradual while at Hoxne the importance of the general area was perpetuated, or possibly revived, when it became the main centre of the bishopric in Suffolk some time before *c* 942. It is possible that some sixth- and seventh-century elite centres elsewhere continued as places of administrative importance, eventually developing into medieval towns and their early archaeology thus obscured by modern housing, Wymondham in Norfolk being one possible case. In this more integrated kingdom, peripatetic rulers might be accommodated on a range of royal properties of various types and sizes including, for example, specialist hunting establishments; or might defray the costs of accommodation and hospitality, while being seen to favour the hosts, as the guests of regional magnates, monasteries or bishops. The royal vills listed in documentary sources in contexts before the year 900 give us glimpses of this landscape of power (Ch 8.2.2.4).

The tripartite division of the kingdom between Beonna, Hun and Ælbert (Æthelbert?) on the death of Ælfwald in 749 suggests that both regional power and territory were still seen as partible, though the exact arrangements after 749 are unclear. Beonna, the senior partner and possibly a Mercian, is the only one at this time to have his name on coins. He disappears from view about 780 and Offa minted coins in his own name in East Anglia. Offa's execution of King Æthelbert in 794 implies conflict between the two kingdoms, but also that East Anglian royal control had continued, or been revived, in at least part of the kingdom. The dynasty was eventually able to fully re-establish itself following the deaths of Offa and his successor Coenwulf. East Anglia may have lost control of Middle Anglian dependencies such as Crowland during their overlordship, but it is unlikely to have involved significant changes in the structures of landholding and power within East Anglia itself. As during the periods of Mercian hegemony in the middle of the seventh century, it seems likely that the East Anglian kingdom remained a going concern while its rulers were subject to Mercian over-kingship and the authority of its kings was not permanently affected. In 825 and 827 the Mercian kings Beornwulf and Ludeca were defeated and killed in battle by the East Anglians and the minting of coins in the names of East Anglian rulers resumed.

11.3 Summary of principal conclusions

Our analysis and narrative point to four major conclusions of wider relevance for understandings of the social, economic and political dynamics of the fifth to eighth centuries in southern and eastern England, and an important methodological conclusion for the study of early medieval settlement and landscape.

The 'flat' societies of the later fifth and earlier sixth centuries were very much more sophisticated in their economic base and capacity for political integration – even if temporarily – than has generally been acknowledged. The levels of wealth, craft skill and resource management by the first generations of regional rulers that were evident in such monumental expressions of their paramount status as princely burial and great hall complexes did not spring up overnight, any more than their capacity to project and sustain leadership on a regional scale.

Despite an emphasis on the so-called 'long eighth century' in narratives of post-Roman resurgence, it would appear that in many ways it was the long seventh century – 570/80 to 720/30 – that saw key developments in the scope and articulation of power, and in economy, coinage and ideology, that underpinned the subsequent trajectories of kingdom structure in the eighth and ninth centuries.

Elite central place complexes were a characteristic feature of the long seventh century – an expression and integral element of the very specific economic and jurisdictional conditions of early regional rulership, and a response to the specific challenges posed by the need to project authority, and collect surplus, over an area much greater than that of local lordship. These were significant settlement aggregations, and integrated at a single place a range of social, jurisdictional, and economic functions. This centralisation dissipated and dispersed as greater economic, institutional and social complexity enabled greater flexibility in geographies of rulership, and runs counter to simple developmental narratives of post-Roman Britain that would see increasing nucleation or aggregation of settlement as a linear trend associated with developing societal complexity.

Following from this, although extensive lordship is enormously useful and powerful as a general conceptual model, it is clear that it can accommodate different

modes, scales and geographies. In our study, we can propose three successive modes which represent an increasing formalisation and territorialisation of authority: limited, periodic and impermanent lordship focused on central individuals prior to the later sixth century; between the later sixth and earlier eighth centuries, lordship based on tiered rights over the population of an extensive area focused on a jurisdictional central place; and from the early eighth century the exercise of tiered rights over obligations and services more closely linked to defined holdings and estates with royal authority articulated through a range of local centres and special-purpose places. This last is closest to the specific model set out by Rosamund Faith (1997).

Finally, we have been able to assess the validity and viability of approaches to the landscapes and settlement patterns of the period between the fifth and the eighth centuries which are based on the retrospective analysis of documentary sources. We have formulated robust models of territorial organisation, social and administrative, by combining the data of soils and topography with information drawn from a range of documentary and cartographic sources of both medieval and post-medieval date. Our results show that where topographies are more marked, and the range of environmental affordances more limited, then the spatial expression of social aggregates is more likely to conform to terrain. It is also clear that there is no simple read-back, even from tenth- and eleventh-century documents, to the circumstances of the eighth century and earlier. In particular, although Rendlesham is identified as a royal place by Bede, there is no trace of its status or significance in any later source, and the same is true of the other sixth- to early eighth-century central places examined here. Although the territories with which they were associated appear to have left a mark on later patterns of administrative geography there is no indication, even in Domesday, of the early importance of the places themselves, save perhaps in one or two cases suggestions of the former presence of minsters. Profound changes in society, economy and rulership, and corresponding transitions in patterns of settlement and geographies of jurisdiction, had erased them from the landscape by the end of the eighth century.

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