



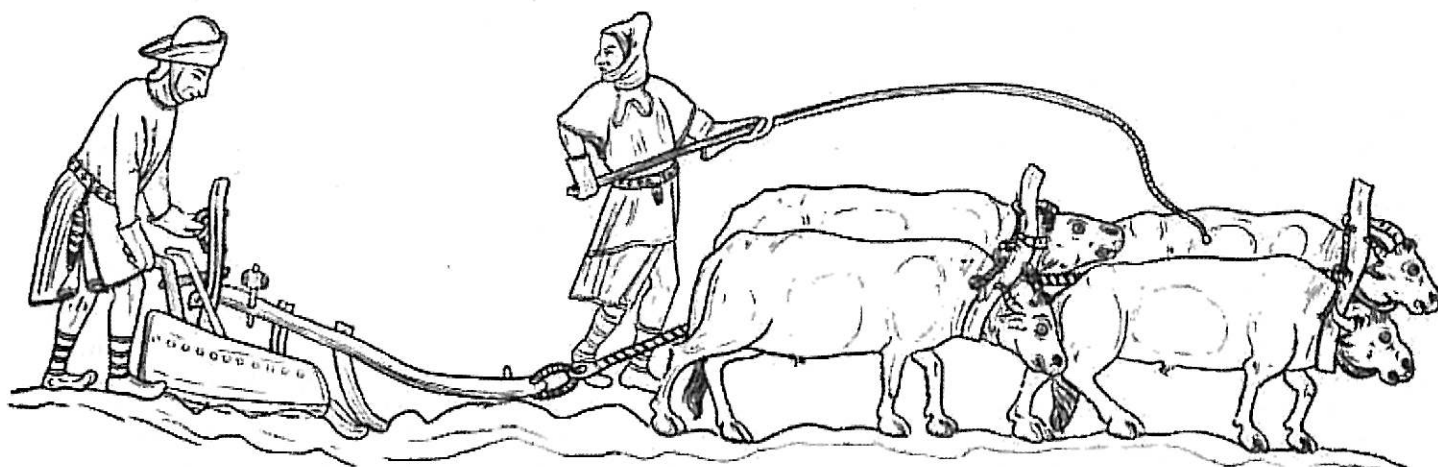
The Newsletter of the Sutton Hoo Society

SAXON

President: The Earl of Cranbrook

No. 42 / 2005

Sutton Hoo Society Fourth Conference 2004 Record Attendance



On 16 October 2004 over 300 delegates from across the country enjoyed a day of fascinating debate and discussion at a spectacular venue, the Royal Hospital School, Holbrook, near Ipswich.

The theme *Anglo-Saxon Landscapes: Real and Imaginary* looked at various aspects of the early medieval landscape, challenging traditional views and concepts. Some of the issues discussed were farming methods, settlement patterns, continental landscapes,

territorial concepts, sub-regional variations and the distribution of cemeteries.

The panel of speakers were Dr. Andrew Rogerson landscape archaeologist, Norfolk Museums Service; John Newman field archaeologist, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service; Peter Fowler Professor of Archaeology and consultant in World Heritage matters with UNESCO; Dr. Helena Hamerow lecturer in early medieval archaeology, University of Oxford; Professor

David Dumville from the department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic studies, University of Cambridge and Dr. Tom Williamson lecturer at University of East Anglia.

Excellent co-chairman for the day were Martin Carver, Professor of Archaeology, University of York and Angela Care Evans, curator of Early Medieval collections at the British Museum.

Agriculture Before Domesday: Farming Was As Farming Always Had Been? by Peter Fowler

The use of a plough-scene, (see above) from the early fourteenth century Luttrell Psalter as our conference leitmotiv implies that such a scene belongs to Anglo-Saxon landscapes. In fact, it has nothing to do with any Anglo-Saxon landscape before AD 900, and we can only be reasonably certain that this type of plough was in use in southern England from about AD 1000. The use of the Psalter to exemplify 'Anglo-Saxon landscapes' is actually the use of a non-contemporary illustration from nearly 300 years after the end of our period and nearly 900 years after its beginning, rather as if we were to illustrate agriculture at the time of the Psalter with a photograph of a combine harvester. Throughout this summary, such assertions rest

on evidence and arguments in my book on farming in the first millennium AD (Fowler 2002).

The ard and the plough

The ard and the plough were crucial to farming in the first millennium AD; but the ard was by far the more common of the two. The ard, a cultivating implement without coulter or mould-board but with a history going back to the fifth millennium in Europe, was widely used in north western Europe throughout the first millennium AD. The implications for Britain are difficult to avoid. The plough, however, especially in the third-fourth and tenth-eleventh centuries, proved the more significant in the light of what happened in the second millennium.

The cultivating implement most commonly in use in Britain until at least the tenth century was most probably a wooden ard. Such was almost certainly of bow and/or crook type, familiar in the arable fields of the first half of the first millennium AD and earlier, probably being replaced by a plough with mouldboard in England in the tenth century. If so, no firm material evidence links it with specifically Viking introduction or development, though much about the socio-economic context of tenth to eleventh century England suggests that the insular emergence of a plough with coulter and mould-board would have been appropriate, not least to cultivate large, long fields.

Landscape and fields

How did first millennium people talk about fields? Some at least must surely have used a word or words derived from the Latin *ager*, 'a field', from which derives the English 'acre' and the loan-word *erw* in both Welsh and Old Cornish. The modern English 'field' is of course from OE *feld*, before the tenth century often meaning the opposite of what we normally mean now, that is 'open country' as distinguished from, for example, woodland.

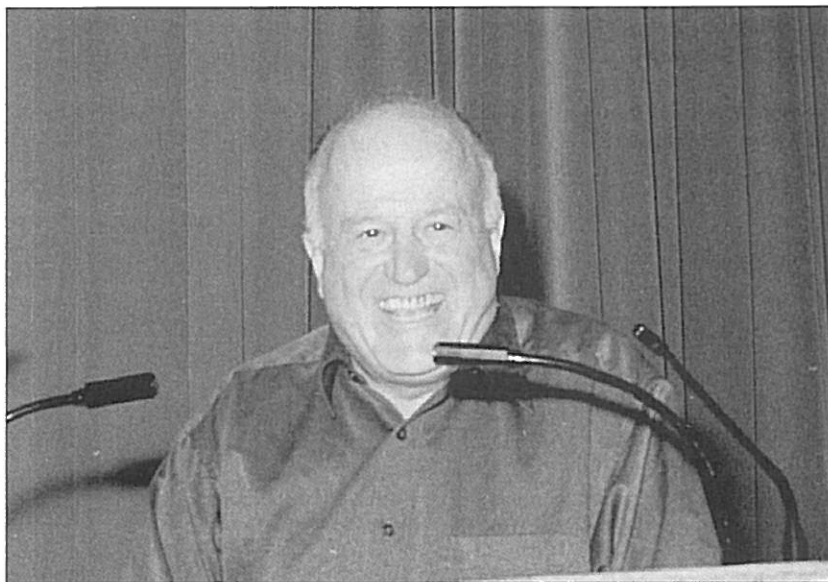
The British tradition, whether continuing to be refined by Roman influence or not, probably remained as the basis for the field systems over the whole country. By AD 800, if not in the eighth century, changes in the organisation of field systems were beginning to occur, however, and during the ninth and tenth centuries much diversity in field morphology and the organization of field systems appeared in numerous local arrangements seemingly breaking away from British and 'Roman' precedents. Nevertheless, in parts of lowland England, the principal field boundaries evolved directly from Romano-British or prehistoric systems of land division. By 1086 open fields existed across the Midlands from Dorset to Yorkshire. 'Open field' was by no means a standard system of land allotment or working, however, and furthermore, much of lowland England, East Anglia, for example, as well as the greater part of Britain to west and north, was not using that system.

The concept of 'Anglo-Saxon landscapes' is not synonymous with landscapes in England in the second half of the first millennium AD and, further, is only one clutch of variables among the diverse landscapes of the British Isles farmed throughout that time, not by Anglo-Saxons but by Britons. Given a range from prehistoric-type fields to open-field systems with strip fields, variety rather than homogeneity was the characteristic of the fieldscape by Domesday, though the great Book itself gives little away on that topic. Variety rather than homogeneity was also the outstanding characteristic of the rural landscape. It is important to distinguish between, on the one hand, the 'hard' reality of structures and functions in those landscape such as fields and cultivation and, on the other, 'soft' realities like kinship and tenure which actually held the whole together.

Crops (see Fowler 2002, Ch 10 and 12)

The outstanding characteristics of the crops that were grown in 1st millennium Britain are that there were indeed changes through those thousand years and that, throughout, there was also considerable regional variation. A summary indicates that:

1. cereals were grown in both upland and lowland areas throughout the first millennium AD.
2. considerable changes in crop exploitation saw:
 - a. at the beginning, staple 'Celtic' crops of barley and spelt wheat with beans, peas



Above: Professor Peter Fowler

Photo: Nigel MacBeth

- b. and flax, possibly hemp too
- b. in the early centuries AD, some areas saw an increasing use of bread wheat, rye and oats, though with the late prehistoric staples - spelt wheat and barley, - continuing strongly; some weeds such as cornflower, corncockle and stinking mayweed may indicate deep ploughing; the big change botanically if not economically was, however, the appearance of grapes and horticultural products such as ornamental and garden plants
- c. bread wheat dominates the record at many sites after the fourth century, accompanied by rye, barley and oats, with flax and hemp strongly evidenced. Plants used for dyeing, woad and madder, appeared at several Viking towns

By the eighth century, in a pattern of what can perhaps be seen as a distinctively Anglo-Saxon crop husbandry compared to the early centuries AD, bread wheat (*T. aestivum*), rye (*Secale cereale*), barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and oats (*Avena sativa*) were becoming the main cereals in England, supplemented by peas and bean, with different emphases between these components from region to region. Barley, however, remained important in Scotland and Ireland. With old-fashioned rye and bread-wheat apparently favoured by the second half of the millennium in place of the traditional wheats, emmer and spelt, cereological innovation hardly seems to mark the period.

Summary

There were always several types of field system operating in Britain in the first millennium AD. Some were for pastoral purposes, some for arable. They related variously to previous types of field system and to newly-broken-in land. From the first century onwards to the seventh or eighth, various types of field system almost exclusively in the British tradition were being cultivated by the traditional ard. Quite large

areas were enclosed in systems of long, rectangular fields in the early centuries AD, on marginal lands like chalk downs, limestone slopes and newly-drained wetlands. In such treeless landscapes, the visual aspects of such systems may well have been 'open', even if their working was neither co-operative nor 'common'. Larger, and possibly 'open' fields appeared in the Romanised parts of England in the third and fourth centuries, cultivated by iron-shared ploughs; such fields, along with the typically stone-walled fields of west and north Britain, probably continued through the middle years of the millennium. Some, indeed, still continue in use.

From the ninth century, new enclosure and extensive arable spread across waste, along wood-edge and through rough grazing in England. New enclosed fields were also being cleared in eastern Scotland and it is unlikely that they were alone. Areas of open-field may have begun to operate in the west, and certainly were doing so in Ireland. In England, originating in part from very long strips of land, strip fields intermixed and probably increasingly farmed in common, progressively developed as permanent features of the countryside from Lincolnshire to Dorset, perhaps under strong direction from monastic and growingly assertive local landlords. Planned field systems appeared in the tenth century in an increasingly regulated English landscape. All the ingredients for a more mature common field system were already present by 1000; focal points within it centred on churches newly-built by increasingly influential local landlords. Perhaps the hierarchical nature of Anglo-Saxon society in England enabled this to happen so early relative to western Europe. In Britain beyond England, visually open fields, as distinct from small enclosed plots, physically existed in some places, in others not. By the end of the first millennium a varied British landscape of fields encapsulated a long history of agrarian, social

and tenorial change quite as much as technological developments in tools, fields and crops.

'Farming was as farming always had been'? – the answer quite genuinely is both 'yes' and 'no'. Chronologically, for example, a British farmer of AD 1 would have felt comfortable working on an English farm of AD 850 but could have been a bit bemused by farming two centuries later. But nothing throughout the first millennium is comparable to the changes on the farm during the half century preceding today.

Reference and acknowledgements

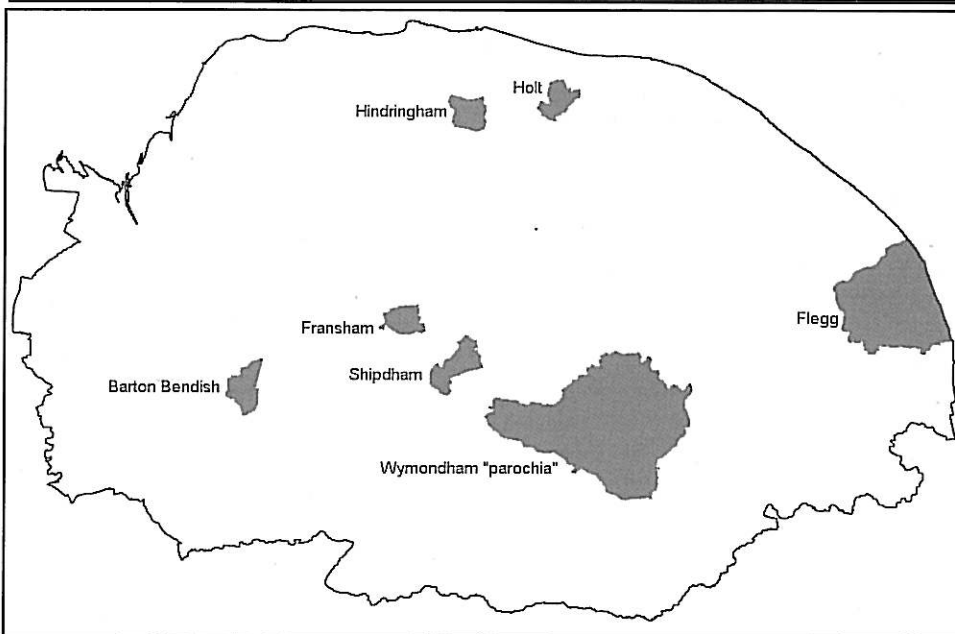
Fowler P. 2002, *Farming in the First*

Millennium AD. *British Agriculture between Julius 'Caesar and William the Conqueror*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. The book, and therefore this summary, could not have been written without the published work of many scholars, gratefully named there and hereby re-acknowledged. I have not therefore referenced this short paper since my book bibliography contains a fairly comprehensive list of my sources and beyond, with my commentary, chapter by chapter, on them. Readers wishing to follow up anything here are invited to consult *Farming ... first*. The archive accumulated in writing that book, including quite a lot of unused material and

many references to short and interim reports and notes, often in local and regional 'grey' literature, was deposited in 2004 at the Centre for Agricultural History, University of Reading.

Professor Peter Fowler. Professor Meritus of Archaeology, Newcastle University now divides his time between travelling, lecturing, writing, painting and as a consultant in World Heritage matters with UNESCO.

New Models Of Landscape Change Andrew Rogerson



Left: Norfolk—Roman and Early Anglo-Saxon finds areas

Image: Author

flatter areas of clay. Only 6 out of 84 EAS sites have produced pottery, the remainder metalwork. Five, all found by detecting since 1973, are probably inhumation cemeteries. A single burial site was previously known, Markshall cremation cemetery first noted in 1815.

Isle of Flegg

Surrounded by North Sea, Rivers Bure and Thurn and the Hundred Stream, the former island is a region of highly fertile "cover loam" soil. The Roman fort and port at Caister-on-Sea in the south-east corner is conspicuous for its lack of EAS material, and there is a scarcity of finds in the immediate area. Over the remainder of Flegg the distribution of both RB and EAS finds is also weak, the latter especially so in the western part of the island. A *grubenhau* in the parish of Repps with Bastwick was recently excavated on the route of a pipeline and the chance find in c.1960 of a group of annular clay loom weights in Hemsby may represent another. All other EAS finds were metal and recovered by detecting, and all single finds apart from a probable inhumation cemetery at Martham. The apparently low level of RB and EAS settlement on Flegg has yet to be explained.

Hindringham

Within the River Stiffkey drainage system Hindringham is on boulder clay, much of it quite well drained. Fortunately a more reliable picture of the extent of settlement and land-use is available here, because work has been carried out by two detectorists who also collect pottery. Of 27 RB sites, 20 have produced potsherds, and of 15 EAS sites 5 have done so. The latter cluster in the south-eastern part and include 2 probable inhumation cemeteries. RB activity is much more widespread, but is absent from several outlying areas where detecting has taken place.

The size of the available data-set for Roman (RB) and Early Anglo-Saxon (EAS) Norfolk is enormous in comparison with thirty years ago. It is held on the county Historic Environment Register (HER, formerly SMR) but little has seen conventional publication. There are at present 7,900 recorded RB finds locations and 1,500 EAS, ranging from single objects to major settlements and cemeteries, both excavated and known from surface evidence alone.

The nature of the archaeological evidence for the two periods is very different. RB settlement sites are easily located by fieldwalking, because of profuse pottery, and by metal detecting, through abundant coins and metalwork. Funerary evidence, however, is very sparse: in 1998 only 245 first to fourth century individual burials, cremations and inhumations, were known in Norfolk. In marked contrast 78 cemeteries of the fifth to seventh centuries are currently recorded on the HER. Morning Thorpe yielded 316 inhumations, while at least 2284 individuals were cremated and 57 inhumed at Spong Hill, North Elmham. Many other cemeteries are suspected from finds of metal objects. EAS

settlement sites, on the other hand, are very hard to find, potsherds being sparse, relatively friable and difficult to identify. Several have been excavated in recent years, as it were by accident, examined not because their presence was known from field evidence or aerial photography, but because monuments of other periods were under examination.

Seven areas have been chosen with a view to illustrating the enormous potential for further study, both in the field and through analysis.

Wymondham parochia

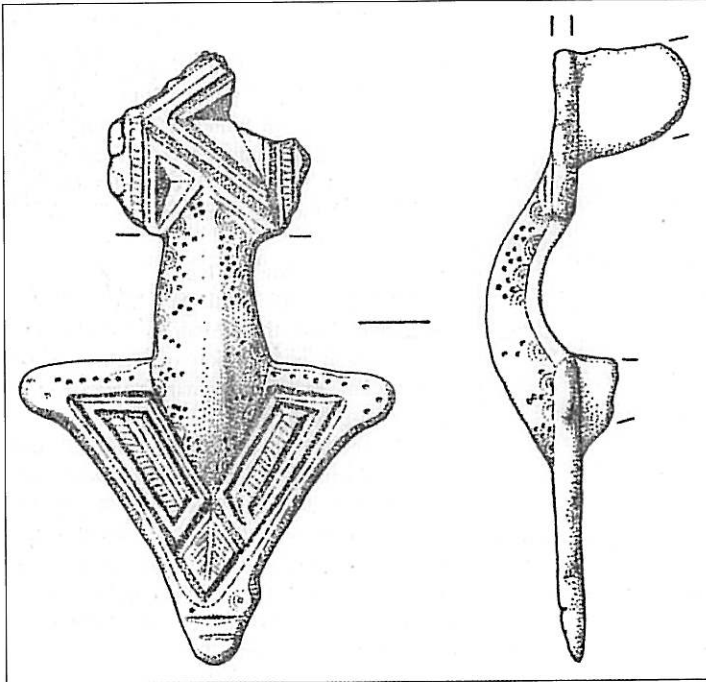
This area, containing 27 modern civil parishes, was suggested as a potential Middle Saxon estate by Kenneth Penn in 1996. It lies on the Boulder Clay plateau dissected by valleys containing gravels and alluvium, and is bounded by the Rivers Tiffèy, Yare and Tas to the north and west, and by ancient trackways to the south. The Roman cantonal capital of *Venta Icenorum* lies just outside to the north-east. RB finds are profuse over much of the area and mirror quite closely the distribution of recorded metal detecting and systematic fieldwalking. EAS material is more sparse and is entirely absent from the

Fransham

On the central watershed this boulder clay parish has been subjected to a programme of intense, systematic fieldwalking. Of 12 concentrations of RB pottery identified as settlement sites, 8 were occupied into the 4th century. Thin spreads of sherds suggest that all were associated with limited areas of arable land, but most of the parish saw some RB activity. The distribution of EAS settlement was much more restricted, with 1 large (0.8 hectare) and 4 very small pottery concentrations, all on lighter soil where RB evidence is also substantial. Despite a moderate amount of detecting only 2 pieces of 6th-century metalwork have been recorded, both near to settlements.

Holt

Lying only 3.5km from North Sea, this parish sits on sands and gravels with cover loam in the eastern part. The River Glaven forms parts of the east and west boundaries.



Below: Asymmetrical brooch find from Holt, Norfolk.

Of 12 sites with RB finds, 3 were located by fieldwalking, the rest by metal detecting. All 5 EAS sites result from detecting. One is a probable inhumation cemetery lying close to the parish boundary. Another, with 2 pieces of EAS metalwork is adjacent to the findspot of a contemporary asymmetrical brooch in Letheringsett. An apparent similarity in the distribution of RB and EAS finds, all are in the western part of the parish, may be misleading because no metal detecting has been recorded in the central and eastern parts.

Shipdham

Nearby Shipdham is also on boulder clay and the central watershed, but the method of data recovery here has been very different, with no formal field survey but frequently reported metal detecting. Of 20 sites with RB finds, 3 produced pot sherds and 18

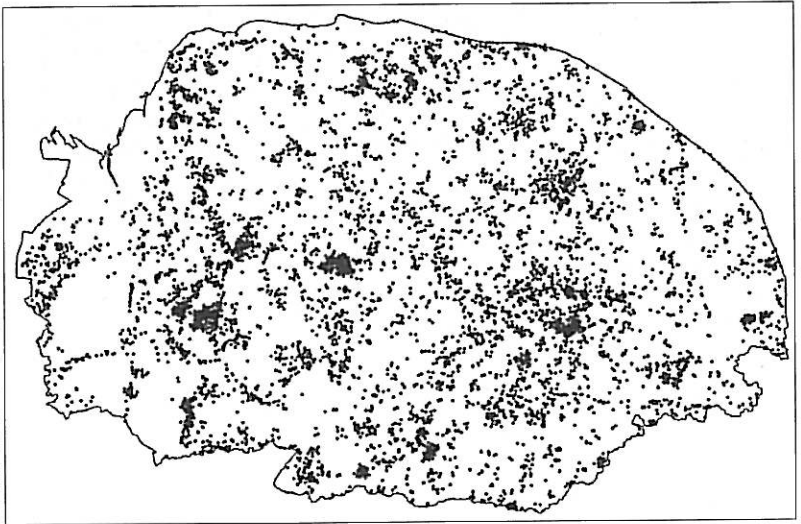
metalwork including coins. EAS metalwork has been recorded on 5 sites, one of which may be an inhumation cemetery. Pottery has not yet been recorded. Again, RB activity is seen as more intense and widespread than the EAS, but all of the latter falls within an area of strong RB activity.

Barton Bendish

On the chalk land of south-west Norfolk, Barton Bendish has been completely covered by formal fieldwalking as well as seeing much reported metal detecting. Against a spread of pot sherds almost continuous except in areas of peat soils, all 15 identified RB settlements were occupied in the fourth century, while only 2 EAS settlements were identified. Detecting has produced metalwork from 6 sites including an inhumation cemetery close to the parish boundary. Interestingly EAS finds are more prolific in the neighbouring parishes of Beachamwell and Fincham.

Conclusions

Patterns of EAS and RB settlement are closely related. Even on the clay where there is a retreat in or soon after c.400 AD, activity is apparent on lighter soils and near to valleys from the later fifth century. This chronological gap is caused by two factors: the invisibility of the sub-Roman population,



i.e. the ending of the circulation of new coins and the apparent collapse in the RB pottery industry; and the rarity of find types that can be attributed to the earliest EAS phases around the middle of the fifth. On the other hand sixth century material occurs throughout most of Norfolk including the clay, in small quantities by RB standards, but in the same areas as those with the strongest evidence for RB activity.

The recording of metal detected finds is of great importance, although we are hampered by its random nature and by our failure systematically to record negative evidence. However, work currently being undertaken by Mary Chester-Kadwell of Cambridge University should us make much better informed on how to assess the significance of both positive and negative results of metal-detecting. In the meantime the Norfolk HER will continue to accumulate data in the hope that the landscapes of the county in both the RB and EAS periods will be the subject of serious "evidence-based" research for many years to come.

Top: Distribution of Roman finds

Below: Early Anglo-Saxon finds



All images: Author



Above: Conference speakers and Chairmen
L to R: Peter Fowler, John Newman, Helena
Hamerow, Andrew Rogerson, Angela Care Evans,
Martin Carver, David Dumville, Tom Williamson



Below: Some members of the Sutton Hoo Society
Committee

Right: Delegates during the afternoon session



Annual General Meeting—Chairman's Report

The Annual General Meeting was held at Tranmer House, Sutton Hoo on Friday 11 February 2005

Thanks to all who organised the Anglo-Saxon Festival and the Autumn Conference. Both events were extremely successful, mainly because of months of hard work by members of the committee and willing hands on the day.

Membership

At 31 December 2004 membership totalled 420, with 130 life, 232 ordinary, 49 family, 9 student and 17 overseas (USA, Canada, Germany, Sweden, Mexico, New Zealand and Ireland) members. Although this total is slightly down on the previous year (428), it reflects the loyalty of our members and the consistency in society interest. (It is worth noting that life members increased in 2004 from 121 to 130).

Guiding

By the end of December 2004 it was clear there had been a significant (but not unexpected) drop in visitor numbers over the year, around 100,000 compared to 127,500 in 2003. The society guided 15,022 visitors in 2004, (25% less than 2003). However, the society gave roughly the same number of guided tours, the significant factor being fewer people (on average) on each tour in 2004 compared with the previous year. Although the demand for guided tours remains as strong as ever, if visitor numbers follow the same trend in future years, we must keep a watch on our income and continue to be imaginative and flexible in our guiding

policy. Our guides have again done a magnificent job in 2004. Four new guides joined us early in the season. Interest in guiding continues and our training programme has been maintained.

Funding and Education

In past years funding was primarily focused on supporting the Research Trust (now wound up) and the 1980's excavations at Sutton Hoo. In 2003 a funding management policy was introduced to enable the committee to better consider and manage large and small requests and projects.

Funding offered/activated by the Society in 2004:

The final phase of the Intertidal Survey Project (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service).

A phased three year grant for a major Research Project, University of East Anglia. The project, to be undertaken by Dr. Tom Williamson and Sarah Harrison is entitled 'Sutton Hoo in Context: the Site and its Landscape'. (Project commenced October 2003)

A donation to a volunteer group's 'Hadrian's Wall Walk' completed in June 2004. The walk raised £2000 for the Build-A-Ship Project (NT).

Further funding for Martin Carver's Sutton Hoo Research Report (British Museum Publications).

Society Events

There were two major society events in 2004. The first Anglo-Saxon Festival was held on 4 July at Sutton Hoo. The weather

was atrocious but the event truly memorable with over 1500 visitors. A resounding success, the first of (hopefully) many more to come.

The fourth Autumn Conference was held on 16 October at The Royal Hospital School, Holbrook, a glorious venue. The subject 'Anglo-Saxon Landscapes: Real and Imaginary' was attended by over 300 delegates who were entertained by six leading academics in their field - another memorable day.

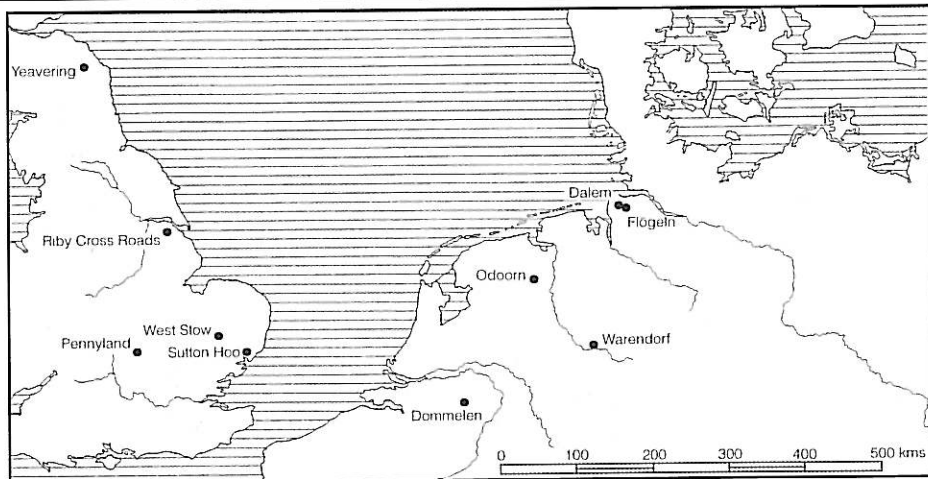
Summary

The society continues to work alongside the National Trust and at the same time expands its own independent status. Everything changes: historical interpretation, archaeology, and Sutton Hoo itself - some changes are regrettable, some welcome. The danger of academic research isolating itself is increasingly debated, yet the Sutton Hoo Society champions scholastic research and reaches out to those who have an ordinary fascination for the Sutton Hoo story, its history and archaeology. The Festival and Conference reflect this all-round approach, both events attract very different audiences, yet both embody what the Society is all about - the advancement of the public education of Sutton Hoo and the wider context of Anglo-Saxon archaeology and history. To achieve this by maintaining academic excellence and having fun seems to me an admirable thing to do.

Lindsay Lee (Chairman)

Continental And Scandinavian Landscapes Of Early Medieval Europe

by Helena Hamerow



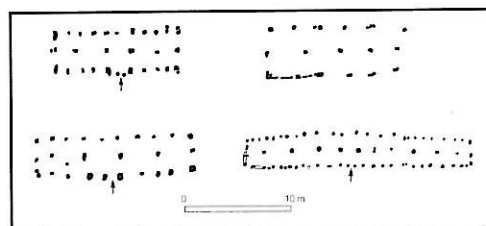
The landscapes of continental north-western Europe have considerable relevance for our understanding of East Anglia in the Age of Sutton Hoo. The following discussion of these landscapes will be confined to the area around the North Sea, with the occasional foray into northernmost Gaul which -- with its

Above: Fig.1. Location map showing main sites mentioned in the text

Right: Fig.2. Early medieval barns from the Netherlands. After Waterbolk 1992, Abb.15.

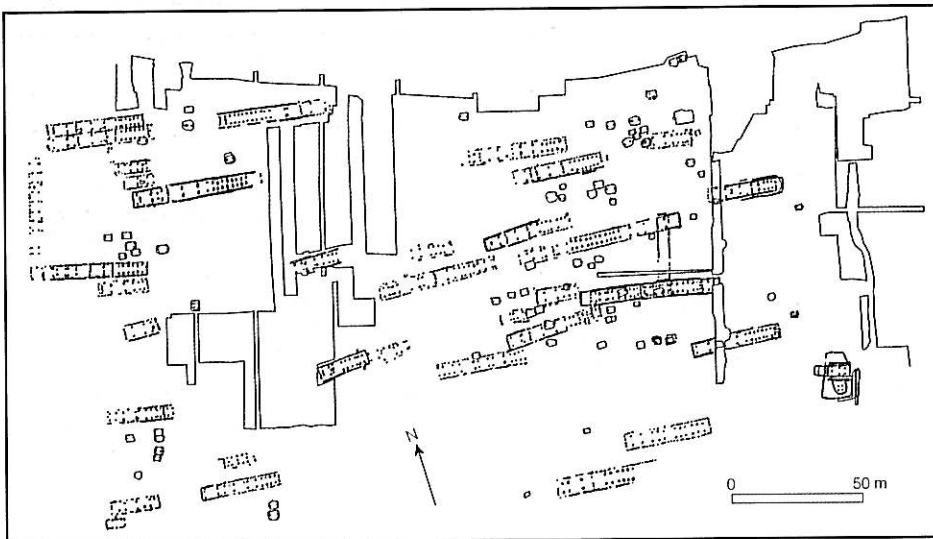
site was abandoned in the sixth c AD and was replaced by the settlement of Dalem, only a couple of miles away (Zimmermann 1991). Dalem, however, looks very different and consisted of a row of at least four enclosed farmsteads dating to the seventh and eighth centuries (Fig. 4). The individual plots, all of similar size, contained *Grubenhäuser*, barns, granaries and workshops arranged around a central house. The regularly spaced, carefully laid out and enclosed properties contrast markedly with Flögeln.

My use of the word 'properties' may provoke some scepticism, but consider the situation at the seventh - ninth century settlement of Odoorn in the northern



Left: Fig.3. The fourth-fifth century settlement at Flögeln - Eekhöltjen. Reproduced with kind permission of Dr. W. H. Zimmerman

Below: Fig.4. Dalem: Plan of settlement phases. After Waterbolk 1991, Abb.35-9



Netherlands (Waterbolk 1991, Fig. 5). Around 700 (Phase A) the settlement consisted of fenced farmsteads and a system of north-south and east-west running trackways. In phase B, the central precinct was divided into three or four fenced yards or paddocks of roughly equal size, closing off in the process the main N-S trackway as well as other trackways. In phase C, the old trackways were re-established and new enclosures were built along the *same boundaries* established in Phase A. This must

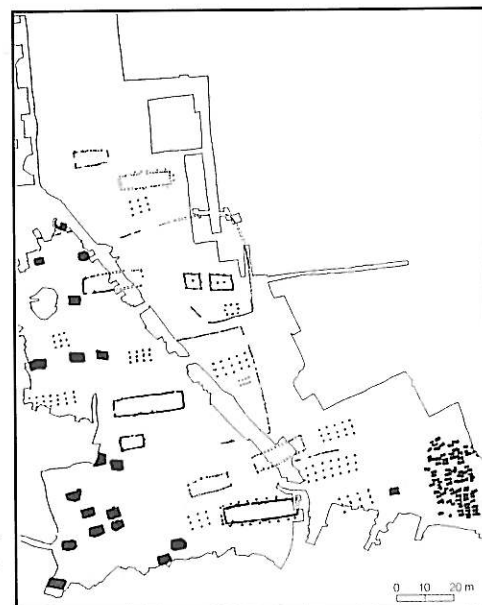
villa landscape and Roman heritage -- is just as relevant to a discussion of Britain as are northern Germany and Denmark (Fig. 1).

Buildings and settlement layout

It is important to begin by looking at individual settlements and their buildings, and to compare these with what we find in eastern England. While *Grubenhäuser* (also known as sunken-featured buildings or SFBs) were found on both sides of the North Sea in the seventh century just as they were in the fifth and sixth centuries, earth-fast timber buildings began to undergo some interesting changes. Most importantly, the traditional longhouse of southern Scandinavia, northern Germany and the Netherlands, gradually began to be replaced in most (though not all) regions of the North Sea Zone. The longhouse combined multiple functions under one roof, including food preparation, storage, sleeping and stabling cattle and other animals. But from the seventh century, and especially during the eighth century, a variety of special-

purpose buildings began to appear, including barns (Fig. 2), granaries, bakehouses, and workshops. We see this very clearly at the settlement of Warendorf (Westphalia), yet the 'Warendorf type' house with its bowed walls is conspicuous by its absence in England. In short, building traditions between the Continent and England began to diverge in the seventh century.

Wide-reaching changes in the layout and structure of settlements are also apparent in the seventh and eighth centuries, with an increased emphasis on boundaries and planning. This is not to say these were entirely absent in preceding centuries, but they do become more pronounced in the later period. We can see this by comparing two neighbouring settlements, one 'early' and one 'late': Flögeln, in Lower Saxony, was occupied from the first century BC, and in the fifth century AD consisted of a number of mostly unenclosed farmsteads consisting of longhouses and *Grubenhäuser* (Fig. 3); the



surely mean that those boundaries had some kind of formal – even legal – status. Phases C and D represent a period after the community had abandoned the old site and brought it under cultivation. Most remarkable of all is the close correspondence between field boundaries shown on a map of 1831 and the early medieval trackways and enclosures. This suggests very strongly that these enclosed precincts were legally established properties.

We can see similar developments in Anglo-Saxon England (Hamerow 2002). The overall impression gained from fifth and sixth century settlements is of a fairly dispersed spread of buildings. Evidence of enclosures around buildings (as distinct from animal pens or paddocks) is scarce, maybe even absent, before c 600. West Stow is a good example of this kind of settlement. But in the seventh century, a series of separate, high-status settlements emerge, of which the royal vill at

Top: Fig. 5. Odoorn: the main settlement phases. After Waterbolk 1992, Abb. 35-9

Below left: Fig.6. Dommelen. Top plan of the settlement, c 700–50. Bottom plan of settlement c800/25–875/900. After Theuvs 1991, figs. 16 and 18

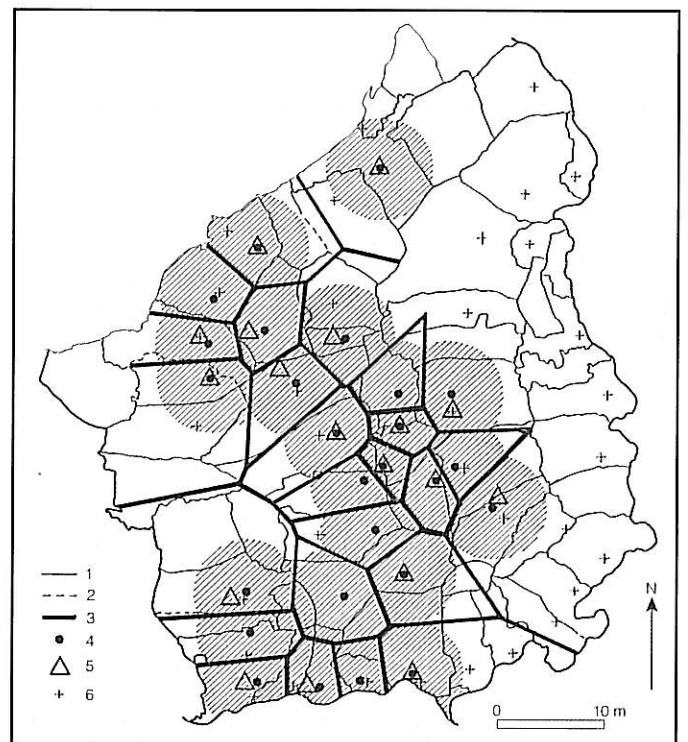
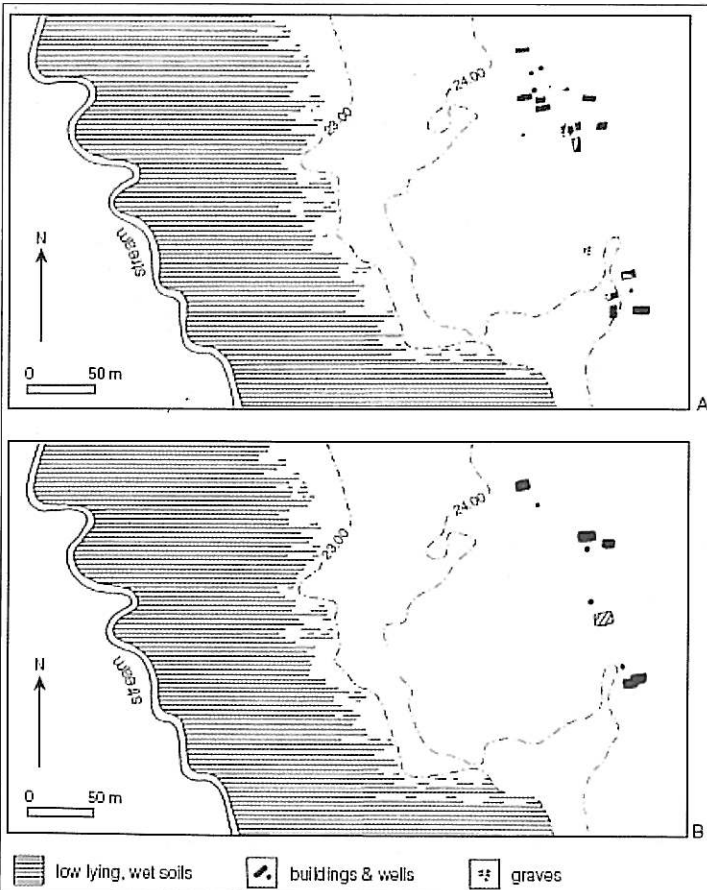
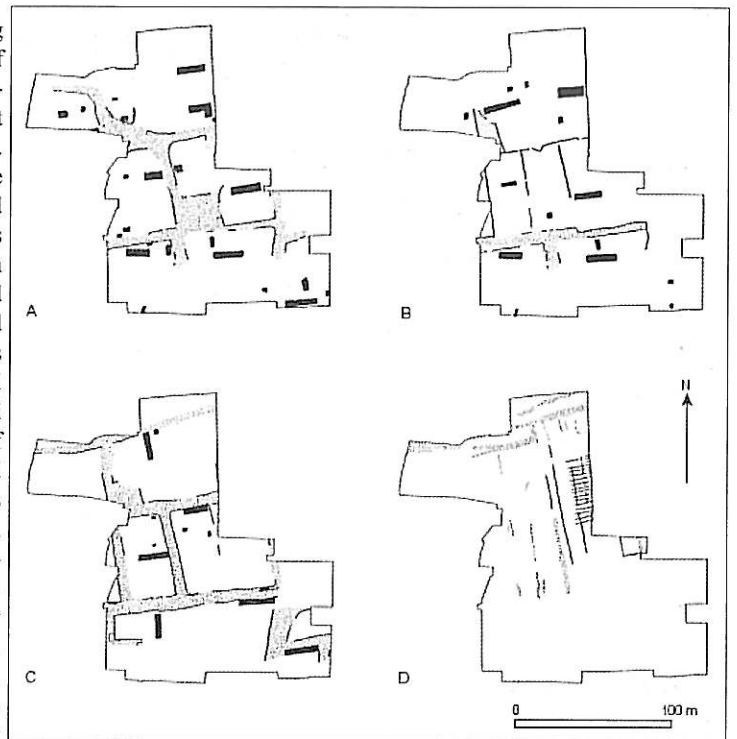
Below right: Fig.7. Territorial model of the Veltwe based on centres known or presumed to have existed in the 7th Century. 1:territorial boundary, historical; 2: territorial boundary, conjectural; 3: Thiessen Polygon; 4: centres of Thiessen Polygon; 5: settlement or cemetery; 6: pre-thirteenth century church. After Heidinga 1987, fig.73.

Yeavinger (Northumbria.) is of course the best-known and most impressive example. These have enclosures around planned arrangements of buildings. Such enclosure and planning were used both to impress visitors and to control access to special places. Use of enclosures in Mid Saxon England was not, however, restricted to high-status settlements. We see them at Riby Crossroads (Lincs), Pennyland (Bucks), and of course the latest phase at West Stow. Not all Mid Saxon settlements exhibited these features, however, and Bloodmoor Hill at Carlton Colville is an example of a settlement that, while clearly organised, did not yield evidence of enclosures or planned layout. Nevertheless, there is an increased emphasis in the seventh and especially eighth centuries on defining and regulating space within settlements.

Does this increased planning and use of boundaries tell us anything about social structure? I think it does. To some extent, the increasingly planned and regular appearance

of some settlements must be linked, at least indirectly, to the appearance of powerful landlords, seeking to increase their revenues. Attempts to intensify agricultural production through crop rotation, more intensive manuring and weeding, and the use of the mould-board plough, would have required strict communal management of resources that in turn is likely to have contributed to a more regulated village layout. Ethnographic studies also suggest that increasingly planned and uniform settlement layouts tend to reflect more controlled and circumscribed social roles and daily activities.

It is now important to widen the focus somewhat and to look at the relationship in the seventh and eighth centuries between settlements and their cemeteries, and at the



relationship of individual settlements to larger territorial units.

Relationship between settlements and cemeteries

The relationship between settlements and cemeteries in the seventh and eighth centuries changed as traditional patterns of burial began to dissolve. In the fifth and sixth centuries, in most parts of the North Sea Zone, burial tended to take place in communal cemeteries which were clearly separate from, though usually near, or even adjacent to, settlements. These communal, ancestral cemeteries began to be given up in the seventh century. One example of the kind of burial practice that replaced them can be seen at the settlement of Dommelen, in the southern Netherlands, the heart of Austrasia (Theuvs 1991). It was established in the mid to late seventh century, when it apparently consisted of only a single timber building and a well. It grew in the early eighth century to around a dozen buildings laid out in two groups, accompanied by two contemporary groups of burials (Fig. 6). The southern group contained twelve rich chamber graves, while to the north lay a group of seventeen ordinary burials, with almost no grave goods. The excavator, Frans Theuvs, thinks that this represents a landowning family establishing a new settlement on one of their estates, bringing with them a group of dependents from elsewhere. There are other settlements in this region consisting of farmsteads accompanied by a few burials. But why were only a few members of the family buried next to the farms? This too could be linked to an increasing emphasis on concepts of property. A current hypothesis is that the elites who founded these settlements, as well as a few of their descendants, were buried within them as a means of establishing their claims to the land. Other family members would either have been buried in the old ancestral cemeteries or in churchyards (*ibid.*).

We see a comparable dislocation of burial in seventh and eighth century England, along with the abandonment of the rite of burial with grave goods. Whether a similar

interpretation is appropriate here is difficult to say. To use a reasonably local example, the settlement at Bloodmoor Hill in Carlton Colville contained a small cemetery of 26 E-W aligned seventh century inhumations right in the middle of the settlement, as well as three isolated burials – intriguingly, an unusual double burial and a juvenile – some 50 m. to the east. A few of the burials were very richly furnished. Small groups as well as isolated burials have also been found in other settlements of this period, including Ipswich. Then we have the so-called ‘Final Phase’ cemeteries, which were long assumed to represent a transitional stage between pagan and Christian burials. It is intriguing to speculate whether they in fact have more to do with the formation of estates than with religious conversion.

Territorial boundaries and settlement mobility

Finally, I want to consider how individual settlements related to larger territories. As settlements became more clearly bounded and fixed in the landscape during the seventh and eighth centuries, estates based on landed production also became more clearly defined, and larger territories came under increasing political control. Ties of ethnicity and kinship began to give way to bonds of clientship and rank. This was a period when communities and individuals must have become increasingly identified with particular territories or regions, whether defined by shared markets, dialects, or military allegiances. Can archaeology identify the ‘symptoms’ of this territorial formation?

In the Netherlands and Germany, early medieval territories could, under certain circumstances, be remarkably stable and survive to be detected in much later boundaries. According to the Thiessen model, ancient territories can be reconstructed by assuming that the boundary between two territorial centres lies roughly halfway between them. This technique has been successfully applied in parts of the Netherlands, such as the Veluwe district where such ‘reconstructed’ early medieval

territories correspond remarkably well with later, documented boundaries (Fig. 7. Heidinga 1987). While it is important to remember that the origins of these early medieval territories could lie still earlier, in the Iron Age and Roman periods, I suspect that they became formalised in the seventh and eighth centuries, a period which saw the drawing up of the first charters and legal documents in these regions.

Before concluding, I should mention the issue of settlement mobility. In northern Germany and the Netherlands, settlements continued to shift at least until the tenth century and in Denmark until the twelfth century. It was certainly happening in England in the seventh century. What brought such mobility to an end, however, is no more certain than what caused it in the first place. It probably related to new systems of farming requiring more intensive use of labour and natural resources, together with more controlled allocation of land by elites and by the Church.

It is striking that so many parts of the North Sea Zone, including England, saw a major reorganization and stabilization of settlement during the seventh and especially eighth centuries. These changes reflect an intensification of production, but also new systems of distribution that changed rural communities in important ways. Families and individuals must have become increasingly aware of their place within larger territories and of the importance to their communities of distant places such as markets, monasteries, royal centres and eventually towns. New administrative structures would have superseded, and in some cases even dismantled, older tribal loyalties as ancestral burial grounds were replaced by new cemeteries and as properties and territories became ever more firmly inscribed onto the landscape.

Dr. Helena Hamerow Lecturer in Early Medieval Archaeology at University of Oxford and Fellow of St. Cross College.

A Landscape In Hiding – The Living And The Dead 400 - 800 AD **by John Newman**

‘We find what we are looking for,’ an old maxim but one which has great relevance to archaeology. The data collected generally comes from a wide, if disparate range of sources such as formal excavation or survey, chance discoveries like antiquarian or recent metal detector finds and environmental sampling. The latter possibly linked to formal excavation work or initiated via some other area of research.

While the archaeological data collected by a project or excavation may be totally consistent and fully valid within its own immediate context, extrapolating any meaning

in order to benefit wider studies often presents problems. Researchers and students must always be aware that any archaeological data for the post Roman period is usually open to several interpretations due to its limited representation of the society from 15-1600 years ago which we are desperate to understand. For the Sutton Hoo period, for example, a great deal of time and effort is spent analysing and studying non-ferrous metal dress items and linking brooches to peoples to places (to fragmentary historical sources). Of course this generally ignores some 90% of the material assemblage of the

period and will totally exclude the c50-75%, which was organic in composition and has faded to dust long ago.

It is also important to remain aware of how differing interpretations are clearly influenced by the various paradigms and preconceptions currently in vogue with the period under study here being notorious for its varied labels. While the conference theme is ‘Anglo-Saxon Landscapes,’ which is clearly an ethnic label, other options were possible including Post Roman, Early medieval or Dark Age. We must be aware that the label creates the framework we consciously or

unconsciously work under and there is real danger that this may pre-determine the outcome. Traditionally we believe in a Roman period and an Anglo-Saxon period, therefore there must be some division, some defining break or crisis to allow us a transformation from one to the other. Similarly how the material is collected or the data analysed will lead to the answers we anticipate if extreme care is not taken while looking over the whole range of evidence that is potentially available.

To start with, we can see a wide range of evidence for Roman period settlement activity across East Anglia, very few major towns or opulent villas but nevertheless an apparently prosperous agricultural region with a dispersed settlement pattern, reminiscent of more recent times, at densities of up to one settlement per square kilometre and evenly spaced small 'market-type' towns. The regular recovery of Roman coinage indicates a sophisticated economy with wide external contacts by the third century. However it must be noted that the Roman period was not stable and uniform. Changes were afoot from the late third century at least as military sites appear on the east and south coasts and over the eastern side of East Anglia use of coinage diminishes markedly after c350AD. However it would be very difficult to argue for any degree of depopulation in the eastern half of the region in the late fourth or early fifth century. Rather from the evidence of differential use of coinage in late Roman Britain we should begin to anticipate differing trajectories or reaction and change to what was to come as Imperial power waned.

To comprehend the following fifth to sixth century period material markers of ethnicity have traditionally transfixed archaeology. Brooches, wrist clasps and other non-ferrous metal items are studied and classified in extreme detail to indicate areas of 'Early Anglo-Saxon' burial or settlement. A study reinforced over the last 25 years by the particular success of metal detecting has resulted in adding numerous more find spots for this distinctive material in East Anglia. However, what evidence can be seen for a surviving 'British' population or for any hybrid product of native and migrant?

The traditional view of Anglo-Saxon settlement in East Anglia would see a simple picture of groups moving onto the lighter soils on the eastern, northern and western areas of the region and little activity of any note on the central claylands. Recent metal detector finds, in particular, have challenged this view with, in Suffolk for example, a string of finds from parishes close to the A140, the Roman Pye Road. This spatial association may be less than coincidental as the survival of Roman roads indicates continuity of use, Rackham noting that roads would disappear under scrub in 10 to 20 years if not used and credible lengths of such roads survive to the present as lines of communication. More intriguingly lengths of Roman road survive in areas with artefactual evidence of a traditional type

indicative of Anglo-Saxon settlement, such as between Coddendam and Scole along the A140/Pye Road, and in areas with very little or no typical fifth-sixth century metalwork. For example south of Coddendam in Suffolk much of the line of the Pye Road is preserved, and in use even now, but characteristic Early Anglo-Saxon finds are rare as the Stour valley is approached. Such a lack of evidence cannot be totally put down to a lack of searching as metal detecting is a common activity across all of Suffolk. Surviving lengths of Roman road appear to link areas with evidence for Early Anglo-Saxon settlement with areas that contain little or no direct evidence for such activity. In the latter areas perhaps evidence for a post-Roman, British, population should be sought. The watershed between those parts of East Anglia with numerous finds of classic Early Anglo-Saxon artefacts and those without is not along the Stour valley which, of course, is seen as the southern boundary of the region in later periods, but along the Gipping valley to the north.

Similarly areas can now be highlighted where evidence for Early Anglo-Saxon settlement might be expected but where no such finds have been recovered. For example the Shotley peninsula in southeast Suffolk has relatively light soils and is readily accessible from the North Sea. However over 20 years of often intense metal detector searching has not recovered any traditional Early Anglo-Saxon metal finds of fifth to seventh century date. It is not credible to argue for depopulation in such an area so we must question whether the current conceptual framework for post-Roman artefact studies is capable of recognising non Anglo-Saxon metal dress items of fifth to seventh century date in Eastern England? Such items might be fashioned crudely from Roman period scrap, as for example are some disc brooches, and they may be identified in metal detected assemblages if the focus is shifted from readily recognisable items of apparently clear ethnic origin to these items of indeterminate age and origin. The general lack of classic Early Anglo-Saxon finds in the Shotley peninsula and Stour valley in south Suffolk perhaps indicating some stronger sub-Roman, British, power enclave perhaps centred around Colchester in the fifth to sixth century period.

Finally we should not forget environmental evidence as an indicator of settlement and land use. Pollen studies may not give us any idea of political structure but it can indicate the presence, scale and type of agricultural activity. Where such environmental evidence is available in Suffolk all indicators point to a continuity of use in the agricultural landscape across the landscape (as noted in the Sutton Hoo Conference in 1998 by Peter Murphy and Patricia Wiltshire and summarised in Saxon



Above: John Newman

Photo: Nigel MacBeth

30). For the post Roman period environmental sampling at Micklemere, Pakenham, indicates an open landscape with grazing for the fifth to sixth century period while similar work at Caudle Head, Eriswell, in west Suffolk also indicates pasture as being dominant in the pollen record. For the region as a whole the pollen sequence from Scole, in the Waveney valley close to the Pye Road, is the most closely dated with a long sequence of radiocarbon dates. Here land use intensifies in the Iron Age and Roman periods, as might be expected, but there is no drop-off in the fifth century. Instead we can see an increase in arable land use in the post-Roman period. Change may be apparent but not any degree of depopulation or abandonment of land on any scale. Further afield this picture is supported at Stanstead on the claylands of Essex where pollen evidence indicates an open landscape with mixed farming in the post Roman period. Intriguing evidence from artefacts is all but absent in and around Stanstead in the fifth to seventh century period where the traditional view would see heavy clay soils as being intensely unattractive through what we know as the Early Anglo-Saxon period.

The evidence for activity in the post Roman period is admittedly biased in its method of collection; is often sparse and is definitely open to varying interpretations. However a combined study of the surviving artefactual material, relict landscape features and environmental evidence points to a complex picture of population survival, migrant settlement, changing economies and subtle interaction as power was fragmented in the fifth to seventh century period. Artefact studies moving away from the constraints of ethnic identification and more detailed environmental sampling would assist these studies and would help more fully illuminate the political complexity of the post Roman period.

John Newman. Field Officer, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service has long been involvement in various key projects fundamental to the understanding of the Anglo-Saxon period in East Anglia.

The Angles And Saxons Geographically Considered

By Tom Williamson

Throughout history a major line of division has cut diagonally across the middle of Suffolk. The north and east of the county has always displayed many similarities with Norfolk; the south and west has shared many features with Essex. Some of these differences appear to be related to aspects of soil and relative relief. Thus in 'northern East Anglia' muted terrain, sluggish rivers and peat-filled valleys ensured that meadow land was in short supply. As a result, medieval settlement in this region tended to take the form of loose scatters of farms around extensive commons, which provided grazing late into the year. In 'southern East Anglia', in contrast, this form of settlement was comparatively rare. Yet many differences between the two regions cannot be related to

In the later Iron Age the material culture of south west Suffolk, like that of Essex and Hertfordshire, indicates close contacts with the Roman world, with wealthy burials, furnished with grave goods including amphorae and other exotic imports; wheel-turned pottery and the first coinage. To north and east, in contrast – in the territory of the Iceni – wheel-thrown pottery did not really come into widespread use until after the Claudian conquest, and wealthy burials and rich imports are rare. Less clearly, perhaps, the distribution of Scandinavian place names, while relatively thin even in northern East Anglia, fades out entirely towards the south west.

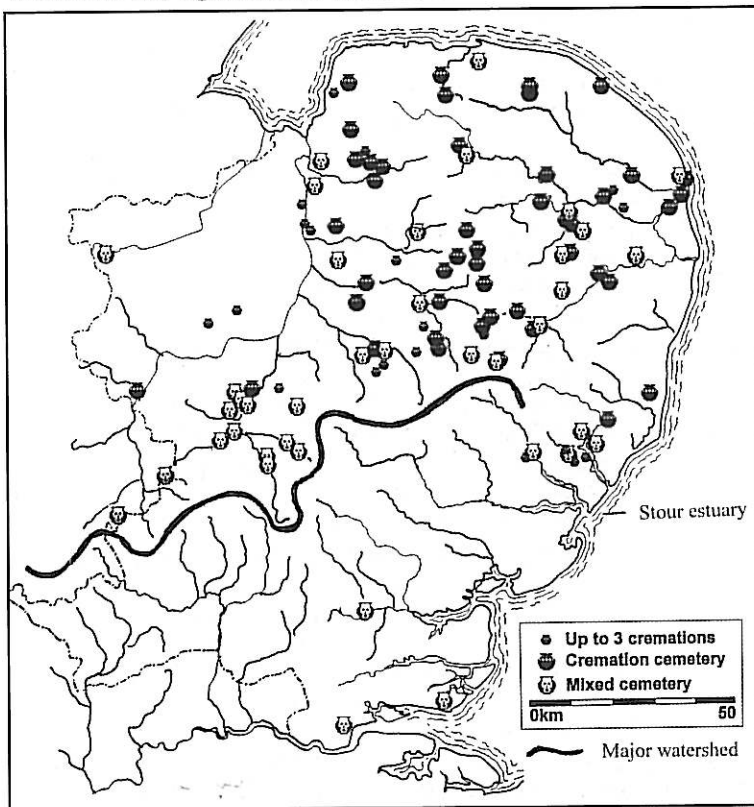
Perhaps of more interest to readers is the fact that the same division appears in the immediate post-Roman centuries, in the rites of disposal found in Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. In Norfolk, and in northern and eastern Suffolk, people both inhumed and cremated their dead, like those in the Midlands and north east England. But those in south west Suffolk, and Essex, in common with those throughout south east England, generally practiced inhumation alone, or some form of disposal

territories, and how the high watersheds between them represent cut-off zones, areas of reduced contact. A major watershed – running along the Chilterns, the East Anglian Heights, and (fading and becoming more diffuse) into north Suffolk, evidently forms the boundary between the two broad zones under discussion here. Of equal importance is the configuration and character of the coast. Norfolk and Suffolk were always, for the most part, easily approached from the sea, and estuaries and offshore spits offered safe habourage for ships. South of Felixstowe, in contrast, extensive shoals and wide mudflats made approach more difficult, and Essex has a much weaker maritime tradition than its northern neighbours. The extent of this difference should not be exaggerated: the Essex coast can, of course, be accessed by boats and ships. But in general, influences coming across the North Sea tend to be strong along the coast to the north of Felixstowe, and to fade in intensity to the south.

Figure 1 shows how the distribution of Anglo-Saxon cremation cemeteries seems to be structured by these topographic constraints: and this in turn has important implications for our understanding of the character of the Anglo-Saxon settlement itself. It suggests that the distribution of different burial rites, and of certain kinds of artefact, reflect long-term patterns of contact and exchange, and perhaps the cultural allegiances which were derived from these. The configuration of natural topography ensured that the Midlands and northern East Anglia looked towards the North Sea and Scandinavia, while the south east of England maintained ties with the former imperial lands across the channel. It is, indeed, a moot point how far this region was ever really drawn into the world of the barbarian north, or how far its culture really differed from that of Gaul, where (for example) inhumation with grave goods was the normal burial rite even among the Christian Franks.

What is of particular interest is the position of Sutton Hoo, at the boundary between these two extensive cultural zones. The Wuffingas evidently belong to the world of the north, but was it their geographical position on the edge of that world, and the access to long-distance exchange networks which this facilitated, that ensured their rise to dominance in East Anglia? Certainly, we need to pay more attention to the wider geographical context of Sutton Hoo, if we are to understand its true significance.

Dr. Tom Williamson Lecturer at the Centre of East Anglian Studies, University of East Anglia and author of numerous publications and books, is an authority on Landscape Archaeology.



Above: Figure 1: Distribution of Anglo-Saxon cremation cemeteries

obvious environmental circumstances and were evidently *cultural* in character. Round-towered churches, the habit of placing two or more churches in the same or adjacent yards, the preference in the middle ages for queen post roofs, even the post-medieval use of pantiles as a roof covering – all these, together with others, are features which northern and eastern Suffolk shares with Norfolk, but which south west Suffolk, like Essex, abjures. Some, although not all, of these distributions extend more widely: those of 'northern East Anglia' into the Midlands and north east England; those of 'southern East Anglia', across extensive areas of south east England.

which – like that which had been used by the majority of the Romano-British population – has left no obvious archaeological trace. Certain forms of artefact also display distributions which extend across northern East Anglia, the Midlands and the north east, such as sleeve clasps, and these have sometimes been seen – together with cremation itself – as specifically 'Anglian' as opposed to 'Saxon' in character.

These cultural differences seem to be related to patterns of communication and contact. Historians of the Leicester School, notably Everitt and Phythian Adams, have written at length about the relationship between regional societies and natural topography in the medieval and post-medieval periods, emphasising in particular how drainage basins often correspond to social

THE NATIONAL TRUST AND THE SUTTON HOO SOCIETY

Reg. Charity No. 205846

Reg. Charity No. 293097

Re-enactment Displays

Archaeology

Hog Roast Beer Tent

Music Books

Burial Ground Tours

Anglo-Saxon Treasure

Sae Wylfing

Falconry Archery

West Stow

Children's Activities



ANGLO-SAXON FESTIVAL

**23 and 24 July at Sutton Hoo
near Woodbridge 10am - 5pm**

Entry: Adult £8.00 Child £2.00 Family £20.00

NT & SHS members' concessions apply

***MRS PRETTY AND
BASIL BROWN: IN PERSON***

Brian Hewlett (Neil Carter in *The Archers*)
as Basil Brown

Rosemary Macvie as Mrs Pretty

Written by Peppy Barlow

2.30pm at Tranmer House

Tickets £8.00 (no concessions)

***BEOWULF AND
THE DREAM-SHIP
OF SUTTON HOO***

Presented by Dr Sam Newton

12.00 at Tranmer House

includes a stroll

on the burial mounds

Tickets £5.00 (no concessions)

Seats for Tranmer House Presentations are limited.

For reservations telephone Mike Argent on 01728 747 716

Tickets also available from Reception at Sutton Hoo Visitor Centre 01394 389737



DIARY

Sutton Hoo Opening Times

11am – 5pm daily until 2 October

Admission

Adult £4.00 Child £2.00 Group rate £3.50

For ALL information about site opening and visiting please contact the National Trust and NOT the Society:

National Trust Sutton Hoo:

Tel: 01394 389700

Fax: 01394 389702

Email: asoksx@smtp.ntrust.org.uk

Web site: www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Sutton Hoo Treasury Exhibition

Celts and Saxons: the Mystery of the Hanging Bowls, explores the development of one of the rarest types of Anglo-Saxon artefact – the hanging bowl.

SOCIETY EVENTS 2005

Anglo-Saxon Festival

Weekend 23 and 24 July. See main advert

Members Autumn Outing

Sunday 9 October. A visit to the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St. Alban, Greenstead Church and Verulamium Museum. Please see enclosed leaflet and booking form.

Guides Guides Guides

Guiding is rewarding and fun and we can never have too many. We would be delighted to hear from anyone interested. Contact Lindsay Lee on 01394 450 491

Constitution Update

It was agreed at the AGM that the Society Constitution should be updated to reflect the changes that have taken place since the National Trust became owners of the site. It has now been submitted to the Charities Commission for approval and we hope to include the final version in the same envelope as the December issue of *Saxon* which will be posted to every Society member.

Archive Corner

Over the years the society has collected an assortment of letters, photographs, slides and information about Sutton Hoo. These collections are an important historical archive which are being carefully catalogued and looked after for future generations.

Our latest addition is the *Don Lodge Slide Collection*, presented to the society by his widow Margaret and depicts the 1960's excavations at Sutton Hoo. Peter Rooley (ex society treasurer) has compiled the catalogue information and written the following notes about Don Lodge:

Don Lodge died in 1986. He was at school during the 1920's and then apprenticed to his father in the building trade. He was a bricklayer and in later years specialized in York stone fireplaces. During World War Two he was in the Auxiliary Fire Service and saw active service in Coventry and York. He was interested in bridge building, churches and windmills and he and Margaret shared an interest in collecting hunting and coach scene prints, principally by the artist, Herring.

Don was a founder member of the Pontefract Archaeological Society and excavated at Pontefract Priory from 1957 alongside Ken and Peggy Wilson, Eric Houlder, Terry Carney and others. He became Vice-President of the PAS and ran it voluntarily after his retirement in the 1970's. He was a good surveyor and a keen photographer.

Between 1967 and 1971 he spent several of his annual holidays at Sutton Hoo and became involved in the excavations, working under Rupert Bruce-Mitford, Paul Ashbee and Ian Longworth. He always travelled and shared a tent with Fred Morris

(nick-name Balou!). Other members of the Pontefract Archaeological Society who came to excavate at Sutton Hoo at this time were Eric and Joan Houlder, Derek and Anne Thorpe, Terry and Caroline Carney, Lionel Taylor and (in 1967) Ken and Peggy Wilson, most of whom can be seen on the slides.

The society are extremely grateful to Margaret Lodge for the slide collection and to Peter Rooley for his work on collating them. The Sutton Hoo Society recognises the importance of keeping archive material safe and accessible for the future.

If anyone has any photographs, slides, film or letters relating to Sutton Hoo, please think about depositing them for safekeeping in our archive. Contact our Chairman Lindsay Lee on 01394 450 491.

The Sutton Hoo Report

The long awaited Sutton Hoo Report by Martin Carver (British Museum Publications) will be available mid-July and the Society has been offered a discount price for our members. We are still waiting for confirmation of the retail price (set some months ago at £75) so our discount price will depend on the final figure, but it should be around 20% (postage & packing excluded). If you are interested in ordering a copy please contact Robert Allen (Sutton Hoo Society Publications Officer) on 01473 728 018 or write to White Gables, Thornley Drive, Rushmere St Andrew, Ipswich, IP4 3LR

Obituary

We are sad to report the death of Christopher Terrell who passed away in January 2005. He was an enthusiastic member of the society and had been guiding at Sutton Hoo since 2000. He retired in 1989 after a career in the Royal Navy, rising to the position of Head of Maps and Charts at Greenwich Museum. Always the gentleman, Christopher loved Suffolk and Sutton Hoo and will be greatly missed. Our condolences go to Clare, his widow.

Contact Addresses

Jane Wright, Membership Secretary, 32, Mariners Way, Aldeburgh, Suffolk IP15 5QH
Stewart Salmond, Guiding Secretary, Tailor's House, Bawdsey, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3AJ
Email: chairman@suttonhoo.org Web site: <http://www.suttonhoo.org>
Saxon: Email: publications@suttonhoo.org

Who's Who — Sutton Hoo Society Committee Members

Chairman: Lindsay Lee Hon. Treasurer: Mike Argent Research Director: Martin Carver
Membership Secretary: Jane Wright Minutes Secretary: Brenda Brown Guiding Secretary: Stewart Salmond Publications: Robert Allen
Duncan Allen Sue Banyard Alison Booth Jenny Cant Nigel Maslin
Trish Mulholland-Middleton Angus Wainwright

CREDITS

Saxon: Editor: Trish Mulholland-Middleton Sub-editor: Jenny Glazebrook Original Design: Nigel MacBeth