The Sixth and Earlier Seventh Centuries: Preconditions of the Rise of the *Emporia*

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Vol. I

Abstract

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This thesis assesses the sixth-/early seventh-century socio-economic roots of the eighth-century transmarine system connecting England and the Continent through major coastal trading sites (*emporia*).

Part 1 discusses socio-economic developments in the coastal areas of Kent, Sussex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, and the Pas-de-Calais, through a close investigation of fifth- to early seventh-century archaeological evidence. The inclusion of later written sources has been fundamental to recognise that the two shores of the Channel were connected in a more complex network than previously assumed, beyond the major *emporia*.

These areas are then considered comparatively: after challenging substantivist approaches that assume an overwhelming importance of gift-exchange in sixth-century England, Part 2 stresses the role of transmarine traffic and exploitation of natural resources in the socio-economic development of coastal areas. The examination of sixth-century written sources has also proved rewarding to reconsider the sixth-century political relationships between Franks and Anglo-Saxons. The role of kings, churches and laymen in the later transmarine network (seventh/eighth centuries) is then discussed by including the Thames Valley, the estuaries of the rivers Seine and Loire, and the Rhine Delta, examined through the written sources.

One crucial question is the role of political actors in the development of a cross-Channel system of exchange. In this regard, scholars have mainly focused on the period when this system was already in place, pointing to a pivotal role of kings and political institutions for its establishment, or to the later appropriation by elites of a coastal area already integrated in the maritime network, but detached from political power. This thesis argues that a close link existed between elites and coastal areas before the *emporia*; thus, although kings were not the driving stimulus for the establishment of trading sites, the transmarine traffic fostered the socio-economic development of the coastal communities.

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Abstract

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This thesis provides a new model to explain the socio-economic frameworks at the origin of the transmarine trading system that flourished in the North Sea area from the eighth century. This network, based around coastal trading sites known as *emporia*, fuelled the unprecedented economic development of this area, and is therefore a well-known theme of historical research. However, its roots in the previous centuries (ca. sixth-seventh c.) had not been fully investigated.

In particular, this research focusses on the area of the Channel, which witnessed the establishment of two of the major *emporia*, namely *Hamwic* in Hampshire and *Quentovic* in the Pas-de-Calais. Close investigations have been conducted on Kent, Sussex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight in Southern England, and on the Pas-de-Calais in Northern France. Each region has been examined separately in Part 1 (Chapters 1-4), investigating the settlement network in coastal areas and the relationship between coasts and their hinterland during roughly the sixth and early seventh centuries. In the context of the archaeological evidence, specific attention has been given to imports and precious goods, to reconstruct the transmarine network before the establishment of the *emporia*. It must be noted that most of this evidence comes from funerary sites, where these items were used as grave goods: this implies important issues concerning the social perception of these objects. Regarding luxury goods, the investigation has focussed on items made in gold, silver, and with garnets, because these materials were most probably imported in England: the pattern of their distribution in each region and within particular cemeteries has been fundamental for the examination of variations in access to foreign goods and materials, and high-status presence. This investigation also includes a detailed study of the written sources, most of which start around the middle of the seventh century; among these, specific attention has been paid to charters documenting grants of lands. Although they pertain to a later period, these sources are crucial to allow us to understand the pattern of landownership in coastal areas, and to identify which of these territories the interest of political actors, that is kings, churches and laymen, was directed to. The inclusion of written sources has made it possible to propose a more complex network of transmarine exchange, beyond that passing through the major *emporia*. Moreover, the integration of archaeological

evidence and written sources has been crucial for the investigation of whether a specific link was in place between maritime zones, communities showing high-status presence during roughly the sixth and earlier seventh centuries, and areas for which the documents reveal a royal and monastic economic interest in the later period. This interdisciplinary first step has enabled me to recognise possible differences in the socio-economic development of each region, which may or may not have led to the establishment of a major *emporium*.

Concerning Kent, it is proposed that the region witnessed a strong relationship between political centres and coasts even in the sixth century, especially in its eastern part; this link, as explained below, is particularly important for assessing the role of elites in the transmarine network. It is then argued that the strong integration of a large part of the Kentish maritime area with transmarine traffic during the Early Saxon period is to be connected with the lack of a Mid-Saxon *emporium* comparable to *Hamwic*, while a widespread pattern of landing sites involved in transmarine activities continued to be in place (Chapter 1). A similar continuity from the Early to the Mid-Saxon period is suggested for Sussex, in this case however in terms of a weak inclusion in the cross-Channel traffic throughout the centuries: indeed, among the examined regions Sussex is the one where the smallest number of foreign goods has been recovered, and it seems thus peripheral in the context of this maritime network (Chapter 2). Contrary to what can be seen in Kent and Sussex, the archaeological evidence indicates that a major change occurred in mid-seventh century Hampshire, with the takeover by the West Saxons of the centrality in maritime routes previously held by the Isle of Wight, and the development of *Hamwic*. In the sixth century, instead, the Isle of Wight seems to have mediated at least part of the traffic arriving into Hampshire. (Chapter 3). Finally, the Pas-de-Calais has been chosen as a case-study in Francia because of the later presence of *Quentovic*, the major *emporium* for this part of the Merovingian kingdoms. Beyond *Quentovic*, moreover, its geographic position close to England makes it an excellent case for the investigation of contacts and exchange between the two areas. The study of the Pas-de-Calais involves partially different issues: since written sources report the presence of foreign populations in the maritime areas of Francia, the 'Anglo-Saxon' materials found in the Pas-de-Calais, mostly in its coastal area, are currently accepted to be proof of an Anglo-Saxon presence. This is particularly important for the origins of *Quentovic*, because 'Anglo-Saxon' objects have been proposed as evidence that the impulse for the birth of the *emporium* came from the Anglo-Saxons. However, the link between grave goods and ethnicity of the owners is not straightforward, and the 'Anglo-Saxon' items make up quite a small group. Thus, while a foreign presence on the coasts of Francia seems likely, such items should be regarded as evidence of contacts (Chapter 4).

These cases have been compared and considered as a whole in Part 2, framing the differences and establishing common lines of economic and social development. In particular, this thesis seeks also to challenge some of the theories which lead to too rigid a picture of a major watershed occurring in the passage from the sixth to the seventh century. In this regard, the recognition of the variety of existing mechanisms of exchange has proved fundamental to overcome the substantivist perspectives that are still used as a framework to understand the socio-economic developments occurred in this period. Indeed, the rise and development of the *emporia* should not be assessed in terms of a passage from a gift- to a market-economy, since the category of gift-economy cannot be applied to sixth-century Anglo-Saxon England. Amber beads are treated in detail in this respect, and it is shown that their massive presence and widespread distribution does not fit well with gift-exchange and the 'luxury good' label, pointing instead to ongoing trading activities (Chapter 5). The thesis then examines the links between communities in receipt of imports and luxury goods during the sixth century, and nodal areas of the later period (e.g. 'productive' sites), recognising that in many cases a continuity in the importance of specific areas can be perceived. Moreover, transmarine exchange and the exploitation of natural resources are examined as possible economic bases for the development of the communities settled on both the coasts of the Channel. Concerning the exploitation of resources, iron and salt are a prominent focus, since they were basic goods capable of fostering economic growth: it is here proposed that the exploitation of these resources played an important role in the socio-economic development of coastal communities even in the sixth century (Chapter 6). The integrated examination of both English and Continental regions has been essential to reconsider the political and economic relationship between the two areas, challenging the idea of a Frankish hegemony over Southern England, which was proposed by Ian Wood in the 1980's and has been widely accepted ever since. A reconsideration of the written sources that have been used to substantiate the overlordship theory shows that they are highly ambiguous at the most. Instead, relationships between Anglo-Saxons and the Merovingians are better framed in the context of a Frankish cultural influence, whereby these contacts were important for the Anglo-Saxons to foster social status. (Chapter 7). Then, the role of kings, churches and laymen in the seventh-/eighth-century transmarine system has been discussed, widening the area of research by including the Thames Valley, the maritime areas of the Seine and the Loire, and the Rhine Delta. This enlarged picture, which has been largely based on written sources, shows that similar processes of appropriation of coastal lands by political actors were ongoing in other areas as well. While the Thames, the Seine and the Loire are excellent cases to investigate the presence and role of kings and monasteries in the trading

network, the later appropriation of the Rhine Delta by the Franks makes the emerging picture of lay landownership in this area unparalleled among the examined regions. (Chapter 8).

This use of the written sources, integrated with a close and thorough investigation of the increasing amount of archaeological remains of the late fifth/early seventh centuries, has allowed me to propose a new model of development for these areas. Indeed, a crucial question which has been a scholarly focus for decades concerns the role of political actors, such as kings and churches, in the development of the *emporia*-system. Concerning the role of elites, fundamental in scholarship has been Richard Hodges's model, revised several times since the 1980s, which pointed to a pivotal role of kings and political institutions for the establishment of the *emporia* (top-down model). On the contrary, more recently scholars such as Christopher Loveluck propose a later elite appropriation of coastal areas which were already included in a maritime network but are argued to have been detached from political centres (bottom-up model). However, these contrasting theories share the same chronological restriction, that is they concentrate on the period when the *emporia* were already active, from around the middle of the seventh century, paying much less attention to the preceding centuries.

In fact, models which are too general are currently applied to the socio-economic context of the sixth century, and the bottom-up framework does not fully answer the question of the role of elites in the transmarine system before the *emporia*. This research has clarified that kings and churches, the most visible socio-economic actors, were not the driving stimulus for the establishing of the cross-Channel network. In fact, they took possession of key sites already involved in economic activities before the formation of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms around the late sixth century and the later establishment of monasteries. Indeed, a complex network of long-distance connections resting on different methods of exchange, including trade and gift-giving, was in place between England and the Continent already during the sixth century. The transmarine network and maritime-related activities (e.g. salt-production) contributed decisively to the increasing development of wealthy communities settled along the coasts near many landing places before the final formation of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. Then, from the moment of their emergence, kings and churches played a pivotal role in increasing and structuring the trade network in the late seventh century and onward.

Concerning the involvement of kings in maritime traffic, recent scholarship argues that kings did not hold a total control over exchange, but were mostly interested in levying tolls – and indeed toll collection points at the *emporia* are documented in the written sources. Thus, their involvement would have been mostly indirect. However, the widespread patterns of royal properties that can be detected at close distance from the trading sites allow us to suggest that

the kings may have participated to the exchange network as producers as well. Much clearer is the active involvement of monasteries in trading activities during the period of the *emporia*, for which charters provide evidence; moreover, the establishment of religious foundations, which were deeply anchored in their territories, may have played an important role in the rise of the *emporia*, that is, of structured trading centres.

Thus, the emergence of major trading centres during the seventh century should be understood against the background of this variegated picture of commercial and non-commercial transmarine exchange occurring in the previous period. Some of the investigated areas, as East Kent, show clear links between coasts and political centres already in the sixth century: this thesis proposes that it was the transmarine network that, by enabling some Anglo-Saxon communities to flourish and develop, played a fundamental role in shaping socio-economic differences among the population, thus decisively contributing to the emergence and consolidation of the kingdoms. Indeed, some of the coastal communities whose cemeteries display a widespread presence of imports and luxury goods, may have developed thanks to a role of intermediaries between their hinterland and the maritime network. Part of the communities settled on the coast of the Pas-de-Calais may have acted in a similar way, which enabled them to develop. However, while in Southern England this may have had some role in the formation of the kingdoms, this did not happen in the Pas-de-Calais, which was a peripheral area in the context of sixth-century Francia. Thus, the specific focus on the centuries preceding the rise of the *emporia* has allowed us to propose a more complex model for understanding the origins of the *emporia*-system, challenging too general assumptions about the sixth-century socio-economic framework and assessing the locally variegated relationships between trade activity and political power.

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Volume II

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Abbreviations

AASS = *Acta Sanctorum*

OSB = *Acta Sanctorum ordinis sancti Benedicti*

ASKED = *Anglo-Saxon Kent Electronic Database*, digital resource

ChLA = *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores*

DB Hampshire = Domesday Book 4 Hampshire

DB Kent = Domesday Book 1 Kent

DB Surrey = Domesday Book 3 Surrey

Dipl. Belg. = Diplomata Belgica ante annum millesimum centesimum scripta

DLH = Gregory of Tours, *Decem Libri Historiarum*

HE = Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*

LSJ = Liddell, H. – Scott, R. – Jones, H.S. 1996, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (9th ed. Oxford).

MGH = *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*

AA = *Auctores antiquissimi*

DD Kar. = Die Urkunden der Karolinger

DD Mer. = *Diplomata regum francorum e stirpe merovingica*

Epp. = Epistolae

LL nat. Germ. = *Leges nationum Germanicarum*

SRG = *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi*

SRM = *Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum*

SS = *Scriptores (in Folio)*

PAS = Portable Antiquities Scheme, digital resource

TLG = *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, digital resource

Introduction

The written sources and the archaeological evidence show that from the mid-seventh century onwards the Atlantic side of Northern Europe was connected together through a transmarine system based on coastal trading sites (*emporia*) which sustained a long-distance traffic of goods and the movement of people. Over the last century, this maritime network has been an important subject of archaeological and historical research. However, scholarship has mainly focused on the period when the large *emporia* were already active and flourishing; in contrast, the origins of this system have been largely neglected. This thesis is an attempt to fill this gap, by investigating the socio-economic context, roughly between the sixth to the early seventh century, for the rise of the later transmarine system; for *emporia* did not appear out of nowhere, and we will not be able to understand them properly until we understand their origins. In particular, this research concentrates on the Channel area, including the Anglo-Saxon regions south of the Thames, namely Kent, Sussex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, and Northern France, especially the *département* of the Pas-de-Calais. The choice to focus on this area is due to the strong connections these regions show in the Post-Roman period, and to the fact that this zone witnessed the establishment of two of the most important and earliest trading sites, *Hamwic* and *Quentovic*. As noted at the end of this Introduction, I will extend my studies in less detail down the French coast as far as the mouth of the Loire, and up the Rhine, only in Ch. 8, largely for reasons of space.

This thesis, as said above, focusses on the origins of the *emporia*. But before I discuss that, it is necessary to look briefly at the debate about *emporia* themselves. These major trading sites are variously mentioned in the sources as *vici* (and the placename *-wic*, an element that may identify a port, without being necessarily an *emporium*) or *emporia*: apart from *Hamwic* and *Quentovic*, and falling beyond the specific focus of this thesis, the most famous are *Lundenwic*,

Ipswich, York, Dorestad, Hedeby, Ribe, Kaupang and Birka. The *emporia* appear to have shared similar characteristics: they were large sites with ports, situated on the coast or at a short distance from the sea and were engaged in long-distance traffic.[1] Not all these trading sites developed simultaneously, but the earliest, in the southern area of the North Sea, are archaeologically visible from around the middle of the seventh century, although the textual evidence for them is generally later. However, the large and structured *emporia* include only part of the sites actively involved in transmarine traffic during these centuries: indeed, while other substantial places are mentioned as *mercimonia* ('trading sites') in the written sources, such as Rouen on the Seine, over the last decades archaeological research has uncovered a large number of sites on the North Sea shores which engaged in commercial activity during the Early Middle Ages. This complex web of trading centres can be found also in areas witnessing the flourishing of a major *emporium*, as along the mouths of the Rhine, where many minor sites are documented alongside Dorestad.[2]

The *emporia* are amply attested archaeologically, with large quantities of long-distance goods and evidence of ongoing craft productions uncovered. Yet they are less visible in the written sources; we have only a few mentions of them in historical texts such as the *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* by Bede, who attests to the existence of the commercial site of *Lundenwic*,[3] or in charters illuminating the presence of a toll collection system based on these sites.[4]

Focusing on the specifics of these trading settlements, which do not seem to have included monumental or important religious zones, central to the scholarly debate has been the question of their nature and their role within the landscape of settlement. Past scholarship has long

[1] See Hill 2001, 75-76, identifying shared similarities; these are: (1) commercial centre, (2) with a harbour, (3) pre-Viking, (4) large occupied area (i.e. over 5 ha), (5) no defensive works before 850, (6) a craft centre, (7) evidence for long-distance trade.

[2] See van Es – Verwers 2010a; Loveluck – Tys 2006.

[3] Bede, *HE* II.3.

[4] See Kelly 1992 and Ch. 1.2, n. 93 (p. 48).

debated about their possible exceptional character. Even if our understanding of them has decisively moved forward since then, it is worth remembering that in 1962 Jean Dhondt referred to them as *villes-champignons*, to stress the precariousness of their roots within the landscape, which would have explained their rapid disappearance – for the majority of them are not attested for very long after the ninth century.[5] More recently, Frans Theuws has also highlighted the uncommon nature of these centres, considering, for instance, the absence of an important religious role in most of them, and has suggested that these places conveyed the articulation of idiosyncratic value systems – and that the changes in this articulation played an important role in their fall.[6] Similarly to Dhondt, Adriaan Verhulst proposed that the *emporia* were marginal and more impermanent sites than the Roman towns, these latter being more deeply rooted in their landscape.[7] Although the question of their disappearance would require a specific research which is beyond the focus of the present thesis, pointing to their 'immaturity' or marginality seems reductive of their broader context; it should instead be addressed within a wider picture of political and economic developments.[8]

Concerning their role in the landscape of settlement, in a fundamental 1976 article Martin Biddle stressed the now well-established link between these sites and centres of royal and ecclesiastical power, as for instance seen in the case of *Hamwic*.[9] On the relation between *emporia* and Roman towns, in 2000 Hodges argued the case for separation further, proposing that the *emporia* were deliberately established away from older centres; however, this does not seem to have been the case since, as Christopher Loveluck has rightly pointed out, the *emporia*

[5] See Dhondt 1962, 181.
[6] See Theuws 2004; 2012a, 44.
[7] See Verhulst 1999, esp. 45-46.
[8] See Henning 2007, 4-5, arguing against the idea of 'a certain economic incompleteness or immaturity' of the *emporia* as the factor which caused their failure. For a more nuanced picture on the exceptionality of these trading sites see Wickham 2005, esp. 685. A radical perspective on the *emporia* has been advocated by Samson 1999 (id., 77: 'there was no such thing as middle-Saxon emporia as conceived by archaeologists'), questioning the division in scholarship between *emporia* and towns. See also Scull 1997; 2002, challenging the label of 'proto-urban' in the case of Ipswich.
[9] Cf. Biddle 1976, 114-15.

lay 'within or in very close proximity to their Roman antecedents'.[10] In the case of Hampshire and the trading sites in Kent, this separation seems in fact to have been determined simply by different strategies of location. While trading centres with ports grew in strategic areas in terms of connectivity (also as regards connection with political centres), former Roman towns best suited ecclesiastical foundations. In addition, as shown in the following chapters, Roman towns and their surroundings appear to have acted as foci for elite presence during the Early Saxon period, as can be seen in the case of the surroundings of Winchester.

In the seminal article of 2001 where David Hill set out his list of the characteristics defining an *emporium*, the author proposed to divide the *emporia* in two classes, '*de novo* sites' (I), and 'suburbs, those in relationship to a major Roman centre' (II).[11] *Quentovic* and *Hamwic* were included in Class I, while London and Rouen in Class II. In Hill's opinion, the trading sites pertaining to the two classes had a different role, those growing in the suburbs having a deeper relationship with the former Roman towns. While a closer link with the Roman sites is likely, one should not forget that post-Roman ecclesiastical and royal links are well attested for the sites in each of the two classes. Moreover, proximity to a former major Roman town does not appear as an entirely satisfactory parameter in a by-now mostly ruralized landscape of settlement. Conversely, if we assume a different perspective, *Quentovic* and *Hamwic* cannot be regarded as *de novo* sites: for instance, the case of *Quentovic* shows that the *emporium* developed at a short distance from the cemetery used by a rich community which engaged in cross-Channel contacts long before the rise of the major trading site (La Calotterie).[12] Moreover, recent progress in research has demonstrated that each of these trading sites had its

[10] Cf. Hodges 2000, esp. 88: 'Yet it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that a rational decision was being taken by these first medieval urban planners to step outside the shadow of classical antiquity.'. Cf. Loveluck 2013, 17.
[11] Cf. Hill 2001, 79.
[12] See Ch. 4.1.

own specificities and underwent different developments; thus, these straightforward divisions are difficult to apply.[13]

From the perspective of this thesis, the *emporia* were essentially 'functional' places, that is centres which owe their establishment and development to economic activities such as commercial exchange and craft production. Thus, they cannot be extrapolated from the context in which they developed: in other words, in the case of *Hamwic* and *Quentovic*, their location near ecclesiastical sites (Winchester and monastic foundations) and royal lands and villas (in the case of *Quentovic* documented from the seventh century) should not be underestimated. The examples of *Quentovic* and *Hamwic* are the most visible, given of course their later development, but similar connections can be seen in other areas as well, as for instance in the case of Canterbury, at a short distance from the many harbours provided by the Wantsum Channel.[14] Stronger economic demand, royal policies toward traders and the traders' choices (among other factors) would have caused the development of a specific site, but, as shown in the case of Kent (Ch. 1), the pattern of a major *emporium* surrounded by minor trading sites was not necessary for a region to participate in the cross-Channel system of exchange. The importance of royal demand, and the evidence for a royal and ecclesiastical presence in the proximity of the trading sites, however, does not entail a founding activity by kings, as will be discussed in detail in Chs. 6 and 8.[15] The evidence for the area considered in this thesis does not, in fact, seem to fit well with such a role played by kings, nor with that suggested by Grenville Astill in 2000, who proposed that the rise of the *emporia* was linked with a 'change in the nature of kingship'.[16]

[13] On this see Hodges 2012, revising the recent debate on *emporia*. Differences between the *emporia* can be for instance seen in terms of their relationship with the hinterlands; see e.g. Scull 1997; Hamerow 2007; below n. 30.

[14] See Ch. 1.1.

[15] On aristocratic wealth generating demand and thus economic development see Wickham 2008.

[16] Cf. Astill 2000, 33. This seems too much a theoretical model; see also Hodges 2012, 102.

The most influential historical model for the development of the *emporia* is that proposed by Richard Hodges in the 1980s with the now classic *Dark Age Economics*. In this model, revised several times since, Hodges looked at the *emporia* as monopolistic centres founded by kings to control the flow of long-distance luxury goods, which would have formed a solid basis for their power, thus understanding them as gateway communities and ports-of-trade in a dendritic system of exchange.[17]

In recent decades, many of the elements of Hodges' theory have been criticised, based on new archaeological discoveries and excavations, which have changed our understanding of the socio-economic context in which the *emporia* flourished. Astill provided one of the first responses to this model, showing that the development of the network may have been more complex than assumed by Hodges.[18] Central to both Hodges' model and its critiques is the role of royal power. Given that these trading centres were established in areas already included in transmarine traffic in the earlier centuries, scholars have suggested that the kings did not found these sites, but instead took possession of them in a later period; and, concerning the political actors involved in the network, Stephane Lebecq and Joachim Henning among others have made the case for the crucial importance of monasteries in the economic activities in which the *emporia* were involved.[19] The role of monasteries in market activity has been recently questioned by Hodges.[20] However, as discussed in this thesis, the process of religious foundations in the coastal areas of Southern England and between the Loire and the Rhine on the Continent from roughly the seventh century onwards strongly suggests an involvement of monasteries in trade. We shall also see, moreover, that in some cases the choice to establish a

[17] See Hodges 1982; 1989; 2000; 2012.
[18] See Astill 1985.
[19] On monasteries see Lebecq 2000; Henning 2007. On this reassessment of the role of political power see e.g. Henning 2007, McCormick 2007, Lebecq 1997, Loveluck – Tys 2006; Fleming 2009, Loveluck 2012.
[20] See Hodges 2012.

monastery in a strategic location along maritime routes may have been motivated by a wish to take part in the transmarine traffic.

As will be seen, a degree of royal control over the seventh/eighth-century *emporia* is undeniable, given the charters attesting to toll collection activities there and the presence of royal villas in their vicinity.[21] However, while Hodges proposed that the kings were interested in the prestige goods exchanged at these sites, a consensus seems now to have been reached that the core of the royal interest were the tolls they could gain on imports and exports. This importance of taxation, which could be in coins or in kind, rather than the control of goods, has been suggested by Verhulst, Loveluck, Dries Tys and John Naylor among others.[22] As proposed in Ch. 8, however, this emphasis on taxes may be due to the onesided picture offered by the written sources. In fact, the wide presence of royal lands in the proximity of the *emporia* and near the estuary of the main rivers in general, suggests that they may have served as a basis for the kings themselves to actively participate in commercial activity.

The discovery, over the last decades, of a more complex web of sites involved in transmarine traffic beyond the *emporia* has been the grounds for challenging the idea of a monopoly held by the major *emporia* and thus by kings; it is now clear that royal control over the totality of the long-distance traffic is very unlikely.[23] Concerning the articulation of the network, in 2007 Søren Sindbæk suggested that, in Scandinavia, it is possible to reconstruct a hierarchical web of trading sites on the basis of the types and amounts of goods recovered from them; this represents a convincing model for other areas too. Indeed, concerning this more articulated network in England, a crucial issue is represented by the so-called 'productive' sites that were in place during the Mid-Saxon period alongside the major *emporia*. The striking characteristic

[21] See e.g. Ch. 4.2.2 on *Quentovic*.

[22] See Kelly 1992; Anderton 1999, 2-3; Verhulst 2002, 129-31; Naylor 2004, 129-34; Loveluck – Tys 2006; cf. also Ch. 8.

[23] On control see Naylor 2004; 2016, 62; Henning 2007, 4. This emphasis on royal control on the trading network was due to the fact that control of goods is necessary for the existence of a system as that suggested by Hodges and Saunders. Cf. Saunders 2001. This aspect will be discussed further in Ch. 8.

of these sites is the very large presence in them of metalworking, metal objects and coins; especially given this latter evidence, an engagement of these sites in trading activities has been proposed. These centres have generated a fertile debate which, again, focuses on their nature. Concerning their role in the landscape, Katharina Ulmschneider proposed that the 'productive' sites should be seen as minsters; the idea that churches played a fundamental role in fostering economic development, a thesis supported by John Blair, is at the basis of this interpretation.[24] However, as Loveluck and Naylor have shown, a straightforward interpretation of these sites as minsters overshadows other possibilities: some of them may have started as secular estate centres, and have become monastic sites in a later period. Such a trajectory has been proposed for Flixborough (see Ch. 8.1), and can be clearly recognised at Lyminge as well (see Ch. 1).

Hodges has recently suggested that the large quantity of metalwork lost on the 'productive' sites should be seen as evidence that they were 'intense, possibly experimental, episodes of consumption', thus being linked to lifestyle and 'social theatre'.[25] However, this does not exclude the presence of markets on 'productive sites'. Indeed, as we will see, the pattern of distribution of imports in the previous centuries clearly shows that these sites were situated in nodal areas in the landscape, and that they should be understood in the context of an ongoing importance of particular areas along the routes of traffic and exchange. In the regions considered in this research, the continuing centrality of some areas between the Early Anglo-Saxon period, where this can be assessed by the presence of communities where the population had access to imports, and the Mid-Saxon period, as suggested by the 'productive' sites, is indeed striking; thus, the latter cannot be understood as having played only an 'episodic role (…) in regional economies'.[26] As shown in Ch. 3, this continuity of nodal areas from the Early to the Mid-Saxon period can be seen in the case of Chessell Down and Carisbrooke Castle in

[24] See Ch. 8, esp. pp. 211-12.
[25] Cf. Hodges 2012, 31.
[26] Cf. Hodges 2012, 30.

the Isle of Wight, both sites showing high-status presence in the earlier centuries, and 'productive' sites in the later.

In 2003 Ben Palmer wrote that 'the *emporia* have come to be regarded as an isolated and, ultimately, a failed experiment in the kingdom-building process'.[27] This perception was an effect of previous historical models, which stressed the role of these sites in long-distance trade, seeing them as fundamentally separate from their hinterland. Indeed, in 2001 Tom Saunders suggested that '*Wics* or *emporia* were specialized settlements regulating trade for the exclusive privilege of the tributary ruling elite and so were divorced from the rural economy'.[28] Since then, Palmer and others have focused their research on the relationship between the trading sites and their landscape, thus framing the development of the *emporia* in the socio-economic context of broader territories. In this sense, the recovery of evidence for craft activities in the sites of the *emporia* has played a strong role in changing our perception of these centres: the excavations carried out after the publication of *Dark Age Economics* have shown that these activities were initially underestimated by Hodges, although he later reevaluated their role in the shaping of the *emporia*.[29]

The focus on hinterland and on production, as advocated by John Moreland in 2000, has represented a turning point in the debate on the *emporia*, which are now assessed in the proper context of their region.[30] This shift in the focus of research, and the discovery of a more complex web of sites included in commercial activity, have challenged the previous model which saw the *emporia* as gateway communities and ports-of-trade, thus substantially detached from the core of their territories. However, the role of production is debated, and for instance Christopher

[27] Cf. Palmer 2003, 48.

[28] Cf. Saunders 2001, 13. Saunders maintained many of the elements of Hodges' model, as for instance the royal control and the stress on luxury goods. See Hodges 2012, 106-7, for a recent critique of Saunders' model.

[29] See now Hodges 2012.

[30] See Moreland 2000a. On this focus on production see e.g. the articles included in Anderton 1999 (Blinkhorn 1999, 10, noted that the importance of luxury goods in *emporia* had been overstressed); Moreland 2000b; on the relationship between the *emporia* and their hinterland see e.g. Newman 1999; Palmer 2003; Naylor 2016. See also above n. 13.

Scull and Simon Loseby stress long-distance trade as the main characteristic of these sites.[31] The assumption that the location on frontier areas would be a shared characteristic of the North Sea *emporia* has also been challenged, and a border location does not seem to apply for *Hamwic* and *Quentovic*.[32]

The nature of the long-distance imports represents a further crucial element to be considered. Indeed, in the next chapters, it will be proposed that not all the foreign materials found in the regions included in this thesis can be identified as luxuries. This was the case even though differences appear to have existed between various types of items, and between distinct areas, i.e. areas which were, or were not, connected to the routes of communication; as we shall see, one good guide to this is the distribution of amber beads, a fairly common import in sixth-century female Anglo-Saxon graves. At a theoretical level, moreover, Hodges' stress on the importance of luxury goods derived from the assumption of a substantivist approach, which has received various critiques and cannot be applied in full to Early Anglo-Saxon England.[33]

In the 1980's Hodges proposed a model for the transformation of the trading sites, which became gradually more organized, from small seasonal and periodic sites, such as fairs (Type A), to permanent and planned sites engaged in long-distance trade (Type B), and then administrative places with evidence for production and trade (Type C).[34] Since then, this evolutionary model has been challenged by Scull, Loveluck and Tys among others, and it is now accepted that different types of sites were active in the same period.[35] Criticising substantivist approaches and stressing the key role of craftsmen in economic development, Dagfinn Skre has proposed a more complex typology of trading sites, based on their characteristics in terms of permanence (seasonal, permanent), trading network (interregional,

[31] See Scull 1997, 289; Loseby 2000, 357.
[32] On this see further the Conclusion.
[33] See Ch. 5.
[34] See Hodges 1982, 50-52.
[35] See Scull 2002; Loveluck – Tys 2006, esp. 153.

intraregional, long-distance) and context, for instance whether they were situated in border areas.[36]

Thus, the identification of a broader network of 'productive' sites, a label including a variety of cases, has indeed changed our perception and understanding of the *emporia*, which should not be seen as isolated cases devoted exclusively to long-distance traffic, but as the major nodal points in an integrated landscape including a variety of trading places. The highly strategic position of the *emporia* allowed them to be reached by a large inflow of goods and to develop. However, even if the range of long-distance imports in the *emporia* is striking, it is their integration in their regional context that provided the basis for their flourishing; thus, characterising them only in terms of long-distance connections means to draw a one-sided picture.

In the area covered by this thesis, during the centuries preceding the rise of the *emporia*, the transmarine network was sustained by a large number of landing sites scattered along the two shores of the Channel. They have not left any physical traces, but their existence can be inferred from later sources, toponymic evidence, and from the pattern of distribution of imports in cemeteries. As will be discussed throughout the thesis, however, it should be noted that many of these places cannot be closely dated, given the scarcity of written and archaeological sources. This pattern of numerous landing sites can be detected on the coasts, as well as on the main rivers: as shown in Ch. 8, this is for instance the case of the River Thames and the estuary of the Seine, which will be considered on the basis of later written sources attesting landownership from the seventh century.

Recent research by Loveluck and Tys on the transmarine trading system has also stressed the existence of a maritime identity on the coastal areas of the North Sea from roughly the sixth

[36] See Skre 2008b. See Hodges 2012, esp. 97-98.

century, which was sustained by a complex system of transmarine connections, configuring the coasts as different from the hinterland. Thus, the maritime areas would have been more loosely linked to political power than the inland regions; the coasts would have also developed specialized productions, such as fishing and salt, which constituted a solid basis of enrichment.[37] In this bottom-up model of development, somewhat opposed to that of Hodges, kings and elites were involved in the transmarine network only from a later period and only in terms of collection of tolls: 'The documented major emporia of the seventh to ninth centuries AD can no longer be viewed as the controlling points for the funnelling of imported 'prestige goods'. They were, instead, the main points at which royal authorities taxed long-distance exchange in finished goods and bulk commodities through the collection of tolls'.[38] This new perspective on the development of the maritime web has been crucial to an overcoming of the centrality of elites in the scholarly debate, and, in this regard, Sindbæk's propositions concerning the active role played by traders and their choices in the shaping of the maritime web of trading sites across the North Sea surely deserve mention too.[39] A leading role of traders and craftsmen in the *emporia* has been stressed also by Johan Callmer and Henning.[40] Such insights have established new grounds for research on the origins of the *emporia* system. However, these models still concentrate on the period when the *emporia* were already active, paying much less attention to the previous centuries; thus, the questions of the growth in economic demand, and the link between the transmarine network and elites, still remain unanswered. In this regard, Hodges' argument that the focus on traders as promoters of the network does not fully consider the source of the demand of goods seems crucial.[41]

[37] See Loveluck – Tys 2006, 153: 'This coastal exchange network may have been totally free of any control'.
[38] Cf. Loveluck – Tys 2006, 161.
[39] See Sindbæk 2007.
[40] See Callmer 2007 and Henning 2007. See also below Fleming 2009.
[41] See Hodges 2012, esp. 8-11, assessing the model proposed by Callmer and Henning.

Considering the general trend in the historical and archaeological debate, it appears that the focus has shifted from discourses deeply centred on kings, to approaches strongly trying to avoid looking at elites; but this risks throwing the baby out with the bathwater. In his warning about how to look at the distribution of imports in coastal areas, Loveluck is certainly right when he suggests that imported goods cannot be straightforwardly considered as evidence for high status.[42] Nonetheless, this does not imply that an elite was not present in all cases – and, moreover, the overall quantity of foreign objects along the coasts must mean that there were people rich enough to participate in exchange. In particular, as will be discussed in the Conclusion to this thesis, a bottom-up model for maritime identity implies a uniformity in the development of coastal areas which cannot be detected across the Channel zone as a whole. On the contrary, as shown in the following chapters, a high degree of local variability can be perceived by investigating the archaeological evidence of the fifth/early seventh century, and these differences are the key which allows us to propose a more complex model of socio-economic development.

As mentioned, the *emporia* debate has not focused on the socio-economic context of the centuries preceding the establishment of the *emporia*, namely the period before around the middle of the seventh century. This has often led to excessively generalizing assumptions, which result in a picture in which the *emporia* seem to have been established out of nothing at all (Dhondt's *villes-champignons*). For instance, Lebecq suggested that '(...) maritime exchange seems to have been fairly *ad hoc* and disorganised until about AD 600, after which point, around the beginning of the seventh century, they seem to have become more orderly and organised – we then see ports with permanent infrastructures, not to mention regular sailing routes, and professional sea-going merchants'.[43] However, this thesis will show that at least in some parts

[42] Cf. Loveluck 2001, 111-12; Loveluck 2012.
[43] Cf. Lebecq 1999, 51.

of the Channel zone , where the quantity of imports does not fit well with a picture of *ad hoc* contacts, this earlier exchange seems to have been quite organised, and the web of trading routes shows a continuity between the sixth and the later centuries (although with major differences in some areas, such as along the Solent). In 2012, Hodges proposed that 'The impulse to make the emporia has its roots in the trading system that stems back to the so-called Merovingian North Sea of the later sixth century and, almost certainly, the episodic creation of beaching-places and associated sites for the exchange of prestige goods'.[44] As will be discussed at length, the trading system of the early centuries was far from episodic, and was not based exclusively on prestige goods. Moreover, the evidence does not allow us to recognise the existence of a 'Merovingian North Sea', at least when considering the relationship between the Franks and the Anglo-Saxons; indeed, this may have been based on an overly 'Frankish' perspective, which obscures the role played by the Anglo-Saxons in the transmarine system.

The gap represented by the absence of a thorough and systematic assessment of the pre-*emporia* evidence has led to the maintainance of substantivist assumptions in the scholarly debate, which are based on theoretical approaches explaining the socio-economic changes across the Early Medieval period in terms of passage from a socially embedded to a 'disembedded' economy. Given that substantivist perspectives, especially in relation to the gift/commodity dichotomy, still play a profound role in theoretical discourses on Early Saxon archaeology, part of this thesis deals with this issue.[45] As discussed in Part 2, the nature of exchange is not an irrelevant point: on the contrary, it is central if we want to investigate the link between elites and commercial activity, and the relationship between the Anglo-Saxons and the Franks. As will be examined in Ch. 7, the picture offered by the archaeological evidence, together with a thorough examination of the written sources, is fundamental to

[44] Cf. Hodges 2012, 101.

[45] In 2009 Fleming complained about the 'persistent habit' of stressing the role of gift-giving, and underestimating trading activity. See Fleming 2009, 394 with reference to Verhaeghe – Loveluck – Story 2005, 270, and Brookes 2007a, 29, which are exceptions.

challenging the model of a sixth-century Merovingian hegemony over Southern England first proposed by Ian Wood in the 1980s, and still widely accepted.[46]

A recent study, which, unusually, focusses on the period before the *emporia* is the research conducted by Sue Harrington on the archaeological evidence pertaining to the Early Saxon period, which provides a powerful tool for investigating imports, luxury goods and raw materials in Southern England.[47] However, the lack of an inclusion of the later written sources, and the absence of a comparison with contemporary Francia, leave open the questions this thesis seeks to answer. This same partial omission of written sources can be recognised in the recent work by Loveluck, one of the major proponents of the bottom-up model, on the archaeology of settlement and trade in Northwestern Europe, resulting, as mentioned, in a rigid model of maritime communities detached from political power.[48] Linked with the recognition of coastal areas as territories with specific characteristics, and on the origins of the maritime network, Hodges has recently supported the idea of a 'liminal connectivity', stating that 'The international North Sea and accompanying riverine trade (reaching between the river Po and the Rhine) in prestige goods appears to have started in quasi-neutral territories in the hands of enterprising middlemen in marginal coastal areas of the English Channel and the North Sea.'[49] Although the relationship between kings, churches and coastal areas will be treated at length in the following chapters and then assessed in the Conclusion, it should be noted here that many of the maritime areas considered in this thesis do not appear to have been marginal lands before the rise of the *emporia*: on the contrary, a large number of rich Anglo-Saxon communities and political centres lay close to the sea.

A particularly notable study, especially focused on the origins of the *emporia*, has been conducted by Robin Fleming. Grounding her research on the sixth century, the author argued

[46] See Wood 1983.
[47] See Harrington – Welch 2014.
[48] See Loveluck 2013, which, however, has a focus starting from the seventh century.
[49] Cf. Hodges 2012, 126.

'that relatively large numbers of households living in eastern Kent in the sixth century had boats, had access to Frankish goods, engaged not only in gift exchange but in trade, and had members who sometimes acted as skippers and/or traders'.[50] Regarding the transformation from the sixth-century maritime traffic to the establishment of the *emporia*, Fleming identified the presence of foreign traders as the force driving economic activity. While Fleming compounded a compelling picture of this transformation, the relationship between trade and political power before the *emporia* is, here too, left unexplained. Moreover, East Kent represents an exceptional case during the sixth century, perhaps matched only by the Isle of Wight, which seems to have had a different development than the other areas included in this thesis; a regionally-differentiated model is thus needed.

The current ideas on the transmarine network in the centuries preceding the *emporia* are based on the major socio-economic and political changes which can be seen in the passage from the sixth to the seventh centuries: the consolidation of kingdoms, the development of a religious landscape, the subsequent deep changes in landholding, and the improvement in agricultural and husbandry practices are only some of these. It is undeniable that the large and structured *emporia* with their regular street pattern and king's officers belong to this later period. Nonetheless, underestimating the socio-economic context of the previous centuries may be extremely misleading, and can lead to rigid and generalised models of development. In 2012, Lebecq wrote that 'It is striking to note that most of the *wicks* (particularly those founded in the 7th century) were created out of nothing and in the middle of nowhere'.[51] Certainly, this does not appear to have been the case for Southern England and Northern France.

Thus, this thesis focuses on the coastal areas of the Anglo-Saxon and Frankish regions facing the Channel, investigating their development and the transmarine network during roughly the

[50] Cf. Fleming 2009, 409.
[51] Cf. Lebecq 2012, 16.

fifth to the earlier seventh century, before the rise of the major *emporia* at *Hamwic* and *Quentovic*. We need to recognize that, while the evidence for these areas is enough to create a picture of the transmarine web of exchange for the sixth century which considers also sub-regional differences, the archaeological evidence for the fifth century is in general scantier, providing us with a much more fragmentary understanding of the earliest Post-Roman period. Although this material has been considered, this thesis will not address the issue of continuity during the fifth century, largely for reasons of time and space; it is however to be noted that the pattern emerging from the sixth-century evidence best fits the fragmented socio-economic picture of the Early Medieval period than that of Late Antiquity.

The four chapters included in Part 1 examine Kent, Sussex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight in England, and the Pas-de-Calais in Northern France. These first chapters assess the fifth/early seventh-centuries archaeological evidence as well as the written sources, the bulk of which pertain to a later period. Among the written sources, close attention has been given to charters, which start from around the 670s and mostly document grants of lands by kings to churches. Although they are later in time, these charters are fundamental if we want to examine landholding in coastal areas and ascertain whether (and in which cases) an interest by political actors in possessing lands close to the sea can be detected.

The most important archives including the charters predating c. 900 for the counties of England on which this investigation is focused are those of Christ Church and St Augustine, Canterbury, and Rochester, which preserve the vast majority of the charters for Kent; the archive of Selsey, for those pertaining to lands in Sussex; and the archive of Old Minster, Winchester, for the charters of Hampshire. Not all of these archives include a similar quantity of reliable documents, and it should be noted that many of the charters claiming to represent transactions from before c. 900 are spurious. This is an important issue in particular in the case of Hampshire, where the archive of Old Minster, Winchester, contains a high percentage of

charters altered or fabricated in the ninth and tenth century: it is thus hardly possible to ascertain with certainty the pattern of landownership in the previous centuries.[52] Nonetheless, some of the archives do include a fairly high number of reliable charters, thus allowing us to investigate the process of creation of landed property; this is especially the case of Kent, this region being also the one for which we have the largest group of charters.[53] Thus, while some of the charters discussed in the following chapters are questionable, they may include earlier genuine materials. It should be noted that not all of the written sources are of equal value for assessing the changing patterns of landownership. Perhaps the most reliable information is that found in original, contemporary documents, which are preserved as single sheets. It should be noted that there is a difference between contemporary documents, and later sources reporting (or claiming to report) earlier events; still, charters which only survive in later copies, such as in later cartularies, can nevertheless preserve a record of legitimate transactions. Other charters may be suspect: they could be complete fabrications, or their information could have been altered. Concerning the Pas-de-Calais, information can be obtained from a range of sources – especially saints' lives, polyptychs, and charters. As regards hagiographies, as we will see, many of these were written in later centuries; they have been used here to ascertain which areas the interest in establishing monastic institutions was directed to. Concerning documentary

[52] The archive of Old Minster, Winchester, contains 35 purportedly pre-tenth century charters, of which around 13 are authentic, probably authentic, or with authentic basis; the earliest, basically authentic, charter is S 235 dated 688. See Gelling 1979; Edwards 1988; Keynes 1994.

[53] As regards Kent, St Augustine's archive includes around 50 charters purported to have been written before the end of the ninth century: more than half of them are considered by Kelly (1995) to be authentic/genuine. For Kent, the major archive is however that of Christ Church, Canterbury, which contains 100 charters claiming to represent transactions before c. 900. Brooks – Kelly 2013 list only nine contemporary charters (or written within a generation) on single sheets of parchment among the 30 charters claiming to be of the seventh and eighth centuries. Among the remaining charters in this group, ten are later forgeries, or surviving only in the Anglo-Norman cartulary, and there are no elements suggesting that authentic diplomas existed behind them; the remaining are copies of authentic diplomas, a revised version of an authentic charter containing an additional grant, later copies of authentic charters, and charters based on earlier diplomas with some changes. Among the charters dated to the ninth century, 44 are originals on single sheets of parchment; the remaining include transcriptions of authentic charters and later forgeries. As for Rochester (ed. Campbell 1973), among the 28 charters claiming to be of the seventh to ninth century, around 20 are authentic or do not present suspicious features. For Sussex, only 15 charters from the archive of Selsey (ed. Kelly 1998) claim to be of a pre-tenth-century date. Three are later forgeries, nine authentic (some of them with interpolations, additions and abbreviations), two may be conflations of charters, and one is an abbreviation of a genuine document.

sources, by far the largest group are those attesting landed property pertaining to Saint-Bertin. Among them, the most important source is the monastery's short Carolingian polyptych, written in the mid-ninth century, while a large part of the charters connected to the Merovingian kings are spurious or interpolated.[54]

This investigation has proved rewarding, in that it suggests that the interest of kings and churches was not directed toward the areas of the *emporia* only, thus indicating that other areas too were possibly integrated in the cross-Channel system of exchange from the seventh century onward. This use of the written sources may prove particularly useful for the Continental side of this research, since different laws restricting or prohibiting the use of metal-detectors limit the visibility of minor trading centres comparable to the 'productive' sites in England.

Concerning archaeological remains, close attention has been given here to imports and luxury goods, especially objects including gold, silver and garnets, so as to reconstruct the pattern of the distribution of these items and the transmarine network before the establishment of the major trading sites. The pattern of the distribution of foreign and precious goods within the regions is here used to investigate the link between communities with access to imports before the development of the major ports, and areas which constituted foci of royal and monastic interest in the later period. While a close investigation of the distribution of imports within particular communities has been conducted for Sussex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, and the Pas-de-Calais, the archaeological evidence for Kent is discussed more generally, and within the more general context of the region. This partly different perspective is motivated by the fact that the Early Saxon remains from Kent have been a stronger focus of recent research, which has also considered in detail the distribution of grave goods.[55] Concerning the Pas-de-Calais, the specific viewpoint from which the archaeological evidence is assessed is the

[54] On the written sources for the properties of Saint-Bertin see Ch. 4.2.2. pp. 131-36. The documents of Saint-Bertin are edited by Gysseling – Koch 1950.

[55] See Ch. 1, n. 8 (p. 26).

presence and distribution of 'Anglo-Saxon' materials, in order to disentangle the relationship this territory held with Southern England.

It should be noted that this use of earlier imports entails a wider discourse on the relationship between grave goods and wealth, because most of the artefacts included in this research have been recovered as associations in burials. Indeed, grave goods do not have a straightforward relationship with the wealth possessed by the people in their lifetime; they mostly concern the social position of the deceased within his/her household, as well as claims to status by the family group as a whole.[56] However, the presence of imported objects in a cemetery does attest that part of that community had access to those goods (and probably more than those used as grave goods), and the pattern of distribution clearly shows that not all the communities and individuals in them had the same degree of access. Moreover, a link with wealth can also be suggested since access to imports implies the possession of something else that can be exchanged in return, be that part of commercial or non-commercial traffic. Hodges has recently proposed that three phases of consumption can be seen from around the middle of the sixth to the middle of the ninth century; the first phase, namely that to which the period investigated by this thesis belongs, would be 'The era of a prominent funerary culture involving grave goods'. Hodges grounds the distinction between these phases on changes in the ritual economy.[57] However, to depict the earlier centuries only from the perspective of the use of imports as grave goods may lead to a misleading picture stemming from the most striking feature of Early Saxon archaeology – the objects found in burials. Many of the items used as grave goods had however a proper function during life. In addition, the use of specific imported grave goods to display social status should be seen as only an effect of cross-Channel traffic: imports can be perceived as valuable in showing status only insofar as they point to far-reaching connections and links.

[56] See Ch. 2.1, n. 23 (p. 61).

[57] Hodges 2012, 122: the next phases are 'the intermediary age of the emporia and periodic fairs', and 'the era of the monastic cities promoting a new ritual economy'.

In Part 2, a possible model of trading exchange will be proposed, which the communities settled on the coasts of Kent, Isle of Wight and the Pas-de-Calais may have developed, during the period before the mid-seventh century, through a role of intermediaries between the inlands and the sea. In the Pas-de-Calais, this will be suggested from the pattern of distribution of items made in gold and silver, which show a strong focus on coastal lands (Ch. 4). While imports from Francia are well attested in Southern England, what England exported to the Continent in this period remains a matter of speculation; given the absence of evidence, Anglo-Saxon exports may have largely consisted of perishable goods and slaves.[58]

As we will see, while in general the web of transmarine routes shows a continuity before and after the rise of the *emporia*, this is not always the case: for instance, Ch. 3 suggests that during the seventh century a major change in the maritime routes took place on the Solent. However, even this case demonstrates the importance of grounding our analysis of the *emporia* system on the previous socio-economic context, as it can illuminate the different relationships between elites and trade and how they shaped the transmarine network. Another example in this regard comes in Ch. 4, where the picture of the distribution of Anglo-Saxon items in the Pas-de-Calais allows us to reinterpret the rise of *Quentovic*, challenging the current picture which sees the *emporium* as deriving from an Anglo-Saxon impulse.[59] Moreover, as shown in the cases of Kent and Sussex (Chs. 1 and 2) the pattern of access to the transmarine network before the mid-seventh century can also help us to illuminate why these territories did not witness the development of a large *emporium* comparable to *Hamwic*; and, at a wider level, their development has repercussions on our understanding of the *emporia* in general.

Having established the development of the transmarine network and the coastal areas for these regions before the *emporia*, Part 2 considers theoretical discourses on the nature of the mechanisms of exchange (Ch. 5), similarities and diversities of socio-economic development,

[58] On exchanged goods see Hodges 1982, esp. 117-29. See also Ch. 5.2, pp. 164-65.
[59] On this suggestion for the origins of *Quentovic* see Ch. 4.3, pp. 143-44.

and how the relationship between Anglo-Saxons and Franks was shaped (Ch. 6, 7 and 8). In this regard, Ch. 6 includes a discussion of specific resources, namely iron and salt, which may have provided a basis for the enrichment of some of the coastal communities settled in the regions considered. This focus on natural resources allows us to widen our analysis of economic development, providing a broader framework to understand how the coasts may have been connected to their hinterland: indeed, looking at the transmarine traffic alone would have provided only a partial perspective of these areas. Ch. 7, as already mentioned, reconsiders the written sources and the archaeological evidence so as to challenge the idea of a Merovingian hegemony over the opposite side of the Channel, arguing that the theory of a Frankish overlordship leads to a misleading picture of the relationship between the kingdoms. Then, Ch. 8 considers the role of kings, elites and churches in the development of the *emporia* system. In this regard, the written sources concerning some other areas of England and Francia have been included, since this broadened focus permits to put in perspective the processes visible in Kent, Sussex, Hampshire, Isle of Wight and the Pas-de-Calais, such as the appropriation of coastal lands by political actors and the creation of large-scale land-units. Among the areas considered, these seem to have indeed been common processes, which led to the inclusion of wider sections of the coasts in the network of traffic.

It should be noted that, while the area of the Rhine delta has been included here to show some of these developments, the specific assessment of the context from which the *emporium* of Dorestad developed would have entailed a detailed research into the archaeological evidence, which was beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, Dorestad has been used in the Conclusion as a comparator for Kent, since this latter and Flanders represent two similar areas in terms of connectivity before the *emporia*, although they show very different developments from the seventh century onwards.

Finally, the Conclusion seeks to answer the question of the relationship between political power and the network of exchange. As will be discussed, this fundamental issue cannot be solved by adopting only one model of development: both the elite-focussed and the bottom-up models appear not to leave enough space for regional differences to emerge. For this reason, the Conclusion of this thesis is strongly based on a reassessment of the different developments and connections between political power and trade as can be identified in each region.

Part 1

Chapter 1. *Early Anglo-Saxon Kent*

Kent is the earliest Anglo-Saxon kingdom for which we have historical sources, and the references to King Aethelberht, some of them contemporary, indicate that the kingdom was already structured in the second half of the sixth century.[1] Past research on the history of the state formation in Kent has shown that this kingdom underwent a political development which may have been partly different to that shown by other areas, as for instance Sussex (see Ch. 2). Indeed, the preservation of the Latin name *Cantium* may be an indication of the survival of part of the region as a unit during the post-Roman period.[2] As the archaeological evidence shows, the earliest Anglo-Saxon kingdom in Kent seems to have developed in the Eastern part of the region, from where it appears to have incorporated the Western part during the sixth century.[3] All the same, a degree of political division continued also in the later period in the form of a dual kingship.[4] In the second half of the seventh century Kent gradually entered the orbit of Mercia, which had expanded toward London and Surrey, and a period of turmoil started. Although Wihtred (690/91-725) restored some stability, Kent had only intermittent independence until 825, when it was finally incorporated by Wessex.[5]

Although a major Mid-Saxon *emporium* comparable to *Hamwic*, *Lundenwic* and *Quentovic* is not documented for Kent in the written sources, this is a crucial area to study if we want to understand the transmarine network connecting Southern England with the Continent during the Early Saxon period. Indeed, the archaeology of Kent shows links with Francia that are unparalleled among the English regions examined in this thesis.

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[1] Bede, *HE* II.5 on the reign of Aethelberht; Gregory of Tours, *DLH* IV.26; IX.26.

[2] Cf. Brooks 1989, 57.

[3] The establishment of the bishopric of Rochester in the first half of the seventh century shows that the kingdom already included West Kent. Cf. Brooks 1989; Yorke 1997, 25-44.

[4] Cf. Yorke 1983.

[5] See Brookes – Harrington 2010.

The picture offered by the archaeological evidence for the fifth to the early seventh century is used here to assess the development of the coastal areas of Kent. This investigation is especially directed toward the geographical distribution of Continental imports in the region and within its communities. Objects made of gold, silver and garnets are here included even when manufactured in Kent, because these materials were imported. It should however be noted that, while garnets surely represent imports,[6] one cannot rule out the possibility that some of the objects made in gold and silver came from a reuse of Late Roman materials. As we will see through this and the following chapters, nonetheless, the predominantly coastal distribution of gold and silver objects strongly points to an imported origin.[7] The archaeological remains thus offer us the opportunity to assess the transmarine network connecting Kent and the Continent, and its relationship with the access to imports and precious items exhibited in some of the Early Saxon cemeteries. In this regard, West Kent will be examined in detail, to assess differences with East Kent and to measure its inclusion in the transmarine traffic supported by the river Thames. The second part of this chapter analyses the landholding pattern emerging from the earliest charters (up to 800), which mostly refer to grants of lands made by kings to churches from the seventh century onward. The picture of seventh- and eighth-century landed property is essential to assess whether a specific interest of political actors in holding lands close to the sea can be perceived, and which were the most important areas in this regard.

This twofold investigation on fifth- to early seventh-century archaeology and later written sources may help to put in perspective the seventh- and eighth-century development of the kingdom. That is to say, the socio-economic development which occurred during the Mid-Saxon period must be understood within the framework of rich communities and wide-ranging transmarine contacts that flourished, as we will see, in earlier centuries.

[6] On sources and trade routes of garnets see Périn *et al.* 2007; Hamerow 2017.
[7] On this see also Ch. 6.2, p. 180.

1.1. *Kentish Archaeology: East and West*

As mentioned in the Introduction, East Kent has been a strong focus of research, and will thus be assessed in more general terms than West Kent and the other regions. Following the important phase of excavations starting from the second half of the last century, an increasing amount of research has been devoted to the socio-economic development of the region in the Early Medieval period and its early cemeteries, whose richness in terms of grave goods has provided the base for important works on material culture and its links with the Continent.[8]

Most of the Kentish archaeology of the Early Saxon period is based on the investigation of funerary sites, in particular those in the eastern part of the region, a crucial area of earliest Anglo-Saxon settlement.[9] The distribution of the sites clearly shows that rivers and the Roman road system were important foci of Anglo-Saxon establishment (see Map 1.1): as we will see, this is a general pattern of distribution that can be recognised in all the other examined regions of Southern England. Grave goods represent a crucial resource for the study of the fifth- to early seventh-century transmarine network and, especially as regards East Kent, they show that early and strong links were in place between this area and Francia, also attested in historical sources from the late sixth century.[10] The considerable number of cemeteries excavated in Kent shows a quantity of imports and rich goods that characterise the region as substantially different from

[8] Fundamental remains the research conducted by Vera Evison and Sonia Chadwick-Hawkes on important Early Saxon cemeteries: see e.g. Evison 1987; Hawkes 1979; 1982; 2000; Hawkes – Grainger 2006. On Kent see esp. Everitt 1986, Brookes 2007a on socio-economic development, Welch 2007a, Brookes – Harrington 2010. See also Harrington – Welch 2014. Richardson 2005 provides an essential guide on cemeteries and the distribution of grave goods.

[9] Everitt 1986 showed that the areas of earliest Anglo-Saxon settlement in Kent are the Foothill and the Holmesdale, as well as the river valleys connecting these two, those of the rivers Darenth, Medway and Stour. Furthermore, drawing on Everitt's definition of Kentish *pays*, Brookes has noted that also the eastern part of the Downland shows a well-established colonization in the Early Anglo-Saxon period. See Brookes 2007a, esp. 77-79, mentioning other lands of possible sixth- and seventh-century settlement. Areas with better soil seem to have been preferred.

[10] Relationships between Kent and the Merovingian kingdoms will be examined in Ch. 7.

the other regions of Southern England facing the Channel (see Maps 1.3 and 1.3.1).[11] Within the territory, a significant contrast can be perceived between East and West Kent, with East Kent standing out for the richness of the items found in graves. This higher density of foreign and luxury goods in East Kent is clearly due to its strategic position along the cross-Channel routes.

Imported goods from the Frankish world thus reached East Kent in a significantly larger quantity than West Kent, Sussex and Hampshire. This difference is also reflected in a greater number of finds from the Mediterranean area, as those of Byzantine/East Mediterranean origin (for instance, amethyst beads and rare high-status items such as the 'Coptic' bowls).[12] The particular position of Kent along maritime routes is highlighted by a presence of certain types of goods which is visibly higher than in the other regions, where they are almost absent, such as glass and copper alloy vessels, wheel-thrown pottery, and scales and weights. Moreover, this is reinforced by the wider spectrum of origins of the imports, which include Thuringian, Gotlandic and Jutlandic objects, pottery from Schleswig-Holstein,[13] and the Mediterranean items already mentioned; as we will see in Chs. 2 and 3, this is in sharp contrast with the paucity of imports found in Sussex and Hampshire, although the gap with this latter is slightly smaller, probably due to the proximity of Hampshire to the Isle of Wight.

[11] The data I am using here are mostly those reported in Brookes – Harrington 2008, *Anglo-Saxon Kent Electronic Database* (ASKED) and Harrington's unpublished Database *The Early Anglo-Saxon Census of Southern Britain*. For Southern England, data are also taken from the *Historic Environment Records*. Metal-detected finds listed in the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) have also been used.

[12] On the distribution of amethyst beads see Huggett 1988; Harrington – Welch 2014, esp. 159-61. On 'Coptic' bowls see Harris 2003, esp. 65-68; 164-69; Périn 2005, suggesting Byzantine Italy as place of production; Harris *et al.* 2006, 3-12.

[13] This kind of pottery has been found at Orpington in West Kent: an urn from cremation n. 52; see Tester 1969, 42. Metalwork examples from these areas include: a Thuringian bird-head brooch with garnets found at Bifrons Patrixbourne gr. 76 (sixth century), see Hawkes 2000; a silver gilt Thuringian bow brooch with garnet from Finglesham gr. 205a (sixth century), see Hawkes – Grainger 2006; a Thuringian silver gilt miniature bow brooch from Dover Buckland gr. 417 (first half of the sixth century), see Parfitt – Anderson 2012, esp. 81; a Gotlandic bow brooch from Eastry House gr. 1 (second half of the sixth/early seventh century), see Hawkes 1979; a bow brooch of suggested Scandinavian origin recovered at Mill Hill Deal I gr. 73 (first half of the sixth century), see Parfitt – Brugmann 1997, esp. 45-46.

The most remarkable imported objects in Kent, and the richest goods, certainly display the high status of the owners in graves, but other types of imports from Continental areas of central and northern Europe do not necessarily imply a particularly high social status for the individuals buried with them. In fact, the high percentages of graves with imports within the cemeteries of East Kent suggest that the display of these objects in graves was not restricted to the richest part of the population. Indeed, in the larger cemeteries (i.e. those with more than 40 graves), these percentages are quite high, many of the sites having around 25% of burials with imports, and some even more. For instance, cemeteries such as Aerodrome Bekesbourne II, Updown Eastry III, Dover Hill Folkestone III, Mill Hill I Deal, and Bifrons Patrixbourne I, show between around 30% and 39% of the burials with imports.[14] This wide diffusion of imports is clearly different from the cemeteries in the other regions, with the exception of the Isle of Wight where, as we will see, Chessell Down has 24,8% of graves displaying imports.[15]

The distribution of glass and amber beads, in particular, reveals another major difference between Kent and the other areas. Glass and amber beads are especially common among grave goods in female burials, and in Kentish cemeteries they are found in great numbers, and are widespread among the population.[16] A Continental origin, especially the Frankish lands and the Netherlands, has been suggested for many of the glass bead types, while amber is generally

[14] Aerodrome Bekesbourne II: cf. Richardson 2005, vol. II, 8-9 number 21. Updown Eastry III: cf. Richardson 2005, vol. II, 31-32 number 100. Dover Hill Folkestone III: cf. Richardson 2005, vol. II, 36-37 number 114. Mill Hill I Deal: cf. Richardson 2005, vol. II, 25 number 79. Bifrons Patrixbourne I: cf. Richardson 2005, vol. II, 61 number 202. See Maps 1.2; 1.5; 1.5.1, reporting places mentioned.

[15] Cf. Ch. 3.1 and Fig. 3.1 (p. 81).

[16] On the chronological distribution of beads and their percentage in Kentish cemeteries see Richardson 2005, vol. 1, especially 31; 146-48. Glass beads are found in fifth- to seventh-century cemeteries, while amber seems to have a more restricted time span, being mostly common in sixth-century contexts. The works by Huggett on amber (Huggett 1988) and by Guido and Welch (Guido 1999; Guido – Welch 2000) and Brugmann 2004 on glass beads provide a picture of the distribution of these goods across the whole of Anglo-Saxon England. However, West Kent cemeteries are underrepresented: Brugmann does not include West Kentish sites among her very extensive sample, while Guido and Welch include only the cemeteries at Horton Kirby I, Orpington and Rochester. Huggett could not consider those sites which have been excavated recently, as St. Edmund's Church and Vicarage, Temple Hill, Dartford (cf. O'Brien 2015), though in any case it does not seem that his picture on the distribution of amber would have been greatly affected if he had done so.

regarded as coming from the Baltic area.[17] Beads in such materials constitute the bulk of Early Saxon imports found in the English regions examined in this thesis, hugely outnumbering other types of imports in areas less connected with the Continent than East Kent, such as West Kent, Hampshire and Sussex. At Mount Pleasant, Alton, in Hampshire, for instance, the graves with imported goods are around 20% of the burials, but if those with only these kinds of beads among imports are excluded, the percentage drops down to around 4%.[18] On the contrary, in many of the Kentish sites, the graves showing only glass and amber beads as imported grave goods do not exceed 50% of the total of graves with imports, thus resulting in a remarkably higher percentage of graves with other imports. That is to say, if the burials with only amber and glass beads as imports are excluded, the percentages of burials with imports at Aerodrome Bekesbourne II, Eastry III, Folkestone III and Mill Hill Deal I are still quite high, ranging between around 17% and 21%.[19]

Moreover, the distribution of amber beads among the burials, which is examined in detail in Ch. 5, shows that these are more evenly distributed in Kent than, for instance, in Hampshire: although in both territories the large majority of the graves with amber have between one and ten amber beads, in Kent the percentage of women with more than ten beads is higher.[20]

These high percentages, and the generally wide distribution of foreign items within the region, are due to an easy access to goods, favoured by the geographical position of East Kent at the narrowest point of the Channel. As is discussed at length in the following chapters, the existence of a complex system of exchange in the sixth and seventh centuries which included trade seems very likely, and the modalities by which foreign goods reached the regions

[17] Guido and Welch suggest an Early Anglo-Saxon production of some types of beads. Kent and East Anglia are counted among the most likely places where glass beads production might have taken place. See Guido – Welch 2000, 115-119. As they point out, Kent has also been suggested as a place of production of glass vessels, and in particular Faversham in the seventh century, for which see Harden 1956, 132-67; Evison 1982, 43-76. See also Evison 2000, 47-104.

[18] Cf. Ch. 3.1, Fig. 3.9 (p. 88).

[19] However, the percentage at Folkestone III might be 12,5% instead of 17,5%, as the material of the beads in two of the eight burials is unknown.

[20] This difference will be discussed in Ch. 5.1.1, pp. 154-55.

discussed in this thesis may have varied also on the basis of the types of imports – that is, the arrival of (quite common) beads should not be assessed in the same way as that of other much rarer goods. In areas as well-connected with the Continent as East Kent, moreover, the higher percentages of burials with foreign goods strongly suggest that these goods did not only reach the uppermost echelons of society.[21]

Particular clusters of imports in the fifth century can be seen in the area around the Wantsum Channel in East Kent and along the Darenth Valley in West Kent (see Map 1.2). Other maritime areas with early imports are also worth noting, as in the area of Dover and south of it, and near Milton Regis. All these coastal areas, indeed, are very visible throughout the Early Saxon period, in terms of both settlement and long-distance objects (see Maps 1.1; 1.3; 1.3.1). The presence of foreign goods is closely connected with the many landing sites which must have been scattered all along the Kentish coasts. It is however to be noted that access to imports was not limited to the coastal areas, as they reached inland areas as well. Previous research has identified a number of possible landing and trading sites, with a particular focus on the East Kent coasts: from west to east, they were at Rochester, Fordwich and its hinterland near the church of St Martin outside Canterbury, Sarre, Sandwich, Dover and Sandtun (see Maps 1.5; 1.5.1).[22] Due to its strategic position, the Wantsum Channel was a crucial area for the maritime routes connecting the Continent with Kent and the Thames; as we will see when examining the

[21] Cf. Chs. 5 and 6 on access to imports and modalities of distribution in Southern England and in the Pas-de-Calais.

[22] A map showing the distribution of seventh- and eighth-century trading sites is in Brookes – Harrington 2010, 83. Specifically on Dover, Fordwich, Sandtun, Sandwich, Sarre and Seasalter see Hill *et al.* 2001. On the important presence of wheel-thrown pottery at Sarre and Dover and in Kent in general, during the second half of the sixth and the seventh century, see Evison 1979; Hawkes 1982, 76. On the *wic* at Sandtun see Gardiner *et al.* 2001: id., 197-98 on the provenance of Continental pottery at Sandtun, dated c. 700-850. See also Brookes 2007a. The existence of a harbour at Sandwich in the 660s is mentioned by Eddius Stephanus in the early eighth-century *Vita Wilfridi* (ch. 13). Fordwich is along an inlet of the Wantsum Channel, and is linked with Canterbury by the Stour river. On the importance of the Wantsum Channel for trading activities, see Brookes – Harrington 2010, 84-85. See Tatton-Brown 1984, 16-22, on Fordwich and Sandwich in the Anglo-Saxon period. See also Russo 1998, esp. 146-48.

written sources, a group of charters related to monasteries on the Isle of Thanet asserts its centrality in the eighth century as well.[23]

The picture of Anglo-Saxon remains from the northern coast of the region (between Rochester and Canterbury) is more patchy, but the existence of further landing places there seems entirely possible, given the presence of Early Saxon sites with imported grave goods close to the coast (see Maps 1.3; 1.5; 1.5.1). In particular, landing sites might have been located in the areas of Milton Regis and Faversham.[24] There, Anglo-Saxon activity is attested from the fifth century (see Map 1.2), and exceptionally rich imported objects have been recovered from King's Field, Faversham.[25] As we shall see, evidence from a later period also suggests the importance of this area. Interestingly, a possible ninth- and tenth-century port and trading centre (Harwich) may have been located east of Faversham in the area of Seasalter.[26] That this part of the coast was included in transmarine traffic in the previous period is also suggested by the recovery, among the Continental coins, of two sixth- or seventh-century gold *tremisses* along the coast north-east of Seasalter.[27] Thus, while a greater density of landing sites may have existed across the Wantsum Channel, due to its importance in maritime routes, the evidence points to a widespread presence of harbours along all the coasts of Kent, which ensured cross-Channel contacts and access to foreign goods.

These landing sites show similar developments during the sixth and seventh centuries. In this period, archaeological and historical sources document a royal and monastic presence in the

[23] On these charters see Kelly 1992; below Ch. 1.2. Cf. Brookes 2007a, 67: 'the Wantsum Channel afforded the principal route for maritime traffic into the Thames estuary and up the Eastern seaboard, avoiding the dangerous waters of the North Foreland headland.'

[24] On the possibility of a landing place at Faversham connected to the market at Rochester see Gardiner *et al.* 2001, 277.

[25] Cf. Smith 1871; Richardson 2005, II, 34-35 number 111.

[26] On Seasalter and its possible identification with Harwich see Baldwin 1992; see also Riddler 2001; Tatton-Brown 1984, 32-34; id. 2001.

[27] The PAS lists two gold *tremisses* (KENT-E1FA56; KENT-F7D2F4) and a button brooch (KENT701) in this area. It should be noted that the *Kent Historic Environment Record* also records two gold Merovingian *tremisses* in the Isle of Sheppey: one minted at Huy, moneyer Bertoaldus, dated 600-675 (Belfort 1892-95, vol.1, n. 1536-9); the other minted at *Quentovic*, moneyer Dutta, dated 600-675 (Lafaurie 1996, IXb, 73-82).

proximity of all of them, which certainly had important consequences for the development of commercial activity. The area of the Wantsum Channel, encompassing Canterbury and the Isle of Thanet, shows this evolution clearly. There, an Anglo-Saxon presence is attested from the earliest period, and archaeological excavations have identified considerable Anglo-Saxon settlement within the walled area of Canterbury from the middle of the fifth century.[28] Royal presence is attested nearby from the sixth century, as for instance in the area outside the Roman walls, where Bede links the church of St Martin with Bertha, the Frankish wife of Aethelbert (d. 616).[29] Past research has suggested a close link between a river port at nearby Fordwich and Canterbury itself, and also that in the area between the town, St Martin's and Fordwich a trading site developed from the seventh century (see Maps 1.5; 1.5.1 for places mentioned).[30] From around the middle of the seventh century, monastic foundations supported by the kings were established in the area of the Isle of Thanet, at Reculver and Minster-in-Thanet.[31]

A similar trend can be seen further south, in the case of Lyminge and in the area of Dover: at Lyminge, the excavation of the earliest settlement has revealed a high-status presence during the sixth century; royal presence is documented from the first half of the seventh, when a large, probably royal hall was also built; later, a royal grant permitted the establishment of a monastery.[32] The above-mentioned *wic* at Sandtun was located at about 10 km from Lyminge.

[28] The evidence of Anglo-Saxon Canterbury has been recently discussed by Speed 2014.

[29] Cf. Bede, *HE* I.26.

[30] On the seventh- to ninth-century extramural *wic* near St Martin's see Sparks – Tatton-Brown 1987, esp. 203-5; Welch 2007a, 237: the authors suggest that the trading site at St Martin Hill may have extended up to Fordwich, thus covering a large area; finds include Ipswich ware pottery. Brooks 1984, 23, suggests that Fordwich and later Sandwich could have had the same role of *Hamwic* as long-distance trading centres. Although all these sites participated in the transmarine network, the lesser density of excavation precludes a thorough comparison with *Hamwic*: see Sparey-Green 2015 on excavations at St Martin's House. But the excavations which we do have do not suggest any concentration of trading in the eighth century comparable to *Hamwic*.

[31] See Ch. 1.2.

[32] On the historical development of settlement at Lyminge see Thomas 2013; 2017. A high-status presence during the sixth century has been proposed on the basis of the recovery of glass vessels and the high proportion of pig bones (Thomas 2013, esp. 123-25; Scull 2011b; Baker 2012, 10). The first phase of Anglo-Saxon settlement is dated between the later fifth and the seventh century; the second period, when the monastery was established, spans between the later seventh and the ninth century. The royal hall has been dated between 600 and 650. This formed part of a 'great hall' complex; see Thomas – Knox 2015, reporting the excavations of the hall occupied during the sixth century; also Philp 2015. Two Early Saxon cemeteries with imports lay at Lyminge, dated between

Similar to Lyminge is the area around Eastry, which appears to have been a central focus of elite settlement during the sixth century.[33] At Dover, the first phase of Anglo-Saxon activity within the Roman fort starts in the sixth century, and the site shows cross-Channel links already in this period: among the finds there are eleven pots of probable Continental origin.[34] The establishment of a monastery at Dover is attributed to Eadbald in the 630s, and a royal presence has been suggested in the site.[35] In addition to these areas, royal centres were probably located at Milton Regis and Faversham from the Early Saxon period onwards.[36] All these places show the presence of particularly rich communities in the Early Saxon period, in which a considerable part of the population displayed foreign items among their grave goods (see Map 1.3). Remarkably rich communities are those buried for instance at Dover Buckland, and at King's Field, Faversham, but sites with access to imports have been excavated near all the proposed landing and trading sites.[37]

An important question in this context is on what grounds the material wealth visible in these communities was based. The locations of the sites, and the later developments of some of them, suggest the possible importance of salt and iron as resources capable of sustaining the enrichment of part of the population (as will be discussed in detail in Ch. 6.3). Indeed, evidence for ironworking has been found at Lyminge, connected to the monastic phase in the Mid-Saxon period; and this resource was clearly important earlier as well, as it is mentioned in the charter documenting royal presence in the site (S 12, dated to 689 and generally recognised as

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the second half of the fifth century to around the end of the sixth century. On glass evidence at Lyminge, which may point to glass-production during the Early Saxon period, see Thomas 2017; Broadley 2017.

[33] On Eastry: Dickinson – Fern – Richardson 2011; on Lyminge: Thomas 2013; 2017. These works suggest that both these places also had importance as religious foci.

[34] See Philp 2003, 73: of these eleven vessels, nine are Frankish roulette-decorated, dated to the sixth and seventh centuries. On other finds at Dover, including a gold and garnet finger ring, see Parfitt 2001, listing also coins in the area of Dover, among which there are two Merovingian gold coins. On sixth-century finds at Dover see also Welch 2007a, 203.

[35] On the royal presence at Dover see Welch 2007a, 203, suggesting the existence of two successive great halls, comparable to those at Yeavering.

[36] See Tatton-Brown 1984, esp. 28-32 on Milton Regis and Faversham. On royal estate centres in Kent see Everitt 1986, esp. 302-32 on Milton Regis; Brookes 2007a. On the location of the royal centres around tidal inlets see Sparks – Tatton-Brown 1987, 204-5. See also Brookes 2011.

[37] On Dover Buckland: Parfitt – Anderson 2012.

authentic).[38] Metalworking and the possible working of glass have been suggested also in the case of Faversham.[39] Roughly between Faversham, Canterbury and Sturry, the Blean forest may have been an important source of wood and iron.[40] Concerning salt, the location of Roman *salinae*, and the later mentions of them in the Mid-Saxon period, as well as in Domesday Book, make it likely that salt production played an important role in the area around Lyminge, at Seasalter, Milton Regis and near Sarre in the Early Saxon period too. In particular, Domesday Book shows that in the eleventh century a large number of *salinae* was located near Milton Regis and Sarre.[41] As discussed below, salt marshes in the Hoo peninsula and along the Thames bank may also have constituted an important resource for communities in West Kent, and salt working may have been linked with the rich grave goods visible in cemeteries such as Northfleet and Dartford, in addition to possibly having represented a stimulus for the establishment of a minster at Hoo.

Thus, the evidence shows that during the Early Saxon period, at least from some point during the sixth century, political centres were to be found in the area of Canterbury, as at St Martin and Sturry,[42] Eastry and probably Lyminge. Beyond these, similar political centres lay in the area of Milton Regis and Faversham, and at Dover, which present a development similar to that at Lyminge: in the case of Dover, a particularly rich Early Saxon cemetery at Buckland, a royal presence and then monastic foundation. All these political centres appear to have had an easy access to natural resources (i.e. iron and salt), as well as an access to landing and commercial

[38] On ironworking at Lyminge: Kelly 2006; Thomas 2013; and see now Thomas 2017, reporting the new evidence pointing to ongoing iron-working a century before S 12. On this charter (S 12) see below Ch. 1.2. For the charters of Kent and the other regions I am following the numbering given by Sawyer 1968.

[39] The place-name Faversham includes Latin *faber* 'smith'. On glass production at Faversham cf. above n. 17. Cf. also Welch 2007a, 245.

[40] On the Blean see Brookes 2007a, 83; on iron-working cf. below Ch. 6.3.

[41] See Map 1.4; 1.5; 1.5.1. On Roman salt production in Kent see Miles 1975; Rippon 2000. On the mentions of *salinae* in Domesday Book see Campbell 1962, 539-40, suggesting that the salterns mentioned at Maidstone may in fact have been closer to the coast. Salt production in Mid-Saxon charters is mentioned for instance around Faversham (S 328) and in the area of Sandtun (S 23).

[42] Sturry is likely to have been an early royal estate centre, see Everitt 1986, 86; Lloyd 2013, esp. 89. The earliest authentic charter mentioning Sturry is S 8, dated 679, documenting a royal grant of land there to Minster-in-Thanet.

sites scattered along the Kentish coast and presenting an important focus across the Wantsum Channel. The coastal areas seem to have been well connected with the inland territories, as shown by the distribution of imports which also reached the settlements located on the Downs, where other political centres lay (as at Wye).[43] The link between political centres and landing sites which can be recognised in all these cases suggests that the trade network played an important role in the development of the elite and of political power in East Kent during the sixth/early seventh century. As will be comparatively assessed in Part 2 and then in the Conclusion, this regular link between sixth- and seventh-century political centres and landing and trading sites in East Kent strongly questions the bottom-up model that sees the maritime areas of England as having a peculiar development, separated from a political power which would have taken control of them only from a later period.[44] It can be added that, according to this model, imports in coastal cemeteries across the North Sea area should not be regarded as indicating a high status for their owners, due to their high density. Fleming arrived at similar conclusions on East Kent communities, suggesting that people living in this territory were widely engaged in the maritime network, an activity which is also indicated by the recovery of pieces of ships in graves along the coasts from Dover to Deal.[45] These arguments are convincing in themselves. However, the widespread access to imports does not necessarily imply that an elite was *not* present in coastal areas, and the presence of particularly rich burials among the communities in East Kent, in fact, points to its existence.[46]

West Kent will be considered in more detail, as it has been studied less by previous scholars. As already mentioned, in general the cemeteries of this area have revealed far less striking

[43] Wye is recorded as a royal estate in 762 (S 25). See Brooks 1989. See Maps 1.3; 1.5; 1.5.1.
[44] Cf. Loveluck – Tys 2006; Loveluck 2012.
[45] Fleming 2009; Brookes 2007b.
[46] In his rigorous work on Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in Kent, Richardson has classified the burials on the basis of grave goods, and has indeed shown that there are graves that stand out for their associations: as for instance at Lyminge and Mill Hill I Deal; cf. Richardson 2005, I, esp. 239-48.

amounts of exotic and prestigious goods. Thus, West Kent appears as more peripheral to the cross-Channel routes, and fewer *wics* have been suggested west of Faversham.[47] However, landing and trading sites are highly likely to have been situated along the north-western coasts of the region in the Early Saxon period, especially the vicinity of the mouth of the river Medway and the banks of the Thames; along the Thames, the estuary of the Darenth may have been an important area too (see Map 1.5). Indeed, the Darenth and Medway Valleys were both crucial areas of settlement in the Early Anglo-Saxon period. Place-names and the later picture of landed property point to the presence of scattered landing sites along the Thames banks as well. These make the region fit better with the picture offered by East Kent.[48] Place-names containing the OE *hȳth* element ('landing-place'), thought to derive from an early period (see Ch. 6), are attested in the vicinity of the Darenth mouth, though not very close to it, so that they are likely to refer to landing-places on the Thames rather than on the Darenth: this element can be noticed in Erith and Greenhithe.[49] It is perhaps significant that these places were situated in the area where the seventh-century grants to the nunnery of Barking lay (see Chs. 1.2 and 8.2), Greenhithe being at very short distance from Swanscombe, as landing places there may have provided Barking with imports without passing through London.[50]

The Darenth Valley had long been inhabited before the Anglo-Saxon period, and it shows important Roman remains of villa sites; the earliest evidence of Anglo-Saxon settlement is

[47] Thus Hill *et al.* 2001 did not list any West Kent *wics*. See above n. 24 on the presence of a market at Rochester. On Rochester see also Tatton-Brown 1984, 12-16. Durham – Goormachtigh 2015, considering the distribution of *wic* place-names in Kent, argue that in general Kentish *wics* lay along navigable waters, and a number of them can be found also in West Kent, along the Thames (id., 172), as for instance Greenwich and Woolwich; the pattern of these two *wics*, in that one stood at the mouth of a river and another lay upstream, may suggest that they were 'trading partners' (id., 175), and that salt may have been a key commodity.

[48] Cf. Ch. 8.2, on landholding along the Thames Valley as visible through the charters.

[49] On the distribution of this place-name element see Gelling – Cole 2000, especially 83-89. See also Cole 2007. Erith is first mentioned in a charter for Barking of the end of seventh century (S 1246): this is a spurious document, but it refers to genuine material, so that the landing-place may have been there by the late seventh century. Cf. Hart 1966, 122-27, stating that 'these were authentic seventh-century endowments of the abbey' (id., 126), and suggesting that 'if this charter is a forgery, then it was created within two centuries of the abbey's first foundation' (id., 127); Gelling 1979, 95;149; Fleming 1985, 256; Yorke 1985, 5-6. This place-name may have been productive from an early period: in fact, apart from charter S 1246, it is recorded for instance in S 106 (dated 760s), mentioning Chelsea, 'chalk landing-place'. See Watts 2004. On place-names see Ch. 6.1.

[50] Cf. Ch. 8.2, p. 219.

dated to the fifth century, revealing also interesting links with the Roman sites.[51] The evidence of settlement in the middle or late fifth century in this area includes the cemeteries at Riseley (Horton Kirby II), South Darenth (Horton Kirby I), Darenth Park, Fordcroft in Orpington, Temple Hill (Dartford) and Northfleet (see Map 1.2).[52] Most of these cemeteries lay very close to the bank of the Thames, the most distant being Orpington, at around 16 km from the Thames. Apart from the route by water, that is along the Thames and the Darenth, the distribution of the cemeteries shows a close connection with the main Roman road linking London to Dover. Among the imported goods reaching this area, amber and glass beads appear to have been predominant. The most common origins for imports were the Baltic area, the source for amber, and the Frankish lands, the likely source, for instance, of the radiate head brooch found at Riseley (gr. 97, dated 450-550), the glass vessel with chi-rho monogram at Darenth Park (gr. 4, 430-500), and the two bird brooches at Orpington (gr. 21, 450-550). Other areas from which it is likely that imports came are the Rhineland and Thuringia, as attested by the grave goods in Orpington gr. 68 (450-525, 1 melon bead, Rhineland) and gr. 58 (450-525, 1 hand-made pottery, Thuringia). In addition, some of the glass beads found in the cemeteries are likely to be imports. A number of graves in these cemeteries are noticeably richer than the rest, such as gr. 56 at Riseley (datable between the last quarter of the sixth and the first half of the following century).[53]

The evidence from these cemeteries gives us a picture of widespread distribution of Early Saxon imports and precious goods (see Maps 1.2; 1.3).[54] In this regard the cemetery at

[51] For a general excursus on the Roman villa sites in the Darenth Valley see Tyler 1992, 79-80. A recent work on settlement in the Darenth Valley is Simmonds *et al.* 2011.

[52] On Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and settlement in the Darenth Valley see Tyler 1992; Welch 2007a, esp. 230-35. On the cemetery at Dartford see O'Brien 2015. On Horton Kirby see also Philp – Clewley 2016a; 2016b; 2017. See below n. 53.

[53] On Riseley see Tyler 1992, 72-73; Richardson 2005, II, 43 number 140. On Darenth Park see Tyler 1992, 75-76; Richardson 2005, II, 22-23 number 69. On Orpington see Tester 1968; 1969; 1977; Palmer 1984; Richardson 2005, II, 60 number 200.

[54] On wealth distribution as assessed through grave-goods evidence see Richardson 2005, I, 210-40. Particularly interesting is *Table 145: Social Structure summary* at id., 247: on the basis of the burials' evidence, in

Northfleet east of the Darenth is important, as grave goods indicate that it was the burial ground (starting from the late fifth century) of a high-status community of the Early Anglo-Saxon period.[55] A strong royal presence has also been suggested in the Darenth Valley, which might be corroborated by the recent discovery of a major timber-framed building at Eynsford, pertaining to the Mid-Saxon period. This high-status building strongly points to a role of Eynsford as a political centre.[56] As we will see below, apart from the above-mentioned document of Barking, charters show that grants of lands in West Kent were given to the bishopric of Rochester and Christ Church from the eighth century.[57] All these elements suggest that the area of the Darenth Valley and environs was highly valuable. Indeed, it may have been attractive for its fertile soils,[58] as well as for its geographical position along the route towards London and along the Thames, near the boundaries of the Kentish kingdoms. In the Early Saxon period, part of the population might have prospered thanks to activities linked with the rivers, as the presence of a high-status site along the river bank, that is Northfleet, might suggest.

West Kent in the fifth and sixth century half of the population can be ascribed to a mid-status group (53,8%), followed by a quite large high-status group (27,5%) and by 18,8% of low-status people.

[55] On the possibility of a high-status community visible in the cemetery at Northfleet see Tyler 1992, 77-79. On Northfleet see also Richardson 2005, II, 59-60 number 198: among the finds there are for instance glass playing pieces.

[56] See Everitt 1986, esp. 77-78, reconstructing the extent of the estate, which stretched across the entire area of the Darenth Valley, and suggesting that it was royal until the tenth century; Everitt proposed that the river estate was of 'very early origin' since it maintained the Celtic name, and because of the Early Saxon finds. Apart from the building at Eynsford, royal presence in this area (near Otford) is attested by a grant to Wulfred, Archbishop of Canterbury, made by King Coenwulf of Mercia in 821 (S 1619). See also Brooks – Kelly 2013, n. 52 (pp. 557-58): this is a memorandum in the Christ Church Anglo-Norman cartulary, and 'the document does not contain any information or formulation which would strongly support its acceptance as evidence of a valid donation'. Cf. Everitt 1986, 78-79; 268-69, on the Otford estate and on the presence of a pre-Conquest market of Old English origins at Sevenoaks. On Mid-Saxon settlement at Otford, where also two Early Saxon cremation burials were found in 1954 and 2001, see Bennell – Stump 2007. On the Mid-Saxon major timber-framed building at Eynsford, over 20m long, see Philp 2013, 35-38; Philp 2014, 118-36, suggesting that it represents the royal site of the West Saxon kings.

[57] See charters S 37, 1613 and 175. Keynes 1993, 114 footnote 23, suggests that S 175 may be a forgery made on S 176. On the ecclesiastical development in Kent, and so also along the Darenth Valley see Everitt 1986, 181-224.

[58] Cf. Brookes – Harrington 2010, 65. From the National Soilscape Map, it appears that the most fertile soils were between the Cray and the Darenth, and in the zone of the Thames bank east of the Darenth. Thus, the correlation between early Anglo-Saxon settlement and fertile areas seems clear.

As we have seen, the archaeological evidence from the cemeteries in this area indicates that the integration of the Darenth Valley within the maritime trading routes predates the Mid-Saxon period, and is most likely to go back to earlier centuries.

Similar characteristics can be recognised along the Ebbsfleet Valley and east of it. Firstly, Anglo-Saxon occupation started in the fifth century here too, being attested both along the Ebbsfleet and at Gravesend (see Map 1.2; 1.5).[59] As mentioned above**,** the cemetery at Northfleet suggests the presence of a high-status community in this same early period. High-status presence is also notable in the two cemeteries found at Springhead (Southfleet), which reflect later occupation of the area, being dated from about the middle of the seventh century.[60] As in the case of the Darenth Valley, both royal and monastic lands are attested: Swanscombe, a land which was given to Barking at the end of the seventh century, is close to Northfleet, while a charter of the late eighth century attests that royal lands were at Northfleet before that period.[61]

The picture that emerges from the Darenth Valley and, on a smaller scale, from the Ebbsfleet Valley, may be compared to that of the Medway River, the other main watercourse in this part of Kent. Evidence of Anglo-Saxon settlement from the fifth century has been found in this area too, as shown by the cemetery at Watt's Avenue (Rochester), starting from the middle of the

[59] A group of eleven sunken-featured buildings (SFBs) has been found near Northfleet and Springhead, dated between the late fifth and early seventh century. Among them, the nine found near Northfleet are the earliest and probably associated with the cemetery, and thus dated to the fifth and sixth century; those at Springhead are dated between the middle of the sixth to the middle of the following century. On Anglo-Saxon occupation of the Ebbsfleet Valley see Andrews *et al.* 2011, vols. I and IV (on the SFBs see esp. I, 249-59; 291-96). On Gravesend see Seddon – Darton 2005a, reporting the finding of two Early Saxon pits, probably used for the smoking of fish, dated 485-510 and 500-530; id. 2005b, reporting Early Saxon pottery, which suggests a settlement in the vicinity.

[60] On these cemeteries see Andrews *et al.* 2011. They might represent one cemetery composed of two groups of burials (id., I, 259). See also Richardson 2005, II, 74 number 243. In the area of Springhead some items dating before the cemeteries have been found, perhaps representing stray losses, among which there are a copper alloy Kentish square-headed brooch of the first half of the sixth century, and a sixth-century small-long brooch. Cf. Andrews *et al.* 2011, I, 296.

[61] Charter S 1258, dated 798 (Clofesho): the Archbishopric of Canterbury held the monastery of Cookham and its lands. Abbess Cynethryth, Offa's widow, kept the monastery but gave to the Archbishop Aethelheard lands, among which 60 hides at Northfleet are listed. According to the charter, this was previously royal land. Cf. also below n. 96.

century and laying close to the southern bank of the Medway.[62] Again near the river and close to Watt's Avenue to its west, the cemetery of Chatham Lines is significant. This cemetery was contemporary to that at Watt's Avenue, being in use from the middle of the fifth century until c. 700. On the basis of the grave goods deposited in some very rich burials, which include a large amount of imports, it has been possible to suggest the presence of a high-status community. It seems highly likely that this area constitutes an important political focus during this period, being thus in line with what has emerged from Canterbury and its surrounding area.[63] A gilded silver bow brooch, possibly of the late fifth century, recovered at Grange Farm, Gillingham, strengthens the hypothesis of a high-status presence in this area.[64]

A strong royal and ecclesiastical presence is visible also in the area of the river Medway and the Hoo Peninsula, although the ecclesiastical presence is earlier here than in the Darenth Valley, Rochester being an episcopal see from the earliest seventh century. As we will see, the foundation of the minster at Hoo in the last quarter of this century is a crucial sign of a royal interest toward this area: its foundation was linked with Caedwalla, King of the West Saxons, who expanded his dominions towards Kent in the 680s, and it then became a royal nunnery.[65] This area is geographically well positioned with respect to the Thames Valley, via both the maritime route and the Roman road. Landing places must have existed around the Medway mouth, as can be seen from the distribution of *wic* place-names.[66]

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[62] The cemetery was used between 450 and 700, but the majority of the 37 graves could be dated just in the wide range of two centuries, between 500 and 700. See the ASKED Database. See also Richardson 2005, II, 67 number 223, who states that the most of, if not the whole cemetery, was probably of the seventh century. Imports have been found in 5 burials of the sixth or seventh century (gr. 2, 16, 8, 19, 26) and all are beads, among which there are two amethyst beads (gr. 2) and one amber bead from the Baltic (gr. 19).

[63] Cf. Brookes 2007a, 150, who suggests its possible central-place and political function. Cf. also Richardson 2005, II, 19 number 58. Brookes – Harrington 2010, 66, point out that this cemetery shows East Kentish characteristics, while no influences are visible in it from West Kent.

[64] PAS find: KENT-3A7463. On Grange Farm see Seddon 2008, suggesting the presence of high-status people in this area. A brooch of the same workshop was found in Canterbury. This brooch might be one high-status import from Scandinavia, or a Kentish Scandinavian-style manufacture. Cf. id., 85.

[65] See also below n. 86.

[66] See Durham – Goormachtigh 2015, map at p. 172; cf. also Gardiner *et al.* 2001, 277.

Salt may have been an important resource for part of these areas, and a stimulus for internal trade. Salt marshes are localized both in the Hoo Peninsula and along the Thames bank, north-west of Northfleet and near the mouth of the Darenth. It is significant that a similar localization for high-status communities is visible in these zones, Northfleet and Dartford being along the southern Thames bank, while the area of Chatham Lines and Grange Farm is positioned near the river mouth in the Medway area. Thus, the suggestion of an engagement of these communities in maritime and coastal activities cannot be ignored. It is possible that religious foundations and kings were involved in salt-production before the eighth century, when this activity is recorded in a charter.[67] Moreover, the presence of such a lucrative activity might have been an additional stimulus for the foundation of Hoo minster there.

The picture emerging from the areas around the mouth of West Kent rivers is fairly homogeneous: presence of rich communities from a very early period, proximity to salt marshes and landing-places, both royal and ecclesiastical presence. These elements can be seen, though in different extents, in all the three cases considered: the mouths of the rivers Darenth, Ebbsfleet and Medway. It seems thus possible to suggest that we are dealing with a common process of development.

The existence of a large number of landing places, each associated with communities showing an elite presence and a remarkably widespread distribution of imports among the population, which are features of both East and West Kent, does not fit well with a top-down model of development of the trading network.[68] These rich communities appear to have been quite well positioned in terms of access to natural resources, such as salt marshes, wood and

[67] Cf. charter S 27, AD 738: King Eadberht gives ten *sulungs* at Stoke in Hoo, along the estuary of the Medway, to the bishopric of Rochester; the grant includes *salsilagine*. The bishopric seems to have been quite interested in possessing lands in these area, as shown below, Ch. 1.2. On the exploitation of marshes see Rippon 2000; in particular on the northern Kentish coast see Evans 1953.

[68] See the Introduction.

iron deposits, which may have constituted part of the economic basis for their increase in wealth. Moreover, proximity to the sea surely played a fundamental role for the development of East Kent: the high percentages of burials with Continental imports show a wide access to foreign goods, and the distribution within the region indicates that cross-Channel contacts seem to have been remarkably widespread, generating an influx of foreign goods capable of reaching even the internal areas of the region to a considerable extent. The centrality of Kent along the routes of access from the Continent is also reflected in the widespread distribution and quantity of items made in gold and silver and containing garnets, forming an unparalleled picture in the context of Southern England, which only the Isle of Wight may perhaps rival (see Ch. 3). A good case is for instance the cemetery at Bifrons Patrixbourne, which lay close to the Roman road linking Canterbury to Dover and was in use between the middle of the fifth to the first quarter of the seventh century: among 109 graves, 5,5% of the burials had gold items, and 11-12% had silver.[69]

Due to its geographical position, it seems likely that cross-Channel contacts were an intrinsic characteristic of East Kent, shaping a maritime-orientated society along its coasts.[70] This model of development of the trading network, based on a large number of landing sites supporting ongoing traffic from the sixth century, applies to the Isle of Wight as well (Ch. 3), above all due to their sharing a similar strategic position along the maritime routes. The development of the Kentish kingdom in the eastern part of the region connects the emergence of the kings with this context: cross-Channel traffic is likely to have played an important supporting role for the growth of elites and kings. As we will see when discussing the written sources, it seems likely that the presence of kings and churches had a considerable structuring role in the further development of the trading system and in attracting resources. The examination of the river

[69] These percentages exclude the unassociated items, the amount of which has led scholars to hypothesise that the graves may have been more than 165. Cf. Hawkes 2000, 7. On percentages of gold and silver in Sussex and Hampshire cf. Chs. 2.1 and 3.1.

[70] This is suggested also by the recovery of parts of boats possibly associated with burials: see Brookes 2007b.

valleys of West Kent however demonstrates that, although this part of the region was undoubtedly far less rich than East Kent in terms of imports and precious materials, these areas cannot be regarded as peripheral.[71] West Kent, too, shows a complex society integrated into the transmarine network, and its position along the routes of communication is likely to have made it a key territory granting access to the river Thames. As discussed in the next section, common developments are indeed documented in East and West Kent during the following period.

The earliest charters documenting landed property start only after the archaeological evidence discussed so far. In the later period, from around the middle of the seventh century, the archaeological remains show a structuring of the settlement landscape through the development of large estates.[72] The transformations occurring in the first phase of the settlement at Lyminge before the development of the monastery, that is to say before the late seventh century, constitute an important case in this respect; another example is the large hall discovered at Eynsford in West Kent.[73] It is from the seventh century that we have archaeological evidence for the presence of *wics* too, which show a close connection with centres of political importance. This link is clear between Sandtun and Lyminge, and in the case of Canterbury where, as mentioned, a possibly large commercial site may have extended from the extramural area up to the port at Fordwich (see Map 1.5.1). Eighth-century Continental pottery and Ipswich-ware point to ongoing trading activity in these sites and to their inclusion in the transmarine network. We have seen that Fordwich was not the only trading site in the area of the Wantsum Channel,

[71] For instance, excluding beads, the cemetery at Northfleet has around the 16% of graves with imports, but the percentage drops to 7% at Orpington (which presents around 16% if we include beads).

[72] See Brookes 2007a; Brookes – Harrington 2010, 98-103.

[73] At Lyminge, it should be noted the exceptional recovery of a heavy plough coulter pertaining to the first phase of the site (it was deposited in the first half of the seventh century), cf. Thomas *et al.* 2016, interpreting this agricultural innovation in the wider context of the Kentish connections with Francia. The use of the heavy plough is linked with the increasing of agricultural surplus, so it is very significant that it has been recovered from such an early period, indicating perhaps the estate centres' capacity to develop. Id., 735, connect the Lyminge heavy plough to a similar context of innovation at Northfleet, where a tidal mill dated to the end of the seventh century has been recovered, on which see Hardy – Watts – Goodburn 2011.

and another *wic* was located, as the place-name shows, at Sandwich.[74] In this area, Sarre is also worth mentioning as the site of a port documented in around the middle of the eighth century.[75] Before this period, an important cemetery, in use between the late fifth and the seventh century, has been excavated at Sarre; among the large quantity of imports recovered as grave goods, Frankish wheel-thrown pottery found in 19 seventh-century graves attests to the inclusion of the site in the transmarine network during this period.[76] Apart from pottery, imports and luxury items suggest a high-status presence, and the recovery of a large number of weapons in burials has been proposed as evidence of a military role of the community under royal control. Although a link between the high percentage of weapons and sites involved in transmarine activity might be suggested, the presence of these weapons is not enough to assume that this was the burial ground of *king*'s officers or warriors.[77] Indeed, it is not necessary to assume a strong top-down political control: the weapons might just signify that these sites were to be defended and, in any case, the identification of an individual's role during lifetime from grave goods is not straightforward.[78]

The Mid-Saxon structuring of the territory seems to have been directed toward areas which display rich communities integrated in the maritime routes of traffic during the sixth century: we have seen that a high-status presence has been proposed for sixth-century Lyminge, and the same can be seen in the case of the surroundings of Canterbury, Sarre, Rochester and the Darenth Valley.

1.2. *Landed property in coastal areas*

[74] Cf. above n. 22; 30.
[75] Cf. below n. 99.
[76] Cf. Perkins 1991; 1992; Richardson 2005, II, 70-71 number 231.
[77] This type of link with royal power has been suggested by Hawkes 1969a, 191-92. On a similar hypothesis on Continental communities see Ch. 4.1, n. 27 (p. 115). On Sarre see Fleming 2009, 404 with references, against this theory.
[78] See Ch. 4.1, n. 27 (p. 115).

Although the charters start only from the seventh century, they can nonetheless illuminate possible areas of economic and trading interest along the coasts, as they show the assignment by kings of great land-units, especially to churches. Kings in such grants did not intend to lose power over the properties they gave, as the monasteries they founded and donated to remained under royal control, at least initially; rather, such gifts show what lands were valued by kings and their ecclesiastical associates.[79] The small group of the earliest charters, pertaining to the late seventh and early eighth century, permits us to draw some important conclusions. Although the picture offered by these documents is patchy, the distribution of the land-grants mentioned in the charters shows a concentration of these properties in coastal areas or at a short distance from the sea. As we will see, this is a feature clearly recognisable in both West and East Kent.[80] This picture is obviously partly due to the distribution of Anglo-Saxon settlement in the region which, as we have seen, shows a generalised connection to the sea. It is nonetheless true that many of these grants lay in areas of high economic potential in terms of maritime traffic. The appropriation of these lands by political actors is particularly visible in the process of monastic foundations which took place from around the middle of the seventh century in coastal areas.

Concerning West Kent, the beneficiaries of these early grants are the bishopric of Rochester, the nunnery of Barking and the minster at Hoo.[81] On the estate of the bishopric, however, only one charter notices its properties in Kent (S 1), which lay within the town. Although the charter itself is a forgery, it is likely that the ecclesiastical see held properties within Rochester shortly after its foundation, in the very first years of the seventh century.[82] As already mentioned, the

[79] The charters of Kent are edited in Campbell 1973 (Rochester), Kelly 1995 (St Augustine and Minster-in-Thanes), Brooks – Kelly 2013 (Christ Church). Cf. above n. 38.

[80] On the places mentioned in this section see Maps 1.5; 1.5.1.

[81] On Barking see Ch. 8.2.

[82] Cf. Bede, *HE* II.3. On the establishment of the bishopric at Rochester and its first endowments see Brooks 1989, 68; Yorke 1997, 27; Brett 1996, 1-5; Brooks 2006, 6-21.

map of rural land-grants in West Kent shows interesting links with the northern coast of the county and the banks of the Thames. Non-Kentish kings are attested by these charters, showing that Kent was passing under external control: one of these is the Mercian king Aethelred, who granted Swanscombe and Erith to Eorcenwold, bishop of London, who gave them in turn to his sister Aethelburg, abbess of Barking, in the second half of the seventh century (S 1246).[83] The other king mentioned as donor is the West Saxon Caedwalla, who gave 40 hides *ad Hebureahg insulam* to Abbot Ecgbald and his *familia* at Hoo (S 233, dated 687).[84] The establishment of the coastal monastery at Hoo is to be understood within the process of monastic foundation which, as shown below, is particularly visible along the coast of East Kent. Later, the minster at Hoo is inserted into the list of Kentish monasteries in charter S 22, a ninth-century forgery.[85] Thus, during the ninth century there was still a monastery in this place, but it disappeared before the Conquest, since Domesday Book reports Hoo as a manor held by Earl Godwin.[86] Royal and monastic interest in this area is very likely to be related to its strategic location near the estuary of the Thames, which made the Hoo Peninsula a territory of high potential in terms of transmarine traffic.

The factors outlined above can be better appreciated from the documents pertaining to lands in East Kent, in particular in the area of the Wantsum Channel and south of it up to around Lympne. The beneficiaries of these charters are St Augustine's Church and Christ Church at Canterbury, Minster-in-Thanet, the minsters of Hoo and Reculver, and St Mary's Church at Lyminge. In the area of the Wantsum Channel, Sturry, Fordwich, Stodmarsh and *Haeg* are

[83] On this see Ch. 8.2, pp. 218-19.

[84] Perhaps the location of this place is Allhallows, in the peninsula of Hoo; see Wallenberg 1931, 19-21; 93. In addition, the same document reports a later grant (691) of further 20 hides in the same place and a donation of woodland at *Fercanhamstede*, given by Swaefheard king of Kent. Charter S 233 is a fabrication, though based on seventh-century material, cf. Edwards 1988, 300-5. See also Yorke 2003, 38 note 27, for a brief excursus on the history of this minster.

[85] See Brooks 1984, 191-97.

[86] See Edwards 1988, 304-5, also exploring the possible link between Hoo and Medeshamstede (Peterborough), on which see also Blair 2005, 83, suggesting that Hoo might have been a subordinate house of the latter.

documented, and also some lands in the Isle of Thanet of unknown location.[87] Stodmarsh and Fordwich are mentioned as grants to the abbey of St Augustine (S 7), which is beneficiary also of land at Sturry, where Minster-in-Thanet and Reculver are attested as landowners (S 8; 10; 11; 13).[88] The properties of Christ Church in this period are attested in spurious charters only, recording properties at Adisham (S 1609), Geddinge and Wootton (S 1610).[89] The centrality of the Wantsum Channel in maritime routes from the Continent, clear from the sixth-century remains, is likely to have been at the basis of the seventh-century religious foundations at Reculver and Minster-in-Thanet, lying at the entrances of the Channel. As mentioned above, also Sturry, Stodmarsh and Fordwich are to be seen in this context of traffic with the Channel: they were on Canterbury's route to the sea.[90] It is therefore possible to recognise here a close link between ecclesiastical foundations, connected to royal politics in most cases,[91] and areas of high economic and trading potential. As we will see in the following chapters, this connection can be identified in other coastal areas of Southern England, as well as in the Continent.

The group of seventh- and early eighth-century documents shows the spread of landed properties south of the Wantsum Channel too, where St Augustine's, Minster-in-Thanet and St

[87] These are *Sudaneie*, *Humantun* and 18 hides mentioned without reporting their boundaries (S 1648; 10; 15), which are all properties of Minster-in-Thanet. On *Sudaneie* see Wallenberg 1931, 10; on *Humantun* see id., 15-17. S 1648: dated 678, probably authentic. S 10, dated 689; cf. Kelly 1995, 141-46: based on genuine seventh-century documentation. S 15, dated 694; cf. Kelly 1995, 155-57: probably authentic. Besides this minster, the only other beneficiary of grants in the Isle was the minster of Reculver, which had a property in a place of unknown location named *Westanae* (S 8, dated 679, original), on this place see Wallenberg 1931, 10-13. See also Brooks – Kelly 2013, 266, suggesting that the estate at *Westanae* may have included Sarre. *Haeg* was a property of Minster-in-Thanet: S 18, dated 697 (Kelly 1995, 160-62: this document probably relied on a genuine charter); see Wallenberg 1931, 24-24, suggesting that it is Haine.

[88] However, the charter reporting St Augustine's land at Sturry is a late eleventh-century forgery (S 4). See Levison 1946, 180-81. S 7, dated 675: Kelly 1995, 27-30: uncertain, but it probably relied on a genuine seventh-century record. S 11, dated 690; cf. Kelly 1995, 147-49: essentially authentic. S 13, dated 690; cf. Kelly 1995, 150-51: probably genuine.

[89] On S 1609 (a post-conquest forgery) and S 1610 cf. Brooks 1984, 100-3: although S 1610 is spurious, it is possible that lands at Geddinge and Wootton were seventh-century grants. On Geddinge and Wootton see also S 156, below n. 102.

[90] See above n. 22.

[91] On the history of Minster-in-Thanet, linked with the kings of Kent and Mercia, see Foot 2000, 125-32; Kelly 1992. On the foundation of Reculver Minster, see Kelly 2008. See also Yorke 2003. These were royal ecclesiastical foundations, and another example is that of Minster-in-Sheppey, founded in the second half of the seventh century, on which see Yorke 2003, esp. 26.

Mary's Church at Lyminge are attested as landowners.[92] As in the case of the Wantsum Channel, this is another area whose archaeological remains show its firm inclusion in transmarine traffic from the earlier period. The inclusion of the Wantsum Channel in the web of transmarine routes and its direct connection to the river Thames is explicitly documented in later charters attesting the remissions of toll due on ships in the port of London, given to Minster-in-Thanet (S 86; 87; 91). From charter S 88 (dated 733) we know that a similar remission grant relating to the port of London was given to Rochester.[93]

While there is thus evidence for maritime routes, and also of the engagement of monasteries in trading activities, the role of land routes such as the Roman road linking Canterbury to Rochester is more difficult to ascertain. There is in fact a considerable lack of charters concerning estates in the territories between the two Roman towns: this seems to be due to the presence of some royal estate centres along the road which were not assigned to churches.[94] This is supported by the fact that in the eleventh century there were substantial royal lands here, as we shall see presently. It is all the same notable that the very few documented early grants between Canterbury and Rochester lay along the coast, the only exception being Sheldwich – which is, however, only about five km from the coast near Faversham.[95] The estates along the coast are Fleet (Northfleet), Tenham (Teynham) and *by Northauwde* (S 1258 and S 26).[96] The first two were properties of the archbishopric, the last was held by Minster-in-Thanet. Such a coastal localisation may support the argument that maritime routes were more important than land routes.

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[92] St Augustine's held properties at Northbourne (S 6, spurious. See Kelly 1995, 24-26) and at Lyminge (S 12); St Mary's Church in the area of Romney Marsh (S 21), and Minster-in-Thanet at Bodsham (S 11). In the case of S 12, it is important to remark that the charter specifies that the land formerly belonged to the royal villa, and that the granted territory was iron-bearing land; cf. above n. 38.

[93] This group of charters concerning remission of tolls is studied in Kelly 1992; S 86 and 87 were probably made in the 730s, S 91 in 748.

[94] See the map in Brookes 2007a, 94. On the earlier royal estate centres see Welch 2007a, 242-45; Everitt 1986.

[95] Sheldwich is mentioned in S 38 (abbreviated cartulary version of a lost charter), dated 784; Cf. Brooks 1984, 113; 349: date may not be reliable.

[96] S 1258 (authentic) is dated to 798, S 26 to 727; cf. Kelly 1995, 166-67: likely to be fundamentally authentic. On *Northauwde* see Wallenberg 1931, 270-71, suggesting that it may be Northwood near Whitstable.

The presence of royal estate centres along the northern coast of Kent in Domesday Book might reinforce the hypothesis that the absence of grants there is due to the continuous existence of large portions of royal lands. Along the Roman road between Rochester and Canterbury, the possible royal estates were at Rainham, Milton Regis, and Faversham. Rainham and Faversham were certainly early royal centres, for they are mentioned in 811 as *oppida regis* (S 168).[97] The interest of the kings in this coastal area is shown in Domesday Book, which reports many territories previously belonging to King Edward. Along the northern coast of Kent, clusters of royal lands in Domesday Book can be seen in the Eastry district near Sandwich, in the vicinity of Faversham, and along the Thames (see Map 1.6).[98]

Concerning the territories along the Wantsum Channel, eighth-century charters mention Fordwich, linked to Minster-in-Thanet and Reculver (S 29, authentic and S 1612), and Sarre, both listed with reference to a remission of the tolls due on ships granted to Minster-in-Thanet (S 29) and Reculver (S 1612).[99] The wealth of the Early Saxon cemeteries in this zone indicates that these places must have had some importance as trading centres during this period too. In and around Canterbury, during the eighth century lay beneficiaries start to be recorded in the documentation too, such as Ealdbeorht, *minister* of the Mercian king Offa (a clear sign of

[97] S 168: Brooks 1984, original. Faversham is also mentioned in S 170 (AD 812) as *terram iuris mei*. In a ninth-century charter there is also a mention of Chatham, very close to Rainham, which was granted by the king (S 321, dated 880). On Milton Regis and Faversham see also above n. 36.

[98] Domesday Book documents a large amount of lands in this area, compounding a compact unit between Rochester, Faversham, Maidstone and Wye. In the area of Faversham, a large number of places are recorded in Domesday Book with the formula *tenuit de rege. E.*, '(He) held it from King Edward': among them, there are Luddenham [10c (5.160)], Oare [10a-b (5.141;154)], Buckland [10b-c (5.152;157)], Norton [10a (5.143)], Perry Court [10b (5.151)], Eastling [10c (5.158)], Arnolton [10b (5.147)], Throwley [10b (5.155)], Ringlestone [10c (5.161)], Perry Wood [10b (5.150)], Hurst [10b (5.153)]. If the situation was the same during the previous centuries, a specific royal policy not to grant these lands might have been linked to a strong interest of the kings towards them. It is to be noted that the royal centre of Wye, at short distance from Faversham, and the sites in its proximity, were linked with Canterbury along the Great Stour river, and then to the Wantsum Channel. The Eastry district shows a lack of grants, now and in the following centuries. However, Domesday Book attests that Sandwich was previously property of King Edward [3a (2.2)], while properties at Each [11c (5.216)], Shelving [11d (5.219)], Ringleton [11a (5.183)], Woodnesborough [11c (5.211)], Ham [11c (5.206)] and Waldershare [11c (5.215)] are also listed as *tenuit de rege. E.* (see Map 1.6). All of them lay at very short distance from the coast, close to Deal and Dover. Furthermore, a royal presence at Eastry might be supposed by the sixth century, as suggests by Hawkes 1979, 95. For royal lands on the Thames see Ch. 8.2.

[99] S 1612: Brooks – Kelly 2013, n. 15 (pp. 360-62), 'cartulary version of a probably authentic diploma'. On the presence of a port at Sarre see Perkins 2001. See Kelly 1992. On an early estate centre at Sarre see Everitt 1986, esp. 105;107.

Mercian overlordship), mentioned as landowner together with his sister Selethryth, abbess of Minster-in-Thanet.[100] Another lay beneficiary connected with Mercia is the landowner of *Duningcland*, in the Eastry district (S 128, dated 788); this is the only lay estate mentioned within this area.[101]

Eighth-century charters allow us to follow the development of landownership in other coastal areas as well, showing that Kentish churches continued to have an interest in possessing lands close to the sea. Along the coast going from Deal to the south, we know of properties of St Augustine's Abbey and Christ Church: the first was beneficiary of lands at Mongeham (S 28), in the hinterland close to Deal, as well as at Beauxfield (S 140) and at Singledge (S 28), both near Dover; Christ Church is the documented landowner in the area of Geddinge and Wootton (S 156).[102] In addition, both these institutions held properties at Chart (Great Chart), in the hinterland of Hythe and Folkestone (S 25 and S 155).[103] We also have mention of a property of St Mary's Church of Lyminge, at Sandtun (S 270).[104]

In addition to coastal areas, during the eighth century the charters start to show the hinterland of the region, in particular near to Wye, the site of a royal centre, and in the proximity of

[100] In the vicinity of the town, they held some properties at *Curringtun*, mentioned as *vicus*, Ickham and Palmstead. The other estate linked with them is Ruckinge, in the area of Romney Marsh. Ickham and Palmstead are mentioned in S 123, dated 785 (where these places are given as *terra iuris mei* by Offa, king of Mercia, being in addition free from tributes). Cf. Brooks – Kelly 2013, number 22 (pp. 399-405): 'original or nearly contemporary single-sheet copy'. The grant of Ruckinge is in S 39 (AD 805); Brooks – Kelly 2013, number 35 (pp. 466-69): 'probably a copy of an authentic and original diploma, although (…) discrepancies in the dating information'. Of some interest is charter S 125 (probably an eleventh-century forgery: cf. Brooks – Kelly 2013, number 23), which includes these three properties and adds the *vicus* of *Curringtun*, because there are references to a market place in Canterbury (to the south of *Curringtun*) as well as to salt-works. Ickham, Palmstead and Ruckinge are mentioned also as grants to Christ Church in S 1614, AD 791: cf. Brooks – Kelly 2013, number 23A (pp. 408-9): cartulary memorandum based on S 123 or S 125, or reflecting a lost fabrication.

[101] On *Duningcland* see Wallenberg 1931, 73-74; 158. On this charter see Brooks 1984, 119; 350: original.

[102] S 28 (762/63); Kelly 1995, 53: authentic. S 140 (765-792); Kelly 1995, 59: 'fabrication based on a genuine charter of Offa, probably dating from the later part of his reign and not originally in favour of Abbot Æthelnoth'. S 156 (799); Brookes – Kelly 2013, number 30: forgery, late tenth/eleventh century, possibly based on S 15; cf. Kelly 1995, 153-57.

[103] S 25 (762): Kelly 1995, 45-47, authentic. S 155 (799): Brooks 1984, 114-15; 131; 321-22, original.

[104] S 270: Brooks – Kelly 2013, number 65: tenth-century forgery. Property of St Mary in the area of Sandtun in the eighth century is nonetheless attested in the original S 23.

Brenchley not far from Maidstone, another royal estate centre.[105] Romney Marsh, in the south of Kent, also starts to be visible in the charters during this period, documenting an expansion of political interest toward this area.[106] Not every place mentioned here can be located precisely, and the difficulty extends to some grants by the river Limen. The interest in Romney Marsh is however highlighted by the presence of many ecclesiastical institutions as landowners in this area: St Mary's Church of Lyminge, the properties of which were in expansion during the eighth century, Minster-in-Thanet, and Christ Church; laymen are mentioned as well.[107]

Returning to West Kent, during the eighth century the written sources attest the widening of the properties of the bishopric of Rochester, the most important ecclesiastical landowner in this part of the county. The ecclesiastical see by now held many properties in the close hinterland of the town, probably linked with the river Medway, and also in the peninsula of Hoo, reaching its coast at, perhaps, Yantlet Creek (S 36).[108] At the connection of the peninsula to the mainland, near Rochester, lies Higham Upshire, the only place concerning which there are references to estates held by other institutions, namely the archbishopric (S 110) and Reculver (S 31).[109] The minster of Reculver is not very well documented during this century, being linked with only two other endowments: Sheldwich (S 38) and Fordwich (S 1612). The locations of these places nonetheless share a position close to the coast leading, from the Wantsum Channel, to the estuary of the Thames. The archbishopric was also the landowner of some lands at the sources

[105] See S 155 on Charing and Barham, near Wye, given to the archbishopric; S 30 on the sites near Brenchley, held by the bishopric of Rochester. S 30, mid-eighth century: on dating see Campbell 1973, XXII; Kelly 1995, 200.

[106] On Romney Marsh see Brooks 1988; Rippon 2000.

[107] *Hafingseota* and *Bobingseata*: S 153, grant to Oswulf, *dux* and *minister* of Ceonwulf King of Mercia (dated 798 x ? c. 810). On these places see Wallenberg 1931, 79-82, suggesting that they lay in Romney Marsh; but see Brooks – Kelly 2013, 426. S 153: see discussion in Brooks – Kelly 2013, number 26: later copy created probably in 820s-830s. Omitting Ruckinge, the lay presence in Kent is quite circumscribed, as far as royal gifts are concerned: Oswulf held estates only in Romney Marsh, Ealdbeorht and Selethryth (abbess of Minster-in Thanet) in the proximity of Canterbury and Minster-in-Thanet (S 123, 125, 39, 1434; S 1434, dated 824, original), Osberht in the district of Eastry (S 128). Only Ealdbeorht and Selethryth seem to have had land at some distance, but it was only a woodland in the Weald.

[108] S 36 (779): Campbell 1973, XXIII, authentic.

[109] S 110: Brooks – Kelly 2013, number 19: tenth- or early eleventh-century forgery. S 31 (748 x 762): Brooks – Kelly 2013, number 14: original or contemporary single-sheet copy.

of the river Cray, tributary of the Thames (S 1613).[110] Once again, the distribution of these possessions attests to an interest in coastal areas which, in the case of the lands in West Kent, seems to have been connected with the Thames.

1.3. *Concluding remarks*

The strategic position of Kent in the cross-Channel routes led to the inclusion of its entire coastal area in maritime traffic from the Early Saxon period. Although West Kent cannot compare with the East in terms of burial wealth, the settlement pattern during the fifth to early seventh centuries, characterized by scattered landing places and communities with access to imported goods, and the processes visible in the charters during the seventh and eighth centuries, display structural similarities with East Kent. The rich cemetery at Chatham Lines near Rochester is indicative in this regard, as it may represent a West Kentish counterpart to the pattern linking Early Saxon high-status sites with a probable political role, Roman towns and later ecclesiastical institutions which can be identified in the case of the hinterland of Canterbury; thus, the existence of one or more trading centres in the area of Rochester seems indeed quite possible. In terms of traffic, West Kent is a key area connecting the eastern part of the region to the Thames and London/*Lundenwic*, and thus it is likely to have constituted an important focus of interest for political and ecclesiastical actors.

The process of monastic foundations linked with royal politics and established near the coasts from around the middle of the seventh century, appears to have been directed toward areas of high economic potential, which were already heavily involved in the sixth-century cross-Channel network: this can be recognised in the case of the monasteries founded along the Wantsum Channel, as well as at Dover and Lyminge. A royal and monastic interest in the

[110] S 1613, dated 791: Brooks – Kelly 2013, number 31 (pp. 448-50): 'some authentic basis' but dating should be postponed to perhaps 801.

coastal areas of Kent is visible through the distribution of the lands granted in the charters, and in this regard even the lack of documentation might be due (at least in some areas) to a continuous presence of royal lands. This latter hypothesis is supported by the correspondence between some of the territories for which no documents are preserved and areas where Domesday Book attests a concentration of royal lands, such as near Eastry and Sandwich, and around Faversham (see Map 1.6).

In the areas of East Kent where there is archaeological evidence for the existence of *wics*, clear links can be identified between these trading sites, ecclesiastical institutions, and royal centres. These connections may be seen along the Wantsum Channel in the area of Canterbury-Sarre-Fordwich and the monasteries at Reculver and Minster-in-Thanet. Together with this area, the zone of Eastry also seems to have had a central importance from the earliest period, as suggested by the funerary evidence, both along the coastline and in its immediate hinterland, which has revealed a large amount of prestige objects of both Kentish and Continental origin, as for instance at Finglesham, Eastry itself and Mill Hill Deal.[111] A similar pattern may also be recognized along the southern coast, around Dover, at the site of the rich Early Saxon community buried at Buckland, and in the area of Lyminge and Sandtun.[112] As previously discussed, all these zones display a connection between political power and landing sites in the sixth century; thus, the seventh-century development of the maritime network seems to have its roots in the same areas which had political and economic centrality in the previous period.

As we will see in the following chapters, ecclesiastical and royal presence linked with trading centres from the seventh century onward is also documented in the other regions examined, in the case of the *emporia* at *Hamwic* and *Quentovic*. However, Kent has so far not revealed a major Mid-Saxon *emporium* comparable to *Hamwic*, *Lundenwic* and *Quentovic*. This absence might have political explanations as in the case of the Isle of Wight, discussed in Ch. 3; that is,

[111] On Finglesham see Hawkes – Grainger 2006. On Mill Hill, Deal see Parfitt – Brugmann 1997.
[112] On Dover Buckland see above n. 37. Monastic foundations in this area are listed in Evison 1987, 177.

it might be related to the decline of the kingdom's importance by the late seventh/eighth century. However, places like Fordwich and Sandtun show the ongoing existence of a system based on more than one *wic* only, and the charters for the monasteries on the Isle of Thanet show that Kent was firmly included within maritime traffic in the eighth century too. The continuing integration of Kent in eighth-century traffic is also attested archaeologically, as can be seen from the distribution of *sceattas* included in the PAS.[113] The distribution of archaeological remains has moreover shown that other landing sites are likely to have existed along the northern coast of Kent and on bank of the Thames, providing access to foreign goods to the West Kentish communities during the sixth/seventh centuries. This may signify an even more articulated inclusion of the Kentish coasts in the maritime network during the Early Saxon period. This can also be suggested in light of the distribution of stray finds from the PAS, as mentioned in regard to the gold *tremisses* near Seasalter. Thus, rather than to political circumstances, the absence of a documented major *emporium* in Kent may be related to the continuing existence of this complex network of trading sites, which were entirely capable of supporting Kent's integration in the maritime network. This web was the result of the ease of contact that characterised the region, and contributed to keep Kent strongly embedded in the Channel area.

[113] See also Naylor 2004, esp. 92-96 discussing the distribution of coins in the late seventh and eighth centuries.

Chapter 2. *Early Anglo-Saxon Sussex*

If Kent provides a picture of a structured kingdom from an early period, the elusive written sources from Sussex show the ongoing existence of a fragmented political power with a constellation of many petty kings well into the seventh century.[1] This political fragmentation seems likely to have been due to the geographical context of the region, encompassing large portions of woodlands and divided by rivers running north to south. The archaeological evidence sustains this picture, showing that small political units were defined by the course of the major rivers. This pattern fits well with the model proposed by Bassett among others, according to which the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms originated through amalgamation of smaller units; however, Sussex did not accomplish this development in full.[2] It is also likely that the lack of a strong centralised power played some role in the late conversion of the kingdom (late seventh century).[3] In the latter period Sussex was under Mercian overlordship, and in the 660s the Mercian king Wulfhere conquered the Isle of Wight and the eastern territory of Hampshire, granting them to the South Saxon king Aethelwealh. This eastward expansion may have caused the wars against Caedwalla in the 680s, won by the West Saxons. During the eighth century Sussex remained under Mercian overlordship until it was fully conquered by Offa in 770s, and was ruled by Mercia up to the final conquest by the West Saxon Egbert in around 825.

The Early Saxon evidence highlights a strong difference between the cemeteries of Kent and Sussex: in general Sussex sites contain fewer precious metal and imported objects.

[1] See Welch 1989, 78 on the *Haestingas*, a semi-independent group around Hastings; Welch suggests that in the seventh century the eastern border of modern Sussex was included in Kent; see id., 80 for the contemporaneous existence of two dynasties. On the history of Sussex cf. also Kelly 1998, esp. LXXIII-LXXXIV, stressing the difficulties in reconstructing the history of the South Saxons. See Semple 2008, on a similar fragmented political pattern in West Sussex. Cf. also Welch 1983, 253-77, Gardiner 2003.

[2] Bassett 1989.

[3] Kelly 1998, LXXVI.

Nevertheless, this does not signify uniformity of burial wealth at a regional and micro-regional level. This chapter examines the distribution of sites and PAS finds, with a particular focus on the large funerary sites at Alfriston, Highdown and Apple Down. The archaeological remains are moreover useful to identify the possible routes of access to these goods. In fact, no *emporia* are documented for Sussex, and the inclusion of this region in transmarine routes is more doubtful than for Kent and Hampshire, both during the Mid and the Early Saxon period: thus, Sussex appears as a peripheral territory within the Channel area. Notwithstanding this notable difference, the archaeological evidence combined with the very small group of seventh- and eighth-century charters shows that Sussex underwent socio-economic developments that are similar to those visible in the other regions of Southern England explored in this thesis.

2.1. *The archaeological evidence: imports and precious goods*

As in Kent, the evidence of Early Saxon activity in East and West Sussex shows that rivers and Roman roads were the foci of settlement (see Maps 2.1, 2.1.1 and 2.1.2).[4] The region is crossed by four major watercourses: from east to west they are the Cuckmere, Ouse, Adur and Arun. Due to changes in sea level, their estuaries underwent a process of silting, and the configuration of the coast changed by erosion.[5] Thus, this represents a crucial factor to be taken into account when considering the picture of the distribution of archaeological remains. Nonetheless, the coastal zone appears rather well represented in terms of finds, the two major

[4] On the importance of rivers for settlement see Semple 2008, also noting that barrow burials were located in strategic places near coastal entry points (id., 420). This suggests that coasts were also important foci of Anglo-Saxon occupation, as corroborated from the distribution of the archaeological remains.

[5] See Woodcock 2003; Cole 2007, esp. 57-58: 'The configuration of the coast in late Roman/early Anglo-Saxon times is unknown because it has been destroyed by erosion.' It is difficult to establish the chronology of these changes, and spits across the river estuaries might have been already formed in the Roman period, as Cole holds for the mouth of the Adur. Cole 2007, 71, suggests that the Adur was probably navigable up to Bines Bridge (north of Bines Green); in the eleventh century there was a port at Steyning, site of a Late Saxon settlement (on which see Gardiner 1993; Blair 1997). See also the map in Cole 2007, 56, showing the distribution of landing-places in England.

exceptions being the area surrounding Pevensey Castle in East Sussex, and the area around Selsey in the West.[6] The western evidence is indeed quite scanty, as are the findings from Chichester and in its hinterland in general.[7] This relates to the lesser visibility of West Sussex in comparison with East Sussex, in terms of the archaeological remains of the Early Saxon period.

The small quantity of finds pertaining to the fifth and early sixth centuries allowed Martin Welch to propose a chronology for Anglo-Saxon occupation of Sussex which would have taken place across a long period of time, the East being already under their control in the fifth century, the West being incorporated during the next century.[8] However, Anglo-Saxon evidence for the fifth century is visible also in West Sussex, which possibly complicates the chronology for their occupation there. In addition to the first phase of use of Apple Down Cemetery I, some of the finds recovered in the Westhampnett bypass area might belong to the fifth century, and evidence of this period has been found near the river Adur (see Map 2.3[9]).[10]

The Maps (2.1; 2.1.1; 2.1.2) show that Anglo-Saxon occupation is well attested at a short distance from the coast and wholly absent further inland, because of the Weald forest; and settlement is not restricted to the main river valleys: this is clearly the case for the area east of

[6] However, the present-day high urbanisation along the Sussex coast is to be considered as an important element influencing the overall picture of distribution. See Map 2.2.

[7] On the difference between East and West Sussex see Harrington – Welch 2010, 175-78; 2014, esp. 193. They also suggest a difference in the presence of Frankish artefacts, more frequent in the East. This seems to be the case, although it might be due to the generally smaller number of excavated sites in the West.

[8] See Welch 1983. The area first under Anglo-Saxon control was the territory between the Ouse and Cuckmere, with the addition of Highdown in West Sussex. Welch's suggestion has been a very influential one, and it is accepted also by more recent works, as Semple 2013, 18. Cf. also Welch 1971, suggesting that lands between the Ouse and the Cuckmere were given to Saxon mercenaries or *laeti*; Harrington – Welch 2010, 175-78.

[9] It is to note that this map does not include the barrow burials for which a redating between the fifth and the eighth centuries has been proposed by Semple 2008 and 2013, due to their wide possible time-span. They are: Friday's Church (Barpham Hill), Rocky Clump (Brighton), Perry Hill (Burpham), Blackpatch (Patching), Sullington Hill (Sullington). It is also to be noted that for some of the sites on the map a fifth-century dating is uncertain.

[10] On the cemetery at Apple Down see Down – Welch 1990, 9-213. Westhampnett Bypass: Fitzpatrick *et al.* 1997; Fitzpatrick – Powell – Allen 2008. Also two SFBs together with pottery have been found, which have been dated to the sixth-seventh century; see Chadwick 2006. Near the river Adur there is Anglo-Saxon evidence at Botolphs (cf. Gardiner 1990) and at Thundersbarrow (cf. Semple 2013, 22-23, suggesting a possible dating in c. fifth-sixth century).

the Cuckmere and for the territory between the Ouse and the Adur, and it can be glimpsed also in the hinterland of West Sussex. As might be expected, evidence derives for the most part from cemeteries, although some settlements have also been excavated. The metal-detected finds included in the PAS add important data: in some cases the finds point to a possible presence of other cemeteries, and some gold or silver items, though few in number, can be added to the scanty group of objects made in precious metal (see Map 2.7).[11] Hints of the presence of a cemetery are, for instance, the finds listed in the PAS which were recovered north-west of South Heighton, very close to the eastern bank of the Ouse, not far from its mouth. Among the finds, whose proximity to each other allows us to speak of a cluster, there are three square-headed brooches (one great and two small) and a probably Frankish bird brooch.[12] Among the other scattered metal-detected finds there are another square-headed brooch and a cruciform brooch dated to the sixth century, found not far from each other near Rodmell on the western bank of the Ouse.[13]

The distribution of imports and luxury goods may help us to understand the possible connections of Sussex with other territories. As Map 2.7 shows, these items have been found in many sites within the region, with a geographical focus in its eastern part. As in Kent and elsewhere, most of the imports come from Frankish and Baltic areas, the latter being represented by amber beads.[14] It is to be noted that there is an evident relation between larger clusters of foreign objects and larger cemeteries; thus, the distribution map may be distorted by differences

[11] Welch 1983 still provides a very useful account of the Anglo-Saxon remains in Sussex, and has been the starting point for this research on the region: the main changes in respect to Welch's distribution maps are especially due to the PAS finds, while post-1983 excavations are few, although some of them are of considerable importance, as for instance that at Apple Down. Of great interest are also Semple 2008 and 2013, focusing in particular on barrow burials in West Sussex and suggesting that some of them might belong to an earlier period than that accepted by Welch, cf. above n. 4 and 9.

[12] Small square-headed brooches: SUR-381ED2 and SUR-796245; great square-headed brooch: SUR-DB66E1; gilded bird brooch: SUR-791CE8.

[13] Square-headed brooch: SUR-716641; cruciform brooch: SUSS-E0E037.

[14] On amber see in general Huggett 1988, and further below Ch. 5.1.1. On the distribution of imports see Harrington – Welch 2014, *passim*.

in the size of excavated funerary sites (see Map 2.4)[15]. This is an issue to be taken into account also for the other territories considered in this research: we cannot assume with certainty that the largest communities, as for instance those discussed in this and the following chapter on Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, were the richest of a certain region. An examination of these larger cemeteries is nonetheless useful to explore the access the population had to foreign and luxury materials. In Sussex, however, items in gold and silver comprise only a small group of finds. The smaller amount of precious metals recovered is relevant when examining the inclusion of this area in the broader context of the Channel, as the eastern focus of these materials and imports in general may be linked with its proximity to Kent, which may have mediated at least part of the access to foreign goods in Sussex.

Finds from the Roman fort at Pevensey, on the east coast of East Sussex, should be added to the imports reported in Map 2.7 (see also 2.1.1; 2.1.2). This coastal site represents a particularly interesting case, where continuity of occupation from the Roman period has been proposed.[16] High-status presence has been suggested due to the recovery of some finds over a long period, as for instance the long-distance imported North African Red-Slipped Ware pottery of the early to mid-fifth century, and a fragment of a precious glass cone-beaker of Kempston type of the sixth or early seventh century.[17] The latter resembles the three cone-beakers found at Alfriston cemetery. Occupation there continued in the next centuries, as visible from the presence of Mid and Late Saxon pottery.[18] Pevensey was the site of a Roman harbour, and the above-mentioned high-status presence during the Early and Mid-Saxon period suggests that this place maintained some degree of centrality. Although there seems to be a lack of finds from the immediate

[15] The isolated red dot on the map is a Merovingian gold *tremissis* (PAS find: KENT8) found near Robertsbridge.

[16] On the excavations at Pevensey see Lyne 2009, esp. 41-42 on post-Roman occupation; Fulford – Rippon 2011, esp. 124-25.

[17] On the Kempston cone-beaker see Lyne 2009, 57; 90-91. On other evidence of long-distance contacts see Lyne 2009; Fulford – Rippon 2011. On Kempstone cone-beakers see also Evison 1972; Evison – Marzinzik 2008.

[18] See Lyne 2009. Cf. Fulford – Rippon 2011: they also suggest a link between the importance of Pevensey and iron-extraction activity from the resources in the Weald; cf. Fulford – Rippon 2011, 125, with reference to Cleere – Crossley 1995. On the parallels for the Kempston cone-beaker fragment see Lyne 2009, 90-91.

surroundings of the site, Pevensey lies not so very far from areas (like Eastbourne) that have revealed imports and luxury items.[19]

With the important exception of Highdown, the river valleys of the Adur and the Arun and their territories represent almost a vacuum in the map of distribution of imported goods, even if they are well represented in terms of finds, as is visible by comparing Maps 2.7, 2.1 and 2.1.2.[20] However, it is interesting to note the small cluster of imports found in the vicinity of Chichester, as Early Anglo-Saxon evidence in this zone is quite scanty: the sites discovered in this area have a clear focus on the Roman roads and Chichester, thus suggesting that, much like Pevensey, the former Roman town continued to attract settlement.[21]

Given the scarcity of large excavated cemeteries in Sussex, social analyses based on them might not be very reliable at a regional comparative level. This kind of investigation is nonetheless fruitful at the level of the individual funerary community. Three major cemeteries will be investigated: Alfriston ('The Sanctuary', Winton Street) in East Sussex, and Highdown (Ferring) and Apple Down (Compton) in West Sussex. It is important to note that these broadly contemporary cemeteries, in use between the fifth and the seventh century, are geographically quite distant from each other, and at varying distances from the coast.[22] The main question is

[19] Two inhumation cemeteries are recorded at Eastbourne. The earliest (St. Anne's Road) has a suggested time-span between the sixth and the first half of the seventh century. In 1877, an unrecorded number of inhumations were excavated: among the grave goods there are glass cups or tumblers, a wooden bucket with silvered copper alloy bands, iron swords (one with silvered gilt mount), an armlet, shield bosses, a bracelet. Another sword was found in 1960. The other (Willingdon Road) is a later cemetery, dated from the late seventh to the early eighth century. Cf. Welch 1983, 334-40.

[20] The uniqueness of Highdown in this picture has been explained by Harrington – Welch 2010, 176 with its strategic position: 'It dominates the coastal plain near Worthing and might represent a strategic station for Saxon troops employed by the British to both control and defend the coastal plain on the exposed coastline of West Sussex.'

[21] Map 2.7 shows that no gold and silver items have been found in the area of Chichester; however, we cannot assume that no rich communities were settled there, due to the very different size of excavations in comparison to the East (see Map 2.4). Connections between Roman sites and Anglo-Saxon settlement will be further discussed in Ch. 6.1.

[22] The cemetery at Alfriston was in use between the second half of the fifth to the first half of the seventh century, while Apple Down's span is slightly later, belonging to the late fifth or early sixth, to the late seventh century, and the starting of Highdown is earlier, in the fourth/first half of the fifth century, extending up to the early seventh. On Apple Down see above n. 10; on Alfriston and Highdown see Welch 1983.

whether noteworthy differences between these communities can be identified or not, especially in terms of access to luxuries and imported goods.

All these communities show evidence of a ranked society, as appears from the grave-good distributions. Differences in grave-good assemblages seem more evident during the sixth century, as most of the richest inhumations in these cemeteries took place in this period. This might be related to an increase of social differentiation.[23] However, a notable social differentiation before the sixth century shows up in the case of Highdown, where three of the five richest female graves belong to the fifth century (gr. 26, 30 and 60), and one might be fifth- or sixth-century (gr. 74). In contrast, the female burials with the richest grave goods in Alfriston are all ascribed to the sixth century (gr. 62 and 29 dated to the first half of the sixth century, and gr. 65, 43, 28 and US datable around the mid-century). Apple Down is similar to Alfriston, the richest female and male graves being sixth-century burials (gr. 10, 12a, 13, 14 and 63).

Possible differences in the communities' composition may be noted: the limited number of richly furnished burials in each phase of use of Apple Down seems to point to the presence of one family having a greater access to exotic, prestigious items than the others; instead, the several high-status burials at Alfriston and Highdown possibly indicate the presence of more than one high-status family at the same time.[24]

Glass and amber beads are by far the most common imports. Interestingly, these three communities present differences in terms of types of imports and their distribution among the individuals. Among the three communities, Alfriston is the cemetery with the greatest range of imports:[25] even if burials with only beads are excluded, the largest number of burials with

[23] Here it is accepted that burial wealth is generally indicative of ranking within families. On an increase of social stratification in Anglo-Saxon England visible from the late sixth and, especially, from the seventh century, see Härke 1997, esp. 147; cf. also Scull 2011a. On grave goods and status see also James 1989; Halsall 2010, esp. 7-9; 289-322; Gaimster 2011.

[24] On this possibility at Apple Down see Down – Welch 1990, 109.

[25] The imports found at Alfriston can be classified into ten types (excluding unidentified objects and crystal beads): brooch, spindle whorl, axehead, buckle, glass vessel, copper alloy bowl, amulet (cowrie), ivory bag/pouch ring, glass bead, amber bead (plus unidentified objects); those at Highdown into seven: brooch, spindle whorl, buckle, pursemount/firesteel, glass vessel, glass beads, amber beads; and the items at Apple Down into seven:

imports can be seen at Alfriston (12,5%), the least at Apple Down (around 6%).[26] It thus seems possible that these differences were due to differential access to foreign items between Alfriston in East Sussex and Apple Down in the West. Nonetheless, they present similarly low percentages of silver, while objects made in gold are, thus far, almost absent.[27] This is in line with the overall picture of Sussex, which has revealed very few gold and silver objects (see Map 2.7). Thus, status was demonstrated with less precious objects than in Kent, even into the seventh century.

Still, the concentration of imports in excavated sites and as stray finds in coastal areas suggests the existence of maritime routes through which foreign goods reached Sussex during the Early Saxon period. As discussed in Ch. 6, landing sites are very likely to have existed along the coasts of the region, for instance near the estuaries of the main rivers. As Welch pointed out, however, the presence of imported goods does not straightforwardly imply direct contacts with the Continent.[28] Indeed, the wider distribution of imports in the eastern part of Sussex might indicate that imports reached this area from Kent, while the areas of Chichester and Apple Down may be seen in the context of Hampshire and the Solent along which, as shown in the next chapter, a large number of landing sites are likely to have existed.

brooch (including different types of brooches), spearhead, buckle, glass vessel, ivory bag/pouch ring, glass beads and amber beads.

[26] I am not taking into consideration those items which do not pertain to any grave. The size of Alfriston is unsure: Welch 1983 suggests that the cemetery should comprise at least 165 graves, although he records only 128 (our percentages of burials with imports take into consideration 128 burials). Concerning Alfriston, I am not considering two graves having crystal beads (gr. 23 and 56), since the origin of this material may have been local, cf. Huggett 1988, 70. The case of Highdown presents difficulties given that only the first 86 graves are fully recorded, out of a total of 186. If we consider the first 86 graves only, the percentage of burials with imports is 16,3%. On the other hand, the percentage drops to 7,5% if 186 graves are considered.

[27] An object with gold, probably a pommel mount of a sword, has been recovered at Apple Down; I am not considering it here since it is an unstratified find (n. 538); see Down – Welch 1990. *The Early Anglo-Saxon Census of Southern Britain* also lists an unidentified gold object at Alfriston gr. 1, not included in the catalogue of the graves in Welch 1983. Gilded and silvered objects are not taken into consideration either, due to the low presence of precious metal.

[28] See Welch 1983, 259-60 and id. 1991, 268, suggesting that these artefacts might have reached Sussex via Kent and the Isle of Wight, and also noting that Sussex might have been excluded from trade with the Continent by the Merovingian and Kentish monopoly; for the broader picture see below Part 2 and the Conclusion.

In this regard one should note that some of the items found in the Sussex cemeteries show connections with territories outside Sussex, for instance Kent and the Thames Valley. The means by which these items reached the communities in Sussex can obviously be various, and marriage is a possibility, as shown for instance in the case of Apple Down gr. 14, which contains a great square-headed brooch and has been identified as the grave of a woman perhaps coming from the Isle of Wight.[29] Other connections with areas outside Sussex can be glimpsed, for instance, in Apple Down gr. 13 (belonging to the sixth century): in addition to a gilded saucer brooch (Dickinson Group 2.1), there is a silver finger ring with zoomorphic terminals representing a snake head, which can be paralleled with the rings from Guildown, Surrey, gr. 77 and 206. Moreover, among the beads are two spangles, possibly connected with a workshop in the Thames Valley. Probably also made outside Sussex is the annular brooch in the sixth-century gr. 15, for which an Anglian workshop or Kent has been proposed as place of manufacture.[30] It is thus entirely likely that part of the Continental imports found in Sussex reached these communities from other areas of Southern England. Nevertheless, the possibility cannot be ruled out that some of these items reached Sussex directly from Francia, and it seems likely that both routes existed.[31]

As with the artefacts from other Anglo-Saxon regions, the means by which these Continental imports arrived in Sussex could therefore be various, and these are analysed in more detail in Chs. 5 and 6. A separate discussion has, however, to be made for the presence of amber. Indeed, as in the other regions considered, amber beads are common finds in the three cemeteries, and

[29] On this grave see Down – Welch 1990, 95-96; 109. Given the scarcity of great square-headed brooches found in Sussex, the brooch in grave 14 is an important find; interestingly, another brooch of this kind was found in this site, though it is not associated with a grave. Great square-headed brooches have been found also at Alfriston, in the richest inhumations (gr. 28, 43 and US, all dated around the middle of the sixth century). On great square-headed brooches see Hines 1997.

[30] See Down – Welch 1990, 96-99; 109-10 on the regional contacts visible at Apple Down.

[31] On contacts and exchange between Sussex and Francia during the sixth century see Soulat 2011b. In the case of fifth-century imports in cemeteries like Alfriston and Highdown, Soulat suggests the presence of foreign people in Sussex, following Welch 1993. It should however be noted that, while this is a possibility, foreign items in graves cannot be straightforwardly linked to foreign individuals; see below Ch. 4.3.

their presence might not have been related to the high status of their owners, as they have also been recovered among otherwise not very rich assemblages. This association can be seen in all of the three cemeteries, and although the amount of amber beads is different in Alfriston, Highdown and Apple Down, their percentages are nonetheless quite high, if compared to the general amount of beads. For instance, at Highdown there are 14 assemblages with beads out of the 19 adult female inhumations and the four female children, and seven of these contain amber. Thus, 50% of the bead assemblages have amber beads. Gr. 50, 10, 72 and 15, this latter being a child inhumation, are not particularly rich graves with amber. At Apple Down, amber beads are in 12 of the 14 female assemblages with beads, the percentage being 85,7%. At Alfriston, 58,3% of the beads assemblages have amber (14 assemblages among the 24 containing beads). As in Apple Down and Highdown, amber is also present in not very rich assemblages, as for instance in gr. 64 and 79.

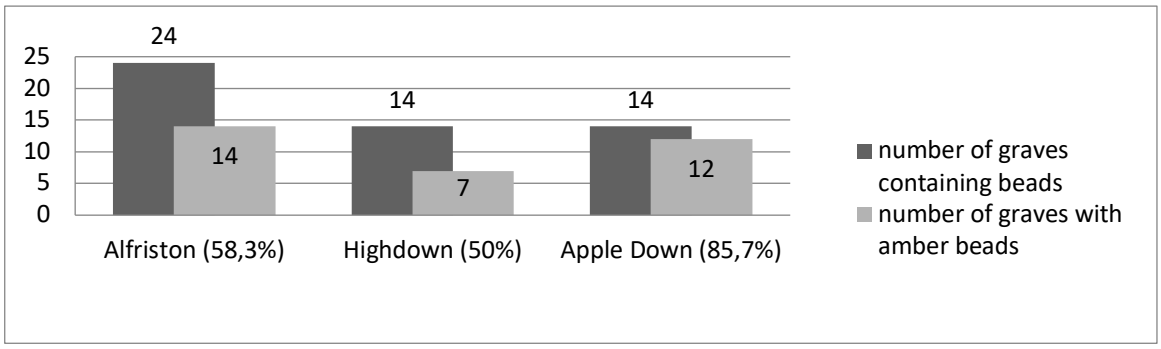


Fig. 2.1. Beads assemblages containing amber beads

The overall amount of amber in relation to other kinds of beads, and its distribution among the population shown by these cemeteries, suggests easy access to this material by the communities in Sussex – a situation comparable to Hampshire (Ch. 3).[32] While Alfriston and Highdown show similar percentages of amber among beads assemblages, at Apple Down its

[32] Figs. 3.5-6-7-8. See Ch. 5.1.1 for the general picture.

presence is considerably higher: this may have been due to its position close to the Hampshire border, meaning that the community may have had access to amber from that area; this would be in line with Huggett's general picture of the distribution of amber (cf. Ch. 5.1.1). Nonetheless, East Sussex cemeteries such as Alfriston and Eastbourne show a high quantity of amber beads, indicating that also this part of the region was well supplied with this material.

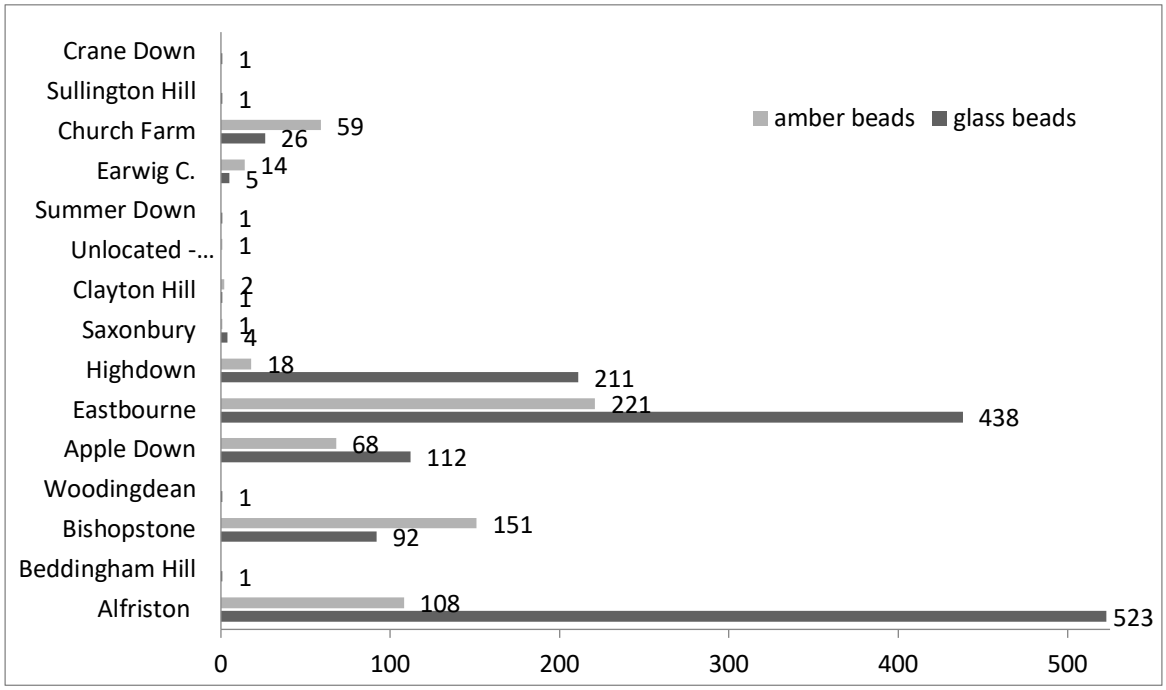


Fig. 2.2. Glass and amber beads

2.2. *Settlement and wealth: some later developments*

The archaeological remains show a notable territorial fragmentation during the Early Saxon period, with cores focused on the main rivers.[33] The locations of Alfriston and Highdown fit well with a picture of river-based foci. As the maps show (2.1; 2.1.1; 2.1.2), Anglo-Saxon presence seems also to be linked to the Roman road system: this is particularly visible, for instance, in the case of the north-east to south-west road east of the Adur. Near this road there

[33] See above n. 4.

is evidence for Early Saxon activity at Portslade-by-Sea, Hangleton, Newtimber, Hassocks (Stonepound Sandpit) and Friars Oak.[34]

The integration of the PAS finds shows, however, that the settlement network until the middle of the seventh century was more complex than previously accepted. We have already mentioned the finds recovered near the Ouse, not very far from the coast: in this case, the fact that some of the items lay close together might suggest the presence of a cemetery. Some of the artefacts are rich items showing connections with other territories, such as the square-headed brooches and the bird brooch.[35] Hence, the distribution of rich items and imported goods might have been more widespread than we know from excavations. Furthermore, some of the metal-detected finds, as well as some of the more recent excavations, cast further light on the chronology of Anglo-Saxon settlement in East and West Sussex, making the difference between the two regions suggested by Welch less sharp, as we have already seen.

It is true that, from most of the sites beyond the larger cemeteries, evidence of rich items is quite limited (see Map 2.7). Nevertheless, it seems possible that a certain level of settlement hierarchy was already present before the late sixth/seventh centuries.[36] Clearly, this does not imply the existence of highly structured local powers in all cases.[37] However, crucial connections can be made between some of the cemeteries showing imports and precious goods, and commercial activities, mostly documented in the later period, which may have provided the basis for the development of some of these communities. Charters, most of which refer to lands held by the ecclesiastical see at Selsey, are here significant: although they form a very modest group in comparison to those relating to Kent, they provide a better understanding of the socio-

[34] Excluding Friars Oak (Butler 2000), where there is evidence for a settlement starting in the first half of the seventh century, the others are funerary sites. On the cemeteries see Welch 1983; on the cemetery at Stonepound Sandpit, Hassocks, see Lyne 1994.

[35] See above n. 12.

[36] This later date is that proposed by Härke 1997, 147. On settlement hierarchy see further Ch. 6.2, n. 46 (p. 181).

[37] Some evidence in this sense might derive from the three larger cemeteries, where rich graves have been found throughout their period of use. Of course, this does not straightforwardly lead us to assume a local power firmly held by the high-status part of these communities.

economic development of some areas of Sussex, illuminating processes already examined in the Kentish case.[38]

As in Kent, a link with the coast can be hypothesised for some of the communities showing early high-status presence, especially at Highdown and Pevensey. Although it is difficult to ascertain what this link consisted of, their location might have led to an involvement in coastal activities, such as quite probably salt-production. From Domesday Book we know that at the end of the Anglo-Saxon period there were more than three hundred salterns in Sussex. One hundred are recorded near Rye, at the easternmost end of Sussex. Going westward but remaining in East Sussex, others are listed at Hooe, Hailsham, Eastbourne and Willingdon. Salterns are mentioned along all the main rivers, and above all along the Adur. Less activity is attested west of the Arun, in the area around the harbours of Pagham and Chichester. The area around the harbours of Portsmouth, Langstone and Chichester was very productive in the Romano-British period, until the middle of the second century.[39] Particularly interesting is the Adur Valley, where a large number of saltern mounds have been found up to the area of Upper Beeding.[40] The proximity of some of the Early Anglo-Saxon sites to the places listed in Domesday Book makes it possible that salt production was an ongoing activity in the Early Saxon period too (see Maps 2.5 and 2.5.1).[41] As in West Kent, an involvement of the population in this production might explain the presence of rich communities in these areas. From a spurious document granting lands in Sussex to Saint-Denis, we know for instance that in later

[38] The editions of Sussex charters used here are Barker 1947-48; Kelly 1998.

[39] On Roman salt production in Sussex see Rippon 2000, esp. 58-59; 105-16 on possible reasons for the end of salt exploitation in these areas. For salterns in Domesday Book see King 1962, 455-57. See also Woodcock 2003, 8.

[40] On this see Holden – Hudson 1981, 117-48. See also Ridgeway 2000, 135-52; esp. 137 on the importance of salt production there in Late Saxon period.

[41] For instance, a site near salterns reported in Domesday Book is Botolphs, Bramber, where an Anglo-Saxon settlement has been excavated; see below n. 45. The maps do not include Rameslie, near or at Rye, where 100 pans are listed in Domesday Book (cf. King 1962, 456-57), as in this area no sites or PAS finds are recorded.

centuries Pevensey developed salt production (S 318, dated 857), which is also attested in Domesday Book (see Map 2.5.1.)[42]

Iron might have been another resource: indeed, the percentages of graves containing iron at Alfriston, Highdown and Apple Down resemble those from Kentish cemeteries.[43] Among the graves containing associated items, the percentage of graves with iron at Apple Down is 83,5%, which becomes 73,9% if only the sixth-century graves are considered. At Highdown the presence of burials with iron is 72,3%, while at Alfriston is 78,2%.

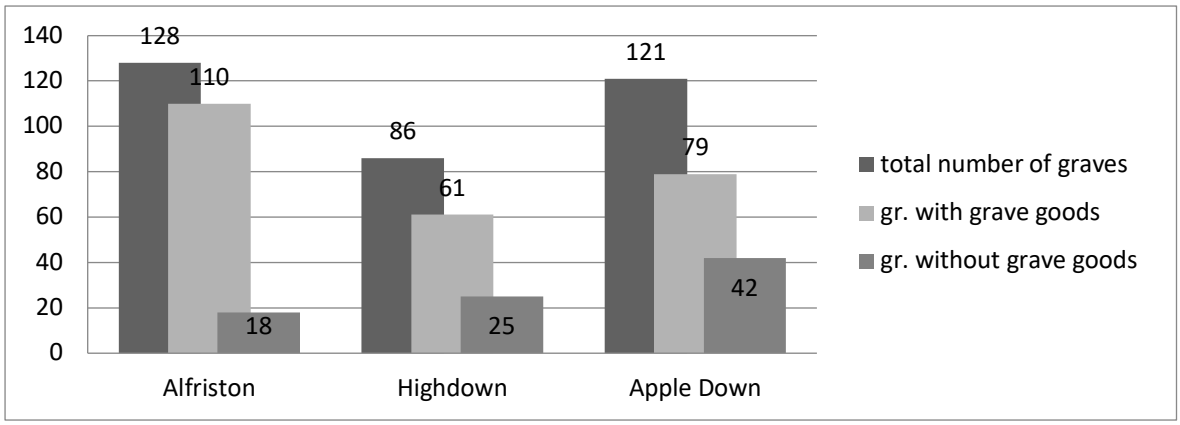


Fig. 2.3. Graves with and without grave goods

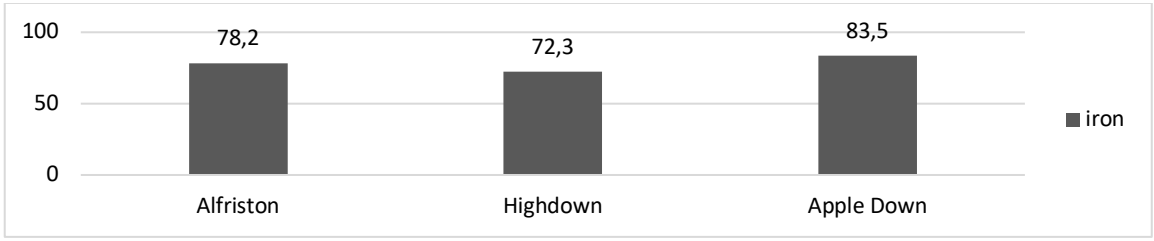


Fig. 2.4. Percentages of graves containing iron

[42] There are three spurious documents concerning land-granted to Saint-Denis: S 133 (790), S 1186 (795) and S 318. All of these concern lands at Rotherfield, Hastings (that is called *portus* in S 1186), and Pevensey (S 133 and S 318 mention also London). An estate of Saint-Denis at Rotherfield, situated in the hinterland of Hastings and Pevensey, is very likely to have existed, because the Church of Rotherfield is the only one dedicated to Saint-Denis in England. On these spurious charters, perhaps written in the post-Conquest period, see Atsma – Vezin 1988, esp. 213-19 and 232-36. On salt-production around Pevensey see Rippon 2000, 157.

[43] On iron in Kentish cemeteries see Brookes 2007a, esp. 119; see also Ch. 6.3.

This widespread presence of iron suggests that these communities had easy access to this material, so it seems likely that its origin was the Weald, a major area for iron.[44] As we will see in Ch. 6.3, iron is likely to have represented an important source of enrichment for these communities: settlements such as Friars Oak, Bishopstone and Botolphs, attest to the connection these communities had with the Weald, from where they gathered resources like iron and clay.[45]

The Anglo-Saxon evidence found at Bishopstone, on the coast of the region near the eastern bank of the Ouse (see Map 2.1.1), moreover shows important developments which can be compared to those visible in Kentish sites such as Lyminge and the area of the Wantsum Channel. This site, where an Early Saxon settlement and cemetery (Rookery Hill) have been recovered, lay in a favourable position at the estuary of the river, and the cemetery shows that the community had access to imported and precious goods, which have been found in many other sites in the Ouse Valley. A minster may have been founded at Bishopstone in the second half of the seventh century.[46] The establishment of a Mid-Saxon minster in an area well positioned in terms of maritime routes during the previous century is clearly in line with the seventh-century processes previously seen in Kent. Also in the area of the Ouse, moreover, royal land is documented during the later period, as at Beddingham, while Welch has proposed Lewes, a later *burh*, as the royal centre for East Sussex during the previous centuries (see Map

[44] The impressive number of undated bloomery sites in the Weald is particularly to be noted: thus, part of them might be Early Saxon. See Harrington – Welch 2014, 114-15.

[45] Botolphs: Anglo-Saxon and Medieval settlement. Three SFBs datable to the late fifth/early sixth century have been found. Cf. Gardiner 1990. The finds include pottery manufactured in the settlement, and two beads. Twelve further beads have been identified about 150 m to the south-west (id., 267). A saucer brooch datable to the same period of the SFBs was found to the north of Botolphs (id., 241; 267). See id. on other finds in the excavation area and in the nearby. On Bishopstone see below n. 46.

[46] Bishopstone: settlement and mixed cemetery (112 inhumations and 6 cremations), both dated to the fifth and sixth century, although one of the buildings is of the seventh or eighth century. Cf. Bell 1977; Welch 1983, esp. 20-29; 394-95. On distant resources see Gardiner 2003, esp. 152-54, adding that this link was the case also at Botolphs. See also Drewett – Rudling – Gardiner 1988, 267-70. On the later development see Thomas 2010, esp. 215, noting that evidence for Phase 1 (the period of the foundation of the minster) is very scanty. Bishopstone is recorded in two charters of the early ninth century with the name Denton, S 158 and S 1435. S 158 also mentions a monastery in Beddingham, probably a royal minster. It is likely that the name Denton was referred to an estate much larger that Bishopstone, including the territory from South Heighton to Sutton; see Thomas 2010, 17-22.

2.1.1).[47] Beddingham and other royal estates in East and West Sussex are recorded in King Alfred's will (S 1507, written between 873 and 888).[48]

Another hint at the possibility that communities with high-status presence were settled in particularly favourable places in terms of trading activities might derive from the distribution of *sceattas* listed in the PAS. Although this refers to a later period (eighth century), it is remarkable that clusters of them have been found near Early Saxon communities with preferential access to imports and high-status goods. This proximity can be seen in the area between Alfriston and Selmeston, where seven coins out of the twenty-seven listed in the PAS for East Sussex have been found, with a focus in the area of Berwick ('barley farm') (see Map 2.6).[49] Not far from Berwick, another cluster of six coins lies north-west of Firle, in the same area as some metal-detected finds of the Early Saxon period.[50] Although these coins form quite a small group, this pattern of proximity between clusters of coins, which may be evidence of sites with some centrality in terms of economic activities, and earlier cemeteries may be compared to two 'productive' sites discovered in the Isle of Wight and examined in Chs. 3 and 6.

[47] Cf. Welch 1989, 80-81. A sixth-century *francisca* and a long seax probably of the late seventh/early eighth century, possibly from burials, have been found at Lewes. Cf. Welch 1983, 124-25; 405-6. Other unlocated finds in barrows in the area of Lewes, recorded ante 1824, include beads (glass, amber and amethyst), brooches inlaid with garnets, gold and silver amulets. Cf. Meaney 1964, 251-52. See also *The Early Anglo-Saxon Census of Southern Britain* Database, dating them between 450 and 700.

[48] The charter reports Aldingbourne, Angmering, Beckley, Beeding, Beddingham, Dean, Ditchling, Felpham, Lyminster, Rotherfield, Sutton and Steyning.

[49] It is to be noted that while there are twenty-seven coins found in East Sussex listed in the PAS, only six coins recovered in West Sussex are listed. Five are the coins near Berwick (one of them is at some distance from the others). All the coins are *sceattas*. Unique ID: SUSS-A79E82; SUSS-D41838; SUSS-6FA614; SUSS-D9A2A7; SUSS-6D1903. Two rather isolated *sceattas* have been found near Alfriston, and in the area of Alciston, about 1 km south-west of Selmeston cemetery, respectively: SUR-A89667 and SUSS-4F3CB0. Another *sceat* has been found along the Cuckmere near Arlington, north-east of Berwick, SUSS-16D666. On the meaning of the Berwick place-name see Watts 2004, 52-53.

[50] I am considering the coins to form a cluster even if the two at the longest distance from each other are at around 1.5 km. The coins are *sceattas*: Unique ID SUSS-2386E4; SUSS-ECFFC3; SUSS-263645; SUSS-B5C282; SUSS-17BCF3 and SUSS-784832. Other finds are three button brooches: SUSS-2BCDA5; SUSS-220331 and SUSS-8BF3A3; one saucer brooch: SUSS-8C1187; a square-headed brooch: SUSS-0D5D37; and a radiate-headed brooch: SUSS-179C21.

The process of establishment of ecclesiastical institutions in areas well-placed in terms of trading activities can be better perceived through the written sources concerning the peninsula of Selsey, in West Sussex. This area is mentioned by Bede and Eddius Stephanus in relation to Wilfrid's arrival in Sussex, in the early 680s. Both authors report that Aethelwealh, King of the South Saxons, gave him lands in this territory, the basis of his monastery at Selsey; from these grants we also known of the existence of a royal estate in this area.[51] The link between ecclesiastical endowments and royal centres attested in the case of the grants to Wilfrid is a common feature visible in other parts of Sussex too, for instance in the possible case of Malling, a property of the archbishops of Canterbury near the river Ouse.[52]

As regards the possible connections between this area of Sussex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight previously mentioned, one must note that Bede mentions another grant made to Wilfrid in the Isle of Wight in the late 680s, this time by the West Saxon King Caedwalla.[53] The centrality of the peninsula of Selsey is also suggested by the same process of monastic foundations in coastal areas which we saw for Kent.[54] Apart from Selsey itself, the charters attest lands granted by King Aethelberth of Sussex at Wittering in order to found a monastery in the eighth century (S 46), while the community of St Andrew at Pagham is mentioned in a problematic charter by Caedwalla granting lands to Wilfrid (S 230).[55] Moreover, in an inlet

[51] There are some doubts about the exact location of these territories, but it is likely that they were at Church Norton, near Pagham; see Welch 1989, 79. See Eddius Stephanus, *Vita Wilfridi* ch. 41. It seems that Aethelwealh gave to Wilfrid two separated endowments. There is no evidence for the establishment of an episcopal see during the age of Wilfrid, and it is more likely that the first bishop of Selsey settled during the first decade of the eighth century. It is probable that not all of the 87 granted hides were in the peninsula of Selsey (which is too small), and perhaps they were in the vicinity of Chichester. See Kelly 1998, lv-lxxiii.

[52] Charter S 1438, dated AD 838, shows that the archbishop and the community of Christ Church held South Malling. This property seems to have been very large, and in the 1010s it comprised also Wadhurst (S 950). The relation with royal power is made evident by the mention of royal properties in the vicinity in the ninth-century will of King Alfred. The case of Malling has been studied by Jones 1976, 26-27. The identification of this property as South Malling is however problematic, and this may well refer to East Malling in Kent: see Brooks – Kelly 2013, 657.

[53] Bede, *HE* IV.16.

[54] On monastic foundations in Sussex see Kirby 1978; Blair 1997.

[55] S 46: Kelly 1998, 37-40 number 7: authentic, datable between 733 and 747/c.765. S 230: Kelly 1998, 99-103 charter A: closely related to S 232 (forgery): 'the two charters were created independently, perhaps in the tenth century, on the basis of a late-eighth-century charter (authenticity unknown) which covered land at Pagham.' (id., 102).

west of Chichester lay the minster at Bosham which is recorded by Bede as the seventh-century monastery of a certain Irish monk Dicuil.[56] Royal presence and the foundation of a monastery is also documented in the late seventh century around Chichester, in a charter granted by King Nothhelm to his sister.[57] Monasteries along the coasts are also documented east of Pagham, as that at Ferring (S 48).[58] Thus, in this area of West Sussex, the charters show the existence of substantial royal lands and the spread of monastic foundations, many of which lay in coastal areas much suited to economic activities such as salt production and trade, such as Bosham and Pagham, which were in a good position as harbours, being possibly important points in maritime trade toward the Solent; this possible centrality may have been at the basis of monastic development there.[59]

The few early documents for Sussex clarify that this region shows later developments in landownership similar to those (better visible) of Kent, such as the foundation of minsters in places with a high potential in terms of commercial activities, as in the Selsey peninsula, which may have increased its importance from around the seventh century thanks to its geographical location at the entrance of the Solent. In some cases, as in East Kent, the proximity between Early Saxon cemeteries in which part of the population had access to imports and luxury goods, and important later sites such as minsters, royal estates and the possible small 'productive' site near Alfriston, may attest to the actual socio-economic centrality of those Early Saxon communities.[60]

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[56] Bede, *HE* IV.3. On this monastery see Blair 1997. On the harbour at Bosham during the Late Saxon period see MacDougall 2009.

[57] S 45, AD 692: Nothhelm, King of the South Saxons, grants lands at Aldingbourne, Westergate, Lindsey and Mundham to his sister Nothgyth, in order to found a monastery. Afterwards, between 692 and 709, she gave these lands to Wilfrid (S 1172). See Kelly 1998, 13-22 number 2: the king's grant to his sister seems acceptable, although details of the estates were probably altered; the second transaction is more problematic: 'it is impossible to discover more about the plausibility of this transaction between Wilfrid and Nothgyth' (id., 19).

[58] S 48: Kelly 1998, 41-43 number 9: probably authentic, dating probably 765 instead of 762. Osmund, King of Sussex, grants 12 hides at Ferring to Walhere, his *comes*. The grant is made for the foundation of a monastery.

[59] See Munby 1984, suggesting the importance of the area of Pagham during the seventh and eighth century, instead of Chichester.

[60] This argument will be discussed in a comparative, more detailed, way in Ch. 6.2.

2.3. *Concluding remarks*

The archaeological remains clearly show communities where part of the population had access to imported goods during the Early Saxon period. However, given the different quantities and distribution of foreign and luxury items in comparison to Kent, the question arises whether Sussex was connected to the Continent through direct links, or whether goods rather reached this region from other areas of Southern England. Links between East Sussex and Kent seems indeed very possible on the basis of the Kentish material recovered in Sussex. On the other hand, West Sussex may have been oriented toward the Solent area. The fact that Sussex did not develop a major *emporium* recorded in the sources might be another hint in this direction.

It seems likely, however, that both direct and indirect links connected Sussex to the Continent during the fifth to early seventh centuries. The existence of maritime routes is highlighted by the coastal distribution of sites in receipt of luxury and imported items, which are likely to have reached Sussex through landing sites scattered along the coast of the region; the estuaries of the main rivers may have been important nodal points in this network. Moreover, we have seen that the earliest imports, pertaining to the fifth century, have been considered as evidence of the presence of foreign groups in Sussex. While this possibility cannot be ruled out, at least for part of this fifth-century material, it does not seem possible to assume this with certainty. It is nevertheless clear that contacts and traffic existed, and the relatively high percentages of individuals buried with imported items at Alfriston and Highdown support this picture. In fact, the overall distribution of imports is quite widespread, although it cannot be compared to East Kent and, as we will see, the Isle of Wight. Thus, rather than an arrival of these goods directed toward few specific communities, this picture may indicate a low level but diffuse inflow, spreading into the river valleys from coastal landing sites. Obviously, this is not in contrast with the existence of differences in wealth between the

communities, and we have seen that those cemeteries which appear as particularly rich in the Early Saxon period lay indeed in areas showing important developments in the Mid-Saxon period, thus suggesting their earlier involvement in commercial activities also in the previous centuries. Mid-Saxon evidence has shown that this was the case for instance at Alfriston and Bishopstone; another example may be Highdown, since a Mid-Saxon monastery existed at Ferring, on lands given by the king to his *comes*.[61]

Concerning gold and silver items, Early Saxon Sussex communities appear much poorer than the contemporary communities in East Kent and the Isle of Wight. Considering the inferior number of imports in respect to Kent, the fact that only a very small number of gold and silver objects have been recovered in Sussex is a crucial element strongly indicating that in both regions these materials should be regarded as imported from Continental sources, rather than as the result of practices of reuse. As in the case of Kent, moreover, this is also suggested by their distribution near the coasts.

We have seen that the evidence highlights a clear difference between East and West in terms of archaeological evidence, and, especially in the peninsula of Selsey, very few Early Saxon remains have been discovered so far.[62] Although an important issue affecting our picture of Anglo-Saxon settlement is represented by the coastal erosion mentioned above, the lack of evidence from this particular area might be related to its specific developments. It seems possible that this territory gained importance in the later centuries, during the Mid-Saxon period, when the written sources show the process of monastic foundations along its coasts.

[61] See above n. 58.

[62] Some unlocated finds are recorded from the area of Selsey, including a copper alloy sword pommel, cocked hat type, a gold bar with a runic inscription, a gold fragment probably from a sword fitting (part of a pyramid stud), a gold ring, a triangular gold fragment probably from a buckle, and a silver bar set with gold cloisonné. Welch 1983, 124; 494-96 suggests that the sword pommel may be of the Early Saxon period, but specifies that there is only a written record of this item. The pyramid stud fragment may have been made from melted coins around 630-650 (id., 114-15). The triangular gold fragment could be of seventh-eighth century date (id., 115). The silver bar might be of the eighth century (id., 116). On the gold bar with runic inscription, possibly part of a finger ring, see id., 87.

Indeed, the coastal focus of the bishopric of Selsey, the web of monasteries close to the sea and the existence of royal lands point to the inclusion of this area in the traffic network. This increasing centrality of the Selsey Peninsula, in turn, may have been due to a more general rise of importance of the Solent Channel and Hampshire from the seventh century onwards, and the drop in centrality of the Isle of Wight (see Ch. 3). If that was the case, however, one should nonetheless note that finds from the area around Chichester show that imports reached this area in the Early Saxon period too, and that this site and the area around it remained a focus for settlement.

The archaeological evidence identifies Sussex as a more peripheral region, in the context of the Channel zone, than Kent and the area of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Nonetheless, transmarine routes seem to have reached Sussex as well. The lack of a major Mid-Saxon *emporium* for Sussex may be explained by this peripheral character. Although the absence of archaeological evidence for a major trading site might be linked with the change in the coastline, this lack must be understood within the framework of a lower volume of traffic even in the earlier period.

Chapter 3. *Early Anglo-Saxon Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*

The West Saxon kingdom is now accepted to have originated in the Upper Thames Valley, and indeed its first bishopric was established at Dorchester, before being moved to Winchester in around 660. From that area and under the pressure of Mercia, the kingdom of the *Gewisse* (as the West Saxons are recorded to have been named before the late seventh century) moved westward and southward toward Hampshire: although the chronology is much uncertain, north Hampshire was under their control by the 680s.[1] Before that period the historical development of Hampshire is obscure, but it seems likely that the region was composed of a highly fragmented political pattern, similar to Sussex. Barbara Yorke has convincingly shown that the southern part of this region was considered as Jutish, being thus linked to the Isle of Wight and Kent, where Bede tells us that the Jutes settled.[2] The nature of the connections between the Isle of Wight and the mainland remains uncertain for the Early Saxon period: that is, it is not clear whether South Hampshire was included in the kingdom of Wight, or whether the two areas were separated although their inhabitants perceived themselves as Jutes. Nevertheless, South Hampshire seems to have maintained some independence from the West Saxon kingdom until the late seventh century. After the appropriation of eastern Hampshire and the Isle of Wight by the South Saxons in the early 660s, southern Hampshire and the island were conquered by Caedwalla in 686-8 and incorporated into Wessex: the defeat of the kingdom of Wight is likely to have represented a crucial moment in the development of the West Saxon kingdom, which thus assumed a stronger control of the maritime zone.[3]

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[1] On the historical development of the kingdom see Yorke 1997, 128-56; Blair 1994, esp. 35-45. See also Hamerow – Ferguson – Naylor 2013.

[2] Bede, *HE* I.15. See Yorke 1989, 92, suggesting that the distinction between Jutes and Saxons may have been more political than cultural. On Jutish identity see also Richardson 2011. Differences in female burial costume seem to have existed between northern Hampshire (here represented by Alton) and the southern part of the region (Worthy Park and Droxford) during the sixth century, and the southern costume seems to have been similar to that of the Isle of Wight and Kent: cf. Stoodley 2002b, 328; Birbeck *et al.* 2005, 191.

[3] See Yorke 1989.

The importance of the coastal area of the Solent as a focus for maritime traffic during the Mid-Saxon period is clearly highlighted by the presence of the *emporium* of *Hamwic*, as well as by the foundations of minsters.[4] Grave goods in earlier cemeteries, however, indicate the existence of important cross-Channel links in both Hampshire and, especially, in the Isle of Wight which predate the establishment of *Hamwic* in the late seventh century. As in the case of the other regions, this chapter first considers the archaeological evidence, in order to investigate the development of the coastal territories between the fifth and the early seventh century. To shed light on the possible development and modalities of a maritime network, the distribution of imports and high-status artefacts is discussed in detail.[5] In this regard, a comparison is made between five large cemeteries in the two regions, to understand whether differences in the presence and distribution of foreign and luxury goods among the communities are related to different modalities of access to these items. Such a comparison will show that, during the Early Saxon period, important differences in the access to foreign goods and materials can be seen in the Isle of Wight. As in Sussex, the seventh- and eighth-century charters granting landed property comprise a very small group of documents, which undermines our understanding of landownership in coastal areas. Some of these documents, discussed in the second part of this chapter, are nonetheless useful in casting light on royal and ecclesiastical properties along the Itchen Valley, where *Hamwic* and the bishopric at Winchester lay, as well as on some of the later developments.

3.1. *The archaeological evidence: Hampshire and the Isle of Wight compared*

[4] On minsters there see Hase 1988.

[5] Gazetteers of Early Saxon Hampshire have been published by Hawkes – Grainger 2003, 201-7; Stoodley 2002a; Ulmschneider 2000, this being focussed on the Mid-Saxon period but nonetheless very useful. In particular on the Winchester district see Schadla-Hall 1977. On Early Saxon Hampshire see also Hinton 1981; Eagles 1994. On sites on the Isle of Wight see Basford 1980; Arnold 1982; Ulmschneider 2000.

In the entire territory of Hampshire, the Early Saxon settlement distribution follows a pattern similar to that visible in Kent and Sussex, the evidence being focussed on river valleys and on the road system, where the intersections of Roman roads appear as important foci of settlement; however, a clearly visible difference is that Anglo-Saxon settlement here has a much more inland focus (see Maps 3.1; 3.1.1). In the Solent area, a difference in the quantity of Anglo-Saxon evidence can be noted between the coast east of Southampton Water, which is quite well represented, and the territory west of it, the New Forest district, where evidence is particularly scanty, probably due to the infertility of the soils, but also to the modern presence of woods, which make archaeological research hard.[6] This is a pattern already visible in the fifth century (see Maps 3.2; 3.2.1). The fifth-century evidence along the Hampshire coast seems restricted to Portchester Castle, which shows occupation throughout the Anglo-Saxon period, and to pottery of this period found in the area of Lymington.[7] Evidence from the sixth to the middle of the seventh centuries shows a pattern of settlement mostly based on the same areas, although the increasing number of finds allows us to create a more detailed picture of the coast east of Southampton Water (see Maps 3.1; 3.1.1; 3.1.2). Sixth- and seventh-century cemeteries have been found in the area around Portchester Castle, where some of the finds may be dated back to the fifth century, as those at Towncil Field, Old Turnpike road, Near Oak Lodge, and at Manor Farm, Clanfield, this latter being at some distance north-east of Portchester.[8] At the Roman fortlet of Clausentum-Bitterne, near the mouth of the river Itchen, a sixth-century

[6] On the low fertility of the soil in the New Forest area see the National Soilscape Map. Cf. also Ulmschneider 2000, 37-38.

[7] On Portchester Castle cf. below n. 55; 77. On Lymington area cf. Smith 1999, 48 with references; Moore – Pine – Taylor 2008.

[8] However, as the dating of these finds to the fifth century is unsure, I have not included them in Maps 3.2 and 3.2.1. These sites are included in *The Early Anglo-Saxon Census of Southern Britain* Database. Finds at Old Turnpike road: two cremation urns belonging to the sixth century, perhaps with a pottery bowl possibly of fifth-century date. Cf. Meaney 1964, 97; Hughes 1976, 60. See Hawkes 1969b.

brooch and an undated cemetery have been recovered.[9] Although Early Saxon evidence at Clausentum is very scanty, this is an interesting site, in that it is close to *Hamwic*.[10]

On the Isle of Wight, evidence of Early Saxon activity appears particularly focussed along the chalk ridge which forms a west-east corridor, and south of it, while the north of the island has yielded relatively few finds. The area west of the Medina river is the best represented, and so is the south-western coast of the island (see Map 3.6).[11]

An evident peculiarity of the Solent area is the quantity of natural harbours it provides, as for instance along the northern coast of the Isle of Wight and along Southampton Water and the area of Portchester in Hampshire where, in addition to Portchester itself, other landing sites might have existed, for instance at Portsmouth and on Hayling Island.[12] Along Southampton Water, it is notable that there had been a Roman port at Clausentum, and that a landing site on the mouth of the Hamble is mentioned in the *Vita Willibaldi* and in the *Vita Wynnebaldi*.[13] From the picture of Early Saxon settlement, the territory around Portchester and that around Winchester along the river Itchen, and the area around Chessell Down and the south-western coast in the Isle of Wight, are particularly interesting areas. Some cemeteries there suggest the presence of rich communities having access to long-distance imports. In Hampshire, these are Worthy Park near Winchester, and Droxford on the river Meon in the hinterland of Portchester. In the western part of the Isle of Wight, as discussed below, rich graves with imports have been recovered at Chessell Down, Bowcombe Down and Carisbrooke Castle (see Maps 3.3; 3.3.1;

[9] The date of use of the cemetery may be somewhere between the seventh and the twelfth centuries. On the finds at Clausentum see Cotton – Gathercole 1958, 29-30; Ulmschneider 2000, 155.

[10] On the distribution of finds in Hampshire see Maps 3.1, 3.1.1 and 3.1.2.

[11] On the distribution of settlement in the Isle of Wight, which is connected to the fertility of soils of certain areas, see Ulmschneider 2000, 48. The prehistoric track on the west-east chalk ridge seems to have been a focus of settlement.

[12] Portsmouth is an early landing place in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (a. 501). The distribution of landing sites in Hampshire and in the Isle of Wight will be discussed also in Ch. 6.1.

[13] On harbours in the Isle of Wight during the Roman and Anglo-Saxon period see Tomalin – Loader – Scaife 2012, esp. 53-264 (see also their map at p. 242 showing ports and anchorages in the Medieval period); cf. also Ulmschneider 2000, esp. 46-47. On the landing site on the Hamble see the *Vita Willibaldi episcopi Eichstetensis* and the *Vita Wynnebaldi abbatis Heidenheimensis* (MGH, SS 15.1, p. 91; 107), possibly a *mercimonium* distinct from *Hamwic*, cf. Ulmschneider 2003 with references.

3.7). Moreover, a certain number of Early Saxon finds are recorded in the PAS as found in a cemetery near Shorwell, along the south-western coast of the island south of Chessell Down. Again in the PAS, a high number of finds is listed as found just to the north of Chessell Down, and their proximity to each other suggests the presence of a cemetery, which was possibly part of Chessell Down itself.[14]

As explained above in relation to funerary sites in Sussex, one must note that the importance of these particular areas cannot be stated in absolute terms on the basis of these cemeteries only: since many of the cemeteries are not completely excavated, it is not possible to be sure that these were the richest sites of the whole region. In addition, the greater presence of imports shown by these sites is linked with the larger number of graves: in fact, many of the other cemeteries have only been excavated on a small scale. Thus, it is quite possible that access to long-distance goods and rich communities was present in other coastal areas too. For instance, the mouth of the Hamble is an intriguing area, given the above-mentioned landing site attested in the Mid-Saxon period, but no finds have been recovered so far.

Nonetheless, these sites remain particularly rich, and in the context of Early Saxon Hampshire Worthy Park and Droxford are comparable, on the basis of size, only to Alton and Portway East. The same can be suggested for the Isle of Wight, where Chessell Down is by far the largest excavated cemetery. Here, however, the excavations at Bowcombe Down and Carisbrooke Castle, and the metal-detected finds in the PAS, show the presence of other communities with the same characteristics as Chessell Down with respect to a high-status presence and access to foreign goods.[15] Thus, it seems clear that the presence of precious items

[14] See Map 3.6.

[15] Bowcombe Down, Carisbrooke, is the site of a mixed cemetery. On this site there are two large Bronze-Age barrows and eleven small Anglo-Saxon barrows. 23 graves, of which 15 inhumations and 8 cremations; see Arnold 1982, 89-96. An excavation in 1979 recovered ten further graves, and another grave was found in 1994. Cf. *The Early Anglo-Saxon Census of Southern Britain* Database, dating the site to 475-600. On Carisbrooke Castle see Young 2000: inhumation cemetery of the first half of the sixth century on the hill-top; three graves were found, but probably the cemetery was larger. One is a very high-status grave (gr. 1612, burial 1651), so 'a possible focus of power nearby' was suggested (Young 2000, 191). Grave goods in this burial include: a copper alloy bowl (type found on the Continent in the area of the Meuse and the Rhine, and in Thuringia), 51 pieces of ivory counters, a

and imports is not restricted to the vicinity of Chessell Down, being instead widely distributed across the central ridge of the island.

In spite of elements of uncertainty due to differences in the scales of excavations, the picture of the archaeological evidence shows a differential access to imports and luxuries in different areas, at least in the case of Hampshire. The comparison of these communities to those at Portway East and Alton supports this idea, so these latter cemeteries are worth including, even though they lay farther from the coast. They can also be useful in ascertaining whether differences can be related to the proximity to the sea. Some differences among these five communities can be seen in respect to access to imports and precious metal objects, and perhaps also in regard to social differentiation.[16]

Comparing the distribution of long-distance goods in the four large cemeteries in Hampshire and at Chessell Down, the latter shows a higher percentage of burials with imports.



Fig. 3.1. Percentages of burials with imports

glass counter (these are playing pieces, very high-status), a glass bowl (similar examples at Lavoye, France; Nenning, Germany; similar to bowls in Meuse valley and Northern France, examples of which have being found in Kent, at Westbere and at Darenth Park), an iron knife, a base silver and copper alloy rim-mount from drinking horn (this is a rare find, perhaps made locally; the die was made in Kent), a copper alloy bucket, a gold plated copper alloy coin (a rare Visigothic *tremissis*). The settlement associated with the cemetery has not been found, but Froglands Farm has been suggested as a possibility, due to the finding of 17 *sceattas* there. The hill-top is in a favourable position for defence, Roman villas nearby. Cf. id., 190-91. Also post-holes of the sixth century were found at Carisbrooke Castle. On this see Sewell 2000, 37, with references.

[16] Worthy Park: Hawkes – Grainger 2003; Droxford: Aldsworth 1979; Chessell Down: Arnold 1982; Mount Pleasant, Alton: Evison 1988; Portway East: Cook – Dacre 1985. The cemetery at Portway East was replaced by a funerary site at Portway West, for which see Stoodley 2006.

High percentages of imports suggest that long-distance goods were relatively common. Thus, questions arise about the value of these goods for displaying the particular social status of the owners.[17] This question, which must be addressed differently according to the areas taken into consideration, will be discussed in more detail in Ch. 5 and 6.

As for Droxford, it must be noted that since its excavated part might represent only a small portion of the site, for the picture of this cemetery is very incomplete, it may not represent the reality of the community. In addition, the Droxford catalogue lists many finds not associated with burials, which are not included in this graph for this reason, and some of these are imported goods, so the percentage may have been much higher than in our graph.[18]

The low percentage of burials with imported items at Worthy Park might reflect a greater concentration of burial wealth in a small number of graves, and this in turn might suggest the existence of a more hierarchical social stratification. In fact, a link between imports and rich graves can be suggested: at least eight out of the fifteen burials with imports in this cemetery have also objects or items denoting status, such as brooches, a sword, and gold and silver objects manufactured in England, although from imported raw material. A more developed and hierarchical social stratification might also explain the lower percentage of female burials (adults and children) with brooches, in comparison to Portway East and Alton.[19]

[17] The variation in the role of imports in signifying social status on the basis of different levels of access to these goods has been suggested, for instance, in relation to Roman imports beyond the Rhine frontier by Wells 1992, esp. 185. See also below Chs. 5 and 6.

[18] See Maps 3.3 and 3.3.1, showing the quantity of imports found in Hampshire sites.

[19] The percentage of females with brooches at Worthy Park might also be lower, as the brooch in gr. 27 is residual.

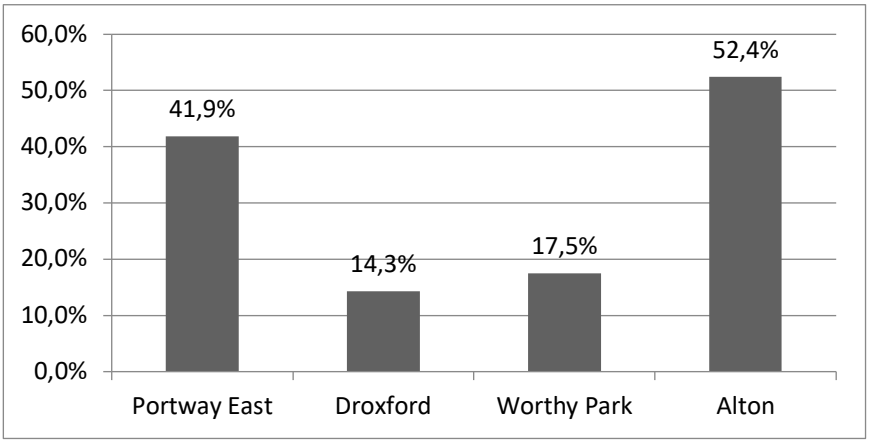


Fig. 3.2. Percentages of female burials with brooches in relation to the total of female burials

The presence of only three burials with brooches at Droxford may again be related to the state of the excavation, and it is worth mentioning that other brooches are listed in the grave catalogue as unassociated finds.[20] At Chessell Down almost 2/3 of the graves with imports (19 out of 30) are among those with the highest status in the cemetery, as they have brooches or swords. Although some of the other graves with imports do not have particularly rich associations, imports in the Hampshire cemeteries are most strongly linked with the richer burials.

The distribution of types of imports in the graves shows that the majority of the burials have only one type of imported goods, with the exception of Portway East, where burials with two types of imports are more numerous than those with only one.

[20] I have not included Chessell Down in the graph as the grave catalogue does not specify the sex of the individuals. Thus, its percentages would not have been reliable, as it is not possible to ascertain if the burials without grave goods or without gender-linked items were females or males.

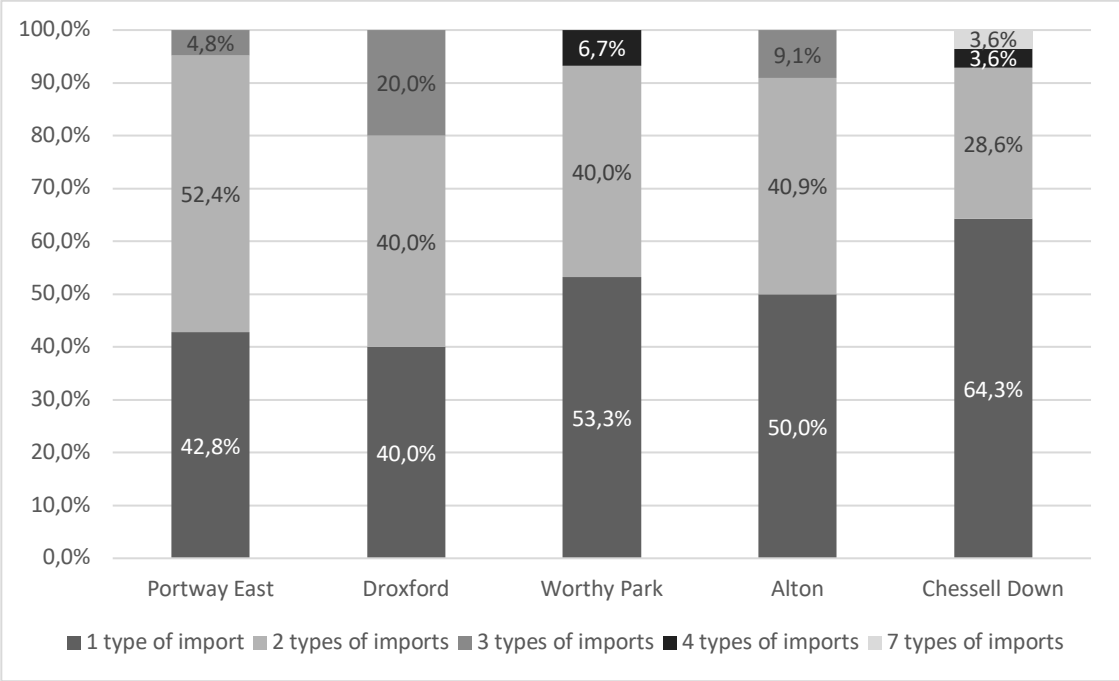


Fig. 3.3. Percentages of burials per types of imports

The exception of Portway East is due to the larger presence of assemblages containing both amber and glass beads. Instead, burials with more than two types of imports (for the most part amber and glass beads) are scarce in all the five communities, spanning between one and three graves. Chessell Down is the site where the grave with most types of imports has been found (gr. 45, with 7 types).[21] Among the Hampshire cemeteries, the burials with the greatest number of types of imports have three of them, apart from Worthy Park, where gr. 10 has four types.

A more substantial access to precious artefacts in the Isle of Wight is highlighted by the distribution of silver and gold items. Looking at the silver items, the maps of Hampshire suggest a scattered presence of this metal in the whole territory (see Maps 3.3 and 3.3.1). On the other hand, silver grave goods remain rare even in the four large Hampshire cemeteries: at Portway

[21] In the case of Chessell Down, I have not listed the silver slings in gr. 40 and 45 as a type of imports, as it is particularly unsure whether they were imported. The percentages at Chessell Down may be misleading, as in many cases the catalogue does not specify whether the beads are of amber, glass or both. In these cases, I have considered the beads as being of one type only.

East, for instance, only one has been found, and even at Alton, which presents the highest number of silver artefacts among the four cemeteries, they were recovered in only five burials, excluding the unassociated finds. The graph showing the percentages of graves having silver objects clearly highlights Chessell Down as being different from the Hampshire cemeteries.

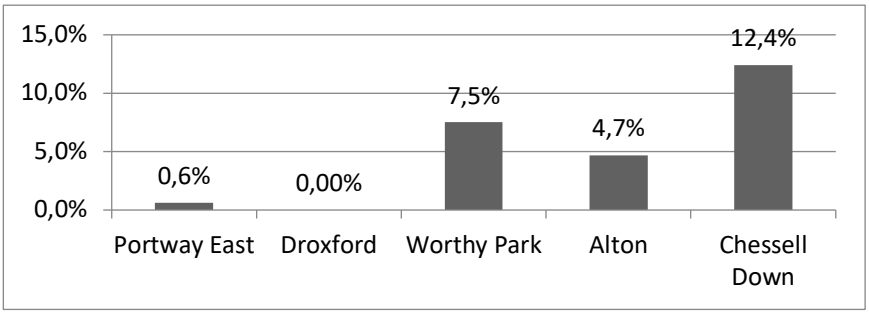


Fig. 3.4. Percentages of burials with silver artefacts

The presence of silver items among the unassociated finds make these percentages slightly different: at Droxford, for instance, silver objects are listed only among unassociated finds, so they are not visible in the graph.[22] Nonetheless, the graph clearly shows that silver was more common at Chessell Down. The percentage of silver items at Worthy Park is noteworthy among the Hampshire cemeteries, and the presence of a gold artefact in this cemetery, alone among the four, may indicate a higher level of wealth among the elite of this community, if compared with the other three; above all, the difference in burial wealth in comparison to Portway East stands out. Two gold artefacts have also been recovered at Chessell Down, both in gr. 45. Besides the large cemeteries, the other Early Saxon excavated sites and PAS finds show that a far greater concentration of precious metal objects has been found in the Isle of Wight, as can be seen for instance around Chessell Down and south-east of it, and in the area of Carisbrooke Castle (see Map 3.7).[23]

[22] Three silver items are listed in the Droxford catalogue. I have not included the unassociated finds as it is not possible to assess the number of graves they pertain to.

[23] On Carisbrooke Castle see above n. 15.

Concerning garnets, only one item with garnets has been recovered in the four Hampshire cemeteries, in a Kentish buckle found in gr. 16 at Alton, which is a rich male burial. By contrast, artefacts with garnets were found in five burials at Chessell Down, to which also an unassociated equal-arm brooch from the Elbe-Weser area should be added. Items with garnets have been recovered from other sites, both in Hampshire and in the Isle of Wight, as shown on the Maps 3.3, 3.3.1 and 3.7.[24]

We have already seen that, among the foreign goods, amber and glass beads are by far the most common imports and, moreover, they seem to reflect a different distribution within the communities from the other types of foreign goods. This different distribution can easily be recognised in the four Hampshire cemeteries. Indeed, if the burials containing these types of beads are compared with the total number of female burials in these four cemeteries, the percentages are quite different, spanning between the 23,8% of Droxford to the 66,7% of Alton.[25]

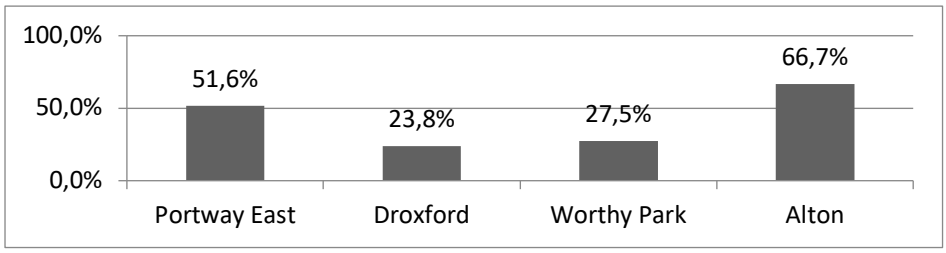


Fig. 3.5. Percentages of female inhumations with amber and/or glass beads among the total female inhumations

The presence of small numbers of beads among the associations is not restricted to the richest burials. This seems to be the case also at Worthy Park where, although the percentage of female graves with amber/glass beads is quite a small one, not all the burials of this group have rich associations. The small percentage at Droxford might be a misrepresentation due to the same

[24] Note that one of the items with garnets in the Isle of Wight (PAS finds), a disc mount, might have had a garnet, but it is not certain (IOW-399B75).

[25] The discrepancy between bone analysis and sex attributed by grave goods at Alton represents an important element of uncertainty. I have not included Chessell Down in the graph as the catalogue does not list the material and the amount of beads in many cases.

reason as previously mentioned, namely the scale of excavation and the lack of association with graves for many items. With the exception of Alton, the majority of inhumations with bead assemblages have between one and ten beads.

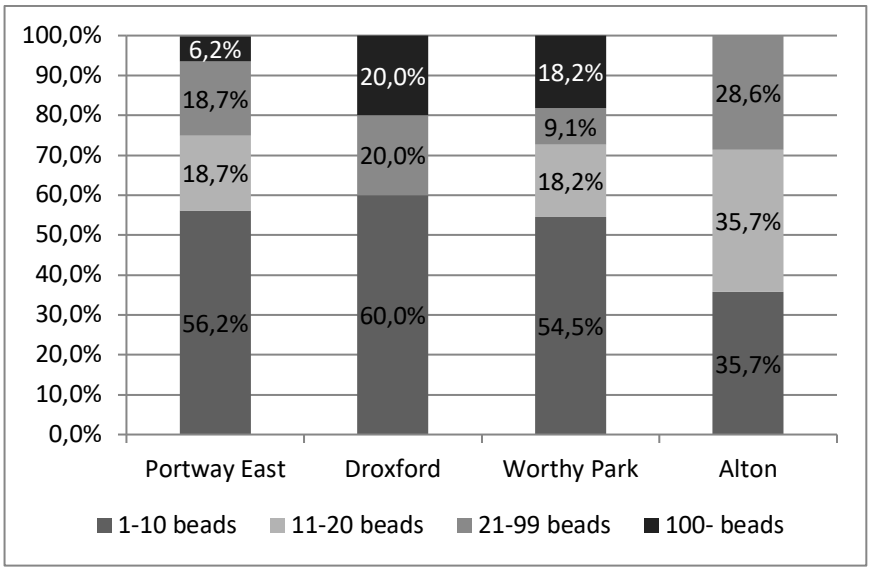


Fig. 3.6. Percentages of amber/glass beads in female inhumations

The large majority of female assemblages with beads contain amber, with percentages between 72,7% at Worthy Park and 93,7% at Portway East. Thus, it seems that these communities had easy access to this material.[26]

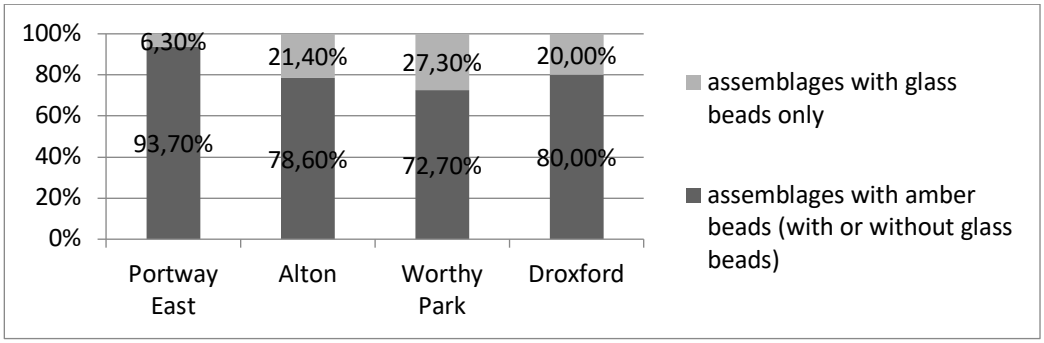


Fig. 3.7. Percentages of female inhumations with amber beads, among female assemblages with amber and/or glass beads

[26] See Huggett 1988, 65. The distribution of amber beads in Hampshire is quite similar to that in Huggett 1988 and the later excavations can add peaks in his graph (id., 83), but do not change the pattern substantially. For a full discussion see below Ch. 5.1.1.

Interestingly, although Worthy Park is the cemetery with the lowest percentage of female assemblages with amber beads, it is the site where the largest overall amount of amber has been found – i.e. a small number of females had a large number of beads.

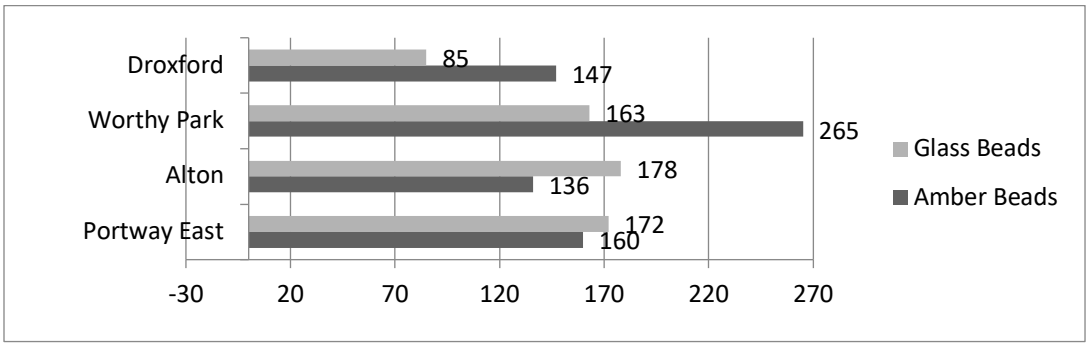


Fig. 3.8. Overall amount of glass and amber beads

It must be noted that more than half of the total number of amber beads at Worthy Park have been found in gr. 10 (138 specimens). The presence of one female burial with a particularly high number of amber and glass beads can be seen in all the four cemeteries.[27]

The high number of beads found in these sites has a remarkable effect in the picture of the distribution of imports in the communities. Indeed, if they are excluded, the distribution of foreign goods per grave shows very different percentages from Fig. 3.1:

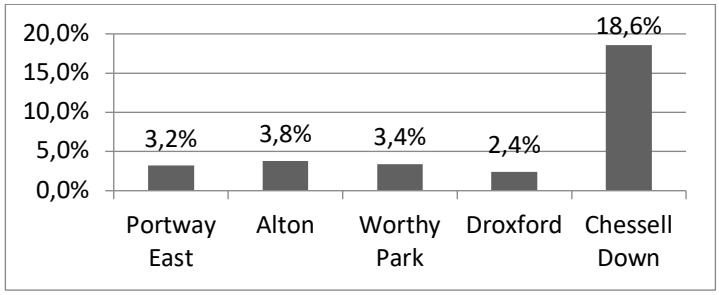


Fig. 3.9. Percentages of burials with imports, excluding those with amber and/or glass beads only

[27] Grave 10 at Worthy Park has 232 amber and glass beads (138 amber and 94 glass), gr. 20 at Droxford has 163 of them (116 amber and 47 glass), gr. 48 at Portway East has 100 (81 amber and 19 glass), while that with the highest number of amber and glass beads at Alton is gr. 47, though it has only 76 (36 amber and 40 glass). This particular distribution of amber beads and amber as status marker is further discussed in Ch. 5.1.1.

The first element that stands out here is the diversity in percentages between the Hampshire cemeteries and Chessell Down. The very low percentages of imports in the former raise questions about the real access to foreign goods in Hampshire. We must note, once again, that the case of Droxford might have been quite different than that shown by the graph, as many other imported objects are listed among the unassociated finds.[28] All the same, the imported goods at Chessell Down show that the Isle of Wight was much better included in the web of long-distance links than Hampshire. This represents an important difference between the two territories. This diversity can be seen also if the origins of foreign goods are taken into consideration. Indeed, Frankish, Frisian, Jutlandic, Baltic and Byzantine items have been recovered at Chessell Down, together with objects from the Rhineland and from the Elbe-Weser area. Instead, only Baltic (which is the probable source of amber) and Frankish imports have been found at Portway East, Worthy Park and Alton, while Droxford, apart from Baltic and Frankish items, also contains a brooch from the Elbe-Weser territory.[29] Imports from other places are extremely rare in Hampshire. Among them, a Jutlandic gold bracteate is to be noted in an inhumation burial from Wind Farm.[30] Since Byzantine items are very rare in this territory in the Early Saxon period, it is however noteworthy that two of them have been found within a short distance from each other in the area of the river Avon, which is generally less visible in

[28] Among the unassociated finds there are 12 glass beads, 5 amber beads, 2 brooches, one glass vessel, one buckle loop and one buckle loop and plate. Also at Portway East and Alton other unassociated imports were found, but these are one amber bead only at Alton and five glass beads at Portway East, thus it is not likely that the percentages would change. As for Chessell Down, unassociated imports are listed in Arnold 1982, suggesting possible associations with burials for some of them.

[29] See Arnold 1982, 102-3, discussing Frisian/Jutlandic pottery at Chessell Down, where also wheel-thrown pottery has been found (e.g. gr. 21; 94). Frankish brooches have been for instance recovered in gr. 40 and 3 (bird brooches), and gr. 108 (radiate-headed brooch); gr. 45 and 16 contain Byzantine copper alloy vessels. Frankish objects in the other cemeteries include: a glass spindle whorl found at Portway East gr. 32; a radiate-headed brooch at Droxford (unstratified), containing also an unstratified equal-arm brooch (Elbe-Weser). On other imports on these sites see also *The Early Anglo-Saxon Census of Southern Britain* Database, indicating the Rhineland as origin for the glass bracelet in gr. 34, and the Elbe-Weser area for the unstratified equal-arm brooch, both at Chessell Down.

[30] The inhumation, containing also a Kentish gold pendant with a garnet, has been dated between the late sixth and the early seventh century. Cf. Meaney 1964, 99; Stoodley – Stedman 2001, 132.

terms of archaeological remains than the other main river valleys of Hampshire. There, a copper alloy Byzantine bucket was recovered at Shallows Farm, which can be dated to the second half of the sixth century.[31] The other artefact is a Byzantine bridle-fitting, which was found near Shallows Farm, close to Breamore Wood.[32] The recovery of these items is intriguing, and is likely to point to a high-status presence in the vicinity.

Considering the distributions of long-distance imports, precious metal items and specifically female objects such as brooches, these five cemeteries appear rather different from each other, though all of these communities were ranked and had at least some access to precious objects. Among the few richer burials in these sites, those at Chessell Down stand out, as for instance gr. 45, with its gold and silver objects, imported goods and regional items denoting status. In general, the community buried at Chessell Down displays more portable wealth than those in Hampshire, as seen by the higher percentages of graves with imports and with silver objects. The presence of a greater number of gold and silver items scattered through the whole territory of the Isle of Wight shows that imports reached the island more easily and in a greater quantity in comparison to Hampshire. This picture can obviously be explained by the geographical position of the Isle of Wight, and the origins of the imported goods suggests that it had wide links with the Continent; but it is all the same significant that ships into the Solent did not bring as many goods to the mainland in this period.

Comparing these five communities, the different amounts of imports and their different distribution across the population may not have a single explanation in all the cases. In fact, the

[31] Also a Frankish glass vessel is to be noted among the finds. Another notable find in this cemetery is a Kentish/Frankish buckle loop and plate (with garnet), dated between 500 and 575. See *The Early Anglo-Saxon Census of Southern Britain* Database. The result of the excavations on this site has been recently published in Hinton – Worrell 2017.

[32] On the bridle-fitting see Eagles – Ager 2004. Another Byzantine find is a *tremissis* included in the Crondall hoard, buried around the middle of the seventh century and including 101 coins, Anglo-Saxon, Merovingian and Frisian *tremisses*; see Archibald 2013, 497. At East Down, Cheriton, a Gallic imitation of a *solidus* of Anastasius I was recovered (*The Early Anglo-Saxon Census of Southern Britain* Database lists this find as Imported/Byzantine). On the *solidus* see Bland 1996, 234-35 n. 61; see also Abdy – Williams 2006, 24 n. 15.

lower percentages of burials with imports at Worthy Park and Portway East may have a different reason. Regarding Worthy Park, grave goods show a rich community with quite a good access to imports, and this is also supported by what we can see in the Itchen Valley in general, as explained below. Thus, the fact that imports are accessed by few families can be explained by the presence of a more hierarchical community, which might also be suggested by a smaller presence of women with brooches. On the contrary, Portway East is a less rich cemetery, as the presence of silver in only one grave shows. This, together with the lower overall number of imports in comparison to Worthy Park, suggests that the lower percentage of burials with imports reflects reduced access to imported goods. Considering their locations, proximity to the sea may have been an important factor in influencing a community's access to imported, high-status objects. In fact, not only Worthy Park but Droxford too appears to have been richer than Portway East and Alton.[33] I have included Droxford here as the picture offered by its incomplete excavations suggests that the community might have been very rich.

High-status presence in these cemeteries is suggested by the richest group of graves, such as gr. 45 at Chessell Down, and it can be recognised in other areas as well, as for instance the Byzantine items mentioned previously for the Avon Valley, and at Carisbrooke Castle on the Isle of Wight, where a particularly rich male burial has been excavated (gr. 1612).[34] Regarding high-status presence, it is worth mentioning the settlement at Cowdery's Down (although it is further away from the coast), since the excavated settlements of this period are rare, in comparison to cemeteries; the site shows an increase of social differentiation in the late sixth and seventh centuries, and high-status presence is indicated by the large excavated halls, comparable in size to those at Yeavering.[35]

[33] It is to note that even Portway East and Alton show differences from each other, as Alton appears to have been richer.

[34] On Carisbrooke Castle see above n. 15.

[35] Cowdery's Down is located on the Roman road south-east of Silchester. See Millett – James 1983, especially 247-50; James – Marshall – Millett 1984, 182-215; Faull 1984, 76; Hinton 1986; Alcock – Walsh 1993; Blair 1995, 19; Ulmschneider 2000, 155-56.

As already highlighted, geographical location played a pivotal role in shaping differential access to imports and precious goods, and it might have been at the basis of a different attitude toward long-distance imports. The high percentage of burials with imports at Chessell Down, in fact, suggests that foreign goods might not have had the same important role in displaying social status as in Hampshire. This might be the case for the burials with one or two types of imports, although of course it is not true when the graves have a great number and types of imported goods, as in gr. 45 at Chessell Down or gr. 1612 at Carisbrooke Castle. In other words, presence of imports is linked with the exhibition of status but, since in the Isle of Wight such items are more common than in Hampshire, the presence of a small number (or few types) of them might not have the same social role. We found this for East Kent as well.

A difference can also be proposed between glass and amber beads and other kinds of imports: as already seen in the case of Early Saxon Sussex, the distribution of beads follows a different logic. In fact, they have been found in great numbers and, especially as regards small groups, they are not present in rich burials only; thus suggesting that they had a limited role in displaying social status. As in the case of Sussex, a similar widespread presence among the population is likely to indicate an easy access to them, which can also suggest commercial activity.[36]

The differences visible between Hampshire and the Isle of Wight with regard to foreign goods and their distribution among the population deserve further explanation. Their distribution raises questions about the importance and development of the Solent area during this period: namely, whether direct links with the Continent were in place before the establishment of *Hamwic* and, if so, how this network was shaped.

[36] On the possible modalities by which imports reached the Anglo-Saxon communities and on amber beads as status marker see further Chs. 5 and 6.

A first element which requires attention is the uneven distribution of luxury goods in Hampshire; that is, the presence of particularly rich communities in certain areas of the region (see Maps 3.3; 3.3.1). It should be noted that communities are here labelled as *rich* based on the presence of a high number of imported goods and luxury items, because a large number of imports in a particular cemetery must imply that at least part of the community had access to these kinds of goods, and this situation is significantly different from cases where there are only a few imports – which might indicate exogamy or have other explanations. Access to foreign items and prestigious grave goods suggest the presence of an elite in the community, which was able to access them.

In Hampshire, the Itchen Valley near Winchester, as well as the area around Portchester and the river Meon, show Early Saxon communities where part of the population had access to imports and prestigious items. As we have seen, an elite presence should also be considered with regard to the river Avon, as the recovery of Byzantine items suggests. It is possible that this kind of highly stratified community was present in all the main river valleys.

Interestingly, however, imports and luxuries are lacking in the coastal area of Hampshire. This might be connected, at least in part, to the general scarcity of evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity on the coast, but this scarcity can also be seen in the Portchester area, where Early Saxon activity is more fully attested. Strategically, Portsmouth Harbour is an important area which provides the eastern entrance to the Solent, and the presence of a number of landing places there is very possible, such as at Hayling Island, Portsmouth and Portchester itself, but Early Saxon finds are absent for most of these. West of Portsmouth Harbour, Anglo-Saxon presence is attested mostly from scattered finds, such as a disc brooch from Clausentum or pottery in the area of Lymington.[37] Rich communities are located in the hinterland, even if some of them are at a short distance from the sea. Imports may have reached these communities

[37] Anglo-Saxon presence from the late sixth century is attested at the Bargates cemetery, at the mouth of the river Avon. On Bargates see Ch. 6.1, n. 28 (p. 173).

without stopping at the coast or through landing sites there: this might be the case for the area of Snells Corner near Portchester, where foreign goods and gold and silver objects have been found. The existence of a maritime route passing throughout the Solent might also explain the larger quantity of imports shown by the cemeteries at a shorter distance from the coast, Worthy Park and Droxford, in comparison to Portway East and Alton, which lay further away. The lack of evidence for the presence of an elite along the Hampshire coast however suggests that the Solent did not have so great an importance in this period, although this absence must be considered within the general picture of scarcity of coastal settlement in this period. In addition, the short distance between some of the internal communities and the coasts makes connections possible.

The Isle of Wight shows a different settlement-pattern during the sixth century, with rich communities settled along the coasts as well (see Map 3.7). This is the case of the cemetery on the south-western coast whose finds are recorded in the PAS (see below), but also of Chessell Down and the cemeteries nearby, which are close to the sea. Their locations, and above all the quantity of foreign goods recovered, suggests that direct links with the Continent were in place during the Early Saxon period.[38] This is consistent with the wider presence of these items in the island, as highlighted by the distribution of the scattered metal-detected finds: although Anglo-Saxon settlement is better visible in the western part of the island than east of the river Medina, finds suggest that other communities with access to imports and luxury goods were settled in this latter area too. Comparing the Isle of Wight to Hampshire and Sussex, it is clear that this island was in a different position with relation to maritime traffic. The links with Kent shown by the material culture on the Isle of Wight, and the claim that both areas were settled by Jutes,

[38] On the importance of the Isle of Wight in cross-Channel maritime route see Ulmschneider 2000, 49.

do not preclude the possibility of a direct route with the Continent, which is consistent with the quantity of imports recovered.[39]

Although the picture of the distribution of imports in Hampshire and in the Isle of Wight is affected by differences in the scale of excavations and in the size of cemeteries, it is clear that in the Itchen Valley, the area around Portchester and Droxford and the western part of the Isle of Wight, rich communities were settled which had access to foreign goods between the fifth and the seventh centuries. In Hampshire, where there was a much larger inland agricultural area than there was in either Kent or Sussex, access to long-distance imports and precious materials appears to decrease with distance from the sea. Indeed, proximity to the sea seems to have been a discriminating factor between communities such as those buried at Worthy Park and Droxford, and those at Alton and Portway East. As we will see, later evidence highlights the possibility that the portable wealth displayed by the communities that were settled at a shorter distance from the coast derived from their position along existing trading routes. Furthermore, the distribution of imports (excluding beads) visible in the two territories highlights the preeminent role of the Isle of Wight, rather than Hampshire, in long-distance routes in the Early Saxon period: this suggests that cross-Channel routes passed through the Isle of Wight, from where they may have passed on to Hampshire.[40]

3.2. *Socio-economic development along the Solent*

The later written evidence allows us to draw some further considerations on the developments these regions underwent in the Mid-Saxon period. The group of seventh- and eighth-century charters is too small to construct a map of Hampshire estates similar to that discussed in the

[39] On 'Jutish' links between Kent, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight see Kruse 2007, reassessing the archaeological evidence and showing that these connections have been overemphasised (see esp. id., 338-39); for similar conclusions see already Arnold 1982, 106.

[40] On this see also below Ch. 3.3.

Kentish case, and the lack of lay documentation does not permit us to shed light on the development of lay property throughout this period. Most of the documents pertain to the bishopric that was moved from Dorchester-on-Thames to Winchester at the middle of the seventh century.[41] Nonetheless, as discussed below, the charters are informative on royal and ecclesiastical lands and, in some cases, reflect the continuous centrality of some areas from the Early to the Mid-Saxon period.

The Itchen Valley represents an important case in this respect. Here, as mentioned above, imports and precious goods are not restricted to Worthy Park: they have been found in other sites along the river Itchen too, suggesting that other rich communities were settled in this valley (see Maps 3.3 and 3.3.1). The pronounced presence of these types of goods along the Itchen well before the rise of *Hamwic* is notable, and the possible focal role of Winchester already in the sixth century needs to be considered. This may be shown by the burials at St Giles, very close to Winchester – although the fifth- and sixth-century cemeteries in the area may equally have been related to rural settlements, rather than to the former Roman town.[42] The example of Worthy Park, only around 4-5 km north of the city, also suggests the presence of a rich community in the sixth century, although social differences may have been more pronounced in the seventh century, as the richest burials belong to this period.[43] So, even if during the sixth century the focus of settlement may have been outside the Roman town, by the seventh century, certainly, high-status and royal presence seem to have been likely inside the walled area of

[41] Bede dated this event to 660, cf. *HE* III.7. The transfer of the episcopal see might be linked to the conquest of the Jutish territories in Hampshire; cf. Yorke 1989, 92. On the early history of the bishopric at Winchester see also Yorke 1982. Most of the earlier charters of Winchester are presumably tenth-/eleventh-century forgeries. The earliest basically authentic charter is S 235, dated 688, followed by S 259 of the middle of the eighth century.

[42] On burials at St Giles see Meaney 1964, 101. On Early Saxon Winchester see Speed 2014, esp. 58-61 with references to Biddle – Kjølbye-Biddle 2007: the archaeological evidence points to a dispersed rural-type settlement within the walled area, which seems to have remained a focus of settlement. Cf. Biddle – Kjølbye-Biddle 2007: continuous activity from the end of the fourth century; see id., 195-99 on evidence from Lower Brook Street, where traces of a cultivated plot represent continuation of settlement in the post-Roman/Early Saxon period; there, a wooden fence was built during the seventh century.

[43] The richest burials, belonging to the seventh century, are gr. 10, which has two silver rings and two crystal beads, and gr. 93, having a gold pendant and two silver rings. The other female grave which is comparable to them in terms of precious items is gr. 61, having two silver rings and a crystal bead, which is dated in a large time span, between 500 and 650.

Winchester, given the presence of enclosures, and it is around the middle of the century that the Old Minster was founded.[44] These developments demonstrate the importance of this area before the appearance of *Hamwic*, and suggest a reason for the subsequent interest in Winchester shown by political and religious authorities. It also appears that the former Roman town attracted elites during the Early Anglo-Saxon period, although the focus of settlement was outside the town. The excavations of the Early and Mid-Saxon settlement at Abbots Worthy, to which the cemetery at Worthy Park probably belonged, is relevant in this perspective: finds from the settlement show the presence of some high-status people, as well as specialized production carried out on the site (smithing and possible bone working).[45] This case shows a connection between economically complex areas and royal and ecclesiastical estates; that is, these latter might have developed a demand for specialized activities, such as the metal and bone working found at this site.[46]

This link between an area where early communities had access to imported goods, and later developments in terms of inclusion in the trading network, can also be seen north of Winchester, not far from Worthy Park. This area, around Micheldever, Northbrook, Weston Colley and Stratton, has clear evidence for Early Saxon occupation, and among the finds there are imports and a silver finger ring. Regarding the later period, the PAS lists a cluster of 12 coins at Stratton Park, on the Roman road west of Northbrook. The coins are 11 *sceattas*, two of which were minted in the Netherlands, and one penny of Aethelstan I of East Anglia (820s-30s). The earlier

[44] See Speed 2014, 61; Biddle – Kjølbye-Biddle 2007.

[45] Cf. Fasham – Whinney 1991. The settlement was occupied from the sixth to the eighth/ninth centuries. Five SFBs were excavated, but the size of the settlement is not fully known. Among the finds there are 551 pottery sherds, and 82 iron objects. An angle-backed knife inlaid with copper and silver (Mid- to Late-Saxon) suggests the presence of some richer people (id., 42-43). See id., 78 on the possibility that the cemetery at Worthy Park pertained to this community.

[46] Concerning settlements in this area, mention must be made of the recent excavation of part of an Anglo-Saxon settlement dated to the sixth-eighth century (and possibly used up to the ninth) at Abbotts Barton, between Worthy Park and Winchester. Cf. Powell *et al.* 2015: SFBs with evidence indicating craft activities, such as weaving (id., 97) and rectilinear post-built structures; remains from the SFBs include pottery, copper-alloy, iron and glass objects, worked stone and bone.

sceattas have been dated to the 690s.[47] These finds point to commercial activity in this area. The case of these coins is comparable to that already seen in the area of Alfriston and Firle in Sussex, although in the close proximity of these coins there is not an Early Saxon cemetery, but an occupation site, and the Hampshire case is rather more distant from the coast.[48] In the case of Stratton Park, the cluster of coins seems clearly focused on the Roman road.[49]

Thus, the Itchen clearly maintained a central position in the Mid-Saxon period. The area stretching roughly between the Thames Valley and Winchester was indeed an important focus of royal estates in the ninth century, when many of them are listed in the will of King Alfred.[50] In the proximity of Worthy Park, a royal estate is attested in the ninth century at Martyr Worthy, and an important Late Saxon royal villa lay at Kings Worthy.[51] Hence, this is clearly an area holding continuous centrality from the Early to the Late Saxon period. Following the river Itchen toward the sea, it is well known that the kings held properties at *Hamwic*, thus strongly indicating a royal control over the *emporium*; a royal villa at *Hamwic* is in fact attested in a charter of the first half of the ninth century (S 288, dated 840), and *Hamtunscir* is attested in the middle of the eighth century.[52] Moreover, a late charter attests that the bishopric held lands at Nursling, in the area of Southampton, in the second half of the ninth century.[53] As we will

[47] On the location of these coins see Map 3.4. *Sceattas*: HAMP-6B73E6; HAMP-015D54; HAMP-773217; SUR-1CF184; SUR-E882E5; SUR-E7D567; DOR-5BA8D7; SUR-02D2A8; SUR-FDF1A5; HAMP-2C4AF7; SUR-3190E3. Penny of Athelstan I: SOM-221D45. It is to note that Micheldever may have been the site of a mother church. Micheldever is recorded as a grant to Winchester in S370, dated 903, which is however a very late forgery, possibly eleventh-century. On Micheldever see Ulmschneider 2000, 40; 66;159, with references.

[48] This site at Stratton Park is datable to the sixth and seventh centuries.

[49] On clusters of coins datable to the Mid-Saxon period near Winchester and Micheldever see Ulmschneider 2010.

[50] S 1507: royal properties in Hampshire and in the Isle of Wight mentioned in this document are Candover, Crondall, Hurstbourne Priors, Hurstbourne Tarrant, Kingsclere, Meon and Arreton. Many of them lay not far from each other north of Winchester, thus attesting a strong royal presence in this area. On Hurstbourne see also S 269 and S 268, attesting royal possession over this land during the late eighth/earlier ninth century, before the period of Alfred. See Map 3.10, showing the places mentioned in this section.

[51] Martyr Worthy is mentioned in two spurious charters (S 273 and 304), and in an authentic charter dated to the third quarter of the ninth century (S 340). On Kings Worthy see Ulmschneider 2000, 43, suggesting that it was the central place for a hundred. See also Yorke 1995, 126-27.

[52] *Hamtunscir*: Anglo-Saxon Chronicle s.a. 757; see Yorke 1997, 146. On the other written sources for *Hamwic* see Morton 1992, 26-27, considering that the place mentioned as *mercimonium* in the *Vita Willibaldi* was *Hamwic*. See above n. 13 for references suggesting that it was a distinct site.

[53] S 1277, dated 877, concerning the grant of 5 hides at Nursling made by Bishop Tunbeorht to the refectory of his brethren at Winchester.

see in the next chapter, this pattern of both royal and ecclesiastical properties in the proximity of a major *emporium* can also be clearly recognised around *Quentovic*, in the Pas-de-Calais.

On the other hand, although these properties are obvious evidence of the interest of political actors in these specific trading sites, in the following chapters (see Part 2) it will be shown that a strong royal and ecclesiastical presence did not represent an exclusive characteristic of the areas where the *emporia* lay; on the contrary, as already implied by the Kentish evidence, this presence is documented along many coastal areas of both England and the Continent, supporting the argument that a more complex network of transmarine traffic was in place on both sides of the Channel.

Of high potential in terms of trading activities and access to exotic goods is also the area of Portsmouth Harbour, in whose hinterland Early Saxon imported artefacts and precious metals have been found (see Map 3.3), both in the area of Droxford and Shavard's Farm, and at Snells Corner and Chalton Peak. The finds from Droxford and the geographical position of this area suggest that these sites might have had an easier access to imports than other zones of Hampshire. As in Kent and Sussex, an important resource for this coastal territory may have been salt, as salterns are documented here in Roman period and in Domesday Book. The entries for the *salinae* in Domesday Book shows that most of those lying in Hampshire are in this area.[54] The zone of Portchester might have offered a number of landing places, as at Portchester and at Hayling Island. The same argument proposed for the Itchen Valley can be made for Portchester, where a later high-status presence may be a hint of the high value of the area in terms of inclusion in the maritime network.[55] Salt may also have represented an important

[54] On the location of the salterns mentioned in Domesday Book see Map 3.5, based on data by Welldon Finn 1962. The saltern listed at Nether Wallop in Domesday Book is not included in the map: see Welldon Finn 1962, 343-44, deeming this location very unlikely. On the Roman sites see Rippon 2000, esp. 58-59.

[55] On landing places and Portchester see Ulmschneider 2000, 46-47, suggesting more evident high-status presence in the late Mid-Saxon period. On places having *port* element in this area see also Cole 2007, esp. 58; also 62-64 on Hythe, on the western coast of Southampton Water, documented in the tenth century. On coin distribution in Mid-Saxon period along the Hampshire coast see Ulmschneider 2003. On Portchester see below n. 77.

resource for the communities on the Isle of Wight, as three salterns are listed in Domesday Book.[56]

Coastal areas apart from *Hamwic* are not very visible in the pre-ninth-century charters. However, from ninth-century charters we know of royal lands in the area of the river Meon and Droxford. Although these are late documents, the link between royal possessions and the area where the rich Early Saxon cemetery at Droxford lay is notable.[57] The importance of the Meon and its early inclusion in maritime traffic, which is suggested by the recovery of sixth-century imported goods, seems to have continued in the later period. Indeed, apart from the royal lands, the presence of a church at Titchfield, near the river close to the coast, may point to its inclusion in commercial traffic (see Map 3.10). The continuity of an important role for this territory can still be assumed in the late eleventh century, when some activity of toll collection and a market appear at Titchfield. Titchfield may have been one of the four or five mother churches established in the late seventh/early eighth century; all of them (Titchfield, Eling, Southampton, Bishop's Waltham and probably Romsey) appear to be linked with a royal estate.[58] A charter of the middle of the eighth century shows that the kings also held possessions in an area of the New Forest district not far from the sea.[59] Although this is an important charter, attesting royal properties in a coastal area, we have seen that, however, Early Saxon evidence for occupation of this area is particular scanty.[60]

To sum up so far, we have seen that areas included in the trading network and attesting high-status presence during the sixth century, that is to say the Itchen Valley and East Hampshire

[56] On the distribution of salterns in Domesday Book see Map 3.9. Cf. Welldon Finn 1962, 344, suggesting that these salterns were probably along the coast. The possible importance of salt in the Mid-Saxon period has been suggested by Ulmschneider 2000, esp. 49.

[57] Apart from the will of King Alfred, a late eighth-century charter mentions royal lands by the river Meon (S 269). Charter S 278 (dated 826; it seems to be spurious, although made from a mid-820s document, see Keynes 1994, 1111-12) reports a grant of land at Droxford, given by King Egbert to the church of SS Peter and Paul.

[58] Ulmschneider 2000, 44, mentions the presence of a minster there as a possible evidence of an early importance of the Meon Valley. On toll collection and market see *DB Hampshire*, 39 b-c (1.45). On the links between seventh/eighth-century mother churches and royal estates and policy see Hase 1988, 45-48.

[59] S 259: the king grants lands in the area of Beaulieu and Brockenhurst to Winchester.

[60] On this see above n. 6.

around the River Meon, Droxford and Portchester, were also nodal areas from the seventh century onwards, showing royal lands, monastic developments and inclusion in the maritime traffic. The royal interest toward the coast seems to have not been restricted to *Hamwic*; although the written sources are particularly scanty, we have seen that other royal lands lay in the area of the New Forest and across the river Meon close to the coast.

The archaeological evidence has shown that during the sixth century it was the Isle of Wight to held the central position along the maritime routes. On the contrary, the presence of *Hamwic* suggests that around the middle of the seventh century the fulcrum of cross-Channel traffic shifted from the Isle of Wight to the coast of Hampshire, probably due to the growth of Wessex and the final loss of independence of the Isle of Wight. The eighth- and ninth-century *emporium*, with a boundary ditch and a rectilinear pattern of gravelled roads, had an estimated population of 2,000-3,000 and was involved in trade and manufacture, such as metal-working (iron, copper-alloy, lead, gold), bone and antler working, and was linked with the rural hinterland, at least for the provisioning of food. The extensive evidence for trade includes continental pottery, glass, querns and ivory.[61]

Hamwic has been interpreted as a royal foundation, which would have occurred during the reign of Ine (688-726): evidence for this includes the planning of the site, which would suggest a degree of royal control, and the possible existence of a seventh-century royal estate there.[62] Although a full assessment of the eighth-century *wic* is beyond the scope of this thesis (and also unnecessary here, given the substantial amount of work on the site and its significance), we do need to discuss the earliest development of the site as shown by the archaeological remains

[61] On *Hamwic* see Hodges 1981; Timby 1988; Morton 1992; Brisbane 1994; Andrews 1997; Morton 1999; Ulmschneider 2000; Birbeck *et al.* 2005; Hamerow 2007.

[62] See Hodges 1989; Yorke 1997, 140. However, the regular street pattern does not seem enough to suggest a royal foundation: see Henning 2007. On the possible seventh-century royal estate see Conclusion, n. 9 (p. 246). See also Birbeck *et al.* 2005, 192.

excavated at St Mary's Stadium, where a mixed cemetery, used between the second half of the seventh and early eighth century, has been unearthed, within the area of eighth-century *Hamwic*.[63] Given the high percentage of weapon-burials (around 40%), the hypothesis has been made that this site represents a royal foundation controlled by kings' representatives. This is in line with what Hawkes suggested for the case of Sarre mentioned in Ch. 1. The existence of a socially stratified community with an elite presence is also supported by the recovery of precious jewellery from the burials.[64] However, as in the case of Sarre, while the presence of burial weapons may be significant and may be linked with the geographical position of these settlements along maritime routes, this may not be evidence of a founding activity by kings; moreover, the choice of burying weapons has also symbolic meanings that may not have been straightforwardly related to the individuals' occupation during life (thus in two cases, gr. 5129 and 5488, weapons may be associated with females). This is not to exclude the presence of political centres in the vicinity: while the existence of a royal estate at *Hamwic* (*Hamtun*) remains putative, it is nonetheless very likely that political centres existed on the Itchen even in the sixth century, as we have seen in the hinterland of Winchester. It must be noted that a late-seventh-century date for other funerary areas within *Hamwic* (though probably later than the cemetery at St Mary's Stadium) has been proposed by Scull; among these there are areas (SOU 32/47) which may have witnessed an elite establishment and have had administrative functions.[65] Although the link of the *emporium* with kings and elites is beyond doubt, it seems possible that the earliest cemetery at St Mary's Stadium represented a community where part of the population was enriched thanks to maritime traffic, and that the kings took possession of

[63] 18 cremations and 26 inhumations have been excavated. Stoodley 2002b; Birbeck *et al.* 2005: however, the settlement to which this early cemetery pertained has not been identified, see id., 194-96. Some of the cremations might be of the sixth century (radiocarbon dating), see Birbeck *et al.* 2005, 11-13. On this cemetery see also Stoodley 2010.

[64] Birbeck *et al.* 2005, esp. 192-96; 64-69 on jewellery; 79-81. Some of the grave goods suggests links with the Continent: e.g. the crescentic gold pendant, paralleled to one found in the 'royal' terp at Wijnaldum, Frisia (id., 64-65).

[65] Scull 2001; Morton 1992.

the site slightly later; and that only from that moment did they play an important role in the development of what would then become the eighth-century *emporium*. However, given that only a very small portion of *Hamwic* has been excavated, this remains only a hypothesis.[66]

It must also be said that the new centrality of southern Hampshire along the maritime routes from around the eighth century does not imply the exclusion of the Isle of Wight, which, on the contrary, shows a continuing inclusion in the exchange network. Indeed, a cluster of 53 coins dated from the late seventh century (among which there is also a Merovingian *tremissis* of the second half of the sixth century) found close to Chessell Down is very significant, showing the presence of a 'productive' site (see Map 3.8).[67] This site was not the only one on the island, as another 'productive' site has been identified near Carisbrooke Castle.[68] Interestingly, other coins listed in the PAS also form (smaller) clusters, as for instance near Arreton east of the river Medina.[69] Coins near Brighstone and Shorwell close to the coast south of Chessell Down are also worth noting here, although they are more distant from each other, as an Early Saxon cemetery has been found at Shorwell.[70] Thus, the 'productive' sites on the island suggest a notable ongoing inclusion of the Isle of Wight in the long-distance network during the Mid-Saxon period. This is an important element which complicates the picture of commercial sites in the region and the relationship between the Isle of Wight and *Hamwic*.

[66] Birbeck *et. al.* 2005, 193, stating that the 92% of the *emporium* is unexcavated.

[67] These 53 coins are those listed in the PAS as issued before 850. On this 'productive' site see Ulmschneider – Metcalf 2013. Merovingian *tremissis* ID: IOW-0A7327. In this area, Early Saxon items in gold and silver included in the PAS should be noted: for instance, a gold pyramidal mount of the late sixth/early seventh century (IOW-B39526), a fragment of a silver sword pommel dated to the sixth century (IOW-200DC2).

[68] See Ulmschneider 2003.

[69] *Sceattas* near Arreton: IOW-C52BAB; IOW-80D664; IOW-368CC1; IOW-F0B41B; IOW-132355; IOW-BAAF11; IOW-BAAF11; IOW-35C9F1; IOW-35C9F1 (there are also other coins at some distance).

[70] The Early Saxon finds from Shorwell in the PAS include: IOW-DE9320; IOW-4D03B4; IOW-0C2B98; IOW-0D2A67; IOW-228192; LVPL-01D185; IOW-BC7168; IOW-0A4DF1; IOW-E0DA81; IOW-A33D42; IOW-BFD033; IOW-B3A065. The coins are *sceattas* (IOW-28BA04; IOW-E41F42; IOW-B601C7; IOW-4350CC; IOW-A6CF85; IOW-4350CC), a Merovingian *tremissis* (IOW-C42F03), a Gallic contemporary copy of a *solidus* of Anastasius (IOW-D7CB55) (cf. above n. 32), a penny of Offa (IOW-424995), and a copper-alloy *decanummium* of Justinian minted in Nicomedia (OW-AECD51).

3.3. *Concluding remarks*

It is likely that during the Early Saxon period imports reached Hampshire and the Isle of Wight via a considerable number of landing sites, as in the case of Kent. However, the amount of foreign goods and their distribution among the population in the two regions are significantly different, thus suggesting diversity in access. The evidence suggests a central role for the Isle of Wight in maritime routes in the sixth century: in addition to the quantity of items found in cemeteries like that at Chessell Down, this is also supported by the pattern of the distribution of foreign goods and high-status items, as it appears when we take into consideration the scattered isolated finds, again suggesting that access to these goods was more widespread on the island than in Hampshire. In contrast, Hampshire appears less involved in this maritime network during the Early Saxon period, as implied by the smaller number of finds, and their less widespread distribution. Nonetheless, the Solent must have been the access route for the foreign objects found in the Hampshire hinterland. The lack of recovery of these kinds of goods along the Hampshire coast leads us to hypothesise that at least part of the maritime traffic to Hampshire may have been mediated through the Isle of Wight.[71]

A major change occurred in the Mid-Saxon period, following the West Saxon conquest of the Isle of Wight in the second half of the seventh century. Indeed, it seems likely that the conquest by the West Saxons was motivated by their desire to have access to this trading network.[72] From that period on, Hampshire seems to have assumed the central role in the trading network. However, the presence of landing sites both in Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight may still have been important, given the steady development of many market-places which seem to have been in existence alongside *Hamwic*: in particular, the presence of at least

[71] The lack of substantial evidence from the northern coast of the Isle of Wight does not preclude this possibility, as scattered finds on the coast might suggest some degree of activity there and, above all, the communities in the hinterland would have had an easy access to the northern coast via the rivers.

[72] As suggested by Ulmschneider 2000, 41.

two trading places on the Isle of Wight seems likely, given the discovery of the two 'productive' sites, showing the integration of the island into the trading routes of the Mid-Saxon period.[73] Along the coast of Hampshire, other cases of areas included in the maritime trading routes beside *Hamwic* seem to have been Portchester and the mouths of the rivers Meon and Hamble, the former attested by the church at Titchfield, the latter by the mention of a trading site.[74]

It is crucial to note that the areas where the two 'productive' sites have been found on the Isle of Wight, namely near Carisbrooke and Chessell Down, are the areas where the evidence suggests high-status groups in the Early Saxon period. Thus, we can understand the development of the island as a process of the structuring of a trade network, which was still based on the same central areas, which later became market hubs. This continuity in locations shows that the role of external agents (churches or kings) need not have been the determining factors in establishing the trade network, although they are likely to have had an important role in its development.[75] Instead, it seems possible that the West Saxon conquerors took advantage of pre-existing trade connections. In fact, the evidence for a rich elite having access to luxury goods makes it likely that the Isle of Wight was included in interregional trade prior to the development of these 'structured' market places around the early eighth century.[76]

A different process may have occurred in Hampshire. During the sixth century, the lack of imports and rich items in the coastal area might suggest that the goods reached the hinterland without stopping at the coast, thus being possibly another proof of the minor inclusion of the Hampshire coast in the Early Saxon maritime network. Instead, from around the second half of the seventh century the presence of an elite settled in the coastal areas of Hampshire is visible,

[73] The widespread distribution of *sceattas* in the island shows that there might have been other market places in the island.

[74] See above n. 13.

[75] On the possible connections between the 'productive' site near Carisbrooke and an early mother church see Ulmschneider 1999; 2003.

[76] The metal-detected recovery of a copper alloy and silver Byzantine weight around Chessell is intriguing as it is dated between 500 and 625, though it is possibly a Late Saxon loss. See PAS (IOW-189AE5).

as at the St Mary's Stadium cemetery in *Hamwic*, while the evidence also suggests the development of a rich Mid-Saxon community at Portchester.[77] The appearance of an elite presence from the second half of the seventh century indicates that it is from around that period that Hampshire became more involved in maritime traffic, possibly taking over (and structuring) the central role previously held by the Isle of Wight. The processes of development in the two regions, thus, might have been quite different, as the role of kings and churches might have been more decisive in the establishment of Hampshire as the principal hub in a trading network. The development of *Hamwic* as an *emporium* would follow that very soon, even if, as I have argued, it may be that, here too, the kings took over a site which had developed commercial links already.

[77] Mid-Saxon finds at Portchester include imported pottery, silver objects, coins and glass. However, high-status presence becomes more evident, through the presence of coins, from the ninth century on. See Cunliffe 1976; Ulmschneider 2000, esp. 77; 161: evidence for Anglo-Saxon occupation from the fifth to the eleventh centuries within the Roman fort; four SFBs and a water-hole have been dated to the later fifth century, and two post-built structure and a refitted well to the sixth century (Phase 1); further huts, pits and wells belong to Phase 2, including the seventh to late eighth centuries; materials for Early Saxon pottery came from Northern France, the Massif Central, Rhineland of Harz Mountains, Isle of Wight, Cotswolds, and Purbeck Hills. Portchester allegedly was acquired by the king from the bishopric of Winchester in 904 (S 372). On Portchester see also below Ch. 8, n. 19 (p. 211).

Chapter 4. *The Pas-de-Calais in the Merovingian period*

Facing the Channel at its narrowest edge, the coast of the *département* of Pas-de-Calais stretches from the proximity of Calais in the north to the river Authie in the south. This area represents a crucial territory for understanding the context of transmarine relations with England during the sixth and seventh centuries, as it was an important point of arrival of maritime routes from the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. Furthermore, its hinterland was a central area in the routes connecting the core of the Merovingian kingdom with its northern territories and the Rhine delta.

The history of the Pas-de-Calais during the sixth century cannot be easily reconstructed through the written sources, since most of them start only a century later, and are charters attesting to monastic properties. Gregory of Tours provides some information about the area of the Scheldt Valley, in the hinterland of the region (e.g. *DLH*, II.9; 40; 42; IV.41), but the bishop is quite laconic concerning the northern territories of the kingdoms, which clearly do not represent the focus of his interest.

The firm inclusion of the Pas-de-Calais within the Neustrian kingdom during the seventh century entails socio-economic developments of the greatest importance for the development of the region; the establishment of monastic foundations, based on royal politics and showing strong links with aristocratic activity, is certainly one of these. In this context, the reign of Dagobert I (629-39) represents a crucial moment for the territory. It is indeed under his reign that a new ecclesiastical landscape starts to be organized.[1]

Similarly to other maritime areas of Francia, the coast of the Pas-de-Calais seems to have witnessed an Anglo-Saxon presence from an early period, which constitutes a key focus of current scholarship. Given its wide implications for the reconstruction of cross-Channel

[1] On the political and ecclesiastical developments in the Pas-de-Calais during the seventh century, and the role played by Dagobert I and his son Clovis II, see Mériaux 2010.

contacts during the Merovingian centuries, it will be examined in detail in the discussion of the archaeological evidence that follows.

The archaeological remains of the fifth to seventh centuries offer a fundamental insight for our understanding of the economic framework of the coastal areas before the rise of the *emporium* of *Quentovic* during the seventh century. Thus, the section on the archaeological evidence (Ch. 4.1) examines the presence of objects of Anglo-Saxon type and, potentially, origin in the light of transmarine contacts and Anglo-Saxon presence on the Continent, and the distribution of precious items in cemeteries located on the coast.[2] This picture is then used to discuss the probable existence of a transmarine network based on a number of landing places linking England and the Continent already in the sixth century – indeed, a pattern similar to that discussed in the preceding chapters on Southern England. The following section (Ch. 4.2) will assess the pattern of landownership as it appears from the written sources, most of which start to appear from the second half of the seventh century. This investigation relies heavily on Merovingian and Carolingian charters: as in the case of Southern England, these documents illuminate the politics of land acquisition and highlight the interest of political and ecclesiastical actors in coastal areas from around the middle of the seventh century onward. As we will see, the location of monasteries and the distribution of ecclesiastical and royal lands make up a picture showing interesting similarities with that offered by the archaeological evidence of the earlier period, suggesting the existence of a complex and ongoing web of transmarine connections which are not limited to *Quentovic* and the river Canche.

4.1. *The archaeological remains: foreign objects and patterns of precious goods*

[2] It is important to specify that I am referring to items 'of Anglo-Saxon tradition' since, as discussed below, some of the objects that can be linked to Anglo-Saxon England were in fact made locally in Northern France. See Soulat 2010, 148.

The importance of the Pas-de-Calais in the context of the Channel area during the Early Medieval period is strongly linked in the historiography with the rise of *Quentovic* as the principal *emporium* of Neustria.[3] Situated on the left bank of the Canche at Visemarest, La Calotterie, the *wic* is attested from the first half of the seventh century, when coins reporting WIC IN PONTIO start to appear. However, the recovery at Sutton Hoo of a coin dated to the end of the sixth century that reports QVANTIA (i.e. the Canche valley) as place of minting shows the importance of the Canche in the previous period too.[4] The centrality of the Canche for the maritime routes is also stressed by the presence of a port on this river mentioned in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, which documents the situation of the beginning of the fifth century.[5] It is therefore possible that a port was active on the Canche without a break from the Late Roman empire to the seventh century, although this has not (yet) been confirmed archaeologically.

As a result of its geographical position, in fact, the Pas-de-Calais was connected with Britain and the North Sea from prehistoric times.[6] As is widely acknowledged, continental Saxon elements in this territory are attested in Late Antiquity when their presence, amply documented in the coastal areas, has been linked with the defence of the *litus saxonicum*.[7] Moreover, as we will see, a strong Germanic presence is indicated by the toponymy, which reveals a high number of Old English place-names.

Archaeological remains are relatively well distributed throughout the territory of the Pas-de-Calais, and a large number of sites are known along the coast, enabling us to build a picture of settlement in the region during the Merovingian period (see Map 4.1).[8] Nonetheless, the

[3] Among the vast bibliography devoted to *Quentovic*, see e.g. Hill *et al.* 1990; Lebecq 1989; 1991; 1993; Lebecq – Béthouart – Verslype 2010; Verslype 2011; 2014; Cense-Bacquet 2012; Leroy – Verslype 2015.

[4] On the coins from *Quentovic* see Lafaurie 1996. See also Lebecq 1994.

[5] The *Notitia Dignitatum* reports the presence of the *Classis Sambrica* in a *locus Hornensis* and in a *locus Quantensis/Quartensis*, this latter referring to the river Canche. See Le Bourdellès 2010.

[6] See for instance Philippe 2009 and 2010, focusing on the estuary of the Canche.

[7] On the link between the *litus saxonicum* and continental Saxon objects found in late-antique graves see e.g. Seillier 1992.

[8] The volumes of the *Carte Archéologique de la Gaule* devoted to the Pas-de-Calais published in 1994 (62.1-2) by Delmaire, and Bellanger – Seillier 1982, have been the starting point for this research on archaeological

presence of some major constraints affecting this enquiry has to be considered. First, major changes have occurred in the coastline of Northern France, and in the Pas-de-Calais they are particularly visible in the area around Calais (maritime transgression), but also south of it, with severe consequences for instance with regard to the course of the river Canche.[9] Other important limits of the research are constituted by the nature of the evidence and, in many cases, the state of excavations. Indeed, as in the English regions we have already examined, funerary sites represent by far the majority of the remains, the evidence from settlements being much less substantial. Moreover, a large number of excavations were carried out in the 19th century, and many of these sites are known only from short reports, often listing the material found without associating it with a particular grave. These constraints have obvious consequences on the kind of enquiry we can pursue; for instance, for many sites it is not possible to investigate the distribution of grave goods and its significance in terms of social stratification within the communities. Such a study, in addition, is hampered by the high levels of plundering of the graves.[10]

Objects linked to an Anglo-Saxon tradition dated from the fifth/sixth century have been recovered from many sites along the coasts of Francia (see Map 4.2 on the Pas-de-Calais). It is now commonly assumed, mostly by French scholarship, that this material, which includes brooches and pottery for the most part found as grave goods, attests to the presence of Anglo-Saxon communities on the Continent.[11] Indeed, the establishment of foreign groups in the

remains. Important data have been also gathered from the archive of the *Service régional de l'archéologie* at Lille, especially for *Quentovic* and La Calotterie.

[9] On the changes that occurred to the river Canche see Leroy 2011. See however Loveluck – Tys 2006 revising the effects of the maritime transgression.

[10] On issues connected with 19th-century archaeological practice and plundering of graves see Effros 2003, esp. 60-63; 131-33. These sites show both ancient and modern plundering: see e.g. Piton 1985, 15-19 on the cemetery at Nouvion-en-Ponthieu, which witnessed violations both in modern times and during the period of use of the funerary site.

[11] The question of Anglo-Saxon presence in Francia has been a prolific focus of research: see e.g. Welch 1991; Lorren 1992; Seillier 1992; Lebecq 1994; Soulat 2007; 2009a; 2010.

coastal areas of Francia during this period is also narrated, as discussed below, by Gregory of Tours and Procopius, and Saxon names occur in later sources, as in the polyptych of Saint-Bertin. Another hint in this regard, moreover, comes from the early-ninth-century *Vita Audomari*, which mentions a *terra saxonica*, perhaps the area of Boulogne.[12] In the Pas-de-Calais, objects of Anglo-Saxon type have been found near the estuaries of the major rivers, and in general along the coast; along the Canche, they have been recovered in graves from Offin and La Calotterie. Given their importance as potential signs of a foreign presence and their similarities with cemeteries inside this region, other funerary sites lying just outside the Pas-de-Calais must be taken into account. Among these, the most important are those at Vron and Nouvion-en-Ponthieu, both situated at a short distance from the sea, between the rivers Authie and Somme.

The recovery of this material poses questions about the nature of contacts with England. More specifically, the scholarly discussion seems to have been shaped according to a dichotomy sharply dividing a hypothesis of transmarine trading from that of an Anglo-Saxon settlement on the Continent, with the former steadily yielding to the latter in recent decades.[13] This section examines the data taken as evidence for the hypothesis of a foreign presence, that is the recovery of objects of 'Anglo-Saxon' tradition (some of them possibly manufactured on the Continent), and shows that it is difficult to assess this presence on the basis of the material culture. Then, a detailed analysis of the funerary sites along the Canche, paying close attention to La Calotterie, will show that 'Anglo-Saxon' objects represent in general a very small part of the grave goods, and that clear differences in terms of distribution and function must be recognised in relation to

[12] On written sources see Rouche 1977, esp. 461 on the identification of the zone of Boulogne as the *terra saxonica*. Cf. Gregory of Tours, *DLH* V.26; X.9; Procopius, *Wars* VIII.20; *Vita Audomari* ch. 8; on this latter see Seillier 1992, 104. On the polyptych of Saint-Bertin, mentioning a certain *Saxger* and a *Alfvvardus ille Saxo* at Tubersent near the Canche, see Lebecq 1994, 36. On the documentation of Saint-Bertin see below Ch. 4.2.2.

[13] Cf. e.g. Lebecq 1994, *contra* Pilet 1992 who stresses the possibility of ongoing trading activity. On 'Anglo-Saxon' objects in France framed within the context of Anglo-Saxon settlement see e.g. Seillier 1992; Soulat 2009a; 2009b; 2010 (see above n. 11). See also Piton 1985, 287, stressing that it is not possible to assume with certainty how the foreign objects recovered at Nouvion-en-Ponthieu reached this community.

the types of these items, i.e. 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery *vis-a-vis* luxury items made with gold and silver. The hypothesis of a foreign presence alone cannot explain these differences: instead, although the presence of some Anglo-Saxons is indeed very probable, this material must be understood in the context of ongoing contacts and exchanges of a more or less commercial nature.

The actual size of these continental Saxon and Anglo-Saxon groups on the Continent is problematic, and there are important differences between the archaeological finds and what can be deduced from the written sources. Indeed, the words of Gregory of Tours and Procopius seem to imply a rather large foreign presence on the Continent, but it needs to be remembered that the bishop of Tours refers to the Saxons settled in the area of Bayeux in Normandy, and tells us nothing about the situation of the Pas-de-Calais. On the population settled in the Bessin, Gregory reports an attack they suffered by Waroch, Count of the Bretons, in which many Saxons were killed (*DLH* V.26), and of Fredegund ordering the Saxons to fight with Waroch against Duke Beppolen (X.9). On the other hand, Procopius certainly did not have a profound knowledge (if any) of this territory. Moreover, it is to be noted that, while Procopius is often cited as one of the sources for a foreign presence in the Pas-de-Calais, he did not refer explicitly to this region.[14]

The large number of Old English place-names may support the picture provided by the written sources. Interestingly, these place-names concentrate in the northern part of the region, especially in the area of Boulogne-sur-Mer. Indeed, the high number of Old English *-tun* toponymic attestations in the Boulonnais in comparison to the area of the Canche is intriguing, since Anglo-Saxon influences along the river of *Quentovic* are widely accepted: this peculiar pattern has been suggested to be a consequence of the different phases of the integration of

[14] Procopius, *Wars* VIII.xx.6-10. See further Ch. 7 for a discussion of Procopius's narrative.

these areas within the Merovingian kingdom.[15] However, the sources pointing to a large foreign presence do not fit well with the distribution of items of Anglo-Saxon tradition, which appear to be rather few.[16]

A good case in point is represented by the local production in Northern France of hand-made pottery of Anglo-Saxon tradition, which is often considered as proof of the presence of foreign communities from Britain.[17] In this regard, we must note that this pottery represents only a small percentage of the pottery found buried as grave goods in cemeteries in the Pas-de-Calais.

The cemetery at La Calotterie 'La Fontaine aux Linottes', which will be presently assessed in detail, is an excellent example: indeed, with more than six hundred graves covering a period between the beginning of the sixth to the second half of the seventh century, this is the largest excavated cemetery among those along the coast of the Pas-de-Calais.[18] In this important funerary site, however, only eight pots have been linked with an Anglo-Saxon tradition out a total of 114 pots, that is to say, only 7%.[19] Considering the exceptional character of this cemetery, which lay in an area with particularly strong contacts with England in the immediate proximity of the later site of *Quentovic*, this percentage does not seem particularly high.[20] Most importantly, it is not possible to classify this pottery as Anglo-Saxon with certainty, as pottery

[15] See Seillier 1983, 38, suggesting that the linguistic frontier from the end of the Merovingian period lay in the area of the Canche, and that this caused the disappearance of the Germanic place-names in Ponthieu. See also Buche 2010, pointing to the presence of place-names in *-s-hem* documented on the northern bank of the Canche. Buche suggests (id., 118) that the establishment of settlements with *-tun* place-names is earlier than those with the *-s-hem* element, and that this latter settlement was encouraged by the presence of *Quentovic*. On *-tun* place-names see also Berger 1983.

[16] On the quantity of Anglo-Saxon objects see Welch 1991, 267, citing Haith's work on the cemetery at Herpes (Charente) 1988, 73 and 75-77. On Anglo-Saxon evidence in Normandy see Pilet 1992.

[17] On the provenance of hand-made pottery see Soulat 2012; 2016. Soulat suggests that the local production of 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery 'perhaps […] would have been motivated by the need to express membership of the same cultural group, both in daily life and in death. It therefore seems likely that the individuals or groups who settled in these territories brought with them certain know-how and customs typical of Anglo-Saxon populations' (Soulat 2012, 219).

[18] The data for La Calotterie are taken from Desfossés *et al.* 1997 (volls II-III).

[19] See Soulat 2016, discussing these pots at La Calotterie. Most of the remaining pottery in this cemetery is biconical.

[20] Note however that a significant variation is visible on a case by case level, as will be seen below concerning the cemetery of Offin (on the Canche about 10 km inland from La Calotterie).

of this kind was produced in many other areas along the Channel.[21] This is a pivotal constraint to bear in mind when approaching these areas, and calls for the recognition of the existence of a wide coastal zone sharing an at least partially common material culture.[22] In addition to 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery, scholars who argue for Anglo-Saxon settlement stress that other types of objects, as for instance some of the button brooches recovered along the Frankish coasts, may also have been manufactured on the Continent, and hence they connect the local production of these items with the presence of foreign groups.[23]

Various explanations for the different pictures offered by the written sources and the archaeological remains can be suggested. One is that the presence of Anglo-Saxons, at least in some areas, was indeed quite small, so that they might have been assimilated by the Frankish and Gallo-Roman majority in an early period, which would have led to the decline of a specific material culture.[24] It should also be considered that these items might not have been exclusively used by Anglo-Saxons: as in the case of the Frankish objects found in East Kent, the individuals who were buried with foreign items in Francia could have been local inhabitants sharing a partly common material culture – this might also explain the local production of some typologies of items.[25] These hypotheses account for situations which could obviously have coexisted, while differences at regional level were certainly possible.

Although some Anglo-Saxon presence in Francia can hardly be questioned, given the written sources and the toponymic evidence, this certainly does not exclude the existence of exchanges between the two areas. Items imported from Kent are a case in point, if we wish to look for

[21] On this kind of pottery in Flanders see Hamerow – Hollevoet – Vince 1994. See also Soulat 2012, discussing hand-made pottery from the Scheldt Valley.

[22] See Loveluck – Tys 2006 on the characteristics shared by the populations living along the coasts of the Channel; see further the Introduction and the Conclusion.

[23] See Soulat 2010; Suzuki – Cadoux – Cadoux 2007; Suzuki 2008.

[24] On assimilation see e.g. Soulat 2007, 83; Kazanski – Périn 2008; 2009.

[25] See e.g. Welch 2002, 126, citing Pilet 1980, who suggests that Anglo-Saxon brooches were buried with local people: Pilet's idea that the community buried at Frénouville was composed of indigenous inhabitants was supported by the physical anthropological research on skulls carried on by L. Buchet. *Contra* Pilet and Buchet see Effros 2006, 202-8, stressing that this kind of research cannot be taken as conclusive as regard ethnicity. On common traditions see Soulat 2010, 160.

signs of the presence of a transmarine network. As will be discussed in more detail below, however, these imports survive only in small quantities and, above all, some of them are luxury items used as grave goods to convey the particular social status of the owners. These two elements, namely the relative rarity of these items and the fact that they are precious goods, make it possible that at least some of these were gifts or the result of exogamic practices, and not signs of trade.[26]

As mentioned above, the state of many excavations precludes a full understanding of the economic and social context of the items of Anglo-Saxon tradition, including the role attributed to these objects. Nouvion-en-Ponthieu, at a short distance from the river Somme, is a good example of these constraints. In this large cemetery, used between the fourth and the end of the seventh century, 457 graves have been investigated, among which 284 belong to the Merovingian period. The excavation suggests that this was the funerary site of a rather rich and socially stratified community.[27] Only eight Merovingian burials, dated between the end of the fifth to the first half of the sixth century, have objects in an Anglo-Saxon tradition.[28] As explained in detail later in this section, these eight burials present uneven degrees of wealth in their associations; however, any discussion of the overall picture of the distribution of items is jeopardised by the very high level of plundering, which affected around 85% of the burials of this site: among this group of eight graves, only one or two of them were intact.[29] Nonetheless, it is interesting to note that the two graves with spears, among the eight containing items of

[26] See Welch 1991; 2002.

[27] See Piton 1985, 287, suggesting that the community was involved in commercial and military activities. The military role is proposed on the basis of the large number of graves with weapons. We must note, however, that the deposition of weapons may reflect symbolic display more than the actual role of the dead man during his lifetime. On weapon burials see Halsall 2010. See also Effros 2006, 206.

[28] These burials are in phase A/B/C of Piton 1985, which extends between c. 485 and c. 530-40. On Nouvion see also below n. 111.

[29] The intact graves are gr. 214 and, possibly, 399: on this latter, the catalogue of the graves (in Piton 1985) does not specify whether it is intact or not, but as it had an iron buckle, a pair of silver earrings, a necklace with 134 glass beads, and pottery, it might well have been intact. It might be significant that two of the graves contain silver items – although they fit well with the distribution of precious goods visible in the cemetery, where a high number of burials have objects made in gold, silver, and with garnets.

Anglo-Saxon tradition, gr. 221 and 322, have this weapon in the reversed 'Frankish' position (pointing to the feet), this being a possible example of a mixed material culture.[30]

Proximity to estuaries is a common feature of the sites containing objects of Anglo-Saxon tradition, and this is visible on the lower course of the river Authie, where a number of them have been recovered at Vron and at Waben, and along the Canche, at La Calotterie and Offin, this latter being at around 30 km from the coast. The funerary sites at Vron and Waben show communities with characteristics comparable to Nouvion-en-Ponthieu: a long period of use of the sites which extends from before the Merovingian period, heterogeneous influences (e.g. Saxon, Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian) in regard to the material culture, and a high presence of weapon burials, particularly at Waben.[31]

The excavation of the Merovingian cemetery at La Calotterie 'La Fontaine aux Linottes' has proved to be fundamental to establishing new insights on contacts with Anglo-Saxon England which were in place on the Canche before the establishment of *Quentovic*. Although most of the inhumations had been plundered, a large quantity of objects buried as grave goods was recovered. The analysis of distribution percentages is also affected by the fact that no skeletons have been found, the only exception being the human remains in gr. 737, which have been preserved by a sarcophagus.[32] Given the large number of rich burials and the high number of graves with weapons (116), it has been proposed here too that this was a high-status community with a strong military presence. These characteristics have been explained by the strategic position of the site along the river.[33] The integration of this community into the maritime area

[30] Concerning the position of spears in burials, it may be worth noting that some inhumations at La Calotterie have the spear pointing to the head, as is more common in England.

[31] Items of Anglo-Saxon influence have been recovered from both sites. On Vron see Seillier 1978; 1986; 1989b; Ben Redjeb 2012 n. 815, 757-60. See also Welch 2007b on Scandinavian influences at Vron. On Anglo-Saxon pottery at Waben see Seillier 1989a. On weapons at Waben see MacGregor *et al.* 1997, 118.

[32] This is a burial of a high-status male of the second half of the sixth century, and is the only sarcophagus burial in the cemetery.

[33] See Desfossés *et al.* 1997, III, 144.

of the Channel is attested by the presence of a few objects of Anglo-Saxon tradition dated between the second half of the sixth and the first half of the seventh century.[34]

Apart from the eight pots mentioned above, seven other 'Anglo-Saxon' objects found in as many graves have been identified. These items include a pair of pyramid studs found in gr. 672, two shield bosses (umbos) in gr. 489 and 737, and four brooches in gr. 230 (radiate-headed brooch with five knobs)[35], 542 (equal-arm brooch), 755 (composite disc brooch) and 2046 (saucer brooch). We must note that some of these objects, such as the pyramid studs, are luxury items. The grave goods associated with these inhumations suggest a possible difference between those with pottery in an 'Anglo-Saxon' tradition, and those with the other items. As the evidence stands, those with pottery do not have precious objects, and indeed some of them have only the 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery as grave goods.[36] On the contrary, the burials having the other 'Anglo-Saxon' objects (but not 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery) can be considered rich graves on the basis of the other items associated with them: some of them have gold, garnets, silver, amethyst, while gr. 489 contains one of the 18 swords recovered from this cemetery. Only two of these graves (230 and 542), do not show other items suggesting high status (gr. 542, however, with a necklace of amber and glass beads, has been violated).

Although this picture is clearly affected by the plundering of the graves, this distribution can tell us something about the value attributed to objects in an Anglo-Saxon tradition, possibly also suggesting differences in the modalities by which these items reached the community. The local production of 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery, as we have seen, cannot be taken as certain evidence for the presence of foreign individuals within the community, and the connection between the

[34] The data on these objects are taken from Soulat 2016.

[35] Soulat 2016, 297-98: decorations resembling those from Anglo-Saxon brooches. However, no parallels are provided, and this brooch seems different from Kentish examples: see e.g. Parfitt – Brugmann 1997.

[36] I have not been able to find in the catalogue of the graves gr. 470, listed among those having Anglo-Saxon pottery in Soulat 2016 and in Desfossés *et al.* 1997, II.

items used as grave goods and the ethnicity of the dead is not straightforward.[37] Moreover, even bearing in mind the problem of grave-robbing, this type of pottery does not seem connected to rich associations. Instead, the case of the other objects is clearly different, as some of them are rich items made with luxury materials, e.g. silver, gold and garnets. Thus, they may well have been valuable in conveying the social status of the dead, perhaps because they also showed their connections with England.[38]

Although it is not possible to state with certainty how these objects reached this community, they nonetheless show that transmarine contacts were in place on the river Canche before the period when *Quentovic* is attested. On the other hand, this inclusion in the maritime area can also explain the presence of 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery, which suggests the existence of a partially mixed material culture- – although, as already seen, this pottery represents only a small part of the pottery found in the cemetery. The local production of 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery may thus represent this partially common material culture flourishing across the Channel, hence undermining the idea that local manufacture necessarily implies foreign presence, although some of the graves with 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery might of course represent the burials of foreign people. Apart from ethnicity, however, the associations shown by the burials with this kind of pottery may suggest a low social status of the individuals buried with them. This might also be corroborated if one looks at the general picture of the pottery found at La Calotterie: indeed, the 'Anglo-Saxon' pots are the only hand-made pottery, the others being mostly biconical pottery, *vases à panse arrondie* (globular jars), and bottles, all made on the wheel.[39] In contrast, the luxury materials used to make many of the other objects suggest exchange at an elite level.

[37] On 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery cf. Soulat 2012; 2016. Cf. above n. 17. On connections between grave goods and ethnicity see below Ch. 4.3.

[38] In this regard, however, the silver composite disc brooch found in gr. 755 might not have been made in England, as its decoration shows Anglo-Frisian influences; see Soulat 2016, 299-300.

[39] See Desfossés *et al.* 1997, III, 97-102. For English terminology see Evison 1979.

In this regard, we need to repeat that these items constitute quite a small group among the total of the grave goods found in a cemetery which has more than 600 graves. Moreover, the overall distribution of precious materials (e.g. gold, silver, garnets) points to a fairly high number of rich burials; and the vast majority of them do not have Anglo-Saxon objects.[40] Among them there is for instance the extremely rich female gr. 1004, likely to belong to the last decades of the sixth century, and standing out for the wealth of its associations, which include objects in gold, silver and with garnets, a crystal ball and a gold solidus of Justinian I among other items; it contains no Anglo-Saxon objects.[41]

This dichotomy represented by some rich graves exhibiting precious Anglo-Saxon objects and burials of much lower status having pottery in an 'Anglo-Saxon' tradition is significantly reinforced by the picture shown by Offin, a funerary site in the hinterland of the region along the Canche which was in use between the end of the fifth century to around 600/610.[42] From some of the burials from this much smaller cemetery, which included 88 graves, eight pots in an 'Anglo-Saxon' tradition have been recovered. Burials with this kind of pottery were thus more numerous in percentage terms than at La Calotterie: the 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery forms 21% of the total ceramics found in the graves.[43] However, no other type of Anglo-Saxon objects was recovered. Also this cemetery has been plundered, so, as in the case of La Calotterie, the picture of the distribution of items might have been significantly different. From the extant picture, however, the graves containing this pottery again do not have precious associations.

[40] Silver, gold and garnets have been found in 30 graves out of the 616 listed in the catalogue, thus they represent 4,9% of the burials. Burials with silver and gold only in coin form have been included. However, the number of rich burials is higher than this: first because of the plundering of the graves, and second because I have not included the objects where silver/gold are used only to plate or decorate, or other expensive items such as, for instance, amethysts.

[41] On this burial see Desfossés *et al.* 1997, III, 142-43 (also in Desfossés – Dilly – Piton 1997). Interestingly, the two pairs of brooches recovered from this burial were used in a combination which is not very common in France but which is similar, in the Pas-de-Calais, to rich burials at Vron (gr. 99A and 121A) and Nouvion-en-Ponthieu (gr. 273), thus possibly showing a characteristic of female dress shared by the elites at a micro-regional level.

[42] On Offin see Legoux – Routier 2007.

[43] 38 pots have been recovered from this site.

This seems to be in line with what appears from La Calotterie, although the context is different; in fact, the population buried at Offin displays a much lower level of wealth in general: among precious materials, only silver is present, in three graves (gr. 17, 62, 88; 3,4%).

Thus, the luxury objects at La Calotterie may suggest elite exchange, although this should not be overestimated, given the small number of these items in comparison to both the total of the burials and to the total of the graves containing precious materials. Moreover, this exchange should be understood within the frame of a wider context of cultural interactions and/or foreign presence, displayed by the pottery. The higher percentage of 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery at the poorer cemetery at Offin in comparison to La Calotterie, and the fact that they seem to have been associated with burials displaying no precious objects in both the funerary sites, seem connected; at least, the absence of this kind of pottery in rich graves suggests that the pottery was not used to display transmarine connections and hence social status.

The differences in wealth visible in the two cemeteries, although both located on the river, and the recovery of precious Anglo-Saxon objects at La Calotterie only, are, furthermore, indicative of the possible specific role played by this latter community within the transmarine network, as will be explained below (see also Ch. 6). A decrease of rich associations as sites were situated further away from the estuary is also supported by what can be seen from the cemetery a Bloville, a funerary site with 96 graves dated between 560/570 and 700/710 which lay at a short distance south of the Canche halfway between Offin and La Calotterie: here only two graves have precious objects, made with gold, silver and garnets.[44]

Thus, the distribution of these goods at La Calotterie suggests that, apart from the pottery, the other 'Anglo-Saxon' objects, some of which are precious items, are buried in rich graves, thus helping to convey social status. However, other cemeteries in this territory show a different picture. In cemeteries such as Nouvion-en-Ponthieu and Vron, the Anglo-Saxon objects

[44] These are gr. 72, dated between the second half of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century, and gr. 70, dated in the first half of the seventh century. On Bloville see Routier – Legoux – Thuillier 2008.

recovered other than pottery, namely brooches, do not seem to have been particularly luxury items, since they are made in copper alloy. Moreover, they have a less clearly defined distribution. In fact, as previously mentioned in relation to Nouvion-en-Ponthieu, the eight graves with a button brooch (gr. 143) and pottery (gr. 221, 322, 214, 399, 260, 237, 316) present associations quite different from each other, spanning from graves containing silver objects (gr. 143 and 399), to others containing only pottery (gr. 237 and 316). It is however worth bearing in mind that, as at La Calotterie, many graves have been plundered. Thus, this picture may not be particularly revealing as regards how these objects were perceived – that is to say, whether or not they were used to display cultural affiliations, social status etc. Comparing La Calotterie and Nouvion, both of them show a rich community with access to precious objects. Concerning the items of foreign tradition, however, it is worth mentioning that the graves with these objects at Nouvion are dated between the end of the fifth to the middle of the sixth century (c. 485 - 530/40), while the objects from La Calotterie come from graves attributed to the second half of the sixth and the first half of the seventh century. This difference in the dating might reflect micro-regional variation in the access to the transmarine traffic.

Going northwards, two important cemeteries containing 'Anglo-Saxon' types of goods lay quite close to possible ports at Sangatte and Ambleteuse. One is the cemetery of Fréthun, near Sangatte, while the other is that at Hardenthun, Marquise, in the hinterland of Ambleteuse; furthermore, Anglo-Saxon influences can also be recognised at Wissant, on the coast.[45] Items of Anglo-Saxon tradition (essentially brooches and pottery) have been recovered also at Equihen and Isques, both lying at a short distance from Boulogne, as well as at Boulogne itself.[46]

[45] On Wissant see Soulat 2012, with his map at p. 216. On the settlement in this area, and at Tardinghen, during the Merovingian period see Leclercq – Masse – Piton 1994. On the possible presence of a cemetery at Sangatte see Delmaire 1994 n. 240, 307-8, citing Terninck.

[46] A pair of button brooches (Suzuki's Class A2) was found in grave 193 at Isques. Cf. Suzuki 2008; on the pottery of Anglo-Saxon tradition at Equihen see Seillier 1992. Another button brooch, of the late fifth or sixth

Regarding Hardenthun, we have only a partial picture of this large funerary site, so it is not possible to make observations similar to those made for La Calotterie, Nouvion and Offin. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the site produced 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery, and a probably Kentish keystone garnet disc brooch made in silver.[47] The presence of such a luxury item in the cemetery of what appears to have been a rich community, as shown below, aligns well with the picture offered by the cemeteries in the south of the region discussed above, as La Calotterie. In this regard we should also mention the sword pommel of Bifrons-Gilton type found in a burial *de chef* at Fréthun, since these particular pommels have been recovered in both the Continent and Southern England, especially in Kent, thus being evidence of supra-regional links between elites.[48] The recovery of rich objects showing cross-Channel links at Fréthun and Hardenthun helps us to put La Calotterie in perspective: not only the Canche had an elite connected with Southern England.[49]

In the fifth/sixth century the network of transmarine contacts between Northern France and England was supported by a number of landing-places scattered along the southern coast of the Pas-de-Calais. The northern territory of the region may well have been integrated into this system too. Although in the fifth century, in fact, the focus of maritime traffic shifted from

century, has been found at Vieil-Atre, Boulogne. See Delmaire 1994 n. 232, p. 300. See also MacGregor 1997, 114. Cf. Welch 1991.

[47] On the cemetery at Hardenthun see Haigneré (ed. 1977), 47-66; cf. also Delmaire 1994 n. 581, p. 429. 120 graves on the site were destroyed. Nevertheless, another 120 burials were excavated, and around 60 among these were intact. On the 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery see Soulat 2012; on the brooch Soulat 2010. On the brooch see also Avent 1975, II, 51: the grave is not recorded. Avent reports that Seillier (1974, 58-59 number 74, fig. 14) states that this brooch is made in bronze, but Haigneré (1866; repr. 1977) described it at gilded silver, and he aligns with Haigneré.

[48] The Bifrons-Gilton type sword pommel found at Fréthun, made in gilt silver, was recovered among the associations of gr. 65, a male burial dated c. 530/40. On this and another sword pommel (copper alloy; type Engling-Nusplingen) found at Fréthun gr. 21 see Fischer *et al.* 2008, 68-77. See also Soulat 2010. On gr. 65 see Routier 1996, 544-47. On Bifrons-Gilton type pommels see also Nicolay 2014, esp. 247-48; Fischer – Soulat 2009: however, while these pommels clearly show links between elites, the recovery of these finds does not seem enough to conclude, as the authors do, that they are evidence of a Merovingian hegemony in Kent, nor that 'these objects and their burial may be interpreted as evidence of an elite group of functionaries, 'ring-lords'' (id., 77). On this issue see below Ch. 7.

[49] The identification of a sixth-century bronze-workshop in the nearby site of Hames-Boucres should be noted; see François 2012: also an 'Anglo-Saxon' pot has been found on the site (id., 61).

Boulogne towards the south, in the area of the rivers Canche and Somme, the possibilities offered by Boulogne itself and the lands north of it in terms of landing sites should not be underestimated, as this is the part of the Pas-de-Calais closest to England.[50] On the coastal area north of Boulogne a number of these places appear to have been in use between the middle and the end of the first century BC, before the establishment of Boulogne as the major Roman port on the route toward Britain. Even in Late Antiquity these smaller ports, which did not have the legal right to support cross-Channel traffic, continued to be used for fishing. Thus, it seems possible that, after the end of the Roman system based on Boulogne, a complex web of many small landing places re-emerged, possibly based on these same sites (see Map 4.3).[51] The above-mentioned presence of items of Anglo-Saxon tradition or showing cross-Channel links north of Boulogne, at Fréthun, Hardenthun and Wissant, seems to support this possibility. This seems to be the case closer to the Roman port too, where settlement at Boulogne-sur-Mer and its surroundings during these centuries, and 'Anglo-Saxon' items, suggest that a landing place might have continued to be in use at the mouth of the Liane (the river of Boulogne).[52]

South of Boulogne, however, every river-estuary, namely those of the Canche, the Authie and the Somme, may well have been part of the cross-Channel network based on landing sites. As already mentioned, the presence of 'Anglo-Saxon' objects becomes more scattered as one proceeds inland, and is in general connected to riverine settlement. Such a maritime-oriented distribution appears to be a common feature of this material: also in Normandy, for instance, they are clearly focussed on coastal areas.[53]

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[50] On the fifth-century southward shifting see Philippe 2010: an important reason was that the Canche is a better route of communication than the Liane, as it permits to travel more than 80 km (id., esp. 63-64).

[51] See Delmaire 2010, suggesting also that in the first century BC small ports were located at Sangatte, Wissant, Tardinghen, Ambleteuse, Wimereux, at the mouth of the Liane and at Étaples, on the Canche. On an *emporium* at Sangatte before the Roman conquest see also Leclercq – Masse – Piton 1994, 35.

[52] The continued existence of a landing site in this area during the next centuries might also be suggested by the recovery of a Frisian *sceat* (690-725) on the beach at Le Portel, near the estuary of the Liane; see Delmaire 1994 n. 827, p. 527.

[53] On Anglo-Saxon objects in Normandy see e.g. Pilet 1992; Soulat 2011a. It is however to note that 'Anglo-Saxon' finds have been recovered also for instance along the Scheldt Valley, which was a central route of communication toward the North Sea: see Soulat 2012, 220-22.

In addition to artefacts of probable Kentish or generally Southern English provenance, it is worth mentioning that these settlements also had access to amber, which has been found in many cemeteries along the coasts of the Pas-de-Calais. Again, the distribution of amber as a grave good suggests that its spread was restricted to the areas closer to the coast: indeed, the number of sites in which amber has been found appears to decrease with distance from the sea; in the more internal zones of the region, as around Arras, its recovery becomes very rare. A high access to this material is by contrast displayed at La Calotterie, where more than half of the burials with beads contain amber, and at Nouvion-en-Ponthieu, where amber beads are present in a smaller, but nonetheless quite high, proportion (about one third of the graves).[54] Given that amber is generally rare in Merovingian burials, the fact that these coastal communities had access to this material is further evidence of their inclusion in the transmarine network.

The communities of these coastal lands, therefore, present a material culture showing the heterogeneous influences derived from the geographical location of the Pas-de-Calais, which made this region a borderland within the maritime area of the Channel. Within this context, fundamental questions remain concerning the possible integration of these communities into the cross-Channel network, and within their own territory. In this respect, the analysis of grave goods found in these cemeteries permits further consideration about the people living in coastal areas and their access to luxuries. Looking at the distribution of items made in precious materials (i.e. gold and silver) in the entire area of the Pas-de-Calais, three main foci may be identified. Two of them are the areas surrounding Arras and Thérouanne (in the hinterland of the region), and this is hardly surprising, since we know of ecclesiastical developments in the two towns in the sixth and seventh centuries, and that mints were established there in the

[54] The graves containing beads at La Calotterie are 94, among which there are 59 with amber, and 35 without it. The percentage of these burials having amber (out of the total of the graves with beads) is thus 62,8%. These numbers are taken from Desfossés *at al.* 1997, III, 103-7. At Nouvion-en-Ponthieu the percentage is 33,9% (20 burials with amber beads out of 59 burials with beads); see Piton 1985, 259-61.

Merovingian period.[55] The third focus is located along the coast (see Map 4.3). Although some bias distorting this picture has to be considered, such as the actual amount of archaeological evidence investigated through the region, and the state of excavations mentioned above, the recovery of a large number of rich burials along the coast is significant.

Some of these sites lay in the area of Boulogne, close to the sea. Among them, the seventh-century cemetery at Pincthun, Echinghen, is striking, as the percentage of individuals buried with precious goods is very high there: as much as around 56% of the females in this site have gold and/or silver items.[56] Significantly, this site is in the immediate surroundings of Boulogne. The cemetery at Hardenthun, Marquise, lying at around 10 km north-west of Boulogne, is another site in which a large number of gold and silver items have been recovered, although in this case the lack of a catalogue of the graves does not permit us to understand their distribution within the cemetery. In regard to access to luxury goods, these examples show that this area can be easily compared with La Calotterie and Nouvion-en-Ponthieu,[57] south of Boulogne: it is thus again likely that this high presence of precious objects is linked with the geographical location of some of these communities along the coasts. Moreover, as already seen in the case of La Calotterie, the wealth displayed by these graves is not based on the presence of Anglo-Saxon finds: as will be discussed in Ch. 6, this represents an important difference from the picture shown by burials in Southern England. Nevertheless, as already seen for the Anglo-Saxon regions, some of these communities may have prospered thanks to transmarine traffic, and the proximity of rich cemeteries and earlier *salinae* suggests that at least for part of these coastal settlements salt may have represented an important resource. For instance, a large

[55] On Arras and Thérouanne see below Ch. 4.2.1.

[56] The total number of graves in this cemetery is 49. The graves with gold and/or silver items are nine out of a total of 16 female burials (among these, gr. 13 has a brooch with gold sheet). In addition to these nine graves, gr. 47 contains a gold brooch, which has not been considered as it is the burial of a child. None of the male burials contain objects in gold and silver. On Pincthun see Haigneré (ed. 1977), including also the catalogue of the graves.

[57] On Nouvion-en-Ponthieu see Piton 1985, 287, suggesting that this site seems richer than the other cemeteries in the Amienois, though admitting the fragmentary picture of funerary sites in this region.

number of salt-making sites are known to have been in use along the Canche in Prehistoric and Roman times, and some of them are also documented as active in the Medieval period.[58] Indeed, proximity between rich communities and possible areas of salt-working is a common pattern that can be recognised in all the territories considered, which also present similar development in terms of landholding, as will be discussed in Ch. 6.

4.2. *The written sources*

It is highly likely that the importance of the Pas-de-Calais region, and hence its inclusion within Neustria, was primarily due to economic factors, namely its role in transmarine traffic.[59] As we are about to see, this is reflected in the patterns of landed property: in fact, although the written sources allow us to build only a fragmented picture of landownership in the Pas-de-Calais from the seventh century onward, that is, when the *emporium* at *Quentovic* was already active, it seems clear that monasteries, kings and also lay landowners had a marked interest in holding lands close to the sea. Indeed, the exploitation of coastal-related activities may have been at the basis of the many monastic foundations scattered along the coasts which can be glimpsed from charters and Lives of Saints; in particular, the highly strategic location of monasteries near the mouths of the main rivers suggest that these institutions may well have been interested in taking part in trading activities. As we will see, the location of monasteries and the distribution of ecclesiastical and royal lands make up a picture showing interesting similarities to that offered by the archaeological evidence of the earlier period, suggesting the existence of a complex web of transmarine connections which are not limited to the major focus on *Quentovic* and the Canche.

[58] On salt making in the area of the Canche see Weller 2000, 333-53; on the location of places connected with the exploitation of this resource in Prehistoric, Gallo-Roman and Medieval periods see his map at id., 334.
[59] See Mériaux 2010.

Given the scarcity of charters related to the coastal area of the Pas-de-Calais, the written sources referring to neighbouring coastal areas and internal lands will be included. While the estuary of the Somme and the coast of Belgium are useful to compare the processes of appropriation of lands visible in the Pas-de-Calais, internal lands and in particular the Scheldt Valley help to illuminate the spread of monasticism, lay property and royal estates, thus helping us to frame the developments of coastal lands in the broader context of the region during the Merovingian period.

4.2.1. *Patterns of landownership in the hinterland*

Among the ecclesiastical developments of the Pas-de-Calais during the seventh century, is the foundation of the episcopal see at Thérouanne, with Audomar appointed as its first bishop.[60] However, it is impossible to reconstruct the ecclesiastical development and the properties held by the church of Thérouanne in the Merovingian period, because none of its charters survives for these centuries. Written sources provide little information on this Roman town before the seventh century, and the site appears once only in the *Decem Libri Historiarum*, during the account of the flight of Merovech from his father Chilperic.[61]

More information can be extrapolated from the written sources regarding the area of the region centred on the river Scheldt and its tributaries. There, the sources show a pattern of monasteries, royal lands and great landowners. This is an area of early Frankish occupation and one in which the strong links between aristocratic and royal activity, and the monastic

[60] On the places mentioned in this section see Map 4.4.

[61] Gregory of Tours, *DLH* V.18: the people of Thérouanne offered a refuge to Merovech, but only to set a trap for him. This episode has been interpreted as evidence for the political isolation of Thérouanne in the sixth century, which would be corroborated by the fact that this is the only mention of the town in Gregory. Cf. Mériaux 2000. However, although it is beyond doubt that the town was out of Gregory's horizon, this is equally true of this entire area. Thus, this lack of mentions tells more about Gregory's interests than about the status of Thérouanne within the territory. On Thérouanne see Verhulst 1999; Dabrowska 2006b.

development which took place during the seventh century, can easily be recognised. The area of Arras represents an interesting case showing ecclesiastical development on the former Roman site and royal centres in its proximity, these latter being attested in the sixth century by Venantius Fortunatus at Athies and Vitry-en-Artois, along the river Scarpe.[62]

In general, the Scheldt valley represents an important focus for royal presence in these centuries: another royal residence in this area is for instance that at Valenciennes, attested at the end of the seventh century.[63] This is a place well positioned near the Scheldt and the Roman road crossing Bavay, and a *portus* is documented here at the end of the ninth century.[64] In the early eighth century royal lands were in its proximity, given by King Childebert III to Saint-Denis in 710.[65] This is one of the few examples of Saint-Denis' estates so far north in this period. Although the sources are not explicit about the reason of the interest of the Abbey in this area, it can be hypothesized that it was linked with the royal presence at Valenciennes. It may also have been of interest thanks to its location: even if the mention of the *portus* is much later, this area may have been important in trading routes during the previous centuries too. A similar argument can be made for Tournai, where a royal centre existed in the fifth century, royal properties are documented from the sixth, and where the presence of traders is attested in the ninth century.[66] North of Valenciennes, the territory of Elnone probably belonged to the kings.[67] This specific area can be taken as an example of seventh-century monastic development, as it shows some interesting links both to missionary activity supported by the

[62] Both these places are mentioned in the *Vita Radegundis* by Venantius Fortunatus: Athies is described as royal villa in ch. 5, while Vitry-en-Artois is the place of the wedding between Chlothar I and Radegund in ch. 8. The fact that Vitry-en-Artois is attested as a wedding place may suggest the presence of a residence. On Arras see Verhulst 1999; Dabrowska 2006a; Wickham 2005, 677. The ecclesiastical developments at Arras are first documented by the *Vita sancti Vedasti*, a text attributed to Jonas of Bobbio and written around the middle of the seventh century.

[63] ChLA n. 576: charter of Clovis III dated 692-93.

[64] Cf. Verhulst 1999, 52; Bruand 2002, 53.

[65] See Kölzer 2001, 159: these lands are at Quérénaing, Romeries, Solesmes and Croix-Caluyau (an *oratorium*). The copy of this charter in the cartulary of 1607 (K) mentions the presence of a market.

[66] For the presence of traders, see *Monumenta historiae Tornacensis* VI.v.17. On royal presence in Tournai in the sixth century see Gregory of Tours, *DLH* IV.50, reporting that Chilperic took refuge in Tournai.

[67] See the *Testamentum Amandi*, reporting that Amand's foundation of Elnone took place *supra largitate regia* (MGH, SRM 5, p. 484). Krusch suggests that his will was written around 674-75, see MGH, SRM 5, p. 395.

kings, and to the involvement of great landowners. At Elnone Amandus established a monastery, and he is also linked with lay foundations nearby, at Hamage and Marchiennes. Gertrude, Rictrudis and Adalbaldus, founders of these monasteries during the first half of the century, were part of a high aristocratic family, whose members held the role of mayor of the palace of Neustria from 639 to 688 (with the only interruption in 658-673 and 675-680, when the *maiordomus* was Ebroinus). Members of this family possessed a great amount of land in various regions, such as near the mouth of the Somme, in the Caribant and Ostrevant, near Compiègne, and in the areas of Caux and Talou.[68]

These elements, namely the strong presence of royal lands attested from the sixth century, and the presence of great lay landowners documented from the seventh century and active in a much wider area than the Scheldt valley, strongly suggest the importance of this area in the routes towards the north even in the sixth century – and this is, of course, well in accordance with its geographical position.

4.2.2. *The Canche in a broader coastal context*

The earliest mentions of a port at *Quentovic* connecting the Continent with England refer to events taking place in the second half of the seventh century, in the context of the voyages of Theodore of Tarsus (668) and Wilfrid (678).[69] Archaeologically, *Quentovic* is much less known than *Hamwic*. The main phase of development of the site is dated from around the middle of the seventh century (phase 2, up to the middle of the ninth century), there being only very faint evidence of pre-650 activity beyond the cemetery at 'La Fontaine aux Linottes', such as fragments of pottery. Nevertheless, from the mid-seventh century the excavations have

[68] The localization of their properties is in Geary 1985, 137. See also Wood 1994a, 259-60. More recently on this family see Le Jan 2010.

[69] On the voyage of Theodore of Tarsus see Bede, *HE* IV.1. On Wilfrid: Eddius Stephanus, *Vita Wilfridi*, chs. 25-26. The mentions of *Quentovic* in the written sources are reported in Lebecq 1983, II. See also Leroy 2011.

uncovered a large range of craft activities similar to those attested at *Hamwic*, namely for instance metal, bone, leather, amber and glass working, as well as items clearly attesting the far-reaching connections of the site, as for example the 18 combs showing links with England, Frisia and the North Sea.[70] Despite the scarcity of early evidence, however, the already mentioned coins minted there by the end of the sixth/early seventh century, as well as the Merovingian cemetery, clearly attest that the site predates the main phase attested archaeologically.

It is from the second half of the seventh century that the written sources allow us to evaluate the attraction represented by *Quentovic* for kings and monasteries. It is well-known that the presence of the *emporium* attracted the interest of many monasteries, some of which lay at some distance, which started to acquire lands near the river Canche.[71] Furthermore, fiscal lands are attested along the Canche during the Carolingian period, at Aix-en-Issart and Attin, this latter being also a point of collection for revenues (see Map 4.5).[72] However, a royal presence at Aix-en-Issart can be suggested from at least the seventh century, as a *villa dominica* there is attested in the 649 charter of Adroaldus for Audomarus.[73] Moreover, during the seventh century religious foundations linked with royal politics and the high aristocracy were established along the course of the river.[74] A clear example of this link is the monastery at Blangy-sur-Ternoise, which was established by Berta around 684 after the death of her husband Sigefrid, *consanguineus regis Clodovei* (II), on her own lands, according to her tenth-century life.[75] Closer to the estuary area, the early seventh-century monastic foundation at Saint-Josse is reported in the *Vita Judoci*, a tenth-century hagiography of the Breton hermit, founder of the

[70] On *Quentovic* see above n. 3. Recent excavation: Cense-Bacquet 2012, esp. II, 89-91 on combs.

[71] See Lebecq 1993.

[72] On the royal presence along the Canche see Barbier 2010.

[73] Cf. Gysseling – Koch 1950 (hereafter *Dipl. Belg.*) 1, dated 649. Cf. below n. 79. See Mériaux 2006, 86, who assumes that *dominica* indicates a royal possession.

[74] On this and on the involvement and competition of high aristocratics in the maritime routes based on *Quentovic* see Le Jan 2010.

[75] Cf. *Vita Bertae*, ch. 4. On this monastery and the *Vita Bertae* see Mériaux 2006, 254-55; 350. See also Schmitz 1937, vol. 9, cols. 138-40.

community.[76] In addition, along the river Ternoise at a short distance from Blangy lay Auchy-lès-Hesdin, where the *Vita Silvini*, perhaps composed in the first half of the ninth century, mentions two churches built by the saint, who died around 760. In this same place, the *Vita* mentions a monastery founded by Adalsquarus, which would later be held by his daughter.[77]

Given their location, the foundation of these monasteries in this area may well have been motivated by the will of being integrated in the exchange network. Moreover, as previously mentioned, the *emporium* attracted also the interest of monasteries lying further away, which started to acquire lands along the Canche; among these, those held by Saint-Bertin in the proximity of the river are well documented and, in this case, the scale of the properties of this monastery may suggest that it was involved in production activities in this area.[78] Another monastery involved in the network centred on the Canche is Saint-Riquier, which, as we will see, took possession of lands along the river before the middle of the ninth century.

Apart from the area of the Canche, Saint-Bertin and Saint-Riquier held lands in other coastal areas too (in general, the possessions of Saint-Bertin are focussed north of the Somme, while those of Saint-Riquier were situated on this river): in these cases too, their interest may have been linked with trade-related activities.

Starting with Saint-Bertin, one of the most important landowners in this part of the Pas-de-Calais, the foundation of the monastery around the middle of the seventh century is linked with a lay donation made by Adroaldus to Audomar, bishop of Thérouanne, of his lands at Sithiu, on the river Aa.[79] On this property, Audomar founded a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary,

[76] The very late tradition of Saint-Josse refers that Judocus went there from Brittany in the first half of the seventh century. However, the most ancient source is a letter of Alcuin of York, dated 794. On this, as well as on other sources on Saint-Josse, see Garry – Helvétius 2010, esp. 460-64.

[77] On the foundations at Auchy-lès-Hesdin see Mériaux 2006, 249-50 and, on the datation of the *Vita Silvini*, id., 366-67.

[78] On Saint-Bertin properties on the Canche see below n. 81; 84.

[79] Adroaldus' grant is the first act reported in the *Gesta abbatum*, dated 649. This grant included the villa of Sithiu and other lands and villas in the nearby, mostly not identifiable: however, since they are referred as *adiacentes seu aspicientes* Sithiu, they are at least likely to have been in the *pagus* of Thérouanne. The recognisable

which he granted to Mummolinus, Ebertramn and Bertin. The earlier foundation, the *Vetus Monasterium*, was then replaced by the monastery of Saint Peter (Saint-Bertin), built south of the first foundation.[80]

Given its position, it is not surprising that the monastery became a great landowner in the area between Boulogne-sur-Mer and the river Aa, where the monastery seems to have undertaken a systematic process of land-acquisition during this period (see Maps 4.6 and 4.6.1). This is a territory which is very poorly attested in other written sources, but which shows a similar pattern of landownership to that on the river Canche, thus suggesting the inclusion of this area in the maritime network. Apart from the donation by Adroaldus and a few other acquisitions, most of Saint-Bertin's possessions there can be seen in Carolingian times, especially in a short polyptych of the middle of the ninth century which informs us about the location of the lands destined to the needs of the *mensa fratrum* of Sithiu.[81] The documents of

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places are lands at Wisques, Zudausques and perhaps at Le Mat, in the nearby of Hermelinghen, and a villa at Tatinghem. All these places are very close to Sithiu, the most distant being Le Mat, which is at about 17 km from the coast, if the identification of Masto as Le Mat is correct. The identification is tentatively suggested by the editors of the *Dipl. Belg.* The documentation of Saint-Bertin is inserted in the *Gesta abbatum Sithiensium*, drawn up by Folcuin in 961-62. In addition, it exists also in a tradition independent from Folcuin, kept in the *Grand Cartulaire* by Dewitte, drawn up before 1775, which supports the argument that it is in large part original. The *Gesta abbatum Sithiensium* by Folcuin are edited by Guérard 1840; and by Holder – Egger 1881. The documents are also edited by Gysseling – Koch 1950, *Dipl. Belg.* On the history of the transmission of the charters of this monastery see Mériaux 2006, 25-26.

[80] The history of Saint-Bertin can be reconstructed through the early ninth-century *Vita Audomari Prima*. On the history of the monastery and the *Vita Audomari Prima* see Ugé 2005; cf. also Derville 1995.

[81] The Carolingian polyptych of Saint-Bertin, included in Folcuin's *Gesta*, is edited in *Dipl. Belg.*, n. 34; Ganshof – Godding-Ganshof – De Smet 1975. The largest part of the properties listed in the polyptych are situated in the vicinity of the abbey. However, some lay at further distance: at Tubersent near the mouth of the Canche, at Escalles on the coast north-west of Sithiu, near Thérouanne, and east of the abbey, at Poperinge and Passendale. Apart from the polyptych, Folcuin (*Gesta abbatum* ch. 38) mentions the villa at Arques, in the very proximity of the monastery, on which Abbot Odlandus (dead before 805) built a church consecrated to Saint Martin. Concerning the donor and the period of this grant, the editors of the charters of the Grand Cartulaire report that it might have been given by Count Walbert around 668, thus attributing it to the very earliest period of the monastery; however, this attribution is not reliable: see Mériaux 2006, 245, according to whom the attribution to Walbert as donor originated in the tenth century. In 704 Eodbertus sells to Abbot Rigobertus lands *in loco nuncupante Rumliaco* in the territory of Thérouanne. *Rumliaco* might be Rombly. This identification is given by Longnon 1869-1872, I, 40-41. The transaction is reported in Haigneré 1886, n. 11. Another sale took place in 708, when a certain Darmundus sold to Abbot Erlefridus his lands (not identifiable) in *pago Vermandense* and *pago Noviomense*. Darmundus sells *duas partes de re portionis meae in loco nuncupante Saroaldsclusa, super fluvio Sumna, in pago Vermandense; similiter et in Appiliaco, super fluvio Ysara, duas partes sitam in pago Noviomensi; seu in Diva et Corbunaco duas partes, ad integrum* [...] continuing with the list of included goods, such as buildings, meadows, grazing lands, vineyards etc. Cf. Haigneré 1886, n. 12. More easily identifiable are the possessions sold by Rigobertus to Saint-Bertin in 723: he sold his villas at Setques on the river Aa with their appurtenances at Quelmes and Étrehem (Leulinghem); his lands at Ledringhem in *pago Mempisco*; and his property at Beaurainville, on the

Saint-Bertin show the existence of a highly fragmented land-pattern, based, as far as the Latin terms show, on the system of a major villa with its appurtenances scattered nearby. Most of the laymen visible in the charters grant or sell to Sithiu their properties in just one place, or in more places but at a short distance apart, although this does not allow us to conclude that this property network was formed only by small landowners. An exception is represented by the charters of Goibertus, one of the most important landowners among the documents of Sithiu. Interestingly, the first of the charters of this layman (dated to 826) mentions that he is about to start a journey to Rome, and he is disposing of his properties for this reason. The lands listed in these charters, as opposed to those given by the donors of the other grants, are scattered throughout the whole territory: he had possessions on the Canche (at Cormont, Embry, Hesmond and perhaps at Inxent), near Saint-Omer (Tatinghem, Arques and Guemps, at north), and between Sithiu and Boulogne (Lottinghen, Selles, Condette).[82] Another grant made by a layman was that of Amalfridus, dated 685, who gave to Saint-Bertin his monastery at Honnecourt-sur-Escaut in *pago Cambricense*, just south of the town of Cambrai. Honnecourt was an aristocratic foundation, and it may be linked to the process of strengthening of the aristocratic families in their possessions, as shown by the establishment of Amalfridus' daughter Auriana as abbess of this community.[83]

Canche in *pago Taruanense*, with its dependent lands *in loco nuncupante Monte* on the Authie, in *pago Pontivo*. Cf. Haigneré 1886, n. 16. Near the Canche, in 800 a *clericus* called Deodatus sells to Saint-Bertin all his properties lying near this river, at Sains-lès-Fressin, Aix-en-Issart and Fressin (charter 21). Two further places are listed among the sold properties, *Hilduualdcurt* and *Lonastum*, not identified. They might have been quite close, for they are said to be in *pago Teruuaninse*, that is the territory of Thérouanne.

[82] Charters n. 26-27-29-31 (*Dipl. Belg.*). Charter 31 mentions also a property at *Winingahem*, which the editors of the *Dipl. Belg.* identify as Wintershoven, near Tongeren, and another at *Fraxerias*, in Flanders, which is not identified. Among the beneficiaries of Goibertus' grants also an unidentified church is mentioned at *Stenetland*, which might be at Saint-Omer.

[83] *Dipl. Belg.* n. 5. The document specifies that Saint-Bertin, after the death of Auriana, would take Honnecourt together with its possessions (not localized). On Amalfridus see Ebling 1974, 48; his links inside Neustria are unknown, as well as the reason for his having granted his foundation to Saint-Bertin, which is rather distant. About him we know only that he was a high-status layman, as the use of *vir illuster* and his having founded a monastery clearly show. Thus, it is possible that Honnecourt was only one of his properties, the rest perhaps lying closer to Sithiu, a possibility which could explain why he gave his monastery to Saint-Bertin; in this case, the establishment of his daughter as abbess might be explained with his interest on that particular territory. However, this hypothesis cannot be verified, and many other explanations are possible.

Among the group of charters of Saint-Bertin, those linked with Merovingian kings are for the most part spurious or interpolated, and they do not include any detail useful for the identification of the possessions of the monastery, or for the indentification of royal lands. Instead, most of the relevant royal charters concern immunities given to the monastery by the kings from the period of Clovis II (639-657) onwards.[84] In Folcuin's *Gesta*, only one of the royal charters is original, namely a confirmation made by Chilperic II in 717 or 718.[85] The charter does not list any properties of Saint-Bertin, but mentions Clovis II as *quondam rex de omnibus curtis vel villis ipsius monasterii*, thus implying the existence of vast royal lands in this area, at least before the development of Saint-Bertin's estate.

In the seventh century, a hint to a possible interest in the part of the coast around Boulogne might be the monasteries at Samer and Wierre-au-Bois, founded by Vulmarus in the second half of the seventh century on his own properties (see Map 4.6).[86] An interesting event reported in the *Vita Vulmari* is the money grant made by Caedwalla, king of Wessex (685-88), during his journey to Rome, which would permit the building of a new church.[87] The mention of Caedwalla in the vicinity of Boulogne-sur-Mer is one of the very few elements in the written sources clearly signalling the integration of this area in the maritime routes used by the Anglo-Saxons. Another hint of the inclusion of this area in seventh-century maritime routes is provided by Bede, who mentions a ship that sank off Ambleteuse.[88] It may be significant, moreover, that some of the lands of Saint-Bertin are at a short distance from some of the possible landing sites

[84] Cf. Kölzer 2001, deperditum n. 241, dated between 649 and 657. The spurious charter 101 might be of interest: this is a confirmation made by Chlothar III to an exchange of lands between Bertinus and Mummolinus, the previous abbot of Saint-Bertin who then became bishop of Noyon after Eligius. The properties involved in this exchange are scattered in *pagi Costantino* (Cotentin), *Noviomaginse* (territory of Noyon), *Cambracinse* (Cambrésis) and *Vermandinse* (Vermandois); it seems however unlikely that charter 101 was made in Merovingian times. Cf. Kölzer 2001, n. 101. Another interesting spurious charter is that given by Theuderic III granting immunity for the lands of the monasteries lying within royal territories *infra mero Attiniacense* (Attin), in *pago Tarvanensi*. Cf. Kölzer 2001, n. 127. These lands lay near the Canche.

[85] Cf. Kölzer 2001, n. 178.

[86] These foundations are mentioned in his *Vita*, composed at the middle of the ninth century.

[87] On Vulmarus' foundations see Mériaux 2006, 324-25. The grant made by Caedwalla is mentioned in *Vita Vulmari* II.14.

[88] Bede, *HE* I.33.

north of Boulogne: its properties at Escalles, Todinchtun and Guînes, in fact, lay along the coast near Sangatte, Wissant and Tardinghen, that is near some of the probable harbours in use during the previous centuries (see Map 4.6). Significantly, later sources show the importance of this area for transmarine connections.[89]

Saint-Bertin seems to have had an interest in possessing land also between the Aa (the river along which the monastery was established) and the river Yser. During Merovingian times, the monastery appears as landowner of properties at Ledringhem and Wormhout, this latter being also mentioned in the *Gesta abbatum* as the place where Bertinus sent Quadanoc, Ingenoc, Madoc and Winnoc in order to build a *cella* (see Map 4.7).[90]

In the Merovingian period Saint-Bertin is documented as landowner of properties lying not far from De Panne, a small coastal site whose nature is debated.[91] Given the archaeological artefacts found there, notably twelve *sceattas* datable between 680 and 720, and one *tremissis* of 670-750,[92] its involvement in maritime traffic has been postulated, as well as its being the site of the *Iserae portus* mentioned in the *Libellus miraculorum s. Bertini*.[93] Although the

[89] The properties at Todinchtun and Guînes are documented in *Dipl. Belg.* n. 23, dated 808, as granted by a certain Lebdrudis who, after the grant, took these same lands as usufruct. Escalles is mentioned in the polyptych, written in the middle of the same century. See Ganshof – Godding-Ganshof – De Smet 1975. *Sigeric's Itinerary* mentions as last stops in his homeward journey from Rome at the end of the tenth century Thérouanne, Guînes and *Sumeran* (identified as Sombre near Wissant). On *Sigeric's Itinerary* see Ortenberg 1990. Again in the tenth century, Flodoard mentions in the *Annales* a *portus* at *Guisum*, restored by Louis IV (a. 938), which may be Guînes or Wissant; see Lauer 1905, 69; Fanning – Bachrach 2004, 30.

[90] They are said to be Bretons. Cf. *Gesta abbatum Sithiensium* ch. 11; Mériaux 2006, 341. The tradition on this grant and on the Breton monks are taken by Folcuin from the *Vita Winnoci*, which is rather late in respect to these events, being a ninth-century work, written together with the *Vita Audomari* and the *Vita Bertini*. On this group of hagiographies see Ugé 2005, 51. Ledringhem was sold by Rigobertus in 723. This sale by Rigobertus is noteworthy, as it shows where the abbey was interested in making acquisition of lands: in addition to Ledringhem he sold lands at Setques, Quelmes and Étrehem, all on the Aa, and Beaurainville, on the Canche, together with its appurtenances along the same river. Cf. above n. 81. Wormhout was given to Saint-Bertin by Heremarus; Haigneré 1886, n. 9, reports 695 as the date of this grant.

[91] In this zone, the monastery held lands at Oostvleteren, Poperinge and Passendale, located in the area of the Yser. Oostvleteren is about 20 km distant from De Panne. It is moreover possible that the monastery held some lands also at Adinkerke, which is very close to De Panne: see Deckers 2010, 163, reporting further references, who suggests this on the basis of the church *patrocinium*.

[92] On these and other records see Deckers 2010, 160-61.

[93] On this mention see *Libellus miraculorum s. Bertini*, *incipit*. On this identification see De Meulemeester 2002, 221, reporting further references, who suggests the possibility that the *Iserae portus* was at De Panne, instead of at Furnes.

significance and range of this traffic has been debated,[94] it suggests the inclusion of this area in a wider trade zone. Other important elements to be considered in this perspective are a continuity of this site from the Roman period, the emerging nearby of the trading settlement of Veurne (Furnes) during the ninth century, when De Panne declined, and the local presence of Saint-Bertin's properties. Again, it seems possible to suggest that the abbey of Sithiu was seeking an inclusion in a preexisting trade area, beyond its involvement in the *Quentovic*-based traffic.

The activity of Saint-Bertin in this direction can be seen also in the area around Bruges, east of the Yser, where both Saint-Bertin and Saint-Peter at Ghent are visible as landowners. In the Merovingian period, Saint-Bertin held lands and a *cella* at Roksem, while lands of Ghent are attested near Aardenburg. South of Roksem a monastery can be identified at Torhout in the first half of the seventh century, as the *Vita Bavonis*, composed at the beginning of the ninth century, mentions a priest belonging to this community.[95] During the Carolingian period Ghent took hold of lands at Greveninge, Oostburg, Vake and Adegem. Along the Roman road, settlements datable to the sixth or seventh century have been found, with pottery and architecture of the buildings attesting their inclusion in the exchange and 'cultural' area of the Channel.[96] A royal presence in this area is attested at Snellegem and Sysele, which were royal estate centres near Bruges, at a short distance from the coast.[97]

[94] Deckers 2010 proposes that De Panne's principal function in the fifth/sixth century was that of a burial site, and that the foreign material does not necessarily imply the presence of a trading site; De Panne would have possibly had some connections with the nearby site of Werken, possibly an early-eighth century Carolingian settlement of some importance, and Torhout, where a monastery was founded by the middle of the seventh century.

[95] Mériaux 2006, 332. See also his comments on Oudenbourg (id., 309-10), lying very close to Roksem, where a church might have been built in Merovingian times. On the mention of the monk of Torhout see *Vita Bavonis* ch. 14. The *cellam*, consecrated to Saint Michel and built by a priest called Felix, was given to Saint-Bertin, with all its appurtenances in 745. On the identification of the place see *Dipl. Belg.*, n. 15.

[96] See Loveluck 2013, 50-52: presence of 'chaff-' or 'grass-tempered' pottery, and single-aisle buildings with continuous foundation trenches similar to English cases. Loveluck specifies that also imported goods have been found in most of these sites. See also Loveluck – Tys 2006.

[97] Cf. Loveluck – Tys 2006, 145.

Regarding the monastic development and the landowners in the area of Ghent, situated at the intersection of the Lys and the Scheldt, some information is contained in the *Vita Amandi*, and in the tenth-century *Liber traditionum*. From the *Life of Amandus*, we learn about the existence of a monastic community, which the *Liber traditionum* connects to the action of Dagobert I, who is said to have granted the *villa Hatingem*, that is Aaigem, near Ghent.[98] This community, founded by Amand shortly before 639, is the *monasterium Blandinium* (Saint-Pierre). Around 630, Amand founded also another monastery at Ghent, the later community of Saint-Bavo. At the beginning of the eighth century, Saint-Pierre was a double monastery.[99]

A certain number of grants can be attributed to the second half of the seventh century, as the *Liber traditionum* shows.[100] In particular, this source reports a list of properties granted or sold by laymen in this period: all the mentioned possessions lay at very short distance from the river Lys, south-west of Ghent. Interestingly, these properties lay in a very small area, so it is possible that the lands given were small as well.[101] A rather different grant is that reported by the *Liber* as made during the reign of Childebert III, in 707. This grant was made by *Ingeluuara filia Affone*; the amount of the lands, as far as can be supposed from the source, situates the donor in a higher position than that of the landowners mentioned before. Moreover, her possessions are scattered in a wider territory: near the coast north of Ghent, near Ghent itself, and including also a part of a villa on the Scheldt south of Tournai.[102]

[98] *Dipl. Belg.*, *Liber traditionum*, n. 4, 128.

[99] See Mériaux 2006, 277.

[100] See *Dipl. Belg.*, *Liber traditionum*, n. 42-46, 134-35. These grants are said to have been made during *temporibus sancti Amandi presulis et abbati Florberti*. Florbertus was nominated abbot by Amand, and held this position from 640 to 661.

[101] At the end of this list, a confirmation of Clovis II is reported. The list mentions four properties near Astene and Bachte, namely *Fliteritsale*, *Fiessalis*, *Firentsammo* and *Hrintalis*, among which the last three are called *mansionilis*. Besides, two landowners are said to have sold their lands at Slote, identified near Bachte-Maria-Leerne by the editors of the *Dipl. Belg.*

[102] See *Dipl. Belg.*, *Liber traditionum*, n. 10, 130. North of Ghent, she grants *mariscos duodecim in pago Rodaninse*, which is identified as the territory of Aardenburg by Gysseling – Koch 1950. Near Ghent, the properties mentioned are at Afsnee, just south-west of the town, and at Appels, which is east of Gand along the Scheldt. South of Tournai, the mentioned villa is at Hollain.

Thus, the written sources show an interest in the coastal areas north of the river Canche, which is highlighted by monastic foundations and estates, royal lands and lay possessions, this last being particularly visible in the documentation of Saint-Bertin and Ghent.

Going towards the south, the kind of developments in terms of landownership discussed for the Canche can be clearly recognised along the estuary of the Somme: that is, both these estuaries attest to a substantial presence of royal and monastic lands, and a certain number of new monastic foundations. Indeed, the Somme estuary displays close similarities with the Canche, as it shows a royal presence as well as religious establishments. From Gregory of Tours we learn about the existence of a port at Amiens in the sixth century.[103] The main monastic foundations in this area took place during the seventh century: monasteries mentioned in the sources on the Somme up to Amiens include Saint-Valery, Saint-Riquier and Port-le-Grand, while Corbie is to the east of Amiens (see Map 4.8). A royal palace is documented in the first decade of the eighth century nearby, at Crécy-en-Ponthieu,[104] in addition to the large amount of lands which the kings appear to have held, since the monasteries of Walaricus and Richarius were established on royal lands.[105] The kings held a large amount of lands not only in the vicinity of the estuary of the Somme, but also in its hinterland, where they may be dated back

[103] Cf. Gregory of Tours, *Liber de virtutibus sancti Martini episcopi* I.17.

[104] The palace at Crécy-en-Ponthieu is attested in ChLA n. 585, dated 709.

[105] Regarding Saint-Valery-sur-Somme, the eleventh-century *Vita Walarici abbatis Leuconaensis* links the monastic foundation to the action of Chlothar II, who is said to have granted some land to the saint for this reason in a period before 610. According to Rouche 1976, 88, the lands were granted to Walaricus by Bertila (*Vita Walarici* ch. 13). However, the following chapter of the *Vita* suggests that the grant had been made by the king (*Vita Walarici* ch. 14): *Tunc vero praefatus rex una cum consensu pontificis Ambianensis iuxta eorum petitionem locum eis secretum et remotioris vitae et habitu monachorum satis aptum, qui Leuconas antiquo vocabulo dicebatur, regio praecepto concessit.* [...] *ceteri vero fratres construentes sibi cellulam de elimosina regis videbatur habere substantiam*. This transaction is listed by Kölzer 2001, among the missing Merovingian charters (n. 104, dated before 610). Kölzer lists another *deperditum* of Chlothar II (n. 105), from the same *Vita* ch. 36, which might be a royal confirmation for the same property. Thus, it is possible to suggest that the granted land was part of royal possessions. As for the foundations of Richarius, his first hagiography can be attributed to the late seventh century, much closer to the death of the saint; cf. Deug-Su 1983, 362. This Life contains interesting information: the land given to the saint at Forest-Montiers was part of a fiscal property which included woodland, that is the royal possessions near Crécy-en-Ponthieu, lying at very short distance. On royal woodlands during Merovingian and Carolingian period see Lorenz 1998, esp. 274-75 for Crécy-en-Ponthieu.

to the sixth century.[106] As regards Saint-Riquier, apart from the Canche, the monastery had properties also around the estuary of the Somme, and along the coast near the estuaries of the Authie and the Bresle: clearly, the interest of this monastery toward maritime-focussed activities was wider than its relation with *Quentovic* alone.[107]

As extensively shown by the archaeological evidence but clearly visible also in some references in the written sources, the estuaries were nodal points within the network of traffic well before the seventh century. This is clearly due to their importance as routes of communication. In spite of these similarities, however, we must remember the remarkable peculiarity of the Canche, namely the existence of the *emporium*, which worked as a fulcrum attracting the interest of major monasteries located at considerable distance from the site, as for instance Saint-Germain-des-Prés.[108]

Less obvious, however, is the interest of economic actors toward the other coastal areas, some of which may have been included in maritime traffic as well, as suggested by the development of a pattern of landownership similar to that visible along the main rivers. As discussed in the first part of this chapter, the archaeological evidence points to the presence of communities with cross-Channel links and to the existence of a certain number of landing sites scattered along the coast north of Boulogne; as regards the later period, the inclusion of this area in the network of maritime contacts is suggested by the materials found at De Panne, as well as by the monastic lands close to possible landing sites north of Boulogne. The presence of royal lands in the

[106] Wood 1994a, 193 suggests the presence of a sixth-century royal estate at Péronne. An *edictum* of Guntramn dated 585 was drawn up at Péronne, cf. Boretius 1883, 10-12.

[107] These properties of Saint-Riquier are listed in a confirmation charter given by Charles the Bald in 845, which is reported within the *Chronica* by Hariulf. See Lot 1894, III, 7. Concerning the properties along the Canche, it lists land at Montreuil-sur-Mer, and 2 *seticis* at *Quentovic*. See Lebecq 1993 (now Lebecq 2011, 160), who suggests that *seticum* has the same sense of *sedilia*, that is 'les emplacements définis dans les lotissements urbains'. Near the Authie, the charter mentions land at *Concilium*, which the editor identifies with Conchil, a wood near Verton; near the Bresle, the *capellam in villa Maris cum mansis ad se pertinentibus*, at Mers-les-Bains. Lebecq 1993 (now Lebecq 2011, 159-62) identifies other Neustrian monasteries having lands along the Canche.

[108] See Lebecq 1993.

coastal areas north of the Canche is hardly visible, contrary to what can be seen in the Scheldt Valley, where the written sources did show wide royal estates from an early period. This difference, however, must be assessed within the general scarcity of sources referring to the territory closer to the coast: royal possessions in this area seems very likely and, as we have seen, the confirmation to Saint-Bertin given by Chilperic II may point to the existence of substantial royal lands in the first half of the seventh century.

4.3. *Concluding remarks*

The archaeological evidence has shown that the network of settlement focusing on the coastal lands of the Pas-de-Calais in the Merovingian period consists of stratified communities displaying different access to wealth, at least as far as can be discerned from grave goods. Among these communities, some cemeteries show a particularly high number of individuals buried with items made of rare, luxury materials. It seems very likely that transmarine contacts and exchanges played some role in this diversity among the communities. The location of some of these cemeteries is a key element supporting this hypothesis: this seems for instance the case at Marquise, Pincthun and La Calotterie, all of which lay near attested or probable landing sites, as well as at Nouvion-en-Ponthieu, at close distance from the estuary of the Somme.

Some elements can be identified which support the existence of a network of landing sites scattered along the coasts of the region. The presence of a large number of harbours before the establishment of the port at Boulogne seems crucial: it may suggest, in fact, that the end of the Roman Empire, which was capable of supporting a highly structured system of communications, gave way to a revitalisation of a more informal but still active network similar to the pre-existing one.[109] The presence of Anglo-Saxon objects along the coast is to be

[109] See above n. 51.

considered within this framework, as they have been recovered in the vicinity of proposed landing-places. As we have seen in the written sources, the presence of these landing sites, some of which are attested in the later centuries, may have attracted the interest of monasteries, as suggested in the case of the possessions of Saint-Bertin north of Boulogne.

The case of Boulogne is also interesting as regards the possible connections between potential landing sites, Anglo-Saxon items, burial wealth and, from the seventh century, monastic presence: in the surrounding area, for example, the cemetery of Pincthun (Echinghen) displays a remarkably high percentage of burials with gold and silver.

In regard to the establishment of foreign communities on the coasts of the Pas-de-Calais, the recovery of Anglo-Saxon items cannot be taken as a certain evidence of the presence of Anglo-Saxon individuals in the region. Indeed, no straightforward connections can be assumed between grave goods and the ethnic identity of the deceased.[110] In this regard, it is worth noting that in some of the cemeteries with Anglo-Saxon finds other foreign objects have also come to light, as for instance at Nouvion-en-Ponthieu, showing objects in an Eastern Germanic/Visigothic and Thuringian tradition; neither community is likely to have been present physically here.[111] The written sources and place-names are better evidence of such a foreign presence, and the same can be said for the 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery possibly made in France although, as we have seen, this kind of hand-made pottery was produced in many areas along the Channel, as in Flanders, and it has been also found along the Scheldt Valley.[112] Moreover, assumptions of a clear-cut link between the origin of items and of individuals are also undermined by the precious Anglo-Saxon imports found in richly endowed burials: it seems in

[110] The shortcomings of such an interpretation are strongly stressed in Halsall 2011, in reply to Kazanski – Périn 2008 and 2009. See also Kazanski's and Perin's reply to Halsall (Kazanski – Périn 2017).

[111] For these objects at Nouvion-en-Ponthieu see Kazanski – Périn 2009, 163, with reference to Piton 1985: these objects are in gr. 140 and 273, both datable in Piton's phase A/B/C (c. 485 – 530/40), and in gr. 303. Gr. 303 is a fifth-century burial (see also gr. 54; Piton 1985, 21-22) Other examples come from cemeteries in Normandy, as Saint-Martin-de-Fontenay and Frénouville (Kazanski – Périn 2009, 163-64).

[112] See above n. 53.

fact highly likely, given the Continental origins of the rest of the goods in each grave, that they were used as grave goods precisely because they were luxury items displaying social status (they can convey social status both because they are luxury items and because they display long-distance connections), and not because they might show ethnic affiliations. Thus, although there is no reason to deny some degree of foreign presence in the Pas-de-Calais, not least because of its geographical position, it is safer to look at these cemeteries within a context of transmarine contacts and exchange, rather than in terms of ethnic origin. Imports from England are fairly rare in the Pas-de-Calais, and the fact that a large proportion are luxury objects suggests that some of them, at least, may have been confined to the level of elite exchange. It is, however, important to remark that we cannot be certain about the means by which these imports reached the Frankish shore. Different types of links connected Northern France and England, including the settlement of communities and individuals, and a variety of contacts of a more or less commercial nature, which are discussed in Chs. 5 and 6. These links might have shaped the growth of a partly shared material culture which seems to have been a development generally restricted to coastal areas, but widely extended along the Channel.

The key characteristics of some of the coastal cemeteries in the Pas-de-Calais, namely luxury materials found in high percentages, their well-connected locations close to landing sites, and the presence of foreign objects, some of which were highly valuable, make the case for the existence of a number of communities included in transmarine traffic, which may have had a central role in connecting the interior of the region with the sea. Despite its being richer than the surrounding sites, the cemetery at La Calotterie 'La Fontaine aux Linottes' and thus the origin of *Quentovic* are to be evaluated in this broader context and perspective, considering the similarities this community shared with other coastal sites. During later centuries too, when *Quentovic* was active and flourishing, the patterns of landownership show similar characteristics along the coast of the region, thus suggesting that other coastal areas were

involved in maritime activities beyond the Canche; the discovery of the site of De Panne makes the case for the existence of a complex network of sites involved in transmarine traffic even after the rise of the *emporium*, pointing to a picture similar to that of the 'productive' sites in England, and suggests that the involvement of monasteries in maritime-related activities may have been more widespread than previously assumed.

In this possible network, including minor ports, *Quentovic* was however clearly different, as it was the fulcrum of a far-reaching web of long-distance contacts and interest – a role that is not revealed by any other of these smaller landing sites. As far as the written sources tell us, the presence of *Quentovic* shaped the pattern of landownership to a deeper degree, and within a wider area along the course of the Canche. By contrast, the landed property along the coast north of the river is illuminated only by very few documents; it seems possible that at least some of these blank areas included royal and lay property.

From the seventh century, royal and aristocratic interest in transmarine traffic played a pivotal role in the development of *Quentovic*.[113] As we have seen, this interest emerges clearly by examining the distribution of landed properties along the river. The origins of the *emporium*, however, are more problematic. It seems now widely accepted, in fact, that *Quentovic* was an Anglo-Saxon foundation, a hypothesis based on the presence of Saxon and Anglo-Saxon population in the region and in the area of the Canche, and of the Anglo-Saxon names of moneyers on coins minted at *Quentovic*.[114] In this respect, our understanding of the origin of the trading site is strongly based on what can be deduced from the Merovingian cemetery at La Calotterie, because, as already mentioned, the excavations at Visemarais, the site of the *emporium*, have revealed clear evidence for occupation from only around the middle of the seventh century. However, considering what has emerged from the distribution of foreign items

[113] See Lebecq 1994.

[114] This hypothesis is grounded on a still fundamental article by Rouche (Rouche 1977). More recently, see Lebecq 1994.

and ‘Anglo-Saxon’ pottery discussed in this chapter, these objects cannot be straightforwardly linked with the presence of significant numbers of Anglo-Saxon immigrants in the cemetery. Indeed, as we have seen, these grave goods have been recovered from a very small number of inhumations, and the presence of precious objects is restricted to rich burials. It thus seems likely that the luxury items were used to display cross-Channel connections and social status by a local population. Hence, while La Calotterie must surely be understood in the context of ongoing transmarine contacts and probably also foreign presence, the evidence from the funerary site is surely not enough to assume that the impulse for the foundation of the *emporium* came from the Anglo-Saxons; it is much more likely that the rich graves were those of part of the local population which developed thanks to cross-Channel traffic and possibly salt production, as will be discussed more fully in the next chapters.

Part 2

The empirical analysis of Anglo-Saxon and Continental regions has provided a picture of landed property visible from the seventh century as well as of the archaeological remains pertaining to the previous period. However, these data must be now compared and considered together, assessing the similarities and differences observed in each region within the broader context of the Channel zone. This comparison is essential in order to reconstruct the socio-economic developments that these regions underwent during the sixth and seventh centuries and to assess their inclusion in the transmarine network; ultimately, this analysis is crucial to illuminate the rise of the major *emporia* in the area under investigation, or the reasons for their absence.

This shift in perspective has to be grounded on a theoretical discussion about the forms of exchange and the nature of things given or exchanged, which is addressed in Ch. 5. Indeed, a fundamental issue to be examined is the nature of the traffic connecting the regions along the Channel coast and on each side of it before the development of the *emporia*; in other words, on what kind of contacts the transmarine links were based, and whether an exchange which could be described as trade can be recognised The distribution of different types of imports can be used to make clear the complex and diversified nature of these contacts: in this regard, the ubiquitous presence of amber beads in sixth-century Anglo-Saxon cemeteries is particularly significant as an indication of commercial activity. A further step will be to compare the distribution of imports in England and France, in order to understand what the similarities and differences signify.

Ch. 6 explores the socio-economic development of coastal communities in the Channel area, and the links between the burial wealth exhibited in cemeteries, maritime-related activities, and the potential exploitation of iron and salt. Based on what has emerged from the archaeological

evidence, as well as written sources, Ch. 7 then reframes the current view on the political relationships between the Merovingians and Southern England during the sixth century. The increasingly visible role of kings and monasteries in maritime activities during later centuries is examined in Ch. 8, both to illuminate seventh-century developments, and to recognise that the web of transmarine connections was more complex than often assumed. As mentioned in the Introduction, a briefer discussion will be made of the Thames Valley and of other coastal territories of Francia, from the mouth of the Loire to the area of the Rhine delta. Indeed, the written sources for these areas offer an essential insight as regards many of the arguments discussed in this thesis. The documents of the monastery of Noirmoutier in the Loire area and the picture of landholding offered by the Seine estuary, for instance, are crucial for understanding the link between monasteries and economic development. Another case is offered from the written sources of the area of the Rhine delta, which give an important insight onto the structure of landed property in territories where the Merovingian power was not so strong, at least in the earlier period. Against this background, finally, we will be able to better assess the rise and development of the major *emporia* which thrived in the regions examined here.

Chapter 5. *Forms of exchange*

5.1. *Exchanges and value: the nature of things given*

The debate on the nature of things given is deeply rooted in the twentieth-century polarisation between the opposite theses of formalists and substantivists. The substantivist approach, championed by Karl Polanyi, assumed that the economy of pre-modern societies was deeply embedded in social constraints and, for this reason, it should not be studied by applying the same methodology as for modern economies. In the context of pre-modern societies, characterized by reciprocity and redistribution, substantivist perspectives assume a strong importance of gift-giving as form of exchange, and commodities and gifts are seen as pertaining to different and largely separate spheres of exchange.[1]

Although substantivism has played a crucial role in shaping historical perspectives from the second half of the 20th century until today, some of its key points have been criticised. Indeed, in recent decades it has been proposed that the dichotomy between pre-modern and modern societies on the basis of the embeddedness of the economy cannot be maintained, since also in modern economies transactions are deeply interwoven within society.[2] Furthermore, the distinction between gift and commodity is not straightforward, and they are not mutually exclusive. In fact, even the same good can be exchanged through different forms of transaction during its 'social life'.[3]

Crucial in substantivist discourses, research on gifts has its roots in anthropological works dating back to the first half of the 20th century, the landmark being Marcel Mauss'

[1] On substantivist theory see Polanyi 1957; 1963; 1968; Dalton 1975. An excellent discussion of the formalist-substantivism debate and its developments is provided in Hann – Hart 2011; see also Graeber 2001.

[2] On the embeddedness of modern economies see Swedberg – Granovetter 1992. For a summary of the criticisms of substantivism see Skre 2008b.

[3] On the concept of the social life of things see Appadurai 1986. A classic example of a single object being exchanged through different forms of transaction is that of the wedding-ring, on which see Thomas 1991, 18-20; Moreland 2000a (2010, esp. 96-98).

identification of the three obligations pertaining to the gift, namely those of giving, receiving and repaying. The author based his work on ethnographic researches on the *potlatch*, a gift-giving practice of north-west Native Americans involving the ritual destruction of goods, and on Bronisław Malinowski's research on the *kula* ring in the Trobriand Islands, a circular system of exchange including different islands and based on the gift-exchange of necklaces and bracelets.[4] As with Polanyi for substantivism, Malinowski's and Mauss' works have represented the starting point of a prolific discussion on gift in anthropology, which has continued until today.[5]

Seen through the lens of substantivism, gift and gift-exchange remains a central theme of research for the Early Medieval period. After Philip Grierson's seminal article of 1959 many studies have been conducted on the gift, which have changed our perception of the landscape of transactions in the Medieval world, certainly adding complexity to our understanding of the social and economic sphere of the period.[6] However, notwithstanding the recent criticism of a virtually evolutionary idea of a historical teleology from gift to commodity, the idea of a prominence of a gift economy in the centuries following Late Antiquity, which would then develop into one based on commerce, is still common in current scholarship on Anglo-Saxon history and archaeology.[7] By playing down or denying the existence of commercial activities in the previous centuries, these researches tend to explain the presence of foreign materials and objects in a given area mainly within the frame of gifts or the movement of people, particularly through exogamy. Thus, this leads to the construction of models of development strongly subjected to an evolutionary perspective which, being grounded on the existence of a 'gift

[4] Cf. Mauss 1923-1924; Malinowski 1978 (1st ed. 1922).

[5] Among the research on gift in anthropology see esp. Lévi-Strauss 1950; Gregory 1982; Bourdieu 1990; Thomas 1991; Weiner 1992; Godelier 1996.

[6] Cf. Grierson 1959. For researches on various aspects of gift-giving in the Middle Ages in the last decades see e.g. Saunders 1995; Bazelmans 1999; Algazi – Groebner – Jussen 2003; Curta 2006; 2007; Davies – Fouracre 2010; Nelson 2011; Nicolay 2014.

[7] Cf. e.g. Scull 1997; 2011a. See also Nicolay 2014, proposing gift-exchange mechanisms as the basis of the spread of luxury objects visible around the southern North Sea area during the fifth and the seventh centuries.

economy', appear to be based, in fact, more on an ideal type than on the evidence available and its historical context.[8]

However, recent perspectives and researches are starting to challenge this idea, pointing to a more nuanced and diversified model, as for instance shown in the works devoted to the excavation of Kaupang (Norway), where Skre has proposed a revision of the typologies of commercial sites made by Hodges.[9] The focus of Skre's works has been Scandinavia. Yet, even in Southern England the archaeological evidence suggests that a more complex system of exchange was ongoing in these regions during the fifth to early seventh centuries, as we shall see.

Thus, gift and commodity do not exclude each other, and the existence of a pure gift economy in pre-modern societies represents an ideal type which is disproved by the same research by Malinowski that has been taken as example for the preeminence of gift; and indeed Polanyi himself denied this mutual exclusion.[10] As regards the Anglo-Saxons during the fifth to seventh centuries, the basic fact that they lived in a Romanized area and had strong contacts with populations that were certainly accustomed to trade, like the Merovingians, cast serious doubts on the idea of an absolute preeminence of gift.

I have mentioned above that the same good can be the object of different forms of exchange. The change in the perspective through which a single item is perceived is crucial with regard to particular kinds of goods as heirlooms or, more generally, as objects used as grave goods. Since these latter represent by far the bulk of our evidence, we have to bear in mind that the item chosen to be buried with the dead is thereby subjected to a profound alteration of its nature

[8] See the critical discussion on how these themes are studied in historical scholarship in Moreland 2000a.

[9] The excavation at Kaupang is edited by Skre 2007; 2008a; 2011. On the revision of Hodges' model see Skre 2008b.

[10] Malinowski draws an account of the trading transactions carried on between several islands in his work on the *kula* ring (1922), proposing that trade and the *kula* were essentially separate activities. *Contra* this division in Melanesia see Thomas 1991, 12. On the connection between the *kula* ring and other forms of exchange see Gosden 2011, 1008: 'The exchange of these valuables helps produce and maintain systems of social relations, which can then act as conduits for more utilitarian exchanges, for example of food'. Polanyi 1957, 250, suggests that gift was only one of the forms of exchange.

at the end of its social life. Indeed, the deposition of a good in a grave can be equated to its social 'destruction' (though it may be used as a votive offering), and in this sense it has something in common with the *potlatch*. After having fulfilled a deep social role with the act of the deposition, the good actually leaves the social sphere, is indeed lost for the web of future exchanges. The item in effect (unless it is robbed, which can even happen shortly after the deposition) becomes an inalienable possession of the dead.[11]

The evidence for transmarine connections between England and France, and between the different Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, during the fifth to the middle of the seventh century derives for the most part from the archaeological recovery of foreign objects and materials as grave goods; as we have seen, the vast majority of the written sources pertains to the later period. Continental items in England are mostly jewellery, weapons or particular objects whose rarity points to high-status connections, such as the buckets from the Eastern Mediterranean.[12] The changing types of foreign items can be taken as important evidence for the changes in the modes of exchange visible in the Channel area before and during the period of the *emporia*: indeed, the excavations on these later sites have recovered more diversified types of items, including pottery. However, as explained below, while it is hardly deniable that a strong economic development occurred from the middle of the seventh century onward, earlier differences in the

[11] On the inalienability of gifts see Strathern 1988, on Melanesia. See e.g. id., 161: 'Rather than talking about 'inalienable property', I prefer to sustain the systemic contrast. Persons simply do not have alienable items, that is, property, at their disposal; they can only dispose of items by enchaining themselves in relations with others'. Enchainment is a key concept in Strathern's view, who explains it as (id., 161) 'a condition of all relations based on the gift' (see however Thomas 1991, 57: 'Strathern's notion that work or objects cannot be alienated in Melanesian systems is derived simply from the proposition that a gift regime cannot permit such transformations.'). I am here using the term inalienable in a more literal meaning, namely to stress that when a good is deposited in a burial the chain of transactions is broken. Moreover, it is to note that, contrary to Anglo-Saxon England, Malinowski reported that the *kula* objects are placed with a dying man, but are not buried with the dead: 'A dying man is surrounded and overlaid with valuables which all his relatives and relatives-in-law bring in loan for the occasion, to take it back when all is over, while the man's own *vaygu'a* [viz. *kula* objects] are left on the corpse for some time after death' (Malinowski 1978, 403). This fundamental difference seems revealing of a different attitude of the Anglo-Saxons toward valuables that may have been exchanged as gifts, and it also highlights the limit of approaches that compare Melanesia to post-Roman Britain. See King 2004, suggesting that part of the items buried as grave goods in Anglo-Saxon England were gifts to the deceased.

[12] On Byzantine items see e.g. Ch. 3.1, pp. 89-90.

types of items call for a more refined explanation. Indeed, it is not possible to put on an equal footing amber beads and Byzantine buckets, which are two extremes of the range of imports found in Southern England in terms of quantity: items from Byzantium and the Eastern Mediterranean are, in fact, extremely rare and valuable in the Early Saxon period, while amber beads were a fairly common grave good. Thus, these differentiations strongly suggest the co-existence of various mechanisms of exchange; and amber, given its remarkably widespread diffusion, is a particularly interesting case in this respect.

5.1.1. *Amber*

Although some sources of amber can be found along the eastern coasts of England, it is commonly accepted that during these centuries the primary origin of this material was the Baltic area; it is not known whether it arrived as raw material or already manufactured.[13] In Anglo-Saxon England, by far the largest group of amber objects are beads, which are particularly common as grave goods in sixth-century female graves, while in the seventh century their quantity is significantly lower.[14] Other items made in amber are sword-beads and spindle-whorls, both much rarer than beads. The drop of amber deposition in the seventh century has been explained by decline in supply, change in fashion, and the Church's condemnation, this latter due to the amuletic and curative properties attributed to amber.[15] The latter hypothesis, however, seems the least likely in the context of Southern England, because the process of

[13] Cf. Sherlock – Welch 1992, 44-45, suggesting the import of amber from the Baltic on the basis of the sheer quantity; cf. also Harrington – Welch 2014, 155-57. Amber in England can be found mostly in East Anglia: on this cf. Meaney 1981, 68-69 with references.

[14] The largest quantity of amber pertains to the second half of the sixth century, see Huggett 1988, 64. On the amber beads chronology see also Bayliss – Hines – Nielsen 2013, 359.

[15] See Owen-Crocker 2004, 87. On the Church's condemnation of amber-wearing see Coulter 2015. On the amuletic and curative properties of amber see Meaney 1981, 67-71.

Christianisation developed rather slowly during the seventh century, and thus it cannot account for the fall of amber deposition.

The overall distribution of amber beads in Early Saxon graves has not changed substantially from the picture drawn in the work of Huggett in the 1980s, although recent discoveries should be added. In Southern England, post-1980s excavations are particularly important in the case of Kent, since these partially change Huggett's distribution; in Huggett's maps, Kent was rather less visible with regard to the presence of amber beads. Nevertheless, since his overall picture is still valid, his analysis represents a convenient starting point for this discussion (see Vol. 2, p. 49).

Huggett's fall-off curve shows that the presence of amber beads does decrease as the distance from the sea increases, but with a much less steep curve than that of other Continental objects, such as amethyst beads, glass vessels and wheel-thrown pottery.[16] A characteristic of the fall-off curve of amber, however, is the presence of numerous peaks, over a large distance from the point of origin, representing sites where large quantities of these beads have been found. The presence of such a high number of peaks, even at a great distance from the sea, underlines what is also visible from Huggett's distribution map, namely the massive presence of amber in England. As Huggett noted, this characteristic curve is close to that of Renfrew's central-place redistribution model, in which the peaks of the curve are caused by the presence of central places. In particular, Renfrew identified two models centred on central places, which differ in terms of the direct involvement (mode 5) or not (mode 6) of a central person in the transactions; market exchange happens in mode 6 (see Vol. 2, pp. 50-52).[17] As we will see in the next section, however, the transition between these two systems remains problematic.

[16] See Huggett 1988; see also Arnold 1997, 103-5; 120-23.

[17] Cf. Renfrew 1975, 42-49. Cf. also Renfrew 1977. The other modes are (1) direct access, (2) reciprocity (home base), (3) reciprocity (boundary), (4) down-the-line, (7) freelance (middleman) trading, (8) emissary trading, (9) colonial trade, (10) port-of-trade.

The distribution of amber beads in cemeteries suggests that they reached England through different routes following the coasts and then the rivers. This appears clearly in the case of Hampshire and East Kent: in these two regions, similar quantities of amber beads appear to have been used as grave goods in a number of cemeteries, each located on the coast or having access to the sea through the river system.[18]

However, we must note that some of the peaks on Huggett's chart may be due to differences in the size of cemeteries and in the level of excavations: a peak might in fact simply represent a particularly large and entirely excavated cemetery, while the drop of the line between two peaks may constitute a misleading representation occurring for the opposite reason. These constraints mean that the real distribution of amber beads may have been partially different, and that new excavations are likely to change the picture, as has already occurred in the case of Kent. Nonetheless, the charts clearly show that amber beads were far more ubiquitous than other foreign goods.[19]

Some elements may indicate the presence of traders, and thus of commerce rather than gift exchange. Indeed, in Renfrew's mode 7, free-lance (middleman) trading, the curve is characterized by a less steep fall-off, representing the area of activity of a trader, outside of which the fall-off becomes steeper (see Vol. 2, p. 52).[20] Given that Huggett's graph of amber shows a not very steep fall-off curve in comparison to other types of imports,[21] and given that new archaeological excavations are likely to add new peaks in the chart, reducing the overall fall-off, the presence of traders seems likely. The presence of many routes of access seems to support this hypothesis.

[18] See Huggett 1988, map at p. 65. As Huggett noted, the fact that the peaks in the fall-off curve are of similar height shows that there was no preferential route for the incoming objects.

[19] The very large amount of amber beads is for instance visible from the graph showing the quantities of amber and glass beads in cemeteries in Sussex, cf. above Fig. 2.2 (p. 65).

[20] Cf. Renfrew 1975, 48-51.

[21] Cf. Arnold 1997, 122.

The widespread distribution of amber discussed in the previous chapters on England, which is the evidence for their easy access, is thus hard to reconcile with the exchange of gifts. This is strongly supported by the distribution of amber beads within the cemeteries, at a community level. As we have seen, the high percentages of female burials with these beads among their grave goods suggest that access to them was not restricted to people of high social status; hence, they did not have a strong value as status markers.[22] This is particularly the case for the burials with a small number of them, from one to twenty in the case of the four cemeteries in Hampshire already examined.[23] It is true that they appear to become more clearly linked with status when they are found in large numbers, as already noted in the case of the rich female graves in the large cemeteries in Hampshire, each of which has one female grave standing out among the others for the quantity of these beads.[24] All the same, the presence of a large part of the population with access to amber implies that we cannot consider amber beads to have been a luxury good in the same way as other types of imports examined in previous chapters, at least in the case of the regions under consideration, where the cemeteries lay near the sea. The distribution among the population in Kent is clearly significant in this regard. As recently noted by Harrington, amber beads in Kent are more evenly distributed across the population than elsewhere in southern England, the percentages of people with 31-100 beads being higher than in the other regions. This may have been caused by the location of Kent, which is likely to have resulted in an easier access to this good by a larger part of the population.[25] Harrington suggests

[22] See above Ch. 2.1, pp. 63-65; Ch. 3.1 pp. 86-88.

[23] See above Fig. 3.6 (p. 87).

[24] Cf. Ch. 3.1, n. 27 (p. 88). See Harrington – Welch 2014, 155, suggesting possible causes for this uneven distribution, as for instance 'a practice of curation of beads by a kin group, which were eventually deposited as heirlooms with a single individual'. However, the other goods associated with these graves characterise them as rich burials, thus suggesting that they were used to display status. Hence, Huggett's hypothesis of a differential access to amber remains the most likely explanation. On the relationship between amber beads and social status see also Brenan 1984-1985, 130, on the cemetery at Sleaford (Lincs.): 'The number of amber beads (as opposed to glass beads) in any grave appears to be status correlated, i.e. the richer the grave the higher the number of amber beads it is likely to contain. At the same time a high-status grave need not necessarily contain a high number of amber beads. (…) The size of the beads does not appear to be directly related to status either.'

[25] See Harrington – Welch 2014, 158-59: Wiltshire presents a situation similar to that in Kent. Cf. Ch. 1.1, p. 29.

that this difference may be due to different hierarchies in society.[26] However, the more widespread presence of other imports in Kent (as also in the Isle of Wight) seems to imply that this is due to the strategic location of these areas with respect to the maritime routes. In other words, direct access to goods means that more people can have them. Moreover, the Kentish access to a larger quantity and wider range of luxury imports is another factor to be considered in assessing the more even distribution of amber beads among its population than for instance in Hampshire: it is indeed possible that in areas where the flow of Continental items was higher, people did not need to use amber as a status marker at all. This possibility again stresses that the interpretation of amber as a luxury good is not straightforward.

In this regard we must note the presence of amber beads used as grave goods in Pas-de-Calais. As seen in Ch. 4, beads in this material have been found in many communities on the coast, and in some cases in large quantities, as at La Calotterie.[27] Given that amber beads are not particularly common in Merovingian cemeteries in general, their presence in these coastal cemeteries might be understood as another element suggesting the existence of a partly common material culture shared between communities on both sides of the Channel.

Thus, the overall quantity of amber beads, their wide distribution in Anglo-Saxon England, their easy access and their resulting low value in displaying social status, at least in the southern regions, may suggest that they were not part of a predominantly gift-exchange system; and this seems especially true concerning how these objects reached England. If it was the result of gift transactions, we would expect amber to be limited to well-defined areas and parts of society, as for instance shown in sixth- and seventh-century cemeteries in Hungary and Crimea, where amber beads are for the vast majority found in a small number of sites, and have a strong connection with high-status graves; hence, their presence has been explained as the result of

[26] Cf. Harrington – Welch 2014, 159, suggesting possible differences 'between areas with a tiered society above a base (indicated by gradation of beads numbers) and areas where more clearly demarcated and hierarchically opposed structures were the norm (marked by extremes of bead numbers)'.

[27] See Ch. 4.1, n. 54 (p. 124).

inter-elite gift exchange.[28] As we have seen, however, England presents a very different distribution of amber beads, while their presence among a large part of the population casts doubt even on their perception as luxury goods. All these elements, in sum, stress that the pattern of distribution of amber beads in Southern England is incongruent with systems such as the *kula* ring, which is often considered as a paradigm of gift-exchange – and, as already mentioned, even in this Melanesian case the separation between gift and commodity has been challenged.[29]

Stressing the possibility of an ongoing trade in amber does not mean that it *could not* be exchanged as a gift, and this might well be the case for some of the very large groups of beads found in rich graves. As already noted, however, the theoretical separation of gift and commodity exchange may well have been much more blurred in reality, since the same good can be exchanged through different mechanisms.

5.2. *Distribution and value*

Alongside inter-elite gift exchange and trade, it should be considered that the presence of foreign goods may be due to the movement of people, which does not only include specific forms like exogamy, but also raids and pillaging; the importance of both movement and raids is amply documented in the written sources. It must be added, however, that on both sides of the Channel we should not exclude that foreign items simply came through trade. In the context of the Channel area, where England and the Continent are separated by a rather short distance, all of these represent important mechanisms by which objects may have travelled. Although it is particularly difficult to distinguish them archaeologically, the large number of imports and

[28] See Curta 2007.
[29] See above n. 10.

their widespread diffusion in the Anglo-Saxon territories certainly point to the existence of regular traffic between the two sides of the Channel.

At a general level, foreign objects in England are more numerous and more widespread than 'Anglo-Saxon' items in Francia; and while in the Merovingian kingdoms these goods were strongly focused on coastal areas, in England a high number of them reached the interior as well.[30] Clear differences in the access to these items can be recognised between the regions of Southern England examined in the previous chapters. Through the fifth to the early seventh century, Kent and the Isle of Wight show the highest quantity of imports, while in Hampshire and Sussex their proportion in cemeteries is significantly lower. These clear differences are to be contextualised within the pattern of maritime routes, which linked Kent and the Isle of Wight directly with the Continent. This can certainly explain the distinctive distribution of imports in Kent, with their particular concentration in the eastern part of the region. By contrast, sites in the western part of Kent have revealed far fewer foreign items.[31] Concerning the Isle of Wight, its being recorded as a land of Jutish settlement like Kent by Bede, and the similarities in the material culture these two areas display, raise the possibility that the imports on the Isle of Wight may have been mediated through Kent.[32] However, direct links with the Continent seem also to be revealed both by the island's location and by sites showing links with Normandy, the Frankish area opposite the Isle of Wight, as well as by the distribution of imports within the cemeteries. Indeed, as seen in Ch. 3, the examination of the Chessell Down cemetery has revealed a wide access to these goods by a large part of the population, thus showing clear similarity with East Kent; hence, the hypothesis of similar ongoing direct contacts with the Continent better fits the similar quantity and distribution. The lower amount of imports in Hampshire and in Sussex can also be addressed within the context of the transmarine routes. In

[30] See Maps 1.3; 3.3; 3.3.1; 4.2.
[31] See above Chs. 1.1; 3.1.
[32] See above Ch. 3.1, n. 39 (p. 95).

Ch. 3 we have seen that the island seems to have played a crucial role connecting Hampshire and the Continent: this may explain the lower overall quantity of foreign goods in Hampshire, and the consequently different distribution within the cemeteries, in which these items are less widespread; this indicates a different level of access, and thus the different perception people had of foreign goods. Among the examined regions, Sussex revealed the smallest quantity of imports, a picture which is in line with the absence of major trading centres in the region during the later period.[33]

Areas of strategic importance within the web of cross-Channel connections conveyed the flow of imported objects and materials toward their hinterland. As regards Kent, this flow followed an east-west direction; in the case of West Kent, however, we must also stress the possibility that other direct routes with the Continent were involved: as previously discussed, it is likely that a large number of landing sites were in use along the northern coast of Kent. It is of course most likely that the Thames was another important route of communication, and the settlement pattern in West Kent shows that the communities there had an easy connection to the river, which may thus have provided access to Continental goods.[34] The smaller quantity of these items, however, suggests that most of them reached this area from the eastern part of Kent.

The substantial presence of imports in East Kent and in the Isle of Wight is also shown by the widespread recovery of them as stray finds, included in the PAS. This evidence shows that in areas with close links to the transmarine network these goods were not limited to a small number of cemeteries; in Kent, imports have been found along the entire coast and, in East Kent, a large number of them are located on the Isle of Thanet and along the river courses. The fact that Kent, and especially its eastern part, represented a preferential point of access for some types of the imports from the Continent is clearly visible from Huggett's distribution maps,

[33] See above Ch. 2.1.
[34] See above Ch. 1.1, esp. pp. 35-41.

showing that the presence of amethyst beads, crystal balls, glass vessels and wheel-thrown pottery is centred in this region; these maps are still valid.[35]

It is important to remark that, at a general level, the sites showing the highest quantities of imports are not necessarily the centres through which they were redistributed, nor the first sites they arrived at when they reached England.[36] Indeed, these particular cemeteries may just represent sites inhabited by people rich and powerful enough to have them, as for instance sites linked with political power. Thus, it is possible that exotic goods first arrived in a distant site whence they were carried to other places. However, in the case of the East Kentish cemeteries it seems most likely that imports arrived directly there, since the widespread presence of landing sites would have made their access very easy.

The key role of East Kent within the transmarine network is also shown by the recovery of balances and weights deposited in graves. These are rare finds whose distribution presents two clear foci, in East Kent and in the Upper Thames Valley. Scull has proposed that these were based on the standards of continental gold coinages, and were used to weigh coins or for bullion transactions made to acquire luxury items in the context of inter-regional or long-distance trade; the owners of these grave goods would be agents through whom the elite made these transactions. Thus, the recovery of these items points to sites of particular importance.[37] It seems, however, possible that some of them were buried merely to display high social status (given the implications these items had with the managing of gold) without being an evidence of an actual role as agents. This may be for instance suggested when they are found in female burials, where they may stress the position of the deceased in a high-status family (as in the case of the rich female gr. 76, St Peter's, Broadstairs, Kent).[38] The recovery of a stray find of a

[35] See Huggett 1988.
[36] See Huggett 1988, 80.
[37] See Scull 1990.
[38] Scull 1990, 205, notes that in female burials only balances, without weights, have been found. See also Harrington – Welch 2014, 163, stressing that if their use was to weigh bullion transactions we would expect both East Kent and the Upper Thames Valley to be foci of gold and silver, but this latter is not. Although the Upper

Byzantine weight on the Isle of Wight appears to strengthen the connection between the pattern of distribution of balances and weights and the cross-Channel network, and adds to the similarities between East Kent and this island.[39]

Before addressing the different distribution of 'Anglo-Saxon' items in the Pas-de-Calais, the picture of Continental imports in England leads to some considerations about the modalities by which they spread in these regions. In this context, the existence of nodal areas will be examined: as we will see, the clusters of foreign materials in particular sites may point to a hierarchical pattern of settlement at least in some cases, even though the identification between central places and cemeteries is not straightforward.

Huggett seems right when suggesting that different forms of distribution were in existence in England during the Early Saxon period.[40] Drawing this conclusion from the different fall-off curves visible for different items, he suggested that the objects showing a strong concentration in Kent (amethyst beads, crystal balls, glass vessels and wheel-thrown pottery) follow a down-the-line exchange model.[41] Others items instead, like amber beads but also ivory rings and crystal beads, show a central place redistribution pattern. This latter group is indeed not centred on Kent, displaying instead a multi-focal distribution. Thus, according to this model, the foreign objects may have reached the sites through a redistributive mechanism.

However, the commercial or non-commercial nature of these exchanges is hard to establish. Renfrew's modes 5 and 6 highlight this difficulty clearly, as the two modes, both structured by the existence of central places, show the same distribution pattern resulting in a similar

Thames Valley is outside the limits of the present work, it might be another case which would suggest that the deposition of these items in graves conveys different meanings.

[39] This sixth-/early seventh-century weight is made in copper alloy and silver. PAS unique id: IOW-189AE5.

[40] See Huggett 1988.

[41] The down-the-line model is explained by Renfrew 1975, esp. 41-48 as an exchange mechanism based on reciprocity, through which 'the commodity travels across successive territories through successive exchanges' (id., 43).

distortion in the fall-off curve (directional trade), even if only mode 6 implies a market system (see Vol. 2, p. 51).[42] Because the two modes are hardly distinguishable on the basis of the distribution of the remains, the transition from one mode to the next as explained by Renfrew is rather problematic, as it is entirely dependent on a theoretical model which is difficult to verify, at least in our case: 'with the development of more sophisticated exchange mechanisms, including money, the exchange becomes less embedded, less integrally related to the social organization. This differentiation allows the growth of market exchange'.[43] While, as we have previously seen, the idea of the different levels of embeddedness of the economy as the key factor leading to societal changes is questionable, the use of coins is not a precondition for the existence of a market.

It is thus hard, basing on Renfrew's modes, to recognise archaeologically whether an object is exchanged through commercial or non-commercial traffic. At a general level, though, we may assume that types of goods which are rare or which have particular symbolic meanings are much more likely to be exchanged as gifts. On the other hand, the different location of settlements within the traffic network and the existence of points of arrival of the objects from the Continent should also be considered, since it may result in a more variegated and complex picture. Indeed, as shown in the preceding chapters, the overall distribution of imports is most easily explicable in the light of a variegated web of landing sites, particularly in Kent; this can be seen if we look at the dispersion of expensive objects made in gold, silver and garnets there.[44] Thus, the possible different nature of the exchange may be hypothesized on the basis of the location of the site where the good is found, viz. whether it is recovered from a site near or outside the network of the maritime routes. In the case of a site distant from the coast, the difficulty in having access to imports may suggest a more important role for gift-exchange

[42] This similarity in the spatial pattern has been already stressed by Renfrew 1975; 1977.
[43] Cf. Renfrew 1975, 44.
[44] See Maps 1.3; 1.3.1.

practices; an example in this regard might be the Byzantine items found in inland Hampshire.[45] On the other hand, the possibility should not be excluded that some of the imports found in East Kent might were acquired through commercial activity.

As we have seen, the fall-off curves of some of the Continental items in England seem to indicate a central place distribution, where the peaks in the curve correspond to rich cemeteries. However, identifying these particular cemeteries as central places raises key issues that must be considered.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, major problems are the different scales in the excavations, and the nature of the sites. The fact that they are mostly cemeteries entails a certain distance, even though not necessarily a very large one, from the settlement/s to which they pertain.[46] This means that we see only the results of craft production and not the places where these goods were manufactured, and that our picture of local social structures can only be grounded on what the burials can tell us. Notwithstanding these constraints, however, some of these rich Early Saxon cemeteries may indeed be seen as central places: for instance particularly large burial sites which may have served more settlements, or sites situated close to ancient monuments or meeting places, which had important symbolic value.[47] In effect, the symbolic value is also a strong element that has permitted sites where finds like bracteates have been recovered to be identified as 'central places'.[48] It has been recognised that the cemeteries at Eastry, Lyminge and Faversham in East Kent show some of the characteristics of central places, such as a particular presence of rich items, long-distance contacts, specialised craft production,

[45] See above Ch. 3.1, pp. 89-90.

[46] On the spatial relation between cemeteries and settlements during the Early Saxon period see esp. Hamerow 2010, 71-72.

[47] Against the identification of cemeteries and central places see Scull 1999, 18-19, stressing that cemeteries during these centuries are unlikely to show a regional elite, and that a link between a cemetery and a single regional central place cannot be assumed. For large cremation cemeteries having a central place role see Williams 2002. On the connections between cemeteries and the landscape including pre-existing monuments see Semple 2013. See also Ch. 6.2, n. 50 (p. 182).

[48] On bracteates and central places see e.g. Gaimster 2011; Behr – Pestell 2014.

and links with sites of political importance – this latter being also visible in the *-ge* place-name of Eastry and Lyminge, and now, above all, in the Lyminge 'great hall' complex.[49]

What has emerged from the examination of the archaeological remains in the Pas-de-Calais suggests a somewhat different situation in Francia. As in England, the evidence from the Pas-de-Calais seems to indicate the existence of numerous landing sites beside the Canche; based on the presence of 'Anglo-Saxon' objects in their vicinity, it seems likely that they provided direct contacts with the other shore of the Channel. Thus, also in the Pas-de-Calais, the picture seems to show a multifocal transmarine network.

As suggested in Ch. 4, continental graves with high-status insular imports should be regarded as different from those having only 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery as foreign-type goods. The former should be considered as evidence for transmarine contacts, rather than proof of the foreign ethnicity of the owners. However, the range of diffusion of insular goods in the Pas-de-Calais is substantially smaller than in England: they are strongly focussed in coastal areas, and this situation does not change if we look at their distribution in other Frankish regions, such as Normandy or the area of Bordeaux.[50] Even accepting a foreign presence on the Frankish coasts, this pattern can be better explained, on the one hand, by the existence of a partially shared material culture in the areas most strongly connected with the Channel and, on the other hand, with a different value associated with the use of 'Anglo-Saxon' items as grave goods. In other words, it seems likely that showing contacts with the Anglo-Saxons was relevant to the display of social power in areas where the contacts were stronger, i.e. the coasts. In general, however, the evidence strongly suggests that in Francia these cross-Channel contacts and foreign objects

[49] On this see Dickinson – Fern – Richardson 2011. In East Kent, also Canterbury may have had central place functions: see Loveluck – Laing 2011. On the characteristics of central places see Fabech 1999. On *-ge* place-names in Kent see Lloyd 2013. On Eastry and Lyminge see Ch. 1.1, n. 33 (p. 33).

[50] See Ch. 4.1, n. 16 (p. 113); n. 53 (p. 123).

were regarded as less valuable than was the case in England, thus resulting in their relative scarcity in the interior of Francia.

The different distribution of foreign goods in Southern England and in France may, in addition, reflect the existence of a different exchange dynamic. The Anglo-Saxons imported from the Continent objects and expensive raw materials, such as the gold, silver and garnets examined in the previous chapters; in addition to them also other materials, such as amethysts and mercury can be added. Mercury is an interesting case: since the primary reason for importing mercury was its use in the gilding process of the objects, it seems likely that it was exchanged as a commodity.[51] In contrast, the 'Anglo-Saxon' objects found in the Pas-de-Calais may have played only an ancillary role in the exports from England, while a substantial export may have been represented by slaves.[52] Although they are archaeologically invisible, the fact that England exported slaves is attested in the written sources, even if mostly from later centuries. Indeed, there is no reason to believe that trade in slaves was not an important activity also in the Early Saxon period.[53] Slave trading might also explain the distribution of foreign items both on the English coasts and in the interior. Indeed, the likelihood must be considered that the coastal communities acted as a fulcrum connecting inland areas and the Continent. While amber has provided a fruitful case in point, it seems likely that the framework of cross-Channel interactions supported a wider range of trading activity during the sixth century, alongside socially embedded relationships, than currently assumed. In general, the different distribution of foreign and luxury items in the coastal areas and in the interior leads to further

[51] On mercury see Arnold 1997, 117-18, suggesting that it came from Spain (other sources of mercury are Italy and Yugoslavia) and proposing a link between this traffic and the Anglo-Saxon objects in the area of Bordeaux. This is an interesting possibility, but the passing of this exchange through other areas of Francia cannot be excluded. On gilding technique see Oddy 1980; Aufderhaar 2009.

[52] On other possible imports including lead, hunting dogs and furs see Hinton 1990, 22-23; Harrington – Welch 2014, 178-79.

[53] On the slave trading see Pelteret 1981; Rio 2017. See Bede, *HE* IV.22, reporting the story of Imma, who was sold to a Frisian in London. This episode, nominally from the 670s, is to be referred to the 730s at the latest.

considerations on the relationship between the socio-economic development of coastal communities and maritime-related activities, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 6. *The development of coastal communities*

Having discussed the mechanisms of distribution of long-distance imports and their uneven concentration across Southern England and the Pas-de-Calais, we must now consider what the implications are for our assessment of the coastal communities settled in these regions. Against the background of the access to the sea as suggested by the analysis in the previous chapters, this chapter first analyses the landscape in which the communities were settled (Ch. 6.1). An examination of the social and economic shaping of coastal areas will follow, focusing on how the involvement of these communities in the cross-Channel network played a fundamental role in their development (6.2). The likely exploitation of natural resources will then be considered as a further element at the basis of the development which increased wealth and enhanced the centrality of some of these communities (6.3). The decision to focus upon iron and salt was motivated by their fundamental role as basic commodities, and hence by their capacity to sustain the economic growth and social development of particular areas. This choice was also dictated by the landscape of these regions, since salt-working is characteristic of coastal areas, while the concentration of iron, especially in Kent and Sussex, makes it a crucial resource for these regions.

6.1. *Coastal communities in their landscape*

We have seen that the archaeological evidence and the later written sources show that the two shores of the Channel were connected through a large number of landing sites scattered along both Southern England and the Pas-de-Calais. In general, in the English coastal areas near previous Roman ports and forts there were communities where part of the population was in receipt of high-value materials and exotic objects during the sixth/early seventh centuries, thus attesting to contacts with the Continent. In many of these same areas, the sources document

the establishment of royal centres and the foundations of monastic communities from the seventh century onwards, which will be discussed in more detail in Ch. 8. This trend thus suggests a general continuity of cross-Channel interactions in these areas. This is clearly visible in Kent, where during the Roman period ports were located at Rochester, Reculver, Richborough, Dover and Lympne;[1] as already seen, transmarine contacts during the Early Saxon period may be suggested in all these cases. For instance, in the area of Rochester, Anglo-Saxon settlement is attested from the fifth century, as demonstrated by the cemeteries at Watt's Avenue and Chatham Lines. This latter cemetery and other finds in the vicinity point to a high-status presence in the Early Saxon period, thus showing the ongoing importance of this area before the establishment of the bishopric in the early seventh century.[2] Eastwards, each of the Roman ports on the Wantsum Channel and on the southern coast of Kent shows a large presence of early Anglo-Saxon foreign and luxury items in their surrounding territory.[3] However, these sites present differences as regards continuity of settlement. In fact, a certain level of continuity may be suggested in the case of Dover, because of the survival of the Celtic name of the river Dour and of the Latin name *Dubris*, and since there is evidence for an Early Anglo-Saxon settlement within the Roman fort. While the first written reference to the existence of a port at Dover is dated to the reign of King Wihtred (d. 725), the remains from the nearby cemeteries, especially from Buckland, strongly indicates the presence of high-status people with Continental connections from the earliest period of Anglo-Saxon occupation, thus suggesting that the existence of a harbour there should be backdated.[4] On the other hand, the evidence for

[1] See Morris 2010, examining the evolution of the maritime landscape between the Late Iron Age to the end of the Roman period; see also Johnson 1976; Cleere 1978; Mason 2003. On the purpose of the *litus saxonicum* see Wood 1990.

[2] On these cemeteries and other Early Saxon finds in the area of Rochester see Ch. 1.1, pp. 39-41.

[3] See Map 1.3.

[4] On the Early Saxon evidence from Dover and its surrounding area see above Ch. 1.1 and Map 1.3. See also Parfitt 2001, 95-98 discussing the possibility of a trading centre there; see esp. id., 96 on the survival of the Celtic river name and the charter of King Wihtred attesting the existence of a port at Dover; with references to Rivet – Smith 1979 and Evison 1987, 171, on the place-names; Tatton-Brown 1988, 110 on Wihtred's charter, and on the monastery at Dover.

the areas of Lympne and Richborough seems to point to a different picture: although in both areas foreign and luxury items have been recovered, thus supporting the idea of their ongoing integration in the transmarine network, it appears that the foci of trading activity were relocated to Sandtun and Sandwich respectively, lying near but not in the Roman settlements.[5] As for Reculver, although the evidence is more scanty, we can nonetheless see finds from the Continent in the area, and the later sources show that in the eighth century the monastery of Reculver, founded in the seventh century, was included in the maritime trading routes.[6]

Sussex and the eastern entrance of the Solent Channel present a similar situation. At Pevensey in East Sussex, where there was a Roman military harbour, the fort shows continuity of occupation during the Early Saxon period and the finds suggest a high-status presence.[7] Westwards, evidence for occupation from the earliest Anglo-Saxon period has been found near Chichester and in the fort at Portchester Castle, both of which being attested as former Roman harbours.[8] The coastal area of Portchester Harbour is very productive in terms of Anglo-Saxon remains – although not as regards imported and luxury goods, which appear to be concentrated north of the Roman road stretching westward from Chichester.[9] Then, the last Roman fort and port along the Solent Channel is that of Clausentum at Bitterne, whose area shows a development similar to that already seen in the case of Richborough and Lympne, namely a relocation of the port at some distance from the Roman site during the seventh century, in this case to *Hamwic*. However, the case of *Hamwic* and the other Hampshire ports is partially different from the Kentish ones since in Kent we saw large clusters of imports close to these sites, while in Hampshire, as already discussed in the previous chapter, imports in the earlier centuries (fifth/sixth c.) are not focused on coastal areas.[10] On the Isle of Wight, Roman

[5] On Sandtun and Sandwich see Gardiner 2001; Holman 2001.
[6] See Ch. 1.2, p. 49.
[7] See Ch. 2.1, pp. 59-60.
[8] See Maps 2.3; 3.2.
[9] See Maps 3.1 and 3.3.
[10] See Ch. 3.3, esp. pp. 105-6, and Map 3.3.

harbours were located at Brading Haven, in the east of the island, and on the Medina, close to which lay the rich Early Saxon cemetery of Carisbrooke Castle.[11]

Thus, concerning the pattern of the Roman shore forts and ports in Southern England, the ongoing importance of most of these places for transmarine connections can be seen in both the cases attesting continuity of occupation, and also in those cases when the harbours appear to have moved at some distance from the former Roman ports. The Pas-de-Calais shows a similar picture, although this has to be considered within the general context of the fundamental shift of the major port from Boulogne to the river Canche.[12] As we have previously seen, however, this relocation to the south, clearly attested by the development of *Quentovic*, does not exclude the ongoing existence of a landing place at Boulogne, which seems quite possible on the basis of the finds recovered in this area. As explained in Ch. 4, it is highly likely that the decline of Boulogne and the collapse of the strong central organisation of the Roman Empire gave way to a revitalisation of the constellation of small harbours scattered along the coasts.[13] The localisation of this network of minor harbours may be inferred from the patterns of landing sites in the pre-Roman period, as well as from the mentions of ports in the later sources; for instance, a landing place at Wissant may be suggested based on the integration of this area into the route from England as described in *Sigeric's Itinerary*. Although this is a late-tenth-century text, the recovery of early 'Anglo-Saxon' finds in this area may be evidence of the existence of a landing site in the previous period.[14] Concerning the relationship between these ports and the Roman system, it is also worth noting that it is likely that the small ports north of Boulogne lay near the Roman fort of *Marcis*, at Marck or Marquise.[15]

[11] On Roman harbours in the Isle of Wight see Ulmschneider 2000, 48. On Carisbrooke Castle cf. Ch. 3.1, n. 15 (p. 80).

[12] On this process see Ch. 4.1, n. 50 (p. 123). On the system of Roman shore forts see above n. 1; see also Seillier 2010.

[13] See Ch. 4.1, n. 51 (p. 123).

[14] See Ch. 4.2.2, n. 89 (p. 135).

[15] See Morris 2010, 137; Seillier 2010, 137.

Thus, the integration of the mostly later written sources and the identification of clusters of foreign items has indeed proved rewarding in identifying Early Medieval harbours near Roman ports. Hence, this methodology seems applicable to other coastal areas as well, in order to reconstruct the ramified network of landing places which are likely to have connected England and the Continent in the post-Roman period. Indeed, we have seen that this wide network of landing places beyond the areas of the Roman shore forts and ports is clearly visible in England. In effect, the pattern of harbours is made much more complex by considering the existence of informal landing sites, which were situated on the coasts or in the hinterland along the rivers. On the coasts, river estuaries were clearly suitable places, but landing sites can also be found on open coasts.[16] Landing places must thus have constituted a constant presence along the Southern English coastline, given also that Early Saxon settlement was particularly focussed on rivers.

Rivers were obviously also used as communication routes, although it should be remembered that not all the rivers were navigable; navigability is likely to have represented an important element influencing settlement and the general development of an area. Sussex is disadvantaged in this regard, since its rivers (Ouse, Adur and Arun) are navigable only for a short section, this constituting a limit in terms of connections between the coast and the inland territories of the region. By contrast, both Hampshire and Kent have navigable rivers stretching far inland such as the Avon in Hampshire and the Medway in Kent.[17] In addition to other crucial factors such as fertility of soils, the importance of navigability as an element affecting the pattern of settlement is shown by the different distribution of archaeological remains in Sussex,

[16] See McGrail 1998, 267-74, discussing the possible locations of landing sites.

[17] Data on navigable rivers are taken from Edwards – Hindle 1991, which includes a map (id., 130) showing the web of navigable waters and areas more than 15 miles from them; the map clearly shows the disadvantage of Sussex.

where they are focused at a short distance from the coast, and Hampshire where, on the contrary, the evidence is rather more clustered in the hinterlands of the river-valleys.[18]

Although landing sites are difficult to identify archaeologically, since they may not have been provided with fixed structures, some of them can be recognised from OE place-names such as those containing the element *hȳth* ('landing place').[19] OE elements are very often not closely datable, thus hampering our reconstruction of the chronological development of the network of settlements. Nonetheless, as noted above, the *hȳth* element seems to have been productive from an early period, since it is attested in eighth-century (and possibly also seventh-century) written sources, as in some of the Kentish cases: thus, some of these landing sites were active from the seventh/eighth century at the latest.[20]

We have seen that the pattern of distribution of foreign items can be used to support the possible presence of landing sites; in addition, in some cases, the later presence of eighth/ninth century 'productive' sites can be used in this regard too. One must, however, note that the distribution of settlement may in some cases be misleading, as landing sites can be found also at a distance from inhabited sites/areas; thus, the absence of archaeological evidence for settlement is not evidence of the absence of a landing place.[21]

The example of the Thames, where *hȳth* place-names are fairly common, shows clearly the wide presence of landing places scattered along its course: indeed, below London we can see eight places containing *hȳth*.[22] Sites with this place-name can be seen in all the regions considered, as Hythe in Kent near Lympne, Bulverhythe in Sussex near Hastings and Hythe in

[18] Compare Maps 2.1 and 3.1.
[19] Cf. Ch. 1.1, n. 49 (p. 36).
[20] On charters documenting *hȳth* place-names in Kent see Ch. 1.1, p. 36.
[21] On landing sites in uninhabited areas see McGrail 1998, 269.
[22] These places are Chelsea, Erith, Lambeth, Putney, Queenhithe, Rotherhithe, Stepney and Greenhithe; on these place-names on the Thames see below Ch. 8.2. See Cowie – Blackmore 2008, 134-35; McGrail 1998, 268; Gelling 1984, 76-78.

Hampshire on the Solent opposite Southampton.[23] The presence of a landing site place-name at Bulverhythe is intriguing for its proximity to Hastings, although no evidence of Early Saxon settlement in this area has been found so far. The same lack of evidence characterises the area around Hythe in Hampshire. If this latter case represents a landing place in existence during the Early Saxon period, it would show that on the Southampton Water a pattern of widespread harbours existed similar to that on the Thames.[24]

In addition to sites with this place-name, in the previous chapter we have seen that a substantial presence of landing sites can be suggested along the northern coast of Kent, as in the area of Rochester and Faversham, at least from the Mid-Saxon period. Given its geographical landscape, the coastal lands between Chichester and Portchester constitute another area where small landing sites might have been in existence alongside those already mentioned for their Roman connections, as for instance at Portsmouth, Langstone and on Hayling Island.[25] This constellation of landing sites can also be suggested for the Isle of Wight, given that in the later period ports are documented in the estuaries of the each of the rivers flowing into the Solent Channel.[26] In this case, the distribution of Early Saxon evidence shows that settlement took place mainly along a west-east line crossing the island so that, if the landing places were situated across the estuaries, we might expect some distance, even if a fairly short one, between the settlement and the landing site (see Map 3.6). The distribution of archaeological remains on the island, as we have seen, attests to a strong focus of settlement in the north-west zone, closest to the western shore of Hampshire and the estuary of the river Avon. Given that foreign and luxury goods have been recovered along the hinterland of the Avon Valley (see Map 3.3), it seems likely that one or more landing places were located along its course, perhaps in the area of the estuary. Indeed, the suitability of its estuary for this purpose

[23] On the examples in Kent and Sussex see Gelling 1984, 76. On Hythe in Hampshire see Watts 2004, 327.
[24] Apart from *Hamwic*, note the port on the river Hamble; cf. Ch. 3.1, n. 13 (p. 79).
[25] On this suggestion see Ulmschneider 2000, 46.
[26] On landing sites in these areas see Ch. 3.1, p. 79.

is amply shown by the presence of an important port with long-distance links at Hengistbury Head in pre-Roman times.[27] It may be significant that the coastal cemetery of Bargates, in use between the late sixth and the seventh century, displays connections with East England, thus possibly showing that the area maintained interregional connections also during the Early Saxon period.[28]

An important element that corroborates the hypothesis of the existence of this widespread network of landing sites in the Early Saxon period is the distribution of the *ōra* place-name, which has been suggested to be a Latin loan word adopted in the earlier Anglo-Saxon period.[29] This place-name indicates a flat-topped hill used as a landmark along routeways and harbours; in this latter case, a close link can be recognised between *ōra* and *hȳth* sites, thus being a further hint that landing-sites marked with *hȳth* were active from the early centuries of Anglo-Saxon occupation. In Kent, coastal *ōra* sites are attested near Rochester (Upnor), Faversham (Oare), Reculver (Oar Farm), Richborough (Stonar), and at some distance from the coast in the area between Dover and Lympne (Drellingore and Argrove).[30] Along the coast of Sussex, Ore is close to Hastings and Bulverhythe, Grey Nore (lost) lay near Pevensey, and The Nore is close to Portslade on the other bank of the Adur. A high concentration of coastal *ōra* sites is then visible from Bognor Regis (which includes the *ōra* element) in Sussex to the area of Portchester. Going westward, it is interesting to note the presence of four *ōra* sites on the north-west coast of the Isle of Wight (Bouldnor, Elmsworth, Werrar Farm and Gurnard), which supports the idea

[27] On the area of the Avon estuary, its development in the Mid-Saxon period, and its possible location on a political boundary there see Ulmschneider 2000, 37, mentioning also the recovery of a seventh-century Coptic bronze bowl at Boscombe Chine, on the coast west of the Avon in Dorset, and suggesting that this may be evidence for the ongoing existence of trading routes. On Hengistbury Head during the Prehistoric and Roman periods see also Cunliffe 1987; Morris 2010, esp. 19 with references.

[28] On Bargates see Jarvis 1983, esp. 131-33 (id., 133: 'There is little evidence to suggest the origin of the Saxon settlers at Christchurch, although the pen-annular ring ditch, the spearheads, and the Boscombe Chine bowl suggest an easterly connection'), the spearhead of Swanton's Type D2 is a type more common in Kent, along the Thames, in Hampshire and in the Isle of Wight (id., 128), and the pen-annular ring ditch is similar to Kentish cases (id., 131).

[29] See Cole 1990 (providing maps); 1989. Cf. also Higham – Ryan 2011, 63.

[30] On Kentish cases see Brookes 2007a, esp. 64-65 (with map).

of a widespread pattern of landing-sites there.[31] In relation to the possible exploitation of natural resources discussed below (Ch. 6.3), it is significant that a close relationship has been suggested between *ōra* place-name and sites of Roman iron- and salt-working. Since they were signalled using such landmarks, this may be a crucial element suggesting that these sites/areas had a particular importance in the Early Saxon period, thus possibly indicating an ongoing exploitation of these resources.[32]

Wic is another place-name element which helps to identify trading sites and hence, when located on the coast, the presence of ports, as in the case of the *emporia*. The identification of trading sites through this place-name is however difficult, given the different meanings this element may assume; it may in fact refer to a building/s having special function, a farm, a hamlet, a trading site or a craft-working settlement.[33]

To summarise so far, the evidence shows that the two shores of the Channel were linked through a complex web of landing places, which can be postulated on the basis of the presence of communities in receipt of imports and of place-names although, as mentioned, the difficulties in the dating of OE elements must be remembered (while the different construction of place-names in France makes the individuation of the early medieval ones even harder). This pattern of landing sites incorporates all the coastal areas into the transmarine network between the fifth and the seventh centuries. This picture displays some continuity with the pattern of Roman ports: even if some of the harbours were relocated, the new landing sites lay at a short distance

[31] On these sites on the Isle of Wight see also Watts 2004; Kökeritz 1940.

[32] On this link with iron and salt see Cole 1990. A possible sign of ongoing exploitation is the cluster of *ōra* and *ofer* sites visible in the area of Droitwich (Cole 1990, see her map 4 on id., 34), which was an important area of salt production active also in the Early Saxon period (see Hurst 1997). In other cases, mentioned in Cole 1990, these places are near to Roman sites which do not show such a continuity of use (such as for instance Beauport Park near Ore in Hastings, and other sites in the area of the Weald); in these cases, nonetheless, the possibility that the *ōra* was referring to other sites nearby cannot be ruled out. *Ofer* is an OE element with the same meaning and use as *ōra*, but concentrated in different areas (as in the Midlands), for which see Cole 1990 (see her map 3 at id., 33 showing also some *ofer* sites in the Isle of Wight and Sussex). On *ofer* and *ōra* see also Gelling 1984, 173-82.

[33] On the different meanings of *wic* see Ekwall 1964; Rumble 2001; Coates 1999.

away, thus attesting to the ongoing use of the same trading routes. However, in the post-Roman period the pattern of landing sites is more widespread, thus resulting in a more broadly-based inclusion of the coast in the transmarine network, by now extended beyond the pattern of Roman ports and the estuaries of the main rivers.[34] The latter, nonetheless, remained areas of the greatest importance, for their capacity to act as intermediaries between a wide hinterland (since they were major routes of communication) and the sea.

In a broader perspective, the presence of closely-spaced minor and informal landing sites apparent in both Southern England and in the Pas-de-Calais aligns with what has emerged from investigations in coastal regions not considered in this research, as for instance in the area of the Rhine Delta.[35] This common pattern, which integrated wide areas into the transmarine web, supported the development of the partially shared material culture mentioned in the previous chapters. This, in turn, encouraged a generally shared perception of the value of specific objects (e.g. what constitutes a luxury good), although with important differences deriving from social context and distance from the points of origins.

As in Northern France, the re-emergence of minor landing sites is to be seen against the backdrop of the weakening of a strong central system capable of channelling maritime traffic through a small number of major sites. The cases of Boulogne and the minor ports in this area of the Pas-de-Calais constitute a clear example of this process, which is likely to have generated the changes visible in Southern England as well.

Having assessed the relationship between the Early Medieval landing sites and the Roman system of shore forts and ports, we must now consider the links between Roman towns and the early Anglo-Saxon settlement, since at least in some cases the former appear to have acted as

[34] Cf. Ch. 4.1, p. 123, for instance, we have seen that the minor pre-Roman ports in the Pas-de-Calais existed throughout the Roman period, but were not used for cross-Channel connections.

[35] On this area see esp. Loveluck – Tys 2006.

foci of settlement, political and then also ecclesiastical power. These places in Southern England – namely Rochester, Canterbury, Chichester and Winchester – are either on the coast or directly connected to the sea by river-courses. Thus, excluding them would give only a partial picture of the reasons for the distribution of precious finds and elite presence.

It is not possible, for instance, to explain the presence of luxury objects near Rochester only by the existence of landing places in the vicinity of the Medway estuary. Indeed, given what has emerged from the previous chapters, it appears that the former Roman towns in these regions of England continued to exercise some role in attracting elite settlement throughout the Early Saxon period: even if the evidence for elite presence comes mostly from extra-mural cemeteries, the proximity of these sites to the Roman towns is a recurrent pattern in these regions.[36] These zones, which are to be understood as areas encompassing the perimeter of the towns to include their surrounding territories, constituted important foci of settlement in the post-Roman period, thus adding to the patterns of distribution of Continental items and landing sites.

However, the maps of the archaeological evidence do not show particular concentrations of luxury and foreign goods in the vicinity of the Roman towns in comparison with the other areas. For instance, the presence of a cluster of these objects in the area of Canterbury has to be understood within the specific context of the broader area, since rich cemeteries are found along the entire coastal area of East Kent. Sixth-century Canterbury, that is to say, cannot be shown to be richer than its surrounding areas, and we cannot say that this or any other formerly Roman city was an urban centre in an economic sense in the Early Saxon period. At the same time, the location of the trading site in the vicinity of the town is obviously strongly linked to the great and early importance of Canterbury as a royal and ecclesiastical centre.[37]

[36] See Maps 1.3, 2.7 and 3.3.1.
[37] On the trading site near Canterbury and the political role of the centre see Ch. 1.1, esp. p. 32.

Given the peculiarity of East Kent in comparison to the other regions in Southern England, an alteration in the pattern of distribution caused by the presence of Roman sites might be better appreciated in the case of Rochester. Here, a connection between the presence of Early Saxon imports and the attraction of the Roman site is more clearly visible, as the communities in West Kent present in general fewer rich items.[38] Yet even in this case the material evidence reinforces a widespread pattern of distribution, which follows the coastline, the river-courses and the Roman road system; hence, if the rich burials near Rochester are contextualized within the region, their concentration appears less striking.

Thus, the Roman towns and their surroundings constituted focal points for elite settlement during these centuries, and their importance is supported by the fact that at least some of them were early royal centres, such as Canterbury and possibly Winchester.[39] This is due to various factors such as their convenient locations on rivers and Roman roads, the possible suitability for defence and perhaps also their symbolic value. Nonetheless, when compared to other rural settlements in receipt of precious items, they do not seem to stand out as having established a strong hierarchichal system around them, at least not before the end of the sixth century.

Indeed, rich communities appear to have been connected with other Roman centres, such as for instance Dover; but the case of Lyminge shows that the Early Saxon community there developed at some distance from the Roman fort at Lympe (around 8 km) – though Lyminge lay close to the Roman road connecting Lympe to Canterbury. Other rich Early Saxon communities developed also outside the surroundings of former Roman towns and forts, as can be seen for instance in East Kent (see Map 1.3). It is moreover worth repeating that, in the cases where the Roman centres act as foci for elite presence, not only the centre itself but also its surrounding area is to be considered, as for instance in the case of Worthy Park, which lay around 3 km north of Winchester.

[38] On West Kent see Ch. 1.1, esp. pp. 35-41 and Map 1.3.1.
[39] On Canterbury and Winchester see Ch. 1.1, p. 32 and Ch. 3.2, pp. 96-97.

6.2. *Wealth and maritime activities, elites and central places*

We have seen that ready access to the sea supported the inclusion of the coastal areas in an integrated landscape, as reflected in the distribution of foreign and luxury goods from the fifth to the early seventh century. This pattern of landing sites and the picture emerging from the presence of rich communities in the areas of Roman sites allow us to draw some conclusions concerning the level of control that these communities had over the transmarine network and hence on the territory. As seen in the Introduction, a strong control over the flow of imports from the Continent by kings and elites was postulated by Hodges and then, until fairly recently, generally accepted. Control over imported goods would have been crucial for kings to establish alliances and thus secure power within a tributary social system.[40]

However, some elements may change this picture. The first to be considered is that this hypothesis rests largely on the distinction examined in Ch. 5 between gift economy and market, so that the role of transmarine traffic is understood through the lens of gift-giving only.[41] However, imports in Early Saxon England did not include only extremely valuable items whose access was limited to the upper echelons of society: as examined in the last chapter, the distribution of amber beads shows that this material was widely available, not a restricted 'luxury' good, and was probably exchanged through commercial mechanisms.

Second, the idea of a strong control over long-distance exchange is mainly centred on the *emporia* from the late seventh century onwards, underestimating the archaeological evidence of the previous centuries, which offers a different picture. Indeed, the wide inclusion of the coastal areas along the sea routes, and the common pattern of cemeteries in which part of the

[40] On elite control see Hodges 1982; Scull 1990, 1997, 2011a; Saunders 2001, who frames the *emporia* in a wider and fuzzier discourse on the transition from a tributary system to feudalism. On this see further the Introduction, Ch. 8, the Conclusion.

[41] See for instance Saunders 2001.

population had foreign objects and materials lying near attested or possible landing sites clearly suggests that during the earlier period there was not a strong control by a restricted elite imposing itself over a large area. Considered in themselves, the existence of small and informal harbours at a short distance from each other does not exclude the possibility of a strong control over trade by a small group, nor is there anything to exclude the possibility that the elite in a certain area controlled more than one harbour, which is in fact quite likely. Nevertheless, the recurrence of this pattern, that is, rich Early Saxon cemeteries found in proximity to landing sites, across the entire area considered, may suggest less centralised control over the network than previously assumed; this is also because political units in the fifth/sixth century seem to have been tiny, each focussed on a small territory and river-valley.[42]

This picture is especially visible within particular areas such as the East Kentish territory between Canterbury, Lyminge and the Isle of Thanet, as well as in the Isle of Wight, thus in the richest and most favourable zones in terms of the transmarine network. The particular dispersal of imports in these two territories is relevant in this regard and, as already mentioned in previous chapters, the PAS finds reinforce this widespread pattern. In the Isle of Wight, for instance, the diffuse access to foreign goods during the Early Saxon period seems likely to have been supported by the scattered landing sites previously discussed, and two of the most famous sites, Chessell Down and Carisbrooke Castle, are most likely to have been connected to the sea by means of different harbours. Moreover, an important cluster of finds in the PAS, including Continental and luxury goods, points to the presence of a cemetery south-east of Chessell Down; the location of this site on the coast may suggest that the community buried there had direct access to the sea.[43]

[42] On this pattern of political units in Sussex see Ch. 2, p. 55. See in general Bassett 1989, particularly the Introduction. On Eastry and Lyminge in Kent, which appear to have been political foci during the sixth century, see Ch. 1.1, n. 33 (p. 33).

[43] On this site see Ch. 3.2, n. 70 (p. 103).

Thus, the widespread involvement in transmarine traffic represented an important stimulus for the development of communities facing the Channel during the Early Saxon period and, within areas lying in strategic locations along the network, this enrichment appears to have been a generalized feature of these communities. As discussed in Ch. 4, the archaeological evidence indicates a similar picture for the Pas-de-Calais: beyond La Calotterie, the recovery of other cemeteries showing elite presence and high percentages of gold and silver (such as in the proximity of Boulogne) points to a general enrichment of coastal communities during these centuries.

The role of maritime traffic in the development of Early Saxon coastal settlements can be especially seen if one looks at the distribution of items in gold and silver: they are clearly focussed on coastal areas and, in a wider perspective, in territories better connected with the maritime routes, that is the Isle of Wight and East Kent. This is clearly visible by comparing the distribution of gold and silver items in Sussex with those of the other Anglo-Saxon regions. Indeed, these precious goods in Sussex make up quite a small group, and they are mainly found close to the coast.[44] This smaller presence of luxury goods can be explained by the lower level of inclusion of Sussex in the maritime routes during this period.[45]

The distribution of imports and luxury goods can also be used to verify whether differences can be seen between cemeteries in relation to the wealth of the population. It is currently accepted that during the earlier Anglo-Saxon period households were relatively uniform among each other in terms of wealth, though they were internally ranked. Although the connection between assemblages and social status is not straightforward, since the choice of grave goods is also influenced by factors related to the age and sex of the individuals, as well as to their role

[44] On luxury materials in Sussex see Ch. 2.1, p. 62, and Map 2.7.

[45] Cf. Ch. 2.3. Concerning precious objects, it is to note that the hypothesis of an ongoing activity of recycling of Roman materials as sources for these metals cannot be excluded (cf. Fleming 2013). However, even if some of the objects made of gold and silver derived from recycling, the particular pattern of distribution they form in Southern England seems more likely to be connected with cross-Channel activity and thus to their importation from the Continent.

within the household, the internal ranking system through which the communities were shaped may be reflected in the different distribution of grave goods within a cemetery. This situation of low differentiation between households changes during the seventh century when, for instance, princely burials and settlements started to appear. Only during the seventh century, it is maintained, can we see the emergence of a settlement hierarchy.[46]

However, although important social changes occurred during the seventh century in connection with the development of the kingdoms and the process of Christianisation, the distribution of precious items and the comparison between cemeteries show that variations in portable wealth among communities can be identified also during the earlier period, thus suggesting the existence of a certain level of settlement differentiation/hierarchy during the sixth century as well. Such variations have already been examined. As is visible for instance in Ch. 3, the comparisons between the four larger Early Saxon cemeteries in Hampshire (Portway East, Worthy Park, Alton and Droxford) and Chessell Down as regards the presence of imports, luxury objects and number of types of imports per grave demonstrate clearly that the community buried in the Isle of Wight cemetery was richer than the others. Similar differences can be seen comparing East and West Kent. Furthermore, more important in this regard are the disparities perceivable between communities settled in the same region, as in the case of the four Hampshire cemeteries, among which Worthy Park and in general the Itchen Valley stand out.

It has been stressed in previous chapters that differences in excavations are likely to affect our picture of the distribution of settlements, artefacts and access to luxury materials, possibly

[46] On this see Härke 1997, 147: '(…) the social differentiation seen in cemeteries may reflect status differences within rather than between families and/or households. This picture changed from the late sixth century onwards, but most markedly during the seventh century. Parallel to signs of increasing social stratification in the burial evidence, we see in this phase the emergence of a settlement hierarchy and the appearance of larger buildings on high-status sites. The various elements of the settlement hierarchy develop from the early seventh century. By the end of the seventh century, at least three levels can be distinguished: rural settlements concerned with food production, trading sites engaged in craft production and commerce, and royal residences as centre of administration. Also from the seventh century onwards, ecclesiastical sites comprising churches, monasteries and episcopal palaces were forming their own settlement hierarchy.' See also Scull 2011a.

leading to a misplaced emphasis on the better or more completely excavated cemeteries. One of the areas most affected in this regard is the Isle of Wight, where no other cemetery can be used for comparison with Chessell Down. For instance, only three inhumations were excavated at Carisbrooke Castle, a site similar to Chessell Down in many regards, in that there is evidence of elite presence and later 'productive' sites in their proximity in each case.[47] Here, the different scale of excavation precludes direct comparison of the two Early Saxon sites in order to examine whether the population had similar access to foreign and precious materials, and a similar distribution of them among the burials. Hence, this example shows that we cannot be certain that the larger cemeteries were in effect the burial sites of the richest communities in a given area, and it is highly likely that new excavations will change the current picture.

Nonetheless, the fact remains that those cemeteries which appear as burial grounds of rich settlements were indeed so; the actual importance and centrality of the communities with the richest cemeteries is further suggested by other evidence, as we are about to see.

A hint of this is the presence of place-names with OE elements meaning ‘assembly’, ‘meeting-place’, ‘speech’, and others linked with religious meanings in the proximity of some of the Early Saxon funerary sites.[48] They seem indeed to suggest the continuing centrality of these areas. In East Kent, for example, Behr has connected the sites of Eastry and Finglesham with the nearby Woodnesborough, containing the element Woden, to suggests the existence of a royal centre connected to the cult of this god during the sixth century.[49] These places were certainly pivotal in structuring the territory, and it seems likely that their central role facilitated trading activities.[50] Their centrality was the basis for later developments which have been

[47] See Ch. 3.2, pp. 103.
[48] On OE elements for assembly sites see esp. Pantos 2004; Baker 2014.
[49] See Behr 2000.
[50] On the connections between early cemeteries and old monuments, and later assembly sites see also Williams 1997; 2002; Reynolds 2011, esp. 366-67 on Saltwood; Semple – Williams 2015. Assembly sites have been the focus of extensive research: see e.g. Pantos 2001; Pantos – Semple 2004; Semple – Sanmark 2013; Baker – Brookes 2013; 2015. On sites with religious significance see Semple 2010.

observed near assembly sites in some of these cases, as for instance at Bowcombe, which was the centre of a hundred and an important royal manor in Domesday Book.[51]

The likely connection between these sites and trading activity is supported by the proximity of some of them to places whose involvement in transmarine traffic is well attested. This is the case of Eastry, Finglesham and Woodnesborough, which lay close to the trading site at Sandwich.[52] Kent provides further examples of such connections, as visible at Saltwood, another area of Early Saxon cemeteries which was the meeting place of the hundred of Heane, in the proximity of the trading site at Sandtun.[53] Coastal location and thus proximity to landing places is to be noted also in the case of High and Lower Halstow, the first situated on the Hoo Peninsula at a short distance from the sea, the second across the estuary of the Medway. These two place-names are made up of the OE elements *halig*, meaning 'holy', and *stow*, '(gathering) place', so they may have been meeting places with some religious importance.[54]

The same connection between landing places and assemblies may also be drawn in the Isle of Wight, especially as regards Chessell Down and the above-mentioned possible cemetery on the south-western coast of the island, whose finds are included in the PAS. In the proximity of these sites, indeed, we can see a place called Mottistone, meaning 'the stone of the speaker(s) or pleader(s)', which thus suggests the existence of a meeting place.[55] In the Isle of Wight, another meeting place lay in the area of Bowcombe, which is a hundred in Domesday Book, and which appears to have been a focus of Early Saxon activity, close to the Carisbrooke Castle cemetery.[56] Mottistone and Bowcombe appear in the written sources only later, in Domesday

[51] On later developments in the area of Bowcombe see below n. 56; see Ulmschneider 1999, 29.
[52] The possible connection between Sandwich and these sites has been identified by Behr 2000, 43.
[53] On the identification of a meeting-place at Saltwood see Baker – Brookes 2015.
[54] On place-names with *stow* element see Baker 2014. On High and Lower Halstow, firstly recorded in c. 1100, see Gelling 1982, 192; Watts 2004.
[55] For the meaning of Mottistone see Kökeritz 1940, 164-65, connecting it with the nearby Long Stone menhir.
[56] On Bowcombe, Mottistone and other place-names referring to meeting places see Margham 2012. On the centrality of Bowcombe see also Ulmschneider 1999.

Book, so we cannot straightforwardly assume that these were the sixth/seventh-century meeting-places. Still, the link between later assembly sites and Early Saxon cemeteries in which part of the population had access to precious and foreign artefacts is notable, and suggests that these latter were situated in areas that were already nodal in the earlier centuries of Anglo-Saxon occupation.

Furthermore, the fact that many of the rich Early Saxon cemeteries lay near places with some centrality during later centuries is also stressed by the distribution of Mid-Saxon clusters of coins. Some examples of this pattern, which is visible in all the regions considered, have been examined in previous chapters, and they range from the large Mid-Saxon 'productive' sites in the Isle of Wight near Chessell Down and Carisbrooke Castle, to the smaller groups of coins found near Worthy Park in Hampshire and Alfriston in Sussex.[57]

These elements may help overcome the questions raised by the different scale of excavations about how to consider these rich communities within the broader context of their regions. They support the hypothesis that at least some of the cemeteries showing access to foreign and luxury goods during the fifth to the early seventh centuries were indeed sites of some importance, lying in nodal areas; and this is also evidence of the existence of some level of hierarchisation of settlement. Moreover, the coastal location of some of these nodal areas and their crucial relationship with landing places and trading sites points to the importance of the maritime network in shaping the Early Saxon landscape of power. Furthermore, evidence pertaining to the later period shows that there was some continuity of nodal areas and trading routes in the following centuries though, in some cases, within the context of major seventh-century political changes affecting the broader territory, as for instance the rise of Hampshire and the partial loss of centrality of the Isle of Wight.

[57] See Ch. 3.2, pp. 97-98; 103; Ch. 2.2, p. 70.

Thus, the Early Saxon evidence does not show a strong control of the transmarine routes by a restricted elite ruling over wide territories; instead it shows that direct access to foreign goods was possible for a large number of communities. As explained in the previous section, however, important differences among the regions are to be considered: in the case of Sussex, for instance, the rich objects coming from the long-distance network might have been restricted to a smaller number of people. This may be due to the reduced involvement of this territory in maritime routes, though, as we have seen, some direct connections with the Continent are likely to have existed.

A stronger link with a restricted elite in Southern England can only be seen from around the mid-seventh century onward, due to the development of the kingdoms, as the establishment of the major *emporia* testifies.[58] Although the existence of these trading sites is obviously significant in this regard, the presence of contemporary 'productive' sites complicates this picture: they show that the network of traffic involved a larger number of places, not only in the coastal areas but in the hinterland as well, as for instance visible in the recovery of a large number of Mid-Saxon coins in sites along the river Itchen, close to Winchester.[59] As already noted, the concentration of clusters of Mid-Saxon coins in areas with access to foreign items and precious goods in the previous centuries shows the continuity of the pattern of foci of interactions, as in the case of the Itchen Valley. This may suggest that the hierarchisation of settlement did not imply an orientation of the economic activity toward one particular site alone, i.e. the major *emporium*, nor the exclusion from trading activities of the other areas and communities.

A broadly similar process seems to have existed in the Pas-de-Calais where, in fact, precious objects from the fifth to the early seventh century are not clustered in La Calotterie only, but also in other rich cemeteries scattered along the coast. In this region, the orientation of trading

[58] See further below Ch. 8.
[59] See Ch. 3.2, pp. 97-98.

activities toward the *emporium* of *Quentovic* from the seventh century onward might have been stronger than in England, since the Frankish kings were much more powerful than their Anglo-Saxon counterparts, so that their control over ports and their capacity to direct trade might have been stronger. However, this picture is greatly affected by the difficulty of identifying 'productive' sites on a comparable scale to England, due to the prohibition of metal-detector use in France; and, moreover, as already examined, there are some elements pointing to the persistence of smaller harbours which, in some cases, acquired importance in later centuries.

Further considerations may be drawn from the recovery of luxury items in coastal sites of the Pas-de-Calais, where the coast appears as an area of concentration of precious objects.[60] A possible explanation for this focus is that this wealth may reflect trading activity with England. Indeed, these communities may have played a role as intermediaries, 'middlemen', between the hinterland of Francia and the maritime traffic in the Channel area. Thus, their access to precious items may reflect transactions with communities in the interior, which may have exchanged these items for goods imported from England, such as slaves (cf. Ch. 5.2). The uniqueness of the sarcophagus burial at La Calotterie in the context of the Pas-de-Calais cemeteries, as well as the rich grave goods found in other burials at this site, is significant in this regard, as it may signal the capacity for enrichment of this coastal community.[61] This might have been the case also for other cemeteries north of the Canche such as Pincthun (Echinghen), close to the Liane very near to Boulogne, where we have seen that more than half of the female burials contain gold and silver.[62]

6.3. *Exploiting natural resources: the production of iron and salt*

[60] See Ch. 4.1, pp. 124-25.
[61] See Ch. 4.1, n. 32 (p. 116); n. 40 (p. 119).
[62] See Ch. 4.1, n. 56 (p. 125).

In addition to transmarine traffic, an analysis of the exploitation of iron and salt offers perspectives on another possible source of enrichment for these communities, and on what could constitute the basis for the continued interest of kings and churches in coastal areas, as attested by later charters granting lands in these regions. Iron and salt are key goods capable of sustaining economic growth and in some cases, as discussed below, it is possible to connect the development of landed property in England and in France in part with a desire to control their exploitation. Moreover, this perspective on natural resources may enrich our understanding of the links connecting these coastal communities with their hinterlands, a fundamental aspect for which research is hampered by the very nature of the archaeological evidence, the vast majority of which derives from funerary sites. Indeed, the scarcity of excavated settlements makes it difficult to reconstruct the complex exploitation of the landscape operated by these communities. Furthermore, the overwhelming presence of grave goods in fifth/seventh century cemeteries, and the crucial role of the later *emporia* in long-distance trade, have strongly oriented the debate about coastal communities towards transmarine connections and traffic. This has neglected the connections these communities had with inland territories.[63]

Evidence for iron smelting in Early Anglo-Saxon England is remarkably scanty, and this has led to an important debate in recent scholarship concerning the origin of this metal. The scarcity of the evidence has even led to the suggestion that iron may have been imported into Southern England from the Continent: possible primary sources would include the rich iron-bearing lands of the Veluwe region in central Netherlands, which has been suggested as the productive area of iron for the *emporium* at Dorestad, and Scandinavia.[64] Another hypothesis is that the iron objects during the early centuries of the Anglo-Saxon period came mostly from a reuse of Late

[63] On the connections between the *emporia* and their hinterlands see Introduction, n. 13 (p. 5); 30 (p. 9).

[64] On the Veluwe region as possible source of iron see Harrington – Welch 2014, 136. On Scandinavia see Lang – Ager 1989, 113.

Roman ironwork.[65] Some crucial elements, however, strongly point to the existence of an exploitation of local sources in the Early Saxon period as well.

A large number of sources of iron are scattered through South-Eastern England: the most important of them is the Weald region, stretching through Kent, Sussex and Surrey, whose importance as a major iron-producing area in Roman Britain is well attested.[66] Interestingly, an extremely large number of undated bloomery sites have been detected in this area, some of which could be Early Saxon.[67] Other sources of iron in these territories are in the Blean forest and in the area of Dover in Kent, and in the western part of the Isle of Wight.[68] By comparing these areas with the distribution of Anglo-Saxon remains from the fifth to seventh centuries, it can be clearly seen that the communities of that period could have accessed the sources of iron very easily.

The most crucial element which may indicate an ongoing exploitation of local sources is represented by the quantity of iron recovered from Early Saxon sites, and in particular the percentage of people with iron objects in their graves. Looking at Kent and Sussex, these numbers turn out to be extremely high**,** as in the cases of Alfriston (78,2%), Highdown (72,3%) and Apple Down (83,5%).[69] Such percentages suggest that access to iron was widespread and remarkably easy in these regions, and this in turn does not fit well either with the hypothesis of an imported origin, or with that of recycled Late Roman ironwork. Concerning this latter hypothesis, it is indeed likely that recycling activities were an ongoing practice among the Anglo-Saxons during these centuries, as there are many indications of the widespread importance of this phenomenon. The scarcity of recovered remains of smelting activities in the Early Saxon period has been recently suggested by Fleming as proof that recycling was far

[65] Strongly stressing the reuse hypothesis is Fleming 2013.
[66] On the exploitation of iron sources in the Weald during the Roman period see e.g. Cleere – Crossley 1995, 57-86; Hodgkinson 2008, 30-34.
[67] On these undated bloomery sites see Harrington – Welch 2014, 114.
[68] On the localization of sites with iron see Harrington – Welch 2014, 104-21.
[69] See Harrington – Welch 2014, 122-36; on Sussex see also Fig. 2.4 (p. 68).

more common than the exploitation of new sources.[70] However, in addition to the proximity between settlements and local sources, it has to be considered that smelting activities might well have been carried out outside the settlements and thus not been archaeologically detected.[71] Some evidence for smelting outside settlements has for instance been recovered in the Rockingham Forest, an area outside the geographical limits of this research but which shows a large production of iron both in Roman and in Medieval times.[72] A spatial separation of smelting and smithing, moreover, has been suggested in the case of some of the Mid-Saxon settlements found in Southern England showing evidence for smithing. For these sites it has been proposed that smelting may have occurred as a seasonal activity during transhumance of animals in the area of the Weald.[73] There is no reason to think that a similar dispersion of iron-working activities should not also have been in place before the Mid-Saxon period.

In fact, the distribution of imports and luxury goods in Southern England shows that there were some rich communities close to the sources of iron ore during the Early Saxon period. This is particularly true in the case of the western part of the Isle of Wight, where an iron source has been detected near Chessell Down.[74] A similar picture of rich cemeteries near iron sources can be seen for instance in the areas of Dover and Lyminge in Kent, but also in general within the eastern part of that region.

The archaeological evidence thus suggests that the exploitation of iron resources may have had a role in the development of the rich coastal communities which we have seen to be included in the cross-Channel network. Moreover, as examined in previous chapters, the written sources show a process of appropriation of those coastal areas which were well integrated

[70] Fleming 2013.

[71] On the possibility that iron-working activity was carried out outside the settlements see Hamerow 2002, 190. See Birch 2011 on the choice of isolated places for this activity.

[72] On the Rockingham Forest see Foard 2001, 68, mentioning the presence of bloomeries outside the settlements, with reference to Bellamy – Jackson – Johnston 2000-2001.

[73] On this see Harrington – Welch 2014, 114-15 with reference to Hodgkinson 2000, who discusses the evidence from Friar's Oak, Hassocks in West Sussex.

[74] See Harrington – Welch 2014, 105.

within transmarine connections in the Early Saxon period by kings and monasteries, the latter of which started to be established in these places around the middle of the seventh century. The possibility that their interest in these areas was linked to a desire to gain control over both cross-Channel traffic and iron cannot be excluded. Fundamental hints at iron exploitation come from charters: probably the most famous of these is a document in which King Oswine of Kent grants iron-bearing land at Lyminge to the church of St Augustine at Canterbury. This late seventh-century charter (S 12, AD 689) shows the high value of possessing ore deposits for both monasteries and kings.[75] This charter states that this land was previously part of the royal property in this area, so it is highly likely that before the end of the seventh century iron-working activity was connected with royal power. Evidence for iron-working activity at Mid-Saxon Lyminge has been revealed by the recent excavation, and interestingly this includes both smelting and smithing,[76] thus perhaps suggesting the centralization of these activities. Crucially, it seems that iron-working on this site was ongoing even in the sixth century.[77]

The involvement of monasteries in iron-working has been identified in other sites in England, and Kent provides other examples of this process, for instance around the minster at Hoo in the western part of the region, where the excavations suggest smithing activity (though this is quite common on settlements).[78] There are also finds near the abbey of St Peter and St Paul (St Augustine's) at Canterbury which indicate both smelting and smithing, thus suggesting a link between the monastery and this craft production, as at Lyminge.[79] Moreover, royal control over iron seems to not have been limited to Lyminge: on the contrary, this is part of a process which can be seen in other areas of Kent. Royal lands are visible near other sources of

[75] On this charter see also Ch. 1.1, pp. 33-34.
[76] See Keys 2011; Ottaway 2012; Thomas 2013.
[77] See Thomas 2017. Cf. Ch. 1.1, n. 38 (p. 34).
[78] On smithing activity at Hoo see Moore 2002. Smithing slag was found in one of the enclosure ditches of a post-built structure. The Anglo-Saxon phase there has been dated to the Early/Mid-Saxon period, on the basis of pottery assemblage which includes also imported wheel-thrown greywares dated to the mid-sixth/seventh century.
[79] On this see Houliston 1999, 1-3: the pits containing evidence of iron-working are dated from the middle of the eighth to the mid/late ninth centuries; however, the recovery of earlier pottery (dating 575-725) might suggest that the site originated in the late sixth/seventh centuries.

iron, as in the area of the forest of Blean, which may have served the iron-working activity at Faversham, this also being the site of a royal estate centre.[80] The kings also had possessions at Dover, yet another area with iron sources which, as we have seen, shows cross-Channel contacts from the sixth century and where King Eadbald established a monastery in the first half of the seventh century.[81]

This control over resources by kings and churches which is visible from the seventh century can be recognised also for salt, the other key commodity under consideration. Before starting to discuss the evidence for salt-working, one must note that the involvement of kings and churches in the exploitation of coastal lands follows a similar process in England and France, although the picture of salt-production in the Merovingian kingdoms is more clearly visible, thanks to the larger quantity of written sources available for France.

The most important area for the long-distance trade of salt in France during the Carolingian period was the Loire estuary. In this region the written sources document the involvement of many monasteries in salt-production and trade; among these, Noirmoutier stands out thanks to its strategic position near the estuary of the river, but other ecclesiastical foundations, focused on the river in its hinterland, were also included in traffic passing along the Loire, which was a major route of communication.[82] Given the importance of salt-working activity, a royal presence there is not unexpected. The royal involvement in the Loire seems to have been shaped in an indirect way: the kings took possession of the profits derived from riverine trade, through the establishment of the toll station at *portus Vetraria* in the Tenu valley, where the salt storage areas were located. A royal presence in the area of *portus Vetraria* is already visible during the Merovingian period, as attested by the existence of a *fiscus*.[83]

[80] On royal presence in this area see Ch. 1.2, n. 97 (p. 49).
[81] On Dover see Ch. 1.1, p. 33.
[82] On this see also Ch. 8.3.
[83] On salt production along the Loire estuary see Bruand 2002, 185-202; 2008; Sarrazin 2008. See also Loveluck 2013, 202-3. On *portus Vetraria* see also Bourgeois 2005, 563.

Although the Loire was the most important area for this production, this activity and similar processes can be seen in other areas as well, as for instance in the Talou, near the mouth of the Seine. Even if this latter was probably less important for salt than the Loire, its mention in the *Gesta* of Fontenelle (VI, 2) is important, for it shows that there were indeed other areas involved in salt-production beyond the estuary of the Loire; although in a more restricted context, these areas might have had some role in trading routes too. It is also of interest to note that in this case the king may have been directly involved in this production.[84]

This structuring of salt-production can be also seen in some of the regions of Anglo-Saxon England considered in this thesis. Kent provides many examples: apart from its favourable geographic position along trading routes, the territory along the northern coasts of Kent, characterized by a wide presence of marshes, seems to have had some importance as a salt production area. Both drainage of marshes and salt pans are attested during the eighth century in the Hoo Peninsula: a charter dated 738 (S 27) allows us to see an involvement of both the king and the bishop of Rochester in salt production.[85] Another case is visible in the area of Lyminge during roughly the same period, when an original document granting lands there to the church of St Mary (S 23, AD 732) again suggests monastic involvement in salt-working. Here this production was carried out at Sandtun, the above-mentioned seasonal coastal site which has been, significantly, linked also with trading activity, attested by the recovery of Continental pottery.[86]

Given the importance of salt production and this recurrent pattern of landownership in these areas, it seems possible that the will to take possession of the exploitation of this resource was at the basis of the foundation of at least some of these monasteries, as for instance those at

[84] See Ch. 8.3, p. 224: the king gave to Fontenelle lands that included *salinae*.
[85] See Ch. 1.1, n. 67 (p. 41).
[86] On Sandtun see Ch. 1.1, n. 22 (p. 30).

Noirmoutier and at Hoo which, although to a lesser extent, may well have played a role in the trading of salt comparable to that of the Frankish monastery.

However, salt may have provided a solid economic basis in previous centuries too.[87] As seen in the previous chapters, it can be suggested that salt was at the basis of the development of some of the rich communities engaged in cross-Channel connections which are visible from the grave goods in around the fifth to seventh centuries. As for iron, this can be deduced on the basis of their locations. In many cases, these rich communities are settled in places where *salinae* are recorded in the previous and/or the later period. This can be seen on both the coasts of France and Southern England: along the coast of the Pas-de-Calais, this pattern is for instance visible in the area of the Canche, where salt production has been identified in Roman times, and some of these sites were active also in the Medieval period. In England, rich Anglo-Saxon communities can be found near places where salt production is documented in the Roman period or in Domesday Book. This can be for instance seen along the coast of Kent, but also in Sussex.[88]

Thus, the written sources show the appropriation of iron and salt by political powers, shaping a complex system of exploitation and trade which, in the case of the Loire, included the hinterland of the coastal areas, and also a similar pattern of landownership in both England and France. It seems likely that the establishment of monastic foundations in these areas was part of this same process, since religious foundations may have had an important role in controlling the territory and, hence, the network of resources.

Although it is undeniable that major developments occurred over the course of the seventh and the eighth centuries,[89] it is nonetheless possible that these resources played a role in the

[87] Bruand 2008, esp. n. 4, suggests the existence of salterns across the Loire estuary before the monasteries took possession of them. Outside the area of this research, Droitwich in Worcestershire is worth mentioning; see Ch. 6.1, n. 32 (p. 174).

[88] Cf. Ch. 1.1, pp. 34; 41; Ch. 2.2, p. 67; Ch. 3.2, pp. 99-100; Maps 1.4, 2.5, 2.5.1, 3.5, 3.9, showing rich cemeteries in relation to salterns listed in Domesday Book.

[89] See Hinton 2011, 426.

development of those rich communities which were included in cross-Channel traffic during the previous period. As already mentioned, the exploitation of iron and salt can cast some light on the links between coastal areas and their hinterland. Indeed, the fact that these resources are localized in particular areas implies that not all the settlements had access to them, and in the case of iron we have also seen that in some cases the various phases of iron-working, that is smelting and smithing, may have been carried out in different sites. Moreover, both iron and salt production needed a large quantity of wood, thus implying that these communities had access to this resource as well. A hint at the importance of wood is for instance visible in its inclusion in two of the Kentish charters of the eighth century (S 23, AD 732 and S 125, AD 786), where the supply of wood is specifically linked with salt production.

The fact that not all communities had access to the sources of iron, together with its extremely widespread presence among the grave goods in Early Saxon cemeteries, suggests that it may have been part of an exchange network also in this earlier period, implying that in some areas a surplus was produced. Interestingly, the distribution of iron in graves in Southern England shows higher percentages in communities located on the coasts;[90] this may suggest that some of them already had some control over this resource. Since iron and salt are basic commodities, their exploitation may have led to an intra-regional exchange within the areas considered, whereby these goods may have been exchanged between the communities which carried out these productions and those which did not have access to them. An exchange within a restricted area seems indeed the most likely scenario since, as we have seen, salt production is a common feature of all these coastal areas, while iron is widely present in Southern England. *Salinae* are in fact attested in all these regions so that the internal demand may have been covered locally, although at least in the Carolingian period the salt from the Loire reached Northern France as well. Similarly, English iron may have supplied an internal regional

[90] Cf. Harrington – Welch 2014, 127, noting this in their Phase A (up to the late sixth century).

demand, although differences as regards the importance of the sources have to be considered, as the Weald stands out for the wealth of its iron, while the other sources were more restricted.[91] By contrast, iron in the Pas-de-Calais may have been imported, since the territory contains no sources of iron; there is no evidence to suggest that it was exported from the Weald to Northern France, although it is possible. The internal demand for these resources is likely to have caused an enrichment of these communities, making the control over coastal areas still more valuable.

Thus, it seems possible that both the exploitation of natural resources and the inclusion in transmarine traffic played a key role in the development of some of the communities scattered along the coasts of the Channel; in the later period, both these elements may have been decisive in attracting the interest of kings and churches, with a similar process of appropriation of coastal areas in England and France. In Ch. 7, the relationships between Anglo-Saxons and Franks during the sixth century will be examined, followed in Ch. 8 by a consideration of the role of kings and monasteries in the trading network, and the developments of landholding in coastal areas as seen through the written sources.

[91] It is to be noted that the Weald is at some distance from the coast. However, Anglo-Saxon communities seem to have had easy access to this area through pathways connecting the coast with the hinterland. On the importance of these routes in Kent see Everitt 1986; Brookes 2007a, esp. 58, although he notes that there is little evidence to support that these routes, used for transhumance from the Mid-Saxon period, were used already in the Early Saxon period. On droveways linking Original Land settlements and the Weald in the Early Saxon period see id., 65.

Chapter 7. *Relations between the Anglo-Saxons and the Merovingians: the hegemony hypothesis*

The archaeological evidence points to wide contacts between Southern England and France throughout the centuries examined in this research, which are amply reflected in the shaping of the material culture. In addition to the transmarine traffic investigated so far, a web of political relations across the Channel is documented in written sources attesting to connections, sometimes strengthened through marriages, the most famous being perhaps that between King Aethelberht of Kent and Bertha, daughter of Charibert I, reported by both Bede and Gregory of Tours.[1] After this, other marriages and political relations in the upper echelons of the society are documented from the seventh century onwards.[2]

Still authoritative as regards the nature of the relationship between Anglo-Saxons and Franks is the hypothesis developed by Ian Wood in a seminal 1983 article, arguing for the hegemony of the Merovingians in the North Sea area and hence for some level of subordination of South-Eastern England to the Franks in the sixth and early seventh centuries.[3] Although with some caveats due to the context of the written sources, a certain level of Frankish overlordship over Southern England is still largely maintained by current scholarship; it is also supported by Hodges' conception of a close relation between the development of Kent as a kingdom and the expansionism of Merovingian Francia.[4] However, a re-examination of the evidence brought to support the hegemony theory and of the archaeological remains may lead to a different picture.

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[1] Bede, *HE* I.25; Gregory of Tours, *DLH* IV.26; IX.26.

[2] On these links see Wood's articles in the following footnote; also e.g. Fouracre – Gerberding 1996, esp. 100-5; Le Jan 2010; Wood 2011.

[3] Wood 1983; see also id. 1984; 1991; 1992; 1994b; 1997; 2010.

[4] See Hodges 1982, 35. Among the vast scholarship which still refers to the hegemony paradigm see e.g. Yorke 1997, 25-44 discussing Kentish history; Brookes 2007a, esp. 7-9 who however notes that 'these sources may record Frankish political aspirations rather than reality' (id., 8); Soulat 2011b, 62-63; Halsall 2013, 283-85; Harrington – Welch 2014, 174-210, esp. id., 209: 'If *Francia* did indeed drive the economic exploitation of lowland Britain by annexing the eastern tranche of Roman Britain, it may have imposed a hierarchical structure through the deployment of displaced North European groups over and amongst the indigenous population to act as their agents'. Particularly rich high-status finds in Southern England have been linked to a supposed Frankish hegemony: see Fischer – Soulat 2009 on Bifrons-Gilton type sword pommels, which would 'appear to be indicative of a brief implantation of Merovingian hegemony in Kent during MA 2', namely 520/30-560/70 (id., 77). Linking these finds with a political hegemony seems however based more on theoretical grounds than on the evidence, and

In fact, the written sources do not provide an uncontroversial basis to establish with certainty that the relationship between Franks and Anglo-Saxons was such that the former held hegemony over the latter. Nor is it particularly clear what this hegemony would have implied, and whether it was cultural, political or economic. When approaching its nature, Wood identifies as characteristics of the hegemony the fulfilment of obligations, one of which may have been military recruitment, and another the payment of tribute, both supporting Merovingian prestige.[5] Since obligations and tributes are attested by our sources as regards the peoples north and east of the Rhine, such as Saxons, Thuringians and Varni, Wood is certainly right in proposing that a Merovingian hegemony would have consisted of those features.[6] However, the written sources do not document the existence of obligations and tributes to be fulfilled by people on the other shore of the Channel.

The sixth-century Byzantine historian Procopius of Caesarea, who provides a major account of Justinian's wars against Persians, Vandals and Goths, represents one of the few sources for the Frankish claim of overlordship, to which he refers directly in the context of a description of a war between the Varni and the population of *Brittia*.[7] It must however be stressed that Procopius' knowledge of English matters was certainly not extensive and possibly non-existent, and clearly mediated through a Frankish perspective. These two issues are both particularly evident from his words.

In reporting the events concerning the land of *Brittia*, a term which cannot be found in any other source in these centuries,[8] he seems in fact to confuse it with Britain, which he understands

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the presence of these high-status artefacts has many other possible explanations, such as inter-elite exchange or the desire to show supra-regional links for the display of social status.

[5] Cf. Wood 1983, 11.

[6] Cf. Wood 1983.

[7] These events are narrated in Procopius, *Wars* VIII.xx; the Frankish claim of overlordship is mentioned in paragraphs 9-10.

[8] As revealed by a lexical search on the *TLG* database, Athanasius (fourth century) calls *Brittia* the Southern Italian region *Brutium*. A northern connection comes only with Joannes Kinnamos (twelfth century) who refers to the Βρίττιοι.

as a different land.[9] The problems concerning the identification of *Brittia*, which has been identified as Denmark or Britain, have long been discussed; the latter hypothesis, however, seems more reasonable. That *Brittia* should be identified as Britain is supported by Procopius' statement that this island was inhabited by three nations, *Angli*, Frisians and *Brittones*, which resembles Bede's narrative concerning the coming of the Angles, Saxons and Jutes.[10] Other elements which may stress this identification are the mention of an ancient wall dividing the territory, which is likely to have been Hadrian's Wall, and that of the people emigrating every year from *Brittia* toward the Frankish territory.[11] After reporting these migrations, Procopius tells us that during an embassy at Byzantium the Franks *claimed* authority 'over the island' on the basis of their power over this migrant people, to whom the Franks gave lands to settle. As already mentioned in Ch. 4, Procopius *might* be documenting the situation of the settlement of foreign people in the Pas-de-Calais, but he is not explicit about the area where these foreigners settled.[12] However, the likely authority of the Merovingians over these foreign groups cannot be seriously taken as proof of their power over their homeland; for here Procopius is referring to how the Franks wanted to have it appear to Byzantium.

Indeed, it is surely necessary to note that Procopius does not report that the Franks *had* an overlordship over *Brittia*, but that they *said* this was the case because they settled the immigrants on their own lands (VIII.xx.10 καὶ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τὴν νῆσον προσποιεῖσθαί φασιν 'and

[9] Cf. Procopius, *Wars* VIII.xx.4-6.

[10] Bede, *HE* I.15.

[11] Cf. Procopius, *Wars* VIII.xx.6-8 (on the three populations) and 43 (on the wall). See Jones 1996, 55-56 for an overview of the different hypotheses on *Brittia* and Britain. The identification of Procopius' Britain (Βρεττανία) as Brittany proposed by Thompson 1980 (who suggests that *Brittia* was in fact Britain) is questionable because in Procopius' Histories Βρεττανία is clearly the Roman island of *Britannia* (e.g. *Wars* III.ii.31 Βρεττανία δὲ ἡ νῆσος 'the island of *Britannia*'): note that in our passage (*Wars* VIII.xx.6) the historian refers his reader back to his previous description of Thule and Britannia (*Wars* VI.xv.4ff.). Still, Thompson 1980 usefully gathers the elements pointing to Procopius' confusion. On *Brittia* as Denmark cf. Stein 1949-59, 718-19 and Dewing's note to *Wars* VIII.xx.4 in his edition. On Procopius' poor knowledge of the Franks and *Brittia* see also Cameron 1985, 210-15 (esp. 214-15 on Brittia).

[12] Cf. Ch. 4.1, p. 112.

because of this they say the island belongs to them', where the verb προσποιεῖσθαι does mean 'attach to oneself' but also 'take to oneself what does not belong to one').[13]

It is interesting to highlight (though this is not part of the Frankish claims to overlordship) that in this chapter on *Brittia*, Procopius mentions that transmarine trading activity was ongoing between the isle of *Brittia* and the 'numerous villages' (κώμας παμπληθεῖς) settled 'along the coast of the Ocean which lies opposite to the island' (παρὰ τὴν ἀκτὴν τοῦ κατὰ τὴν Βριττίαν Ὠκεανοῦ νῆσον).[14] This is narrated in the context of the peculiar story of the dead souls crossing the Channel, whose ferrying by the people of these Continental villages was compensated by the Franks with the remission of the tribute.[15]

In general, the strong Merovingian perspective adopted by the written sources needs to be taken into full account when assessing them. This is especially true in the case of those passages reporting a Frankish claim of hegemony, not only as regards Procopius' report, but also in the case of the letter of Theudebert to the Emperor Justinian, another testimony of a Frankish embassy at Byzantium, and one which also makes claims to overlordship over neighbouring peoples.[16] Beyond considering the Frankish perspective underlying these claims, one must also take into full account that both were directed to the Byzantine Empire. In this regard, Theudebert's letter conveys the Frankish desire to show grandeur when confronting the Empire, putting himself on an equal footing by displaying power over their own neighbouring peoples; Procopius elaborates and reflects (ironically) on precisely this pretension.[17]

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[13] Cf. *LSJ* s.v. II.

[14] Cf. Procopius, *Wars* VIII.xx.49.

[15] The ferrying of the dead is in *Wars* VIII.xx.47-58; the tribute is in 49: 'Along the coast of the Ocean which lies opposite the island of Brittia there are numerous villages. These are inhabited by men who fish with nets or till the soil or carry on a sea-trade with this island, being in other respects subject to the Franks, but never making them any payment of tribute, that burden having been remitted to them from ancient times on account, as they say, of a certain service, which will be described by me' – that is, the ferrying of the dead souls. Although it is hazardous to say so given the fantasy involved, one can speculate that this remission concerned tolls relating to the transmarine trade.

[16] *Epistolae Austrasiacae* 20, dated to 534-547.

[17] The possible irony in Procopius's words may be seen in the use of the verb προσποιεῖσθαι (see above n. 13), but also because a claim based on the domination over immigrants is rather bizarre.

Furthermore, it is far from certain that Theudebert's letter did refer to the Anglo-Saxons. In fact, among other populations, Theudebert claims power over the *Eucii*, probably the Jutes.[18] Wood suggested that it should be assumed that these Jutes were those settled in Kent, as they were rather closer to Francia than those in Denmark.[19] Since, however, Theudebert's name is linked with the important event of the defeat of Danes during their raid on his father's territory, it seems at least equally possible that Theudebert referred, in fact, to Continental Jutes.[20] As a matter of fact, Theudebert claims that the Merovingian *dominium* extends from Pannonia to the east, *usque in oceanis litoribus*, 'up to the shores of the Ocean' – i.e. not beyond them.[21] It is also worth noting that wars against the Jutes (*Euthio*) are also mentioned by Venantius to exalt the figures of Chilperic and Chlothar and here the text most likely refers to the population of the Continent: they are in a list of Continental peoples, between the *Dani* and the Saxons.[22] Given the presence of small foreign groups in Francia, such as the Saxon populations documented by Gregory of Tours and mentioned in Ch. 4, one cannot exclude that here too the sources are referring to groups of Jutes settled in Jutland or in other Continental areas nearer than Denmark to the Frankish kingdoms.

A letter of 596 from Gregory the Great to the Frankish kings Theudebert II and Theuderic II, in which the pope asked the kings to help Augustine on his way to England, has been taken by Wood as another possible evidence for Frankish overlordship.[23] In fact, in this letter the pope might be mentioning the Anglo-Saxons as subjected to the Merovingians. However, this source

[18] *Epistole Austrasiacae* 20, 7-13: *Dei nostri misericordiam feliciter subactis Thoringiis et eorum provinciis adquisitis, extinctis ipsorum tunc tempore regibus, Norsavorum itaque gentem nobis placata maiestate, colla subdentibus edictis ideoque, Deo propition, Wesigotis, incolomes Franciae, septentrionalem plagam Italiaeque Pannoniae cum Saxonibus, Euciis, qui se nobis voluntate propria tradiderunt, per Danubium et limitem Pannoniae usque in oceanis litoribus custodiente Deo dominatio nostra porrigetur*.

[19] Cf. Wood 1983; id. 2010, 165.

[20] Cf. Gregory of Tours, *DLH* III.3: (…) *Dani cum rege suo nomen Chlochilaichum evectu navale per mare Gallias appetunt.*

[21] *Epistole Austrasiacae*, n.20.

[22] On Venantius' purpose see Wood 1983, 10. The mention of the Jutes is in Venantius, *Carmina*, IX, 1.73-4 (MGH, AA 4.1): *quem Geta, Vasco tremunt, Danus, Euthio, Saxo, Britannus, / cum patre quos acie te domitasse patet.* Also the Britons cited there are better seen as those settled in Gaul. Chilperic's efforts against Bretons are narrated by Gregory of Tours, cf. *DLH* V.26. Cf. Smith 1992, 17-19.

[23] Cf. Gregory the Great, *Register*, VI, 49.

is obviously a further example of a diplomatic context of display of power through a Merovingian perspective. As in the case of Procopius, it seems very possible that Gregory the Great had only a limited knowledge of England, which was surely mediated through the Franks.[24] Moreover, the text of the letter does not straightforwardly identify the Anglo-Saxons among the peoples subjected to the Franks. In the first part of the letter, Gregory praises the Franks for their conversion and states his presumption of their willingness to convert their subjected peoples. Then he introduces the Anglo-Saxons' own willingness to be converted and Augustine's mission. These two sections are in fact connected through a generic *atque ideo*, which should be translated 'in this regard / and so', implying analogy rather than consequence: the British *sacerdotes* were not helping the eager Anglo-Saxons, and Augustine will need Frankish help.[25] It is true that the expression *atque ideo* is ambiguous, but even if it was intended to convey a consequential meaning, it cannot be taken as a proof of the existence of overlordship, due to the pope's restricted knowledge of England – at most, he is here reporting the Frankish claim.

While both Procopius and Gregory the Great appear to have had only a limited and Frankish-mediated knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, Gregory of Tours was surely in a better position. One event reported in his *Decem Libri Historiarum* is relevant here. The bishop, as already mentioned, documents the marriage of Aethelberht and Bertha, which took place when the former was not yet king of Kent.[26] However, Gregory reports the event very briefly, telling us nothing about Aethelberht. This suggests that he was not very well informed or was not too interested in the Anglo-Saxons, who hardly appear in his work. It must be however noted that Bertha's sibling was a nun at Tours (*DLH* IX.33) and that Gregory personally knew Ingoberg,

[24] On Gregory's limited knowledge of Britain see e.g. Colgrave 1968, 2; Fisher 2014, 68.

[25] […] *magnam de vobis materiam praesumendi concepimus, quod subiectos vestros ad eam converti fidem per omni cupiatis, in qua eorum nempe estis reges et domini. Atque ideo pervenit ad nos Anglorum gentem* […] *velle converti* […]. On the use of *atque ideo* see Collins – McClure 2008, 20-21 suggesting that in this letter the Anglo-Saxons are not represented among the people subjected to the Frankish power.

[26] On the chronological problems for this event see Wood 1983; Wood 2010, 166-67.

Bertha's mother, who died in 589:[27] thus, the absence of any mention of the subjection of the Anglo-Saxons is more striking – if there was a Frankish political hegemony over Kent, Gregory must have known it, and there is no obvious reason why he should not mention it, since in many other cases he reports the tributes due from other populations to the Franks.[28] In addition, the two mentions of this same marriage by Gregory are quite different, the first describing Aethelberht as the 'man she married in Kent', the second as 'the son of a certain king of Kent'.[29] This difference is interesting since it has been recognised that the bishop of Tours uses the term *rex* only when referring to independent political entities.[30] Although one could relate this to Gregory's limited knowledge of England, the absence of any mention of overlordship and the use of this terminology are important evidence against a political subjection.

The fact that Bertha was a royal figure of secondary importance, as her father was probably already dead, and not succeeded by sons, when the marriage took place, has been proposed as proof that the Franks considered the Anglo-Saxons as not on their same level.[31] This was surely the case, and indeed the situation of Kent in the late sixth century cannot be compared to the much more powerful and influential Merovingian kingdoms: but, again, the inferiority of Kent is not a proof of its subjection. A *cultural* subjection of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms may explain other evidence for dynastic links, as for instance the presence of Frankish-related names in Anglo-Saxon royal genealogies, such as Sigbert, son of King Redwald, both of whom had strong contacts with the Merovingians.[32] Indeed, this name choice displaying royal links with the more powerful Franks may well have been used by the Anglo-Saxon kings to show their impressive connections and hence to promote their own status.

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[27] On this see Wood 1983, 15. Ingoberg sent for Gregory when feeling death approaching: *DLH* IX.25.

[28] On the mentions of tributes due by other populations to the Franks in Gregory of Tours and Fredegar see Wood 1983; 1992.

[29] Gregory of Tours, *DLH* IV.26: *in Ganthia virum accipiens est deducta*; IX,26 *in Canthia regis cuiusdam filius*.

[30] On the use of *rex* by Gregory see Hedeager 2005, 501.

[31] Cf. Wood 1983.

[32] See Wood 1983, 14, stressing the Frankish links of Sigbert's name and that Sigbert, after his father's death, went to Francia.

The uneven level of the two kingdoms may also explain the famous mention of enslaved people brought *trans mare* which is reported in the *Pactus Legis Salicae* (39.2). This mention has been taken as further evidence for the Merovingian hegemony over England, a hint that the Franks had some influence over Anglo-Saxon tribunal jurisdiction for this reason.[33] However, the inclusion of such a law may easily be explained by the effectively greater power of the Merovingians, without implying any subjection. As the evidence stands, this law may simply attest to some agreement between the two parties. Moreover, as Wood has rightly noted,[34] it is also possible that the other party to which the law is referring were not the Anglo-Saxons but other people toward whose territory the maritime routes were used – as in the case of the populations north of the Rhine, such as the Frisians, for whom maritime activity is well attested. As they were certainly subjected at some level to the Merovingians, Wood's suggestion that a hegemony was necessary for this rule to be accepted by foreign tribunals may well apply to them. In any case, however, the legal nature of this source should be noted, that is, we cannot be sure that the regulations established were in fact applied; the *Pactus* may not reflect reality.

Thus, this small corpus of written sources does not allow us to put on the same level the hegemony the Franks had over some of the populations north of the Rhine and their relations with the Anglo-Saxons. Indeed, the relations with England as they appear from the sources are not shaped through obligations and tributes – if they were, it is surely strange that they are never mentioned, just as neither are rebellions, wars and the like, which are attested by the written sources and appear endemic in the relations between the Merovingians and their subjected peoples on the other side of the Rhine. Thus, though it is undeniable that the Franks were by far the most powerful people in the North Sea zone, an understanding of their relations within the framework of overlordship is misleading.

[33] Cf. Wood 1983, 12-13.
[34] Cf. Wood 1983, 13.

Wood is surely right that Frankish authority was 'a matter of prestige',[35] but this reconsideration of the written sources and the distribution of the archaeological remains may allow us to consider the relations between Franks and Anglo-Saxons in a different perspective.

We have seen that the goods imported from Francia into Southern England in this period are distributed through a scattered pattern essentially based on access to the sea; thus, in the areas most strongly connected within the maritime routes, these objects are not restricted to a small number of cemeteries. Moreover, again in these more tightly linked areas, Frankish objects seem to be connected to the display of status. This use is not, however, restricted to the later princely burials which Wood uses to stress the hegemony theory;[36] on the contrary, we have observed it throughout the fifth and sixth centuries in a wide number of cases. This is an important point since, if political overlordship was in place, the distribution of imports would arguably have been more limited to the uppermost echelons of society. Furthermore, the 'incorrect' wearing of imported brooches in some coastal cemeteries of East Kent is surely significant, for it demonstrates that some Kentish women had access to these goods but did not know how to use them in proper Frankish fashion.[37] This may indicate that these communities had only indirect contacts with the Continent; that is, these items reached England through the transmarine network, without the presence of foreign people among the population who would know how to wear them in the 'correct' Frankish fashion.

This far-flung presence of Frankish items and their widespread use to convey status is better ascribed to an *influence* from the Merovingian side in the context of an uneven economic and political balance, rather than an actual political hegemony, for which we do not have any uncontroversial evidence, but for which we do have a significant silence where we should have expected otherwise. A far-reaching influence of the Franks over the Anglo-Saxons is indeed

[35] Cf. Wood 1983, 11.
[36] See Wood 2010, 170-72. On Sutton Hoo see esp. Wood 1991.
[37] On the use of imported jewellery by Kentish women see Owen-Crocker 2004, 91-92.

undeniable; and, as stressed by Wood, this can be recognised, apart from the political sphere shown by the marriages, also in religious and legal contexts.[38] Concerning the uneven balance, as already mentioned, the small Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of the late sixth and seventh centuries cannot be compared to the already structured and far richer Merovingian kingdoms, which were the most powerful political entities of Western Europe in this period. The prestige of the Merovingians and the inferiority of the Anglo-Saxons made it possible for the links with the Franks to have been used by the Anglo-Saxon elite, as is visible in the cemeteries, to enhance their power by displaying their powerful connections.[39] In this sense, the relationship was more advantageous for the Anglo-Saxons. As discussed above, moreover, the distribution of luxury goods made in precious materials, and other elements – such as the later presence of important places (e.g. assembly sites) in proximity to rich early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries – suggest the development of these communities through transmarine traffic; thus, relations with Franks would have been profitable in this regard as well, as the enrichment derived from the traffic with Francia is likely to have underpinned the power of Anglo-Saxon elites within their own territory. But none of these features require Frankish overlordship; merely Frankish maritime connections.

The hegemony paradigm, finally, may overshadow the wider perspective in which England should be considered, namely the broader context of the Channel and the North Sea area. Although the Franks were the most powerful people with whom the Anglo-Saxons had strong contacts, it is also most likely that Southern England had relations with other areas of Northern Europe. Wide links with the Continent beyond the Franks can be seen through archaeology, and some of the non-Frankish imports had an important role in the display of status.[40] It is

[38] See Wood 1983; 2010. On the Frankish involvement in the Christianization of England see also Wood 1994b.

[39] On Frankish grave goods in Kent see Halsall 2013, 284-85, suggesting that these might 'represent a claim to a Frankish identity' in the sense of 'a political ethnicity' (id., 285). In addition to this, however, the choice to put luxuries and imported items in burials may also display a will to show the wealth and status of the family, and its possible enrichment through traffic with the Continent.

[40] On links between England and the North Sea area see Nicolay 2014, e.g. 238-44 on bracteates.

possible that alliances and marriages happened in these cases as well. Although the reliability of this event is very uncertain, Procopius might be referring to such circumstances when he narrates the troubled wedding between the unnamed Anglian princess of '*Brittia*' and Radigis, son of Hermegisclus king of the Varni.[41]

[41] Cf. Procopius, *Wars*, VIII.xx. Procopius narrates that the king of the Varni Hermegisclus settled a wedding between his son Radigis and the sister of the king of the Angles. Then, after an alleged prophecy by a bird, he changed his mind and preferred his son to be married with his step-mother, the sister of Theudebert: this would have strengthened the alliances with the Franks, safeguarding the kingdom of the Varni. However, the enraged Anglian princess led war against the Varni in the area of the Rhine delta and, having captured Radigis, made him marry her. On Radigis and Theudechildis, the sister of Theudebert, see Martindale 1992, 1074 and 1233 respectively. It seems however possible that the Angles of this story were those settled on the Continent. See further Wood 2011, 445-46, also noting that Radigis and the East Anglian king Raedwald have the first name element in common.

Chapter 8. *Kings and monasteries in the transmarine network*

In the first four chapters on England and Francia we have seen that the written sources show a process of appropriation of coastal lands by kings and churches, which was orientated toward those lands that most clearly formed part of the pre-existing exchange network, or else lands with high economic potential in terms of natural resources. In general, this broad process can be followed from the seventh century, and involves the establishment of monasteries which began to be founded from around the middle of the century. Admittedly, however, because the written sources start only from the seventh century, this chronology is at least partially incomplete. A royal presence is already visible in the sixth century in zones particularly important for maritime traffic, such as the area around Canterbury.[1] It is only from the seventh century, however, that a substantial monastic presence is documented in our regions, and that, at least, cannot be earlier in England, for it obviously fits the overall chronology of ecclesiastical development there. It also, as explained in Ch. 4, fits the Pas-de-Calais;[2] but in the Frankish case, as we will see, the sixth century represents the starting point for ecclesiastical foundations in other coastal areas, as for instance the territory of the Seine. Even in this case, however, the most prominent monastic foundations across the estuary were established in the second half of the seventh century.[3] Thus, while the seventh century undoubtedly represents a crucial period of socio-economic developments, in some of these cases royal and occasionally ecclesiastical presence was earlier.

The sources pertaining to the coastal areas of Francia clearly highlight this long-term process of appropriation. In fact, as was seen in Ch. 4 and will be examined below in relation to other territories within the Merovingian kingdoms, the appearance of royal lands and palaces and

[1] See Ch. 1.3, p. 53.
[2] See Ch. 4, n. 1 (p. 107).
[3] See Ch. 8.3.

monasteries show a structured pattern in the proximity of all the major routes of communication and trade, and, in particular, in the proximity of the mouths of the main rivers.[4] In England, a strong royal interest in possessing coastal lands can be seen through later charters and Domesday Book – the use of Domeday Book being based on the working hypothesis that at least in some cases a gap in the picture of documented lands granted by kings may reveal a continuous royal presence.[5]

In general, the written sources for both England and the Continent show some royal control over exchange, which is highlighted by the presence of toll collection points and royal officials in the *emporia*. We have seen that the scholarly debate on the nature of the transmarine traffic and indeed of the very nature on the *emporia* is strongly focussed on the role the kings had in this network. Indeed, royal control over transmarine traffic has been used to explain the establishment of the trading sites in the first place, and taken as the basis for the power and development of kingship, especially by Hodges and Saunders.[6]

However, as mentioned in the Introduction, a royal presence in the major *emporia* (visible through royal lands in their proximity and toll collection points) cannot be taken as evidence of total royal control over maritime traffic, both at the points of entrance of transmarine materials, and as regards the internal redistribution of the objects. The evidence suggests a different picture. As we have seen, both the identification of the Mid-Saxon 'productive' sites in England, and the written sources in the Pas-de-Calais, suggest that the transmarine web was more complex and inter-related than one based only on the most important nodal points (e.g. the estuaries of the main rivers and the *emporia*).[7] This is clear if one looks at the evidence for the territories surrounding the two trading centres at *Hamwic* and *Quentovic*. In the case of the

[4] For the Pas-de-Calais and the area of the Somme see Ch. 4.2.2.
[5] On royal lands in Domesday Book see Ch. 1.2, p. 49; Ch. 8.2, p. 220.
[6] Cf. the Introduction.
[7] See Ch. 3.3, pp. 104-5; Ch. 4.2.2, p. 139.

Solent we can list, apart from *Hamwic*, the two productive sites on the Isle of Wight, the possible port on the Humble, a possible landing site as suggested by the place-name Hythe on the other side of the Southampton Water, perhaps another landing site on the mouth of the Avon, and a large number of probable harbours in the area of Portchester.[8] In the Pas-de-Calais, the distribution of the possible landing sites is such that the entire coastal area of the region may have been integrated in the maritime routes.[9] Thus, that the kings held a full control over such a widespread pattern of ports does not seem likely: instead, it seems most probable that they controlled access through toll collection points in the most important places, like the *emporia*.[10]

If we accept that royal control did not extend over the entire volume of these exchanges, the foreign and luxury items which we find in excavations do not always need to have been the result of a royal redistribution; that is, seventh-century elites almost certainly had access to these goods without the involvement of the king. This consideration partially undermines the claimed differences between the earlier centuries (sixth/early seventh) when, as discussed above, the evidence shows that the inflow of imports was not controlled by a very restricted elite, and the period of the *emporia*. Thus, the role of royal control in our understanding of cross-Channel exchange, and hence of the *emporia*, should be put in perspective. Neither sixth-century transmarine exchange nor the seventh-eighth-century, more developed, trading sites can be understood only as the result of the kings' desire to have access to luxuries to support their power among the elite. The theoretical framework of the model proposed by Hodges and Saunders is that of a prestige goods economy, where luxury items would have a central role for

[8] See Ch. 6.1, pp. 168; 172-73.
[9] See above Ch. 6.1, p. 169.
[10] On tolls and *emporia* see the Introduction. Loveluck 2007, 127 suggests that the widespread presence of beach sites 'demonstrates a potential complexity perhaps beyond the ability of kings to regulate totally'. The cases listed by Loveluck included also Sandtun-West Hythe in Kent: however, given the short distance between this trading site and Lyminge, it seems likely that in this case it was linked to the royal and then monastic presence in the latter.

maintaining and increasing the power of kings, who redistributed these items to their followers.[11] However, for this to be true, the kings would have needed complete control over the exchange of prestige goods, which is highly unlikely given the articulated pattern of commercial sites.[12] Indeed, as we have seen, over the last decades Hodges' model of a monopolistic control by kings has been challenged, and now it is mostly understood in terms of control of taxation, which is suggested as the reason for the royal interest in trade.[13]

One important element that adds complexity to this picture is that, apart from taxing the goods passing through the *emporia*, the kings were also most probably themselves engaged in profitable productive activities. Since the written sources tell us almost nothing about their involvement in production, at least in coastal zones, but they do report their control over the *emporia* in terms of tolls and protection, scholars tend to explain their role primarily in this latter sense. However, as examined in the previous chapters, the sources show that royal presence on the coasts and especially across the estuaries was strong, and their presence near the major *emporia* seems likely to have included both palaces *and* estates. Thus, in addition to serving as toll collection points, these centres may have been involved in the production of goods which then were sold at the trading sites. As already mentioned, salt working in the Talou may represent an example of a royal involvement in this production.[14]

As already seen, many of the seventh-century monastic foundations were tightly connected to royal politics: this link is most clearly visible in Kent, where the monasteries at Minster-in-Thanet, Reculver and Dover are important examples of this process.[15] The location of these

[11] See the Introduction.

[12] Cf. Saunders 2001, 11: 'The use of gifts for reinforcing royal power could only be maintained through the regulation and control of their supply. An open and unchecked circulation of gifts would undermine the use of prestige goods as symbols of royal authority. The success of early mediaeval kings in securing alliances and concealing class conflicts was subject to the tight monopoly of either the production or exchange of prestige goods'.

[13] On the involvement of kings in trade mostly for toll collection see Hinton 1996, 100; 1999; Astill 1985; Samson 1999; Carver 1993, 57; Naylor 2004, 129-34. Cf. the Introduction.

[14] See below Ch. 8.3, n. 70 (p. 224).

[15] See above Ch. 1.2.

minsters suggests that transmarine traffic may well have provided an important stimulus for their foundation. In this sense, another example in Southern England may perhaps be the foundation of the bishopric at Selsey in West Sussex, which lay in a favourable area to be involved in traffic through the Solent Channel.[16] While ecclesiastical centres have long been recognized as sites of central importance for economic development,[17] it must be noted that in these cases they were established in areas already involved in the transmarine network, and the choice to found monasteries there may have been linked to a will to strengthen the control over areas of particular interest. As seen in the previous chapters, we should rethink regional evolution in this perspective: a pivotal case in point is that of the 'productive' sites, whose origin has been linked by Ulmschneider to an ecclesiastical stimulus. This latter idea has been challenged by Naylor, who suggests that other economic actors may have been involved – and the settlement at Flixborough in North Lincolnshire may be a pivotal case in this regard.[18] Indeed, Loveluck has compared the secular estate centre at Flixborough with that at Portchester in Hampshire, and the recent excavation at Lyminge has shown another possible trajectory of development, namely that from a royal estate to a monastic centre.[19] Whatever the actual Mid-Saxon origin of these sites, which is likely to have been different on a case-by-case or regional level, the issue should be addressed by considering what had been their context in the previous centuries. So, we have seen that both cases of 'productive' sites on the Isle of Wight, and possibly also that of the smaller cluster of coins near the cemetery at Alfriston in Sussex,[20] present a similar evolution: that is, they appear in the Mid-Saxon period in places where the archaeological record reveals particularly rich Early Saxon communities. Thus, their roots must

[16] See Ch. 2.2, p. 71.

[17] On the importance of monasteries in this sense see Hodges – Whitehouse 1983; Blair 1988; 2005; Ulmschneider 2000; Naylor 2004, esp. 129-33.

[18] On this idea see Ulmschneider 2000, esp. 87-88, and the discussion by Naylor 2004, esp. 131-32. Cf. the Introduction. On Flixborough see below Ch. 8.1.

[19] On Portchester see Loveluck 2012, 163; on Lyminge see Ch. 1.1, p. 32. On 'productive' sites and places connected with trade and production activities in Hampshire see Ulmschneider 2000, esp. 83-92.

[20] On Alfriston see Ch. 2.2, p. 70.

be understood starting from the Early Saxon network, in terms of a continuity in the routes of traffic. An analogous process, in fact, seems to underlie many seventh-century monastic foundations, as well as the estate centres at Portchester and Lyminge.

In addition to royal and ecclesiastical interest, we should also look at the involvement of elite laymen in trade.[21] Indeed, the charters show that the process of appropriation of coastal lands did not involve only kings and churches, although laymen in Southern England can be seen more clearly in the written sources only from the eighth century. However, an earlier date is the starting point for the visibility of lay landowners in France, and among the charters pertaining to them one of the most important sources is certainly the will of Bertram, bishop of Le Mans, dated 616.[22] From this document, we find out that Bertram's family owned estates near the mouth of the rivers Dordogne and the Garonne, as well as along the Seine near Rouen. Another interesting charter of the Merovingian period attesting lay presence on the coast south of the Seine is the late seventh-century will of Wademir and Ercamberta, based near Paris, from which we know that they held lands along the coast of Normandy near Bayeux.[23] The documentation of Bertram and Wademir, taken as examples, highlight the widespread diffusion of aristocratic lay property in Merovingian times, and the possible involvement of laymen in maritime-related activities. As already examined in Ch. 4, moreover, a fundamental process documented in Francia from the seventh century which must be considered when addressing the involvement of aristocrats in economic activities, are lay monastic foundations.[24] In fact, some of these were established in areas well positioned along the trading routes, as for instance those of Vulmarus along the coast of the Pas-de-Calais, and those in the area of the Scheldt Valley.[25] Concerning England, the substantially larger group of charters for Kent makes this

[21] See Naylor 2004, esp. 129-34.
[22] On Bertram's will see Weidemann 1986.
[23] ChLA n. 571.
[24] Cf. Wickham 2005, esp. 172-73.
[25] See Ch. 4.2.1, p. 129; Ch. 4.2.2, p. 134.

area the Anglo-Saxon region where the involvement of elite laymen can be best perceived although, since the Southern England charters are fewer than those for Francia, here lay property is less visible overall. Some interesting examples can nonetheless be highlighted. Indeed, as seen in Ch. 1, the desire of laymen to hold areas giving access to natural resources and maritime activities is probably visible in the territory of Romney Marsh in the south of Kent, where the grants of lands by kings to the laity start in the eighth century, and which was an important area for salt production.[26]

The appropriation of strategically located lands to gain access to trading routes and resources is also visible when we look at broader political processes. As already explained, for example, an important reason for the West Saxon conquest of the Isle of Wight at the middle of the seventh century is likely to have been a wish to take over its centrality in maritime traffic.[27] The development of the Kentish kingdom may be another example, since, with the enlargement of East Kent to include the Western part, the kingdom acquired access to the river Thames.

In a comparative perspective, the written sources suggest a partially different orientation of the Anglo-Saxon and Merovingian kingdoms. In fact, a more substantial focus on the coasts is visible in the case of the Anglo-Saxon regions discussed here, where Kent again is a clear example, showing royal centres and lands over the entire coastal area. In contrast, although the location of coastal royal palaces in the proximity of the mouths of the main rivers in Francia suggests a strong connection with transmarine traffic, the centres of Merovingian political power lay inland. However, this difference is probably due, at least partially, to the substantially different size of the Anglo-Saxon and the Merovingian kingdoms. Moreover, Canterbury and other similar Roman sites already lay close to the sea, and we have previously seen that they constituted important foci of elite settlement from the start. These issues apart, the link with the Channel in the fifth to early seventh centuries may have been more structurally central for the

[26] On Romney Marsh see Ch. 1.2, p. 51.
[27] See Ch. 3.3.

kingdoms of Southern England, since trade with the Continent may have provided a more solid basis of enrichment than it did for the vast lands of the Frankish kingdoms – it may be not a matter of chance that the earliest fulcrum of Kentish power lay in the East.

Thus, the archaeological evidence has highlighted that in the sixth to early-seventh centuries important cross-Channel contacts and transmarine traffics were already in place; hence, the kings did not establish the network of exchange. The distribution of archaeological evidence, moreover, shows that a system of diffusely scattered landing sites continued to be in place in the later period too, even if it was by now accompanied by the major development represented by the *emporia* (though Kent had a partially different development). This complex pattern suggests the continuing involvement in traffic of other actors besides kings and churches. In general, we have seen that Southern English elites and kings grew richer through maritime traffic; this role of cross-Channel exchange in supporting socio-economic development may have had a more important role in the case of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms – though, as we have seen, the pattern of landownership suggests a substantial interest of elites in coastal lands in Francia too. From the seventh century, the written sources tell us that the kings controlled exchange essentially through the collections of tolls and the regulation of trade, rather than a monopolistic control over trade. However, the wide presence of royal lands may suggest that the kings also entered in this traffic as producers. While evidence for this is admittedly scanty, this may be linked with the nature of the extant documentation, almost entirely composed of charters granting lands or toll exemptions to churches.

Concerning the ecclesiastical institutions, we start to see monastic foundations around the middle of the seventh century, and from that period onward they appear to be involved in economic activities and trade. As already seen, their locations and the royal links they display suggest that these monasteries were established in strategic areas, to strengthen control and better exploit a still existing traffic. If we understand the rise of the major *emporia* as a

structuration of an existing trading network, the strong involvement of monasteries in transmarine traffic signifies that we should look also at ecclesiastical institutions in leading these changes: the appearance of centres deeply anchored in a territory may have been fundamental for the rise and flourishing of structured trading sites.[28]

8.1. *Flixborough*

The importance of monasteries in structuring their surrounding territory does not mean that other actors did not take part in this process. Although it lies in an area well beyond the geographical limits of this thesis, one important case in this regard is the Anglo-Saxon settlement of Flixborough in North Lincolnshire, which was in a strategic position close to the river Trent and near the estuary of the Humber, a major route for transmarine trade in Northern England; thus, it shares a similar location with the coastal areas already considered.

The excavations of this site show that the settlement was occupied from the middle of the seventh to the early eleventh century, and then between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries.[29] However, the recovery of Early Saxon local wares and artefacts such as a mid-sixth century great square-headed brooch indicates an earlier occupation of the area between the fifth and the earlier seventh century.[30] It has been suggested that, during the eighth century, Flixborough was a secular rural estate centre, displaying strong evidence for an aristocratic presence.[31] Apart from imports, there is evidence for feasting (glass drinking vessels probably imported from the

[28] See further the Conclusion.

[29] The results of the excavations at Flixborough have been published in Loveluck – Atkinson 2007; Loveluck 2007, Dobney *et al.* 2007, Evans – Loveluck 2009. See also Loveluck 2001.

[30] On the great square-headed brooch see Hines in Evans – Loveluck 2009, 3-4. On the phases of occupation see Loveluck – Atkinson 2007.

[31] Cf. Loveluck 2007, 147: in the earlier phase (the second half of the seventh century) there is indeed evidence for high-status presence, for example in terms of long-distance imports and craft working, but 'before the eighth century, discard strategies within the excavated area do not provide sufficient certainty to claim that the trends observable were shared by the settlement as a whole', and Loveluck warns against the use of the 'high status' label.

Rhineland, Belgium or Northern France) and hunting, and a high degree of consumption. Then, important changes would have occurred in the settlement, which, from the early to the mid-ninth century, appears to have been an ecclesiastical or monastic site. In the following period, the site reveals other major changes, and in the tenth century it appears as a manorial centre.[32]

Flixborough shows evidence for craft working, such as textile and iron working, indicating a strong interaction with the surrounding territory and an intensification of the management of resources.[33] Exchange is visible as well, and before the end of the seventh/early eighth century the finds indicate inter-regional and long-distance connections with Eastern England and the Continent.[34] In this sense, Flixborough is not unique, since imports, such as continental pottery, have been found in many other sites across the estuary of the Humber, reflecting the importance of the river in the transmarine routes and thus the easy access of long-distance items by these communities.[35]

In this regard, Loveluck is certainly right in his critique of a too generalized use of the 'high status' label: as he points out for the area of the Humber, and as discussed in previous chapters for the regions considered in this thesis, areas with easier access to transmarine exchange (as East Kent and the Isle of Wight) show a high level of imported materials which is notably widespread across the population: thus, the connections between imports and social status must be assessed differently according to the territories' stronger or weaker inclusion in the network.[36]

[32] See Loveluck 2007, 147-63 for a discussion of the socio-economic development of the settlement throughout the centuries of its occupation.

[33] Loveluck 2007, 150: in the context of the eighth-century phase, Loveluck suggests that: '(…) even though the resources of the settlement's territories, and the skills of artisans, were used disproportionately in the support of an elite lifestyle for one or a number of leading households, the settlement cannot be characterised as a 'consumer' site, alone. A complex range of activities by the whole social spectrum on the inhabitants has resulted in a composite profile which can be described as one of 'conspicuous consumption', in terms of how resources were used, and how they were thrown away'.

[34] Evidence for exchange is assessed in Loveluck 2007, 112-29.

[35] Loveluck 2007, esp. 113.

[36] Cf. Ch. 5.2, p. 161-62. On this see Loveluck 2001, 111-12; Loveluck 2007, esp. 147.

However, the presence of long-distance and inter-regional materials remains significant, even in the areas most strongly included in the network. On the one hand, although in these territories a larger part of the population had access to imports, not all the individuals were buried with them (at least in the southern regions considered), which signifies that only certain people had the means to obtain them. On the other hand, communities in strategic areas, as we have seen, may have played a role of intermediaries between the sea and the inland territories: the presence of imports implies something given in return, even within non-commercial mechanisms.

Critiques have been moved to the identification of eighth-century Flixborough as an aristocratic site, since for instance the recovery of metal *styli* there may suggest that it was a minster.[37] Although the nature of the eighth-century site remains debated, the role of secular aristocratic centres in the development of coastal areas must not be underestimated. In our southern regions, the presence of rich Early Saxon cemeteries may be a hint of a similar development. To be sure, areas like the peninsula of Selsey in West Sussex, where there is little archaeological evidence for the fifth/early seventh century but where religious foundations are attested from the Mid-Saxon period, may indicate that the socio-economic development was strongly due to monastic involvement. On the contrary, the spread of imports in territories such as East Kent or the Itchen Valley in Hampshire may suggest an aristocratic presence in the Early Saxon period, before the development of monasticism.[38] A focussed research on the Humber would certainly be necessary, but it seems possible to compare it with East Kent: their highly strategic position along maritime routes may have fostered elite interest and development from an early period; and indeed Continental connections and possibly a high-status presence has been identified at Flixborough even before the eighth century.[39]

[37] See Moreland 2000b (2010, esp. 225-28); Blair 1996b, 9; Blair 2011, suggesting that late seventh/eighth-century Flixborough was a religious site.
[38] See Chs. 1.1 and 3.3.
[39] See above n. 30; 31; 34.

The following sections present the documentary evidence from other territories, all of which confirm that the connections between royal lands, ecclesiastical foundations and economically productive areas which we have seen do not represent isolated cases. I do not here set out the archaeological evidence, for these regions are introduced here only for comparative purposes. Future work will be needed to test the full significance of these comparisons, but they are still worth presenting, as we will see.

An important case worth investigating is the Thames Valley (8.2), for which we have a fairly large group of charters dated prior to the ninth century, clearly showing the spread of royal lands in pivotal areas for trade. In general, the region's primary importance along the network of communication and traffic is stressed, of course, by the presence of the *emporium* at *Lundenwic*. Then, Normandy and the estuary of the Loire (8.3) and the Rhine delta (8.4) are particularly interesting examples to show the pattern of landownership in the estuaries of main rivers and the involvement of monasteries in economic activities. In addition, the charters of the coastal area of the Rhine are also useful if we wish to examine what the pattern of landownership was before the establishment of ecclesiastical institutions. Taken together, these sources show that from the seventh century a similar pattern of landownership developed across both the shores of the Channel, including royal lands and the foundations of monasteries, more widely than in the areas focussed on in this thesis.

8.2. *The Thames Valley: common developments*

We can start from the foundation of the twin monasteries at Barking and Chertsey around 666 by Eorcenwald, who then became bishop of London. Both foundations, indeed, lay in strategic areas for trading activities, in that they and their properties had a clear focus on the

Thames.[40] Interestingly, a charter of the second half of the seventh century listing properties given to the nunnery of Barking by Eorcenwald shows that the monastery held considerable land on the Thames which was previously royal.[41] This source suggests that kings of Mercia, Wessex and probably of the East Saxons held wide areas along the Thames Valley, among which was Erith, a possible landing site.[42]

This spread of monastic lands across the river is mirrored by the properties of the monastery of Chertsey, whose substantial possessions were focused across the river west of London. The fact that both Barking and Chertsey held lands close to London points to the importance of the area, and it is to note that a charter for the latter mentions the existence of a port there.[43] The importance of London is moreover stressed by the distribution of Chertsey's possessions listed in this same charter, this being the only possession at some distance from the main core of its properties, which were otherwise focused in the proximity of the monastery.

The pattern of the possessions of these two institutions also stresses the possibility of an articulated trading network passing through other places besides London. Indeed, given the substantial presence of landing sites across the Thames which has been already examined,[44] it seems quite possible that the trading activity attested at Barking directly linked the monastery with the estuary of the river, without being mediated through the trading site at London.[45]

Among the monastic institutions recorded by seventh-century charters in the Thames Valley, it is worth mentioning that King Caedwalla of Wessex granted a very large amount of land (60

[40] Bede, *HE* IV.6. See Palmer 2003, 53, remarking the trade potential of the location of the minsters.

[41] Cf. S 1246: among the properties, lands at Swanscombe, Erith, Barking, *iuxta Lundoniam*, Battersea and Isleworth are said to have been royal. See Hart 1966, 130-31. See Map 8.2.1. for the places mentioned in this section.

[42] See Ch. 1.1, n. 49 (p. 36). The lands are said to have been given by King Swidfrid (? East Saxons), Aethelred (East Saxon royalty), Aethelred of Mercia, Ceadwalla of Wessex and Wulfhere of Mercia.

[43] Cf. S 1165 (dated to the 670s), given by Frithuwold, *subregulus* of Surrey. On this charter see Blair 1989, 98-100; see also Dyson 1980, suggesting that the property near London was at Southwark.

[44] See Ch. 6.1, n. 22 (p. 171).

[45] This possibility is also stressed by Cowie 2000, 190. On the history of the prosperous foundation at Barking see Foot 2000, II, 27-33. Excavations at Barking have revealed seventh-/eighth-century imported pottery from Northern France or Belgium and the Rhineland, cf. Blackmore – Redknap 1988, 231-34; Redknap 1992.

hides) at Farnham in Surrey to Cedde, Cisi and Criswa in 688 with the specific aim of founding a minster there.[46] These are but a few examples of the wide process of monastic foundations established along the Thames which started in the second half of the seventh century, developing a pattern of major landed properties such as that of the monastery of Chertsey.[47]

Given that the charters from the Thames Valley constitute quite a small group of documents, our knowledge of the development of royal properties is severely fragmentary. Royal properties may have stretched over the course of the river Thames from the earliest period, although they are only fragmentarily visible in the charters, since they are almost exclusively attested when they are given to someone else. As already mentioned, evidence for this comes from the seventh-century charter for Barking, and others may be added from eighth-century charters attesting royal properties at Twickenham, Woking and along the river Brent, a tributary of the Thames.[48] Furthermore, a strong royal presence on the river is what emerges from Domesday Book, where lands held by the king are attested across the entire river-course.[49] As elsewhere, Domesday Book may be helpful to fill in some of the areas for which we do not have early documentation, including the territory east of London, for which we have fewer charters: it seems indeed very possible that royal presence in this area was far larger than what emerges from the charters up to the end of the ninth century and that the vacuum of granted lands is at least partially due to a continuing existence of royal lands.

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[46] S 235. Although Farnham lay at some distance from the Thames, it is however connected to this river by a bifurcation of the Wey.

[47] On this process see Blair 1996a, providing also an appendix of minsters. On monasteries in Surrey see Blair 1991. On early minsters see also Cowie – Blackmore 2008, 6.

[48] Twickhenham: S 65 (beginning of the eighth century); Woking: S 144; in the area of the river Brent for instance at Yeading: S 100 (the earlier for Yeading). Another royal possession on the course of the Thames is at Cookham. On this see Gelling 1979, 25 on S 1258 (there number 16): the monastery at Cookham was given by Aethelbald of Mercia to Canterbury in the eighth century. It should also be noted that the will of King Alfred (S 1507, written between 873 and 888) mentions royal lands in Surrey, at Eashing, Godalming, Guildford, Leatherhead and Thunderfield Castle.

[49] Royal lands along the Thames up to the western border of Surrey include: *DB Kent*: Howbury [6c (5.20)]; Plumstead [6c (5.21)]; Woolwich [14b (12.2)]; Charlton [6d (5.33)]; Wricklesmarsh [6d (5.31)]; Lee [6d (5.32)]; Lewisham [12d (8.1)]; *DB Surrey*: Southwark [32a [5.28]]; Lambeth [34a,b (14.1)] (held by Gode, sister of King Edward); Kennington [36d (36.6)]; Wandsworth [34a (9.1)]; Ham [32d (8.15)]; Kingston [30c (1.8)]; Long Ditton [35a (19.21)]; West Molesey [36d (35.2)]; East Molesey [35b (19.29)]; Walton-on-Thames [35b (19.26)]. Most of these are listed as *tenuit de rege E.* See Map 8.2.2.

In spite of the scarcity of sources, a continuing presence of properties held by kings seems likely in the case of London and its neighbouring area. Some charters written between the seventh and the ninth century clearly point to the centrality of London, which was by now a very active *emporium*, as well as to its attraction to ecclesiastical institutions at a long distance from the Thames Valley, thus showing a widespread interest in the area, similar to that already seen in the case of *Quentovic*.[50] Two seventh-century charters attest the granting of royal lands at London and Ealing, respectively to Barking and the bishopric of London;[51] and eighth-century charters document trading privileges to Minster-in-Thanet, Rochester and the bishopric of London.[52] Other royal grants of lands are attributed in the ninth century to Christ Church and the bishopric of Worcester.[53] Finally, a royal centre in London is documented in the early ninth-century by two charters.[54]

Thus, the spread of royal lands which can be reconstructed from the charters and Domesday Book suggests that the kings maintained a considerable interest and control over the Thames Valley, and the establishment of monasteries along the entire river-course indicates that traffic passing along the river constituted a strong attraction for political actors. Among them, we can also note the involvement of laymen, clearly visible from the eighth century.[55]

The distribution of grants and minsters here strongly suggests that trade was not directed only toward London. Indeed, Barking's properties indicate the possibility that trading routes linked the monastery with the estuary of the river directly, and the locations of other minsters

[50] On *Quentovic* see Ch. 4.2.2, p. 130. On London and *Lundenwic* see Cowie 2000; Blackmore 2002; 2010; 2012; Leary *et al.* 2004, esp. 3-4 on the maintaining of a centrality, ecclesiastical and administrative, of the intramural area; Cowie – Blackmore 2008; 2012; Fowler – Taylor 2013; Foreman – Hiller – Petts 2002 on the Middle Thames area.

[51] The charter concerning land at Ealing is S 1783, dated in the last decade of the seventh or in the early eighth century. On this see Kelly 2004, 137-38. On lands of the monastery of Barking cf. S 1246.

[52] On these charters see Ch. 1.1, n. 93 (p. 48). See also Blair 2005, 257-58.

[53] S 1628, granting land to Christ Church and to the bishop of Worcester (authentic basis?). S 208, granting land to Worcester. S 346, granting land and commercial privileges to Worcester (genuine basis).

[54] These are S 168, an original dated 811, and S 170, dated 812 (in a later cartulary copy). On this see Blair 2005, 274.

[55] Among the seventh-century charters, laymen as beneficiaries appear only in S 235, where however the grant is done to establish a monastery.

across the estuary (Minster-in-Sheppey and Minster-at-Hoo on the southern side; Tilbury and Wakering on the norther side)[56] are significant in this regard too.

8.3. *The coasts of Neustria from the Somme to the Loire: patterns of landownership*

The development of landownership and the appropriation of lands of high potential in terms of economic and trading activities by kings and monasteries can be clearly followed along the coasts of Neustria. Since the written sources referring to the Pas-de-Calais and the Somme have already been analysed in Ch. 4, here these developments will be investigated in the area of the Seine estuary and between the Seine and the Somme, and in the estuary of the Loire. The choice to discuss here such a large territory is due to the common processes these lands shared. This section addresses the economic centrality of the estuary areas, which acted as catalysts for monastic and royal landed property: both the Seine and the Loire were in fact major routes of communication and trade.

The estuary of the Seine was a strong focus of royal land, and in the seventh century a royal palace and a port are documented at *Arelauno* (probably near Vatteville-la-Rue, which is about 30 km away from the estuary).[57] The strategic position of this place on the river, highlighted by the mention of the port, clearly suggests its connections with river-based activities. As we will see below, a possible comparison with *portus Vetraria* on the Loire can be assumed on the basis of its position, thus suggesting that it might have been a toll collection point. In early

[56] On these see Blair 1996a; on the Upper Thames Valley see Blair 1994. On the Kentish bank of the Thames see also Ch. 1.1, pp. 35-41.

[57] Cf. *Vita Lantberti* ch. 3. The *Vita Condedi* chs. 2-3, and p. 647 n.1, mentions the presence of a port and royal lands. On *Arelauno* see Le Maho 1996, esp. 23 on its location. See Map 8.3.1. for the places mentioned along the Seine.

Carolingian times a toll collection point is attested at Rouen.[58] The royal interest in this area, apart from tolls, was probably also linked with the presence of the royal forest of Brotonne, where the palace of *Arelauno* lay.

The process of monastic foundations across the Seine estuary, strongly linked with the kings, started already in the sixth century, when the *Vita Samsonis* refers to the establishment of the monastic foundation of Pentale, very close to the estuary, thanks to a royal grant of Childebert I.[59] However, the major communities in the estuary area are mid-seventh century foundations: they are Fontenelle, consecrated to Saint Wandrille and founded by Wandregiselus around 649, and Jumièges, established by Filibertus around 654 (both lying at about 40 km from the sea).[60]

The foundation of Jumièges is connected to the monastic activities of Queen Balthild and testified to in her *Vita*, which mentions the grants of royal lands there to Filibertus.[61] His name is also linked with the foundations of other monasteries, namely the nunnery of Pavilly, in 662-4, Montivilliers, which is across the estuary, in c. 683,[62] and Noirmoutier, which will be discussed below.

From the seventh/eighth-century *Vita Wandregiseli* we know that the Abbey of Fontenelle was also founded on fiscal lands, belonging to the forest of Jumièges.[63] The place where the monastery was built was previously granted to a certain Rotmarus by Dagobert I.[64]

Other monasteries were established in the area between the estuary and Rouen during the Merovingian period: the *Vita Balthildis* and the *Gesta* of Fontenelle mention a monastery called

[58] Cf. ChLA n. 625, dated 779. A *mercimonium* at Rouen is mentioned in the eighth-century *Vita Willibaldi* ch. 3.

[59] See the edition of his *Vita prima* by Flobert 1997. The dating of the *Vita prima* is disputed; see Sowerby 2011, who suggests a date of composition in c. 700, while proposing the 860s as the period in which the *Vita secunda* was written. See also Laporte 1941, 8. On Pentale see Le Maho 2008, 66-87.

[60] On the history of Jumièges and Fontenelle see Howe 2001a and 2001b.

[61] Cf. *Vita Balthildis* chs. 7-8. The *Vita* was probably written at Chelles shortly after her death in 680.

[62] Cf. *Vita Filiberti* ch. 22 on Pavilly; 31 on Montivilliers (land granted by the Neustrian *maior domus* Waratto).

[63] See *Vita Wandregiseli* ch. 14.

[64] See Kölzer, deperditum 203. Then, Clovis II confirmed this grant (deperditum 220). Cf. *Gesta sanctorum patrum Fontanellensis coenobii*, I.7 (ed. Pradié 1999). The land was given to the *maior domus* Erchinoaldus by Airamnus, son of Rotmarus, in exchange for lands in Vexin. Then the land was given to Wandregiselus and his nephew Godo.

Logium, a female community at Caudebec-en-Caux, along the bank of the Seine at about 30 km from the estuary.[65] The possessions of this monastery are hard to identify, but it must have been rich enough to funnel people and resources to build at least two churches and possibly also a chapel. Moreover, the position of this community along the Seine and near the Roman road connecting Rouen and Lillebonne suggests its involvement in economic activities. The foundation of *Logium*, around the end of the 650s, is also linked to Wandregiselus.[66]

In this same area, the Briton Condedus grants to Saint-Wandrille the monastery he founded in 668-678 on the Île of Belcinac, which was previously part of the very large amount of royal lands near the estuary of the Seine.[67] Moreover, the *Vita Condedi*, written about a century after the saint's death,[68] mentions also some lands granted to Condedus by laymen, this being one of the few hints at the presence of small lay landowners in this area. From the *Vita Condedi* we learn that at least the woodland between Caudebec-en-Caux and Villequier, and the Île de Belcinac in the Seine (now submerged), were fiscal lands up to 675, when Theuderic III granted them to Condedus.[69]

Other fiscal lands and monastic foundations can be seen along the coastal area north of the Seine. There the *Gesta* of Fontenelle and the *Vita Lamberti* (written around the end of the eighth century) mention royal lands at Osmoy and Saint-Saëns, given by the king to Abbot Lambert together with their appurtenances. Interestingly, the source mentions fishing and salt-production on the coast (*terram super litus maris et areas salinarum piscationumque*).[70] North

[65] On the identification of the site of *Logium* see Le Maho 1996, esp. 6 for relevant sources.

[66] Le Maho 1996, 21; 29-30, suggests that *Logium* might have been founded by Wandregiselus in order to fulfill functions precluded to Saint-Wandrille, such as those of assisting foreigners; alternatively, the foundation might have been caused by a higher number of requests from women. On monasteries and maritime activities across the Seine estuary see Le Maho 2012, mentioning also the site of *Pennante*, probably at Saint-Pierre-du-Val (id., 188 with references); on trading activity in Normandy see also Lajoye 2012.

[67] On the monastery of Belcinac see Laporte 1941, 27; and Le Maho 1996, 16. The sources cannot help us to identify the size of its possessions, but the fact that it had more than one church suggests that it was quite rich.

[68] See Howe 2001b, 147-48: the *Vita* was probably written by a Saint-Wandrille monk between 796-797 and 840.

[69] See *Vita Condedi* chs. 4-5. See also Le Maho 1996, 23.

[70] Grant made by Childeric II to Abbot Lambert, in 673. In the *Gesta*, it is recorded in a transaction made between Abbot Teutsindus and count Ratharius in 734. Most of the mentioned lands lay in Talou, and are focussed on the rivers Béthune and Varenne. Cf. *Vita Lamberti* ch. 3; *Gesta* VI.2. The mentioned appurtenances are at

of the Seine, Wandregiselus was also the founder of the community of *Vintlana* in the 650s, at Bacqueville-en-Caux (ca. 20 km from the sea), a fiscal land according to the *Gesta*.[71] An important coastal monastery in this territory, which also shows the involvement of laymen in monastic foundations, is that of Fécamp, linked with Wandregiselus and Waningus and established in c. 660.[72] Regarding lay foundations, the *Gesta* mention the grant of Fleury-sur-Andelle to Fontenelle at the beginning of the eighth century. The *Floriacum coenobium in pago Veliocassino* was founded by Pepin of Herstal and his wife Plectrude, on a possession of a certain Fraericus, who had already built a *xenodochium* there. After its foundation, Pepin grants the monastery to Saint-Wandrille Abbey, together with its properties.[73]

Apart from the possessions of Saint-Wandrille, another great landowner in the coastal area between the Seine and the Somme was Saint-Denis. The chronology here is problematic, because the documentation does not state when these lands first became part of the properties of Saint-Denis. However, since they are listed as properties which are given back to Saint-Denis by Pepin III, the monastery must have held them before the 750s.[74]

Besides trade, the importance of the estuary area was obviously based on fishing and the production of salt. The land that Saint-Germain-des-Près held near the mouth of the river, at Pont-Audemer near Saint-Germain-Village, may be seen in this context. This property lay at some distance from the bulk of Saint-Germain's properties, which present a general strong focus on the Île-de-France, and the twelve *mariscos* mentioned there may attest to salt

Crisciaco (Cressy), *Seda* (Sideville), two places called *Magneroto* (Maintra), and *Toscarias*. On the identification of Sideville and Maintra see Pradié 1999: Maintra, comm. Saint-Valery-sur-Bures, (now Osmoy-Saint-Valery); Sideville, cant. Yerville, or la Scie, or Saint-Aubin-sur-Scie or Longueville-sur-Scie. A still useful work on the property of Saint-Wandrille is Lot 1913.

[71] Cf. *Gesta* IX.2: the Neustrian *maior domus* Ragendrifus grants the fiscal land at *Vintlana* to the abbot of Saint-Wandrille, in 717.

[72] On Fécamp, the post-Merovingian *Passio Leudegarii* links its foundation with the action of Waningus. Cf. *Passio Leudegarii* II.15. Waningus was *comes palatii* of Chlothar III and count of the territory of Caux. See Ebling 1974, CCCVII, 233-34; see also Hennebicque-Le Jan 1989, 266, n. 291.

[73] See *Gesta*, II.1-2. On the involvement of laymen in maritime activities see Le Maho 2012.

[74] ChLA 595 and 596.

production.[75] One should compare, on a far smaller scale, Chertsey's isolated possession close to London (above Ch. 8.2).

The estuary of the Seine from the seventh century witnessed a strong presence of monasticism that can be compared to that which took place, for instance, across the Wantsum Channel; and, as in England, nodal areas in the trading network saw also a strong royal presence. This proliferation of monasteries, and the interest shown by religious foundations further away (such as Saint-Germain-des-Près), may be linked to the presence of natural resources as well as to a desire to be involved in the transmarine network, as the Seine was a major route connecting the sea to the cores of the Merovingian kingdoms. In this context, Le Maho has highlighted that a system of scattered ports, many of which linked to monasteries, was in place along the estuary of the Seine before the end of the ninth century.[76] In this regard, the vicinity and ease of communication with the centres of royal power in the Île-de-France is likely to have played a role in the choice of the Seine estuary as focus of so many foundations. If the Seine followed the models presented in the rest of this thesis, it is likely that that system of scattered ports predated the monasteries; but only detailed archaeological work will be able to test such a hypothesis.

Towards the south, the Loire represented another major route of communication and trade in these centuries and the written sources show similar ongoing processes across its estuary during the Merovingian period: although there are fewer sources, monastic development, royal lands, trade and economic activities are all clearly visible there as well. The mouth of the Loire was in fact a key area for salt production, whose export followed two main routes: northward toward the Channel and then along the main rivers, the Seine, the Meuse and the Rhine; and

[75] *Breve de Villa supra mare*, number xx of the polyptych. The polyptych, drawn up under Abbot Irminon, is edited by Hägermann 1993. See Le Maho 2012, 188.

[76] Cf. Le Maho 2003, 234-37, also mentioning the presence of a property of Saint-Denis at Sanvic, at the entrance of the Seine.

along the coast to the south and then along the Charente and the Garonne.[77] A substantial later group of charters testifies to the involvement of monastic institutions in the hinterland in trading activities along the Loire in Carolingian times.[78] The centrality of the estuary of the Loire in the long-distance network is also visible thanks to the mentions of ships from Ireland, Bordeaux, Brittany and England, in the mid-ninth century *Vita Filiberti*.[79]

Given the importance of these activities, a royal presence is not unexpected here. Royal involvement seems however to be shaped in an indirect way: the kings took possession of the profits derived from the salt trade, with the establishment of a toll collection place called *portus Vetraria* in the Tenu valley, where the salt storage areas were located. As regards the Merovingian period, a royal presence in the area of *portus Vetraria* is already visible, as attested by the existence of a *fiscus*.[80] Interestingly, a mid-seventh-century charter attests the grant to the distant Ardennes monastery of Stavelot-Malmedy of the tolls collected there.[81]

In the Loire estuary area the main ecclesiastical foundation was that of the monastery of Noirmoutier, founded by Filibertus of Jumièges in the 670s, when Ansoald, bishop of Poitiers, gave to him the isle of Noirmoutier and other lands on the mainland.[82] This monastery was

[77] See Sarrazin 2008, 112.

[78] These charters, dated between 800 and 830, grant tax exemptions for a certain number of ships owned by abbeys, and are granted for the abbeys of Charroux (in the Vienne department, far from the coast), Saint-Jean-D'Angély and Saint-Maixent; see Sarrazin 2008, 111; Jeanne-Rose 1996, 119-20 and fn. 3. One of the earliest among these documents is that of Cormery (dated 800), situated at a short distance south-east of Tours along the river Indre, which interestingly highlights the inclusion of the Loire hinterland in this trade. In this charter (Mühlbacher – Dopsch 1906, 192) Charlemagne gives to the monastery immunity from taxation for two ships along the rivers Loire, Mayenne, Sarthe, Loir and Vienne. The charter states that these two ships are free from taxation on salt, so it is likely that they followed the course of the Loire in order to supply this resource; cf. Sarrazin 2008, 111. It is not, however, completely clear, within the picture of ships going from Cormery to the mouth of the Loire, why its tributaries should be included in the exemption. Other abbeys which were beneficiaries of similar exemptions are listed in Sarrazin 2008, 111. See Map 8.3.2. for the places mentioned in the area of the Loire.

[79] See Poupardin 1905, *Vita Filiberti* chs. 27-28-81. On Atlantic connections see Wooding 1996, esp. 67 on the *Vita Filiberti*; Wooding 2002; Campbell 2007, esp. 48; 136-38 on Noirmoutier and the *Vita Filiberti*. On connections between Ireland and the Loire see also recently Loveluck – O'Sullivan 2016.

[80] On salt-production along the Loire estuary and *portus Vetraria* see Bruand 2002, 185-202; 2008, esp. 9, stressing the existence of salterns before the monastic take-over. Cf. also Loveluck 2013, 202-3. The exact location of *portus Vetraria*, which lay near the estuary area, is unknown: cf. Loveluck – O'Sullivan 2016, 25. Bruand 2008, 21 links it with Port-Saint-Père.

[81] See charter n. 4 of Halkin – Roland 1909, I, 10-14. See Bruand 2008.

[82] See *Vita Filiberti* ch. 26. In 677 this same bishop grants to the monastery lands owned by the bishopric of Poitiers: the villa at L'Ampan, on the coast in front of the isle of Noirmoutier; the villa at *Deas*, that is Saint-Philibert-de-Grand-Lieu along the river Boulogne; part of the villa at Taizé; the *villa Pusiagus*. Saltworks are

highly involved in salt production, and at least from the time of Louis the Pious Noirmoutier was free from the taxation on six ships on the rivers Loire, Allier, Cher and Dordogne.[83] The choice to establish a monastery in a strategic position near the estuary of the Loire may well have been due to a wish by Jumièges to take part in the exploitation of such a remunerative activity as salt production.[84]

To sum up thus far, although the Loire has left fewer documents, it presents close similarities with the Seine, in terms of both royal and religious presence, which also in this area are strongly connected to the trading network and the exploitation of natural resources.

8.4. *The Rhine Delta: landownership in frontier lands*

Most of the written sources on landownership (here, mostly charters) in the area of the Rhine delta belong to the latest Merovingian and Carolingian period, when this region came to be firmly under Frankish control. While this greatly affects our comprehension of landholding here in the previous centuries, comparison with this area is particularly fruitful, for it again illuminates the interest of political actors in possessing lands in areas with a high potential for trading activities. Moreover, laymen are unusually visible in these charters and, as we will see, the high degree of fragmentation of some of the estates may indicate a strong continuity of lay property into the Carolingian period. Concerning kings, substantial royal lands are documented in this area, whose locations points to an involvement of royal power in trading activities, extending far beyond the *emporium* at Dorestad: here as elsewhere, it can be suggested that the

mentioned in the list of properties that belonged to the villa at Ampan. The text of the donation of Ansoald, together with his testament, is edited in Tardif 1898, 763-90. In addition to this charter, two other documents concern this donation, on which see Tardif 1898, 766; 786-88.

[83] Poupardin 1905, n 2, p. 108: in 826 Pepin I king of Aquitaine confirms the exemption given by Louis the Pious.

[84] See above Ch. 6.3.

interest of the kings was not caused by expectations of trade-deriving profit based on toll collection only; instead, they may also have played an active part in production.

In the area of the Delta, the documents attest to royal lands inside and outside Utrecht,[85] at Nijmegen, whose centrality is suggested by the Merovingian mint active from the second half of the sixth century and the presence of a palace in the eighth century,[86] and at Elst, mentioned as royal property in a charter dated 726, when also Arnhem was part of the royal possessions.[87] During the ninth century a royal estate existed also at Rhenen.[88] The proximity of a royal presence to a trading site can clearly be recognised in the case of Arnhem: the nearby centre of Meinerswijk has been identified with the *vicus Meginhardi*, where the presence of Frisian merchants is documented in 863.[89] Lying on the Rhine, close to its intersection with the Ijssel, Arnhem and this trading site were in a particularly favourable position along the communication routes. Moreover, Heidinga has suggested the possible involvement of Meinerswijk in the iron trade, in the light of iron production in this area (especially in the Veluwe and Montferland).[90]

More information on the links between kings and trade comes from a document listing properties of the church of Utrecht: the bishopric held the *regalis decima* at Dorestad, Loet,

[85] Cf. *Dipl. Belg.* n. 173: fiscal lands within the *castrum* of Utrecht, as well as the villa at Vechten. Charles Martel gave these lands to Utrecht in 723. See Maps 8.4.1, 8.4.2, 8.4.3 for the places mentioned in this section.

[86] On the coins minted at Nijmegen see Depeyrot 1998, II, 25-26. See also Willems – van Enckevort – van den Broeke 2009, 103, highlighting the site's importance in the light of the mint, and contextualising the occupation of Nijmegen in the general appropriation of Roman forts by the Frankish kings occurred during the fifth century, when the area of the Lower Rhine came under Frankish rule. The Carolingian residence there is attested as the place of redaction of a charter of Charlemagne (*Dipl. Belg.* n. 178; Mühlbacher – Dopsch 1906, n. 117), suggesting that the king was at Nijmegen in 777.

[87] See *Dipl. Belg.* n. 174: Charles Martel gives to the bishopric of Utrecht the villa of Elst. The charter reports that this villa became royal property during King Childebert III's reign, who then gave it to Pepin, Charles Martel's father; previously, it was a property of Everhardus, who was expropriated for betrayal. On Arnhem see Verkerk 1983; Heidinga 1990, 32.

[88] See Heidinga 1990, 30-32 with references, suggesting the possibility of its centrality before the eighth century, as well as the presence of other royal lands in its surroundings.

[89] The identification of this site with the *villa non modica*, in which *multis Frisiorum negotiatoribus* were killed in a Viking raid in 863 (reported in *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 863), is accepted by Lebecq 1983, I, 148-49, listing also other places suggested by scholars. Another raid is attested in 847 (*Annales Xantenses*). The mentions in these *Annales* are reported by Lebecq 1983, II, 313-14; 336. It is worth remembering that one of the meanings of the term *vicus* is trading site.

[90] See Heidinga 1987, 204 on Meinerswijk, 194 on Veluwe and Montferland.

Maasland, Almere, *Northwalde* and Medemblik.[91] *Regalis decima* means that in these places Utrecht held one-tenth of the royal lands, or else one-tenth of the royal customs due.[92] Among them, apart from Dorestad, Medemblik was a secondary trade centre in long-distance circuits with importance at regional level, lying in a strategic position on the Ijsselmeer route: most of the income from Medemblik derived from trade.[93]

Maasland and *Northwalde* possibly took part in trade activity too: the position of Maasland, near the Meuse delta, clearly points to this. It is important to note that Maasland lay near the settlement of Witla, if the location of the latter on the Isle of Voorne is correct.[94] In the first half of the ninth century Witla was the site of an *emporium*, documented by the *Annales Fuldenses* when it refers to a Viking raid in 836.[95] Interestingly, before this reference, Witla is recorded as a property of Saint-Peter at Ghent (Mons-Blandin) around the end of the seventh century, in a grant made by a layman called Rathadus.[96] Although no mention of trade activity in this place is visible in the record of this grant, it is possible that the monastery was interested in owning property there for reasons linked to its potential in trading routes; and it is worth stressing that Saint-Peter took possession of lands there thanks to a lay aristocratic grant.

Northwalde has been not localized, but Besteman suggests that it was near the mouth of the Old Rhine, so that it might be connected with trade activity there, which is archaeologically

[91] See *Dipl. Belg.* n. 195. On this list see Henderikx 1986, 543-52, arguing that the first section of the list, ending at about two-thirds of f. 43v (*De Uuiron in Aluitlo...* starts the second part, cf. id., 545), was written 'at some time before 885 at the earliest and in any event before 896' (id., 546), the remaining part being of the first half of the tenth century. According to Henderikx, the document lists properties and rights possessed by the bishopric until around 860. For the localization of these properties, I am following *Dipl. Belg.*, and Künzel – Blok – Verhoeff 1988. Almere was a lake in the IJsselmeer, while Loet is probably near the Lek, in the Krimpenerwaard or near Dorestad. On the area of the Almere, the charter reports *in Almere regalis decima census qui vocatur cogsculd*, and Lebecq proposes that the *cogsculd* was a toll levied on cogs; cf. Lebecq 1983, 181-82.

[92] Besteman 1989, 8, connects the mentions of the *regalis decima* in this document with the same kind of grant made by Pepin to the church of Utrecht in 753. Cf. *Dipl. Belg.* n. 175. On the grants of *decimae* from Frankish kings to ecclesiastical institutions on frontiers see Eldevik 2012, esp. 37-38.

[93] On Medemblik and its role in the trade route Dorestad-Rhine-Vecht-Almere-Vlie-North Sea see Besteman 1989, 1-30. It is possible that salt represented a particularly important export for the site, perhaps this being the basis of its development, cf. id., 22, with further references.

[94] On this identification see Lebecq 1983, I, 145-46.

[95] See *Annales Fuldenses sive Annales regni Francorum orientalis*, a. 836.

[96] This mention is in the fragment of the *Liber Traditionum*, *Dipl. Belg.* n. 49, ch. 45: here, Witla is not a large amount of land, but of course it is possible that Rathadus held other lands apart from those given to the monastery.

visible in settlements in that area.[97] Significantly, and in line with what we have seen elsewhere, such activities are documented before the bishopric of Utrecht took possession of lands there. For instance, traces of production of iron and glass beads are found at Rijnsburg, inhabited from the beginning of the seventh century.[98] Rijnsburg is mentioned as property of the church of Utrecht, perhaps from the first half of the eighth century.[99] Another important settlement here is Valkenburg-De Woerd; this too is attested in the Utrecht list, as the bishopric held a church there, *cum omnibus appendiciis*. This site has been identified as a possible secondary trading settlement.[100] Though the document is not explicit here, the *castrum* of Valkenburg was perhaps a fiscal land together with Maasland;[101] a possibility that might be considered also for the church of Oegstgeest, founded in the first quarter of the eighth century and perhaps a property of Willibrord.[102]

Again from the Utrecht document, it can be seen that the kings held a large amount of lands near the mouth of the Ijsselmeer in the North Sea, in the isle of Texel and at Stroe (Wieringen). This same zone attracted the interest of distant ecclesiastical institutions in addition to the bishopric of Utrecht, as Liège, Fulda, Echternach and Werden held lands there.[103] This interest is likely to have been connected with trade activity in this region, in the same way as we have seen for Medemblik.

Further evidence of a royal interest in this part of the coast is the presence of land of Charles Martel, who gave a villa at Adrichem, close to the coast *super fluvium Velisena*, to

[97] Besteman 1989, 8.

[98] Bazelmans – Dijkstra – De Koning 2004, 22.

[99] See van Es – Verwers 2010a, 26, reporting Henderikx, who argues that it might also date back to the first years of the century.

[100] See van Es – Verwers 2010a, 25-26, depicting this site as 'a miniature Dorestad'. Bone and antler working have been found in this site. See also Loveluck 2013, 191.

[101] *In Masalandae* (Maasland) *omnis decima sancti Martini et sui nouerit* [read *Suinoverit* = Zwijndrecht? according to Muller – Bouman 1920, I, n. 49] *totum Ostburon* (Oostbuurt) *totum. Similiter ecclesia que dicitur Ualcanaburg* (Valkenburg) *cum omnibus appendiciis sancti Martini totum et ad integrum.*

[102] See van Es – Verwers 2010a, 26, where the endowment of the church at Valkenburg is considered as given by the king with certainty. This article mentions also other settlements in the nearby.

[103] These are reported by Henderikx 1986, 548. The document states: *in Strude sexaginta et XII mansa quae fuerunt Dei sanctorum Martini, Bonifacii, Willibrordi, Liudgeri, Landberti et domni regis in Bante. Bante* is not identified, Künzel – Blok – Verhoeff 1988 suggest that it is lost in the Zuiderzee (now IJsselmeer).

Willibrord.[104] The high amount of royal (or, in this case, mayoral) estates in the region suggests that part of the production of these lands may have been focussed on trade. This pattern might be compared to that at Walcheren, where the kings had a very large amount of land and where livestock was possibly important.[105]

Of course, Utrecht's short polyptych illuminates the appropriation of coastal lands north of the Rhine delta by the bishopric itself during the eighth and ninth centuries, through a process already seen in our other regions. However, this document is exceptionally revealing as regards lay property. The bishopric inserted itself into a highly-fragmented property pattern: the majority of its estates did not consist of whole villas, but of a certain amount of *mansi*. This fragmentation is best explained as signifying that these lands, before being given to the bishopric, were held by laymen; something which is sometimes explicit in the text.

Since the list mentions few donors, it is hard to identify whether these laymen were small or great landowners. Among them, Radulfus, Erulfus and Aldburge, who gave lands at Rijnsburg, were all part of a family of great landowners, as the quantity of their lands shows.[106] Another donor who might have possessed much land is a certain Gotha, who seems to have held four villas in *Beuorhen* (probably Beverwijk). Interestingly, this grant concerns a church which Gotha gave to Saint-Martin of Utrecht.[107] In this case it seems that the church was built by Gotha. However, the presence of churches on the bishopric's listed properties, which is common in the document, cannot be as easily explained in all the cases: not all of them can be

[104] The document of this transaction is lost. It is listed as *deperditum* by Pertz 1872 (MGH, DD Mer, n. 8). The grant is recorded in the *Vita Willibrordi* by Thiofrido, ch. 12.

[105] Cf. Tys 2010, 172.

[106] On the history of Rijnsburg and this family see Sarfatij 1977, 290-302; van Es – Verwers 2010a, 26.

[107] Gotha's possession of these villas is suggested from the fact that these villas have to pay the tithe to the church granted to Utrecht: *In Beuorhem tradidit Gutha ecclesiam necdum consecratam, in ius et dominium sancti Martini, ea videlicet ratione ut post consecrationem eiusdem ecclesie, decime darentur ad supra nominatam aecclesiam de villis his nominibus vocitatis: Beuerhem, Gisleshem, Hegginghem, Schupildhem*.

assumed to be lay foundations. Again, regarding the landowners, in some cases the document seems to imply grants made by kings, though this is not always mentioned explicitly.[108]

Other documents show this process of appropriation by monasteries of areas which were important in terms of trading and economic activities. The area of Deventer is one example: this site was a trading settlement of some importance at least from the end of the ninth century, but the *Vita Liudgeri* documents the establishment of a church there by Lebuin around 770, thus suggesting the centrality of this place already in the eighth century.[109] Given the favourable position of Deventer along the Ijssel, the possibility of a previous involvement of this place in trading routes seems likely.

In terms of economic activities, another important case is that of the possessions of the bishopric of Utrecht and the monastery of Wichmond in the Veluwe district, which had some importance during these centuries for the production and export of iron, present between Apeldoorn and Arnhem.[110] Although the charters do not mention iron, it is likely that the interest of both these institutions was directed toward this resource, and both a religious and a lay involvement in this profitable activity may be suggested. The donors of lands in the Veluwe were in fact laymen who generally held a large amount of lands, also in other areas.[111]

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[108] For instance, the document reports: *In Eddingem sunt mansa regis III, et quod superest totum sancti Martini, quod fiunt mansa XXXII* (Eddingem, in the area of Wieringen, is not localized). So that in this place there were 32 *mansi*, among them 3 were royal lands, and the remaining 29 belonged to the bishopric. These 29 *mansi* stand out, since the estates in the list are mainly constituted of a small amount of lands. The presence of royal lands here makes it possible that the 29 *mansi* were granted to Utrecht by the king.

[109] At the end of the ninth century a *portus* and customs are mentioned at Deventer; on this see Lebecq 1983, I, 146. See Altfrid's *Vita Liudgeri* I.13.

[110] See Heidinga 1990, 10.

[111] Among those, cf. *Dipl. Belg.* n. 182, dated 838: transaction between Rodgarius *comes* and Utrecht. Cf. Heidinga 1987, 201. Another case is that of a certain Gerward, who granted lands to the abbey of Lorsch in 814. This grant is in *Codex Laureshamensis* (Glöckner 1929, I, 101, p. 381). See Heidinga 1987, 58, suggesting that perhaps *Dubridum* is Oud-Kootwijk. Another layman holding considerable land there is Folckerus, who made a grant to the monastery of Werden in 855. The distribution of his property shows two remarkable groups, one near the Veluwe to the north-west, the other in the iron-working region near Apeldoorn, close to the properties mentioned in the donation by Gerward. Also Folckerus' lands there are *silvae*. On these great landowners see Heidinga 1987, 199-203, highlighting that the importance of the iron-working area can be seen from the distribution of their estates: they held a concentration of properties widely distributed, where only those who produced iron are found in the same region. The lands given to Wichmond in this district are granted by a certain Hrodulfus in 801 *in villa Engeland* (Engeland), together with the twelfth part of the *silva Braclog* (Bruggelen). Cf. *Dipl. Belg.* n. 205. Cf. Heidinga 1990, 12, stating that certainly from the seventh century the elite of the Central Netherlands (based on this area) controlled the iron-producting activity.

The attraction toward the Rhine Delta by distant institutions is well exemplified by a group of charters concerning grants to Willibrord in Toxandria, mostly made by laymen between the 690s and the 720s. After Willibrord's death, these lands passed to Echternach.[112] The amount of lands shows the presence of great landowners, for whom supra-regional links have been suggested.[113] Interest in trading activities can be seen by two grants documenting the presence of a toll collection point in Antwerp at least by the end of the seventh century - the *teloneo* is managed by a layman, who grants part of the income to Willibrord.[114] This document gives insights into the existence of an articulated pattern of trading centres in the broad Rhine Delta area, and it clearly shows the involvement of laymen in trading-related activities, which is highly likely to have constituted a fundamental source of enrichment for elites.

Much more focussed work on the archaeological evidence is surely needed to disentangle the socio-economic development of the Rhine delta and the surrounding area. It should be clear from the foregoing that the evidence for internal and maritime trade in this region by the mid-eighth century is very dense indeed; but an account purely based on written sources cannot here say enough about how it emerged, and who controlled it before the period of the *emporia*. Still, the written sources have revealed that a process of appropriation of areas linked with trade and exploitation of resources was ongoing during the eighth and ninth century which is similar to

[112] A charter dated 726 reports the grant made by Willibrord to Echternach concerning his properties (Wampach 1930, I.2, 39). Interestingly, the grant concerns also properties located along the mouth of the Meuse. The charters reporting properties in Toxandria are in the *Liber Aureus Eptenacensis*, drawn up in the twelfth century.

[113] On Toxandrian landowners and the landed-property organisation of the *pagus*, see esp. Theuws 1991 and Costambeys 1994. I am here referring mostly to these works. More recently, see also Theuws 2010. See Theuws 1991 and Costambeys 1994 for evidence of links between Toxandrian landowners and other regions: eg. Bertildis, donor in one charter (Wampach n. 17), who could have been a nun at Chelles-sur-Marne. Theuws suggests a strong link between these landowners and Pepin. Costambeys suggests that the grants to Willibrord were used as a confirmation that they joined Pepin's side. Cf. Theuws 1991, 329-30: this elite group was present in the region one or two generations before the period of the grants.

[114] The documents are Wampach nn. 1 and 34: the first (dated 692-93) concerns the grant of land in *Antwerpo castello* and one-third of the *teloneo*, made by Rohingus. The donor of n. 34, dated 726, is called Rauchingus, so it is possible that he is the same person of the first grant. In this charter he grants the *teloneo*, and a church *infra castrum*. In addition to the toll collection point, the possible importance of Antwerp in the seventh century is suggested by the seventh-century mint, and its mentions in the Lives of Eligius, Amand and Willibrord. On this see Loveluck – Tys 2006, 144-45, suggesting also a similarity of this site to the 'poly-focal' settlements of the Meuse valley.

that seen in England and further south in Francia. Dorestad was not the only focus of ecclesiastical and royal interest: indeed, a ramified network of trading sites has emerged, which is clearly rooted in the geographical context of the area. In this regard, we must remember that this is the area over which the disputed frontier between Frankish and Frisians lay, and where the latter appear to have undertaken an expansion in the fifth/seventh century, to include also the Rhine mouths.[115] Thus, Dorestad may be one of the few cases that follow one of the general characteristics often mentioned for the *emporia*, namely their position on political boundaries. In this regard, it could be similar to *Lundenwic*.[116] The first references to Dorestad, whose origin has been ascribed to a Frisian impulse, are coins from 630s, minted by Madelinus (who was however a Frank; his coins are also found at Maastricht), and dendrochronological analysis has shown that jetties are dated from the middle of the seventh century onwards.[117] But the patterns discussed briefly above are not so different from those visible in England and (what is now) France for us to be able to say with certainty that Frisians had a different way of developing and appropriating transmarine trade; if this was a Frisian area, only fully conquered by the Franks in the late seventh century, then the latter inherited a landscape of royal involvement in exchange very similar to that found in Kent or the Pas-de-Calais.

As revealed by the written sources, Frisian traders were very active in transmarine exchange – and, as Lebecq pointed out, the term 'Frisian' started to be associated with international traders, without an ethnic connotation.[118] In this dynamic context, the written sources show a

[115] See Lebecq 1983, 107-17, on the history of Frisian expansion and Frankish conquest.

[116] See further the Conclusion, p. 250.

[117] On Dorestad see e.g. van Es – Verwers 1980; 2009; 2010b; Prummel 1983; van Es 1990; Coupland 2002; Willemsen – Hanneke 2010; Willemsen 2012; also Theuws 2004. On the Frisian origin of Dorestad see Lebecq 1997, 75; Lebecq 2005, 648. Although this is beyond the scope of this thesis, we must note that the *emporium* originated from a complex context of interactions between different populations. Cf. e.g. van Es 1990, 166: 'it is quite probable that it (i.e. Dorestad) existed even earlier (i.e. than 635/640), but not that it had been a Frisian settlement up to then. The inhabitants present which now came under Frankish authority were far more likely to have belonged to the native Batavian-Chamavian population'. Frankish activities in this area in the seventh century are well documented (see Bazelmans – Dijkstra – De Koning 2004, esp. 18-20). Yet it is likely that ethnic identities in this border lands were notably mixed and blurred.

[118] On Frisians see Lebecq 1983, discussing written sources. On the term 'Frisian' see Lebecq 1990. On the passage from a Frisian to a Frankish/Frisian trade see Lebecq 1986. On the concept of 'marchands-paysans' see Lebecq 1983, 249-54.

strong presence of lay landowners, apparently both great and smaller ones; this, in turn, may be reflected in a high fragmentation of lands, to a greater degree than we have seen elsewhere, as for instance in the documents of Utrecht. Given the location of the lay properties mentioned in the charters, their involvement in trading activities seems very possible. While the involvement of laymen in trade is easily predictable in both England and the Continent, it is generally scarcely documented. Thus, the documents from the Rhine are especially significant.

8.5. *Concluding remarks*

The charters from these areas show that the Southern English regions examined in the previous chapters and the Pas-de-Calais must be contextualized within the broader area of the Channel, for common features of landholding are clearly recognisable in the coastal area of Francia and along the Thames Valley. Indeed, the process of appropriation of coastal zones included in the transmarine network is mirrored by the spread of royal and monastic properties from the Loire to the Rhine, and along the course of the Thames.

It seems highly likely that at least some of the properties strategically located near commercial sites were involved in production linked to the trading centres. For instance, the interest in the coastal area north-west of Utrecht shown by monasteries located at a considerable distance from the sea can be seen in this perspective. Moreover, this example shows that such long-distance connections were by no means limited to the most important trading sites like *Quentovic* or, as we have seen more briefly, *Lundenwic*. This is an important element to put the *emporia* in perspective, and it also indicates that coastal zones were often tightly linked with the hinterland. In this regard, the wide royal possessions along the coasts, which can be identified in all the examined territories, are a strong hint that the kings took part in trading activities, not only through toll collections but also as producers. Considering the areas where

royal presence is documented, salt is a likely possibility, as indicated by the royal *salinae* in the Talou. In this regard, we must remember that, apart from the Loire (where royal involvement seems to have been oriented toward the collections of tolls – but the possibility of an involvement in production cannot be discarded, given the scarcity of charters) the zone of the Rhine delta was an important area of salt production.[119] The pre-eminence the scholarship confers on an indirect role of kings in trade, that is, their enrichment through the collection of tolls, seems indeed to be due to the very nature of the written sources: the charters mostly attest grants of lands and toll exceptions, while we do not have royal archives.

From the written sources, it is clear that the mouths of the main rivers were prominent areas for monastic development and royal lands. This is of course due to their importance as routes of communication and trade: the ecclesiastical foundations and royal properties around the estuaries may easily be interpreted as reflecting a will to profit from trading activities, as can be seen in the case of Noirmoutier and *portus Vetraria* across the Loire, but in general in all the areas analysed.

Although the pre-eminence of the zones most strongly included within the long-distance network, such as the river-mouths, or East Kent, or the Solent, is undeniable, the inclusion of other coastal zones in this investigation has made it clear that we should look at broader areas too. This is the case of the Rhine Delta, where trading activities are not exclusively localized in a small territory: on the contrary, trading sites appear to have been scattered throughout the coastal zone. Also in the case of the Seine, the focus on the estuary must be enlarged to include also the coastal area north of the Seine, where we saw a strong interest of Saint-Wandrille, royal lands and seventh-century foundations. These examples suggest that the trading routes are likely to have been more articulated than those passing through the main rivers.

[119] See Rippon 2000, esp. 178-82; Besteman 1974, reporting written sources for salt production in Southwestern Netherlands; the author was skeptical about the possibility that salt working was ongoing in the Early Middle Ages in North Holland (i.e. the area of Medemblik), but see Besteman 1989 and above n. 93.

The charters from the Rhine illuminate lay property at a unique level: the fragmentation of monastic property may in fact suggest a strong lay basis, not limited to great lay landowners. Lay property in the proximity of trading centres may be a hint of their early involvement in commercial activities, and the great landowners of Toxandria and Veluwe might have grown richer thanks to trading activities, as suggested by their proximity to the Rhine Delta, and from charters such as those documenting the *teloneum* at Antwerp (Wampach 1 and 34). As already seen, lay property in the other regions is rather poorly documented, but the case of Flixborough has shown that we should also look at the centres of secular power, as well as at their role in structuring the territories.

Thus, this investigation has made clear that, in the broader context of the Channel and North Sea, similar processes were ongoing from the sixth century onward. Indeed, while the seventh century is the crucial starting point for the process of structuration of coastal areas by political actors in Southern England and the Pas-de-Calais, monastic foundations on the coasts of Neustria began earlier, although even in this territory the seventh century was a pivotal period of development. In assessing the role of political actors in trading activities, important differences may have existed between the areas. Nodal points such as the estuary of the Seine exhibit an earlier and probably stronger creation of great land-units through the establishment of important monasteries and royal palaces – in the case of the Seine in particular, this probably stronger presence of great landowners must be put in relation with the main political core of (Neustrian) Merovingian power in the Île-de-France. The Rhine, instead, being the northern frontier during the Merovingian period, may have witnessed this structuring of the territory by political actors in a later period, around the eighth century. This later chronology may well have been at the basis of the peculiarities this area shows, namely the existence of a widespread pattern of trading sites alongside Dorestad, and the ongoing presence of lay property.

The presence of a stronger centralised control did not automatically lead to the creation of a system based on one major centre alone, an *emporium* dominating an entire exchange system – something which, as we have seen, seems never to have happened. It is, however, undeniable that a stronger control and the establishment of powerful institutions deeply anchored in the territory had a role in the development of a more structured network of trading centres. The persistence of an articulated web of sites in the eighth century is due to the peculiar case of the Rhine, which was obviously a crucial area of trade. The consideration of the territories where the *emporia* lay problematises the question of the nature of these trading sites, which will be addressed in the Conclusion.

Conclusion: *The development of the transmarine network*

The question of the relationship between political power and the rise of the seventh-/eighth-centuries transmarine system has been left unsolved by previous historical models. On the one hand, Hodges's model has received valid critiques in recent decades. Indeed, the archaeological evidence for the regions considered has made clear that a pivotal role of kings in establishing this whole system cannot be maintained.[1] Still, on the other hand, the competing bottom-up model, which points to the importance of a specific maritime identity of coastal lands and the role of free-lance traders, does not take into sufficient account the question of economic demand.[2] While the traders clearly had an importance in establishing trading routes and commercial sites, it is nonetheless clear that merchants needed an internal demand for goods; and indeed, the evidence shows that the choice of routes and sites depended on the location of groups able to acquire commodities.

As Loveluck and Tys have clarified, the maritime identity of North Sea coastal areas relied on a network of facilitated contacts that can be recognized in an easier, and thus wider, access to imported goods by communities living close to the sea, and in the development of a partly shared material culture. However, these important insights leave the question of the role of political power in establishing the transmarine system open. In this regard, their model proposes that coastal zones should be regarded as somehow detached from or only loosely linked to more inland territories, in that the difficulties of the political power in controlling the coasts would have led to a more independent development of the latter.[3] Evidence of this would come from texts referring to the coasts as liminal places. This is intriguing, but we should consider that the idea of a spatial liminality is a very common *topos* of written sources: although this would

[1] See the Introduction. Cf. Hodges 2012 for a recent revision of his model, and extensive references.

[2] See the Introduction. On the specificity of coastal lands see Loveluck – Tys 2006; Loveluck 2012; 2013; on the importance of traders see Sindbæk 2007; Callmer 2007; Henning 2007.

[3] See esp. Loveluck 2012.

certainly deserve a more focused research, one can see this *topos* at work, for instance, in many of the *Lives* of saints portraying the saint as a hermit who chooses to spend his life detached from the world.[4] Moreover, the sea and the beach are archetypes of liminal places which are not limited to Early Medieval North-West Europe; hence, this perspective does not allow us to postulate a real detachment between coast and hinterland in our period.[5] More relevant for Anglo-Saxon England is that this separation between political centres and coasts cannot be identified in the regions under consideration – although differences certainly existed between the regions discussed in this thesis. East Kent shows a notable proximity between sites of political authority and the coast. This can be seen for instance in the case of Lyminge, where the excavated hall documents a royal presence in the middle of the seventh century, which lay not far from the trading site at Sandtun. A similar connection can be found in the zone of the Wantsum Channel, where Eastry seems to have been a sixth-century political centre, and Woodnesborough a place connected with the religious sphere: given their vicinity to coastal landing places, their links with (and their probable control over) the coast is undeniable. Other such examples can be made for Southern England: in Kent, again, Dover and the area of the estuary of the Medway near Rochester are good candidates, and other cases have been made in Ch. 1 from West Kent. Although a focussed research would be needed, the similar location of Flixborough along maritime routes, and the presence of early imports, makes it possible that a comparable situation existed in this case as well.

Especially concerning the territories more deeply integrated in the transmarine network, one could argue that, as already mentioned, access to *some* imports is not a straightforward proof

[4] See Harrison 2001, 85 on wilderness (deserts, islands and forests) as opposed to civilization in Medieval texts. An example of a hermitage is that established by Riquier at Forest-Montiers, north of the mouth of the Somme (see Ch. 4.2.2, n. 105, p. 138); to the north, the Breton hermit founder of Saint-Josse, close to the Canche estuary (see Ch. 4.2.2, n. 76, p. 131). Seillier 2010, 145, identifies the model followed by the hagiographers with the *vitae* of the eastern Mediterranean hermits.

[5] Cf. Thomassen 2012, 21: 'Seasides and beaches are archetypical liminal landscapes. The seaside is something more than just the end of dry and inhabited land: it is a coast*line* with something on the other side of the threshold'.

of high status. This seems, however, not to be the case of Chessell Down and Carisbrooke Castle, in the Isle of Wight, where the wealth of the artefacts in some of the graves undoubtedly indicates a high-status presence. We have also seen in Ch. 3 that both these communities were favoured by a direct access to the sea. The written sources for England show that proximity between political power and the coasts existed at least from the seventh century, and kings had a strong interest in holding lands close to the sea.

Thus, while evidence from the coasts does show that, due to their inclusion in the Channel area, these communities lived in a more dynamic context than those in the hinterland, some of them are in fact most likely to have entertained strong links with political power even before the development of the *emporia*. Hence, the bottom-up models challenging top-down theories do not resolve the problem of the dialectic between political power and the transmarine network, which appears instead, as we are about to see, much more complex and variegated according to the different territories.

This question cannot be solved without considering the situation of the transmarine network of the period preceding the *emporia*. Indeed, we have seen that in most of the scholarship the fifth-early seventh centuries, when they are considered at all, are assessed through vague and over-simplistic perspectives.[6] It is undoubtedly true that profound socio-economic changes and developments can be perceived from the seventh century onward, such as the consolidation of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, the establishment of a web of ecclesiastical sites in England and Northern France, and agrarian and settlement developments. However, this thesis has shown that some of the elements that are currently considered as major structural differences between the two phases derived, in fact, more from a theoretical and evolutionary framework, which sees the earlier centuries under an 'other' perspective, than from empirical analysis.[7] Although

[6] Cf. the Introduction.
[7] See Moreland 2000a on 'other'/'same' perspectives.

this has already been examined in Ch. 5, it is nonetheless worth repeating here that a central issue in this regard concerns the systems of exchange, which have been seen as being non-commercial in the earlier centuries and commercial in the later period. It was however shown here that it is very unlikely that all the long-distance imports found in Southern England reached these regions through non-commercial mechanisms only, especially in areas strongly included in the transmarine network as East Kent, where access to foreign goods was particularly easy. As we have seen, this distinction appears to be based on rigidly substantivist approaches without regard to the evidence; and, in the case of the Anglo-Saxons, it seems also unlikely because they had contacts and exchange with populations whose practice of commercial trading activities is beyond doubt, especially the Franks. It is also worth stressing again that not all the sixth/early seventh-century foreign goods found in these regions can be explained as luxury items, especially amber, thus strongly suggesting that these goods reached England through varying mechanisms of exchange. As examined in Ch. 6, a clear distinction between the earlier period (fifth/early seventh centuries) and the age of the *emporia* cannot be drawn on the basis of the maritime routes either: although the *emporia* played a major role in channelling goods, the web of transmarine connections seems in general to have been the same (even if with some differences, to which we will return) – and the level of sixth-century exchange, at least in some areas, cannot be explained with the idea of occasional *ad hoc* traffic.[8] In fact, the complexity of a ramified web of transmarine routes and many access points (landing sites) seems to remain unaltered. This continuity is clearly shown by the widespread proximity that can be recognised between Early Saxon communities in receipt of foreign goods and materials, and later evidence of nodal areas in the Mid-Saxon period, such as 'productive' sites or sites of assemblies (see Ch. 6).

[8] *Contra* Lebecq 1999, 51.

Thus, it can be proposed that the transmarine traffic had a role in the development of elites in coastal communities, which may have acted as intermediaries in cross-Channel exchange from the sixth century. The location of some of these communities, furthermore, suggests that they may have developed also thanks to the exploitation of natural resources (see Ch. 6). From the seventh century, indeed, we see that kings and churches have a specific interest in possessing iron and salt and, in some cases, the choice to establish religious foundations in a specific place may have been based on the desire to get access to these resources: likely cases in this regard are Lyminge, Noirmoutier and Minster-at-Hoo. As can be seen in all the regions considered, the opportunity to participate in the transmarine network appears to have been another crucial factor at the base of the process of monastic foundations: monasteries were indeed established across the estuaries of the major rivers and in strategic areas along the communication routes, such as for instance in the Wantsum Channel and in the peninsula of Selsey in West Sussex. While the development of monasticism in Northern France and England is a seventh-century development, it is very possible that transmarine traffic and natural resources fuelled the growing power of kings and elites in the earlier period too.

The complex interaction between political power and the transmarine network is best assessed by considering the differences visible between the development of these territories. While the kings did not establish the network in any of the regions considered, an involvement in transmarine exchange had an important role for the development of elites and royal power in the Anglo-Saxon regions which were more strongly included in the network. This appears to have been the case for East Kent and the Isle of Wight where, as mentioned above, proximity between centres of political powers and landing sites can be recognized even in the sixth century, well before the rise of the system based on the *emporia*. In this context, the fact that the Kentish kingdom developed from the eastern part of the region (see Ch. 1) is hardly a

coincidence. While we cannot frame the relationship between the sixth-century Kentish elites and the trading network in terms of a top-down control, taking part in maritime traffic and exploiting resources needed by inland territories may well have provided a solid basis for the development of some East Kentish communities.

Although recent excavations in Sussex have broadened the picture of Anglo-Saxon settlement there, this remains the region from which fewer foreign materials have been recovered. We have nevertheless seen that cemeteries containing imports lay along the coast or in areas well connected to the sea thanks to the river system. Thus, in this case too, access to foreign goods may have been connected to the development of elites. However, in Sussex, access to foreign goods appears to have been more sporadic: thus, more than an actual involvement in direct traffic with the Continent (though this probably existed), these goods may have been more connected with the articulation of social status.

A partly different case is that of Hampshire, where communities with access to imports had a stronger inland focus during the fifth/early seventh century; thus, involvement in maritime traffic might not have represented a strong basis for the earlier development of elites in the same way as in Kent and the Isle of Wight – although access to imports was nonetheless important for status differentiation, as in Sussex. This seems in line with the historical development of the West Saxon kingdom, which appears to have developed in the Upper Thames Valley area (settled by the Anglo-Saxons from the fifth century), and then expanded towards the south. However, we must consider that not only imports, but also evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlement, are almost absent on the coast of Hampshire, and the navigability of the rivers made the connection between the coast and hinterland quite easy.

So a different development of the transmarine system can be suggested for this region. In the sixth century, at least part of the traffic was channeled to Hampshire through the Isle of Wight (though some direct contacts can be proposed for the eastern part of the coast, near

Portchester): thus, Hampshire communities may not have had an important active role in the cross-Channel routes in the Early Saxon period. Then, from the seventh century onwards, the establishment of *Hamwic* seems indeed connected with the southward expansion of the West Saxon kingdom and the appropriation of the Isle of Wight. The rise of the *emporium* is deeply connected to the development of the kingdom: the shift of power from the Isle of Wight to Hampshire is at the base of a shift of trading network. This need not imply a founding activity by kings; but, after the fall of the kingdom of the Isle of Wight, the royal and ecclesiastical presence near Winchester certainly represented a stimulus for traders to choose *Hamwic* as major port of arrival, and it is to be noted that the existence of a seventh-century royal estate has been proposed in the area of the *emporium*.[9]

The Pas-de-Calais presents a development partly similar to Kent. In Ch. 4 we have seen that the picture of archaeological evidence suggests that transmarine traffic was at the base of the development of some communities along the coast. They may have acted as those of Kent and the Isle of Wight, namely they may have played an active role in connecting the hinterland with the maritime exchange. The development of an elite through the integration in this system can be seen in the presence of particularly high-status graves, such as the sarcophagus burial at La Calotterie. *Quentovic* may thus be a good example of the process of appropriation of existing sites by kings:[10] it is clear, in fact, that the main centres of Merovingian power did not lie along the coast of the Pas-de-Calais.

It should however be noted that seventh-century sources indicate a wide royal presence along the Canche, as well as monastic foundations, which shows that the development of the

[9] On the possibility of a seventh-century estate there see Yorke 1982, 80. While a royal presence there is possible, it is however to be noted that a royal villa at *Hamwic* is first recorded in the ninth century, while *Hamtunscir* is mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (s.a. 757). Clearly, the stimulus represented by kings and churches does not contradict the existence of other sources of demand in the *emporia*, for which see Loveluck 2012, esp. 162-63: '(…) a significant number of merchant and artisan households had access to the material culture of warfare, mobility, and luxury drinking normally associated with the highest secular aristocratic households at their rural estate centres (…)'.

[10] Cf. Lebecq 2005, esp. 654-55.

seventh/eighth-century *emporium* was deeply interwoven with political actors. As the written sources from other coastal areas of Francia have shown, a strong royal presence is a common feature of all the main estuaries considered, through which the maritime traffic passed; in this regard, thus, the picture of landholding on the Canche is certainly not unique. As regards the first impulse for a trading site on the Canche, however, it is worth repeating that the assignment of the origin of *Quentovic* to the Anglo-Saxons is not supported by the archaeological evidence. Indeed, the Early Medieval *emporium* there must be seen in the context of a river connected to England from Prehistory, and, more importantly, the 'Anglo-Saxon' artefacts at La Calotterie are not enough, either in terms of quantity or typologies, to prove an Anglo-Saxon settlement there. It must moreover be made clear that, while in general grave goods cannot be straightforwardly used to trace ethnic origins, this is all the more difficult in areas with such a high degree of interconnections as coasts.

The sixth-century evidence, in my view, suggests that in some of these territories the dialectic between maritime traffic and political power is more complex than assumed either by models suggesting a founding activity by elites, or by those depicting the coasts as 'independent' areas active in traffic, which supposedly witnessed a later appropriation by elites through the collection of taxes. Indeed, an involvement in exchange and the exploitation of specific maritime resources such as salt may have provided a solid basis of enrichment for some of the communities of Kent, the Isle of Wight and the Pas-de-Calais. In the case of Kent and the Isle of Wight, this may have played a role in the development of the kingdoms; instead, this is not the case in the Pas-de-Calais, which was a peripheral area in the context of sixth-century Francia. Although the archaeological part of this thesis concentrates on long-distance artefacts, we must remember that they are not the only goods to be exchanged from the coasts toward the hinterland: even if they are objects that can be exchanged for other goods or to foster social relationships, long-distance imports alone cannot provide a solid base for economic

development. Thus, the examples of salt and iron examined in the previous chapters are particularly important since they show what some of these communities could export to their hinterland (iron is obviously not an exclusive characteristic of coastal areas, though it must be remembered that there were concentrations of iron along the coasts of Kent and the Isle of Wight, near particularly rich Early Saxon cemeteries). Control of these resources by kings and monasteries is stressed by later charters; it has been argued above that some of the sixth-century communities developed thanks to their exploitation.

It must be stressed that this model does not deny (far from it) the existence of a fluid situation of contacts and traffic beyond the control of kings and elites, as shown by the widespread presence of foreign goods in the most connected areas, and the almost ubiquitous existence of landing sites. Moreover, this picture does much to counter the idea of a Merovingian-Kentish monopoly over the systems of exchange during the sixth century.[11] This context of widespread contacts including most coastal areas, and the similarities between Kent and the Isle of Wight indicating that also this latter had direct contacts with the Continent (a further possible evidence for which being the 'Anglo-Saxon' presence in the Normandy Peninsula), strongly suggest that this monopoly reflects a theoretical construct rather more than reality. Although it is certain that Kent was the Anglo-Saxon kingdom with the strongest contacts with Francia during the Early Saxon period, this does not imply a monopoly – larger quantities of imports and political contacts can simply be seen as the result of its geographical proximity with the Continent. Moreover, the assumption of the existence of a monopoly in this period implies a degree of administrative complexity and political direction that cannot be detected from the evidence, which, on the contrary, shows that foreign materials reached many communities via the sea and then the rivers. This thesis has shown that even in the Mid-Saxon period the existence of a large

[11] On this see e.g. Welch 1991, 267: 'A probable condition of this monopoly was that the kings of Kent recognized the Merovingians as their overlords'; Yorke 1997, 40 with previous references; Harrington – Welch 2014, esp. 178-79; 209. See also Ch. 7.

number of landing sites strongly suggests that royal control could not and did not extend over the entire transmarine traffic;[12] this is all the more true for the previous centuries, when the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were still developing.

The archaeological evidence of the fifth/early seventh centuries shows that extensive contacts were in place between Southern England and the Continent, and that, in the Anglo-Saxon areas most deeply included in the network of traffic, imports reached a large part of the population. This picture, and the possibility of an enrichment of some of the coastal communities thanks to transmarine traffic, has allowed us to reshape the theory of a Merovingian hegemony crossing the Channel and extending over Southern England in the sixth century. As examined in Ch. 7, this idea has been based on quite a small number of written sources, all of which are ambiguous: whereas Gregory the Great's letter *might* imply some sort of overlordship, the almost contemporary source, Gregory of Tours, does not mention a Frankish overlordship and identifies the king of Kent as *rex*, a term Gregory used for independent political powers, and the earlier letter of Theudebert to Justinian specifies that Frankish hegemony extended only *usque in oceanis litoribus*. Hence, the corpus of sources does not support the theory of a Merovingian hegemony, which may foster a misleading picture of the development of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

The case of Kent and the identification of the network of the Mid-Saxon 'productive' sites help us better to frame the *emporia*. The recognition of other possible sites involved in the long-distance routes illustrates that, while the *emporia* were undoubtedly major nodes in the network of traffic from the seventh century, they should be seen in the context of strong interactions which include all the coastal zones in the Channel area.[13] The Kentish case, furthermore, shows that the model of one major *emporium* surrounded by smaller trading centres is not always

[12] See Loveluck – Tys 2006; Naylor 2012.
[13] See Ch. 1.1; 2.1; 3.1; 4.1.

followed. In fact, a central question concerning the development of the *emporia* is why Kent did not develop one major site comparable to *Hamwic*, *Quentovic* and Dorestad.[14] The investigation of the Early Saxon web of connections has shown that this peculiarity of Kent derived from the fact that the ease of connections with the Continent made the framework of many trading sites highly functional; thus, in the later period the region did not *need* one major trading site. The fifth-/early seventh-century context helps to understand the case of Sussex as well, for which no Mid-Saxon *emporium* is documented. In this case, this absence is explained by a more peripheral position along maritime routes, which is not a Mid-Saxon development, but a situation visible already in the Early Saxon period. Indeed, while some degree of direct traffic from the Continent seems clearly to have existed in this region too, this seems to have been much more sporadic than in Kent and the Isle of Wight. Thus, the differences in the development of the transmarine network in the examined regions demonstrate that it is not possible to understand the rise of the *emporia* system by applying a single one-way model.

One of the characteristics of these centres as listed by Cowie, for instance, is that they lay in strategic locations near political or natural boundaries; this is said to be a characteristic of ports-of-trade.[15] As Scull points out, however, this is not a common feature of all the *emporia*; *Hamwic* for instance did not lie near boundaries.[16] One may add that nor did the Kentish trading sites have such a location. The question of the political boundaries, when present (as in the case of Dorestad, which was located near the Frisian-Frankish frontier, and London), may indeed represent more an effect than a cause: trading sites firstly developed in strategic locations along the communication system, and were integral part of the network of settlement; then, the desire to take possession of them by kings made these areas became frontier zones.

[14] As noted by Moreland 2000b (2010, 210).
[15] Cowie 2001, 17, noting that York is an exception.
[16] Scull 1997, 286.

Since both are nodal areas in the transmarine system, one would ask why in the Rhine delta we saw the emergence of one major commercial site out of a complex constellation of smaller trading centres, and this was not the case of Kent. In this regard, it seems possible that the frontier location of Dorestad played an important role, as this might have caused a stronger channelling of traders and goods toward a specific site.[17] Nonetheless, the presence of a web of trading sites throughout these centuries in the strategic areas along the communication routes highlights the strong integration of wider areas in the network, to which a larger part of the population had access, and again stresses that kings did not control all the traffic. The charters from the Rhine delta have moreover suggested a wide existence of small lay landowners and their possible involvement in commercial activity (Ch. 8.4).[18] A broader inclusion of laymen in traffic is highly likely in the other regions too, but differences should be considered between areas where the Merovingian power was stronger from an earlier period, and those which came into firm control by the Franks only later. Although this would require a specific investigation of the archaeological evidence, the development of great ecclesiastical and lay landowners and the extensive royal properties around the estuary of the Seine may have left fewer opportunities for smaller lay property there, which does not appear in the charters.

Being 'functional' commercial centres which owe their existence to the demand for goods and the choice of traders, the major coastal *emporia* appear as only one of the possibilities stemming from the articulation of the trading network. Although there may have been an over-emphasis on the uniqueness of the *emporia*, it is nonetheless evident that they were the preeminent nodes of Mid-Saxon (and contemporary Frankish) transmarine traffic, and the role of the royal and ecclesiastical involvement was certainly crucial in their development. In this

[17] See also Theuws 2004 on the specificity of Dorestad from a cultural perspective.

[18] See Loveluck – Tys 2006. On access to the network from a larger part of the population see also Theuws 2012a and 2012b on peasant agency, focusing on the area of the Rhine-Meuse-Moselle.

regard, in Ch. 8 it has been suggested that the foundations of monasteries and ecclesiastical sites may have been an important stimulus for the development of more structured trading sites, given that these sites were more strongly embedded in their territory – a religious site is more anchored in a territory than a peripatetic king; this is thus a stimulus for the landing site linked with that monastery or bishopric to become a more structured trading site. While the ecclesiastical centres may thus have played a crucial role, the same can be assumed for secular estate centres, and we have seen that the 'aristocratic' Flixborough, for instance, is strongly rooted in its territory. Indeed, the prominence of religious sites may be due to the partial perspective offered by the written sources, since the bulk of the charters are from monasteries.

This same partiality of the written sources can account for our perspective concerning the role assumed by the kings in the *emporia* system from the seventh century onward. We have seen in Ch. 6 and 8 that previous scholarship, led by Hodges and assuming a substantivist perspective, saw the kings as founders of the sites, who established them to take possession of luxury goods capable of sustaining their power; instead, more recent research has stated that the involvement of kings in the *emporia* was essentially shaped by the collections of tolls. It seems however unlikely, in my view, that royal power limited its possibility of enrichment to toll-collection. Seventh- and eighth-century written sources document that kings had extensive properties and residences in the area surrounding the *emporia*: this can be easily seen on the Continent, near the Rhine delta and across the estuaries of the main rivers, which acted as routes of traffic (the Canche, Somme, Seine and Loire). Royal properties can also be seen near *Hamwic* and London; and the written sources show wide royal properties along the course of the Thames. These extensive properties, thus, may be a hint that, at least in some cases, the kings took an active participation in commercial activities.

The important researches on the specificity of the maritime territories across the North Sea have made the case for a dynamism that configures these areas as partly different from their hinterland. I am proposing that, at least in the regions covered by this thesis, the coast was intrinsically linked with political power, although in different ways according to the different socio-political landscape. In general, however, the vitality of coasts did foster the development of some of the sixth-century communities there, which may have assumed an active role in trading activity both between the opposite shores of the Channel, and toward their hinterland.

Most of the historical and archaeological scholarship tends to investigate the transmarine network and the *emporia* starting from the seventh/eighth centuries; the previous centuries have been explained by the means of overly-theoretical and unsophisticated models. As a consequence, much emphasis has been placed on the differences between the sixth and the seventh centuries, this passage assuming the profile of a watershed, in which the previous period is seen as utterly different. While this is not to underestimate the major socio-economic developments occurring from the seventh century onward, it must now be acknowledged that the crucial prelude of this growth lay in the sixth century: not to take it into account when examining the rise of the *emporia* system means to downplay the origin of this network. On the contrary, it is the investigation of the preceding context which has enabled us to illuminate regional socio-economic differences, and to propose more complex and differentiated models of historical development.

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The Sixth and Earlier Seventh Centuries: Preconditions of the Rise of the *Emporia*

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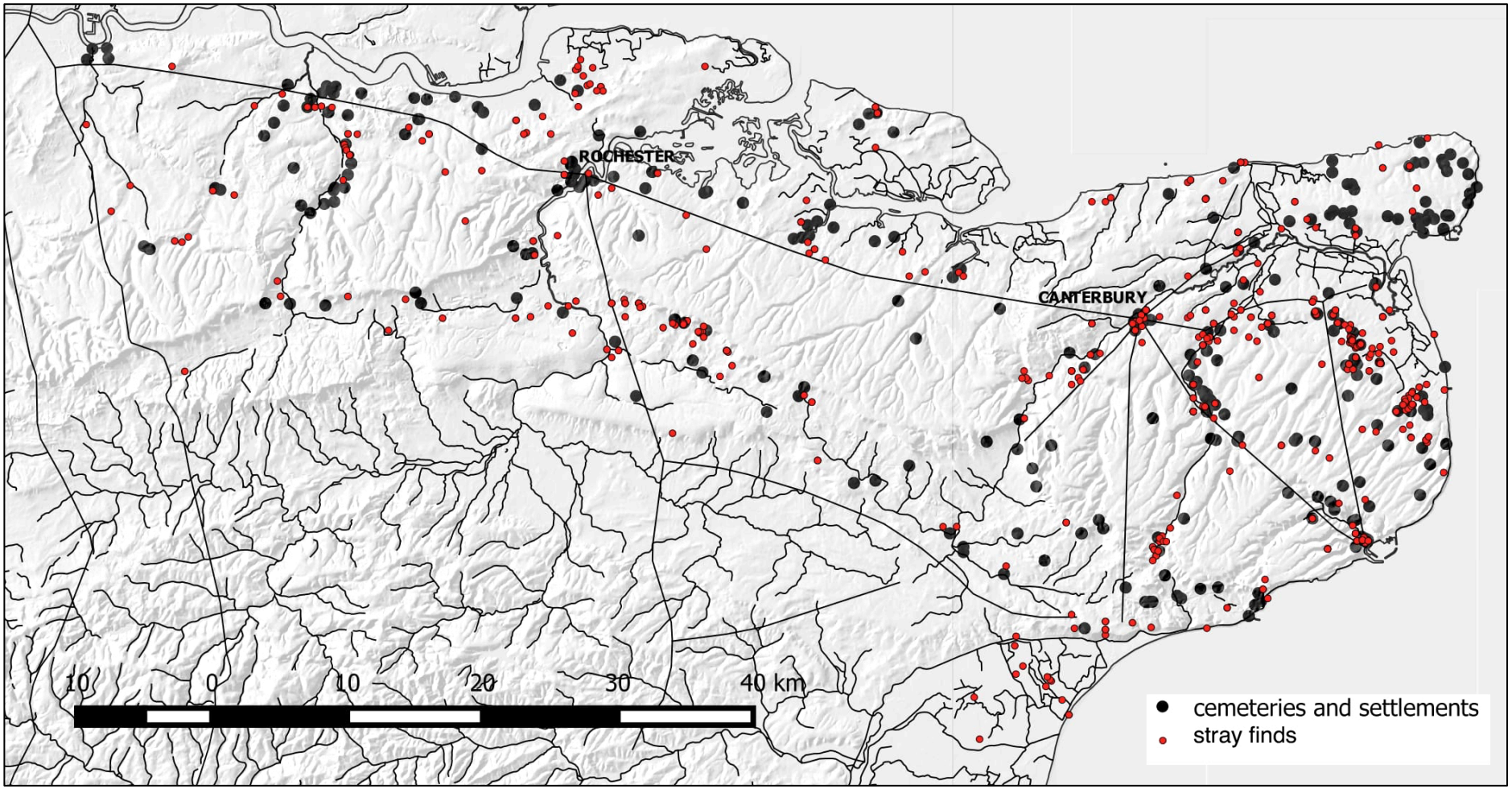
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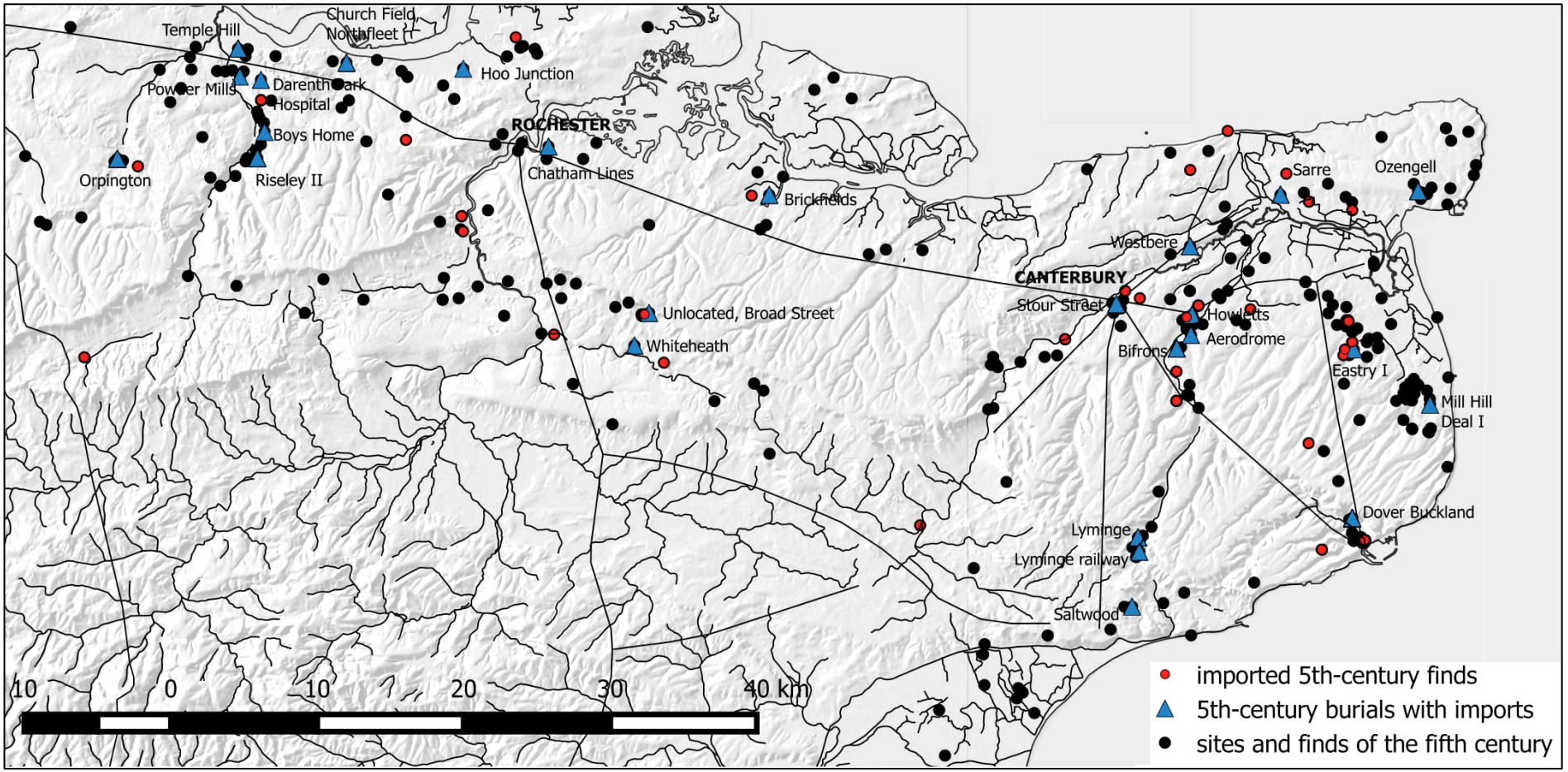
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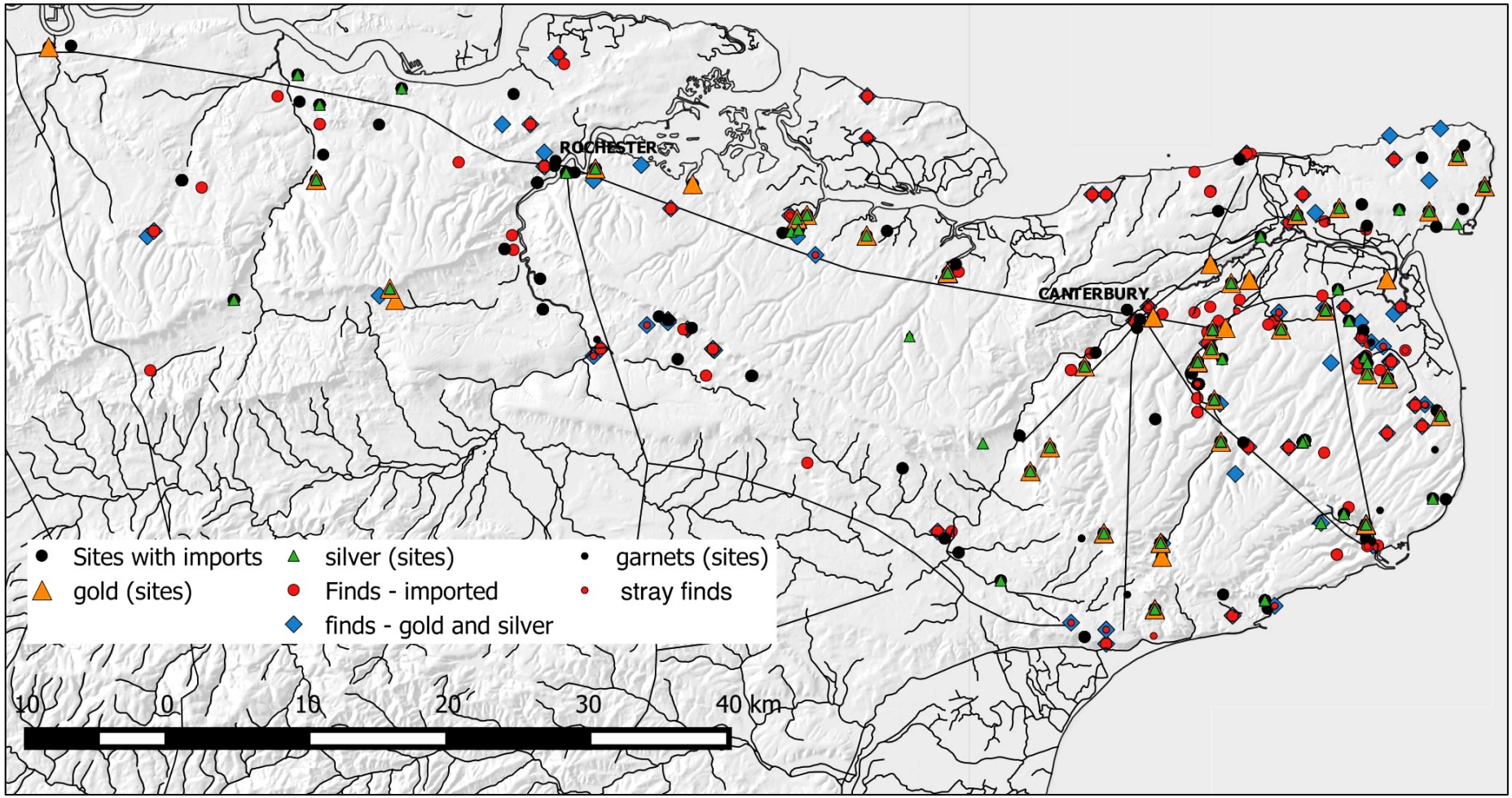
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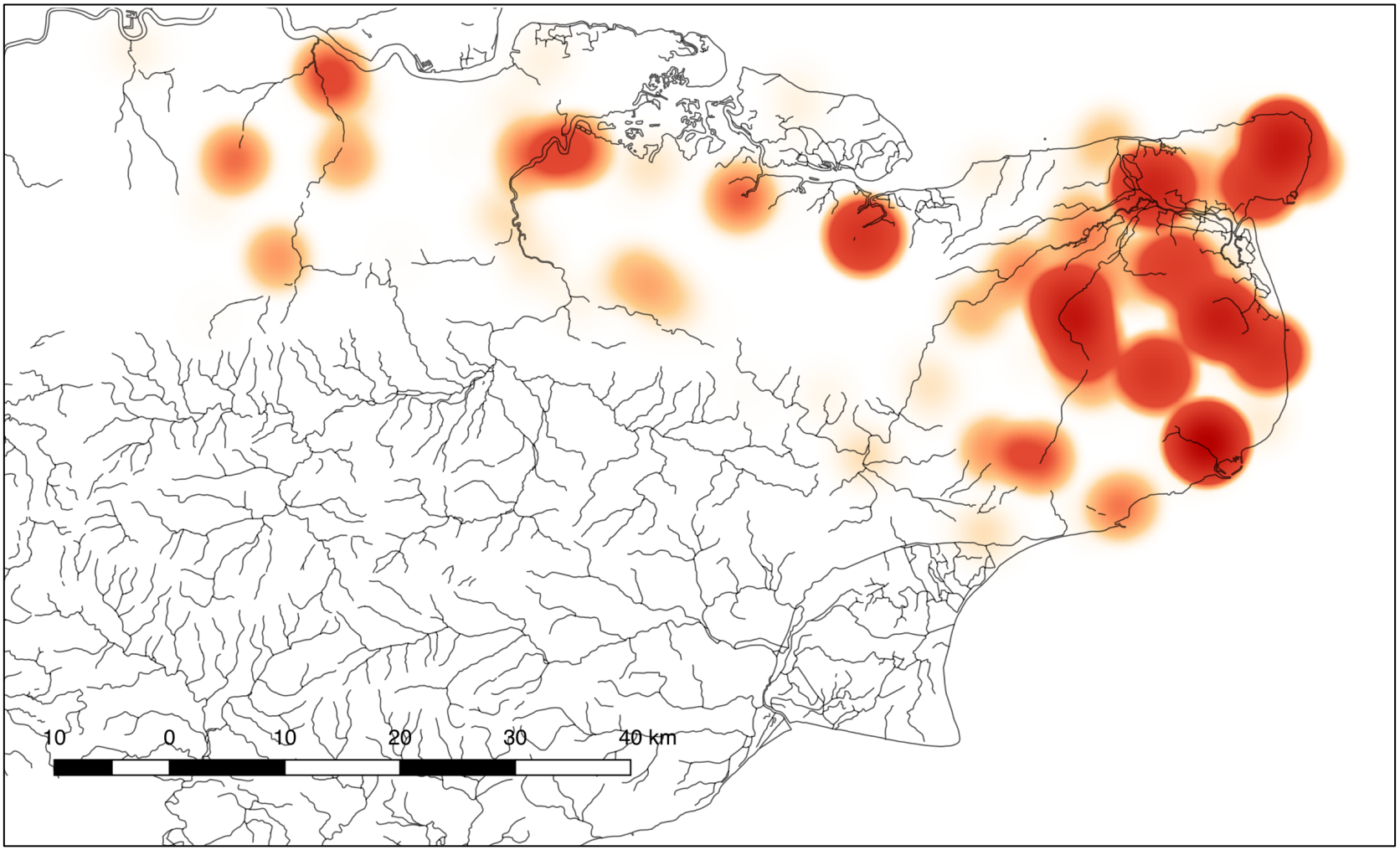
Map 1.1: Kent – Sites and finds



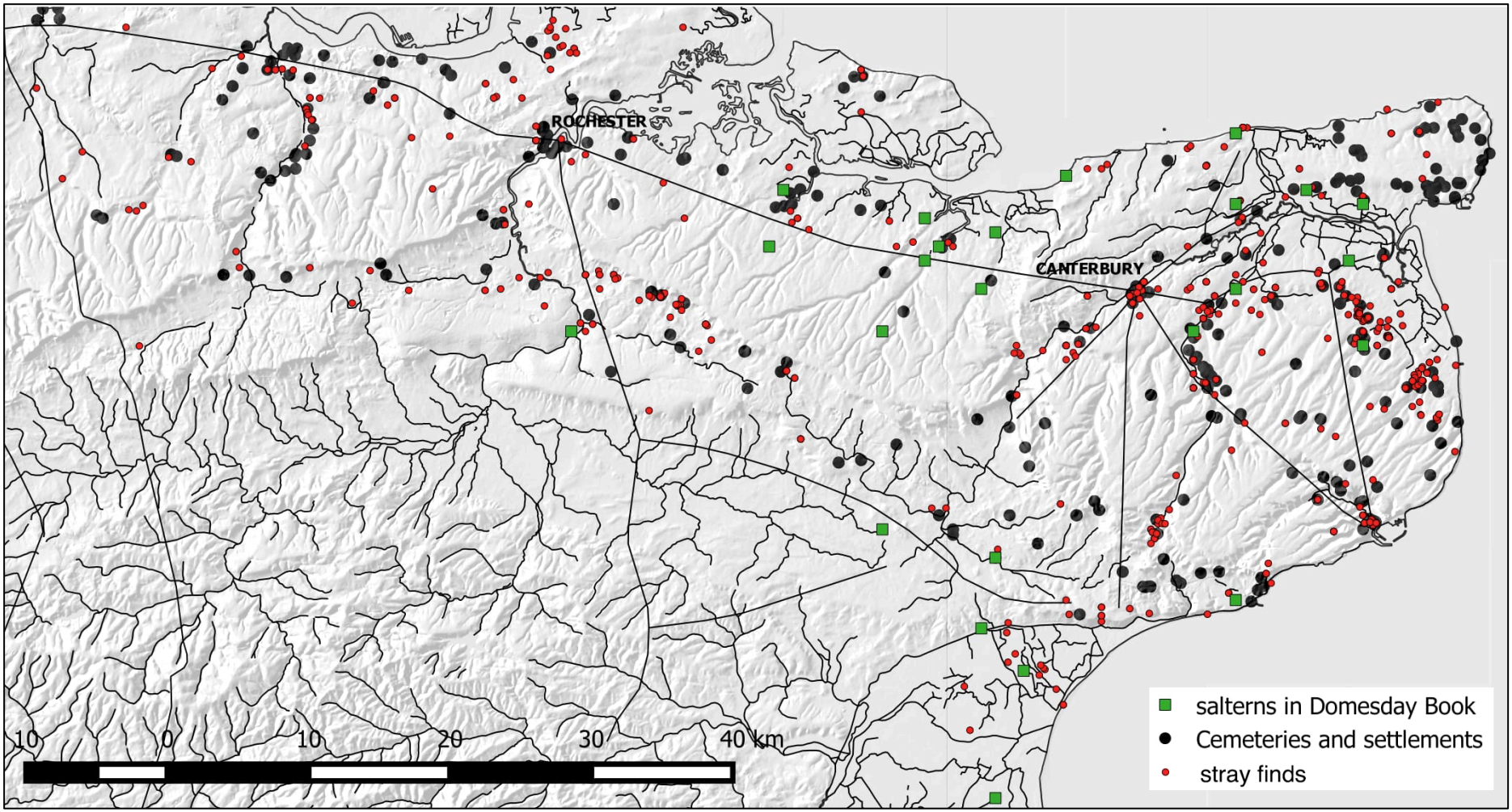
Map 1.2: Kent – Fifth-century sites and finds



Map 1.3: Kent – Imports, gold, silver and garnets

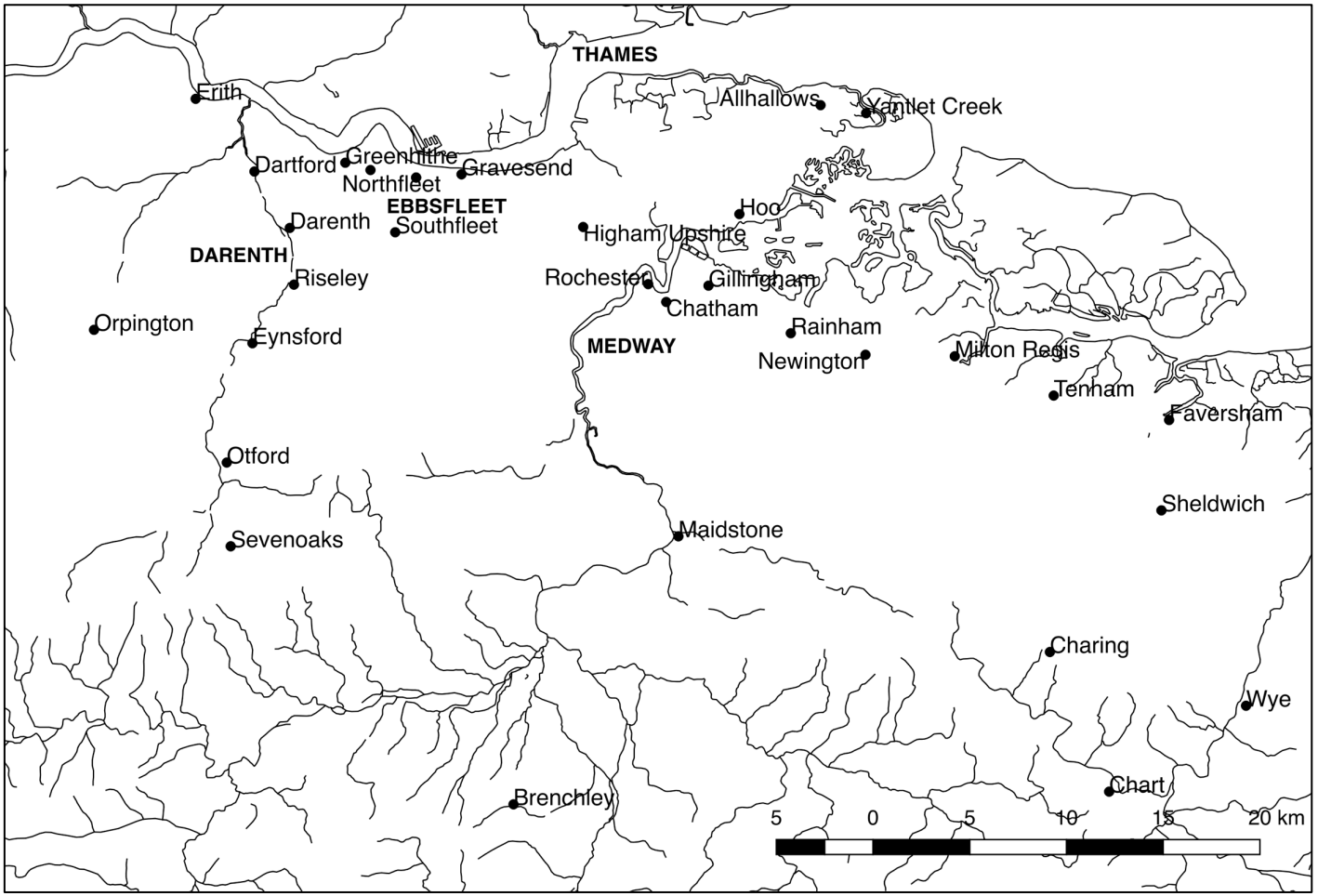


Map 1.3.1: Kent – Heatmap of imports, gold and silver

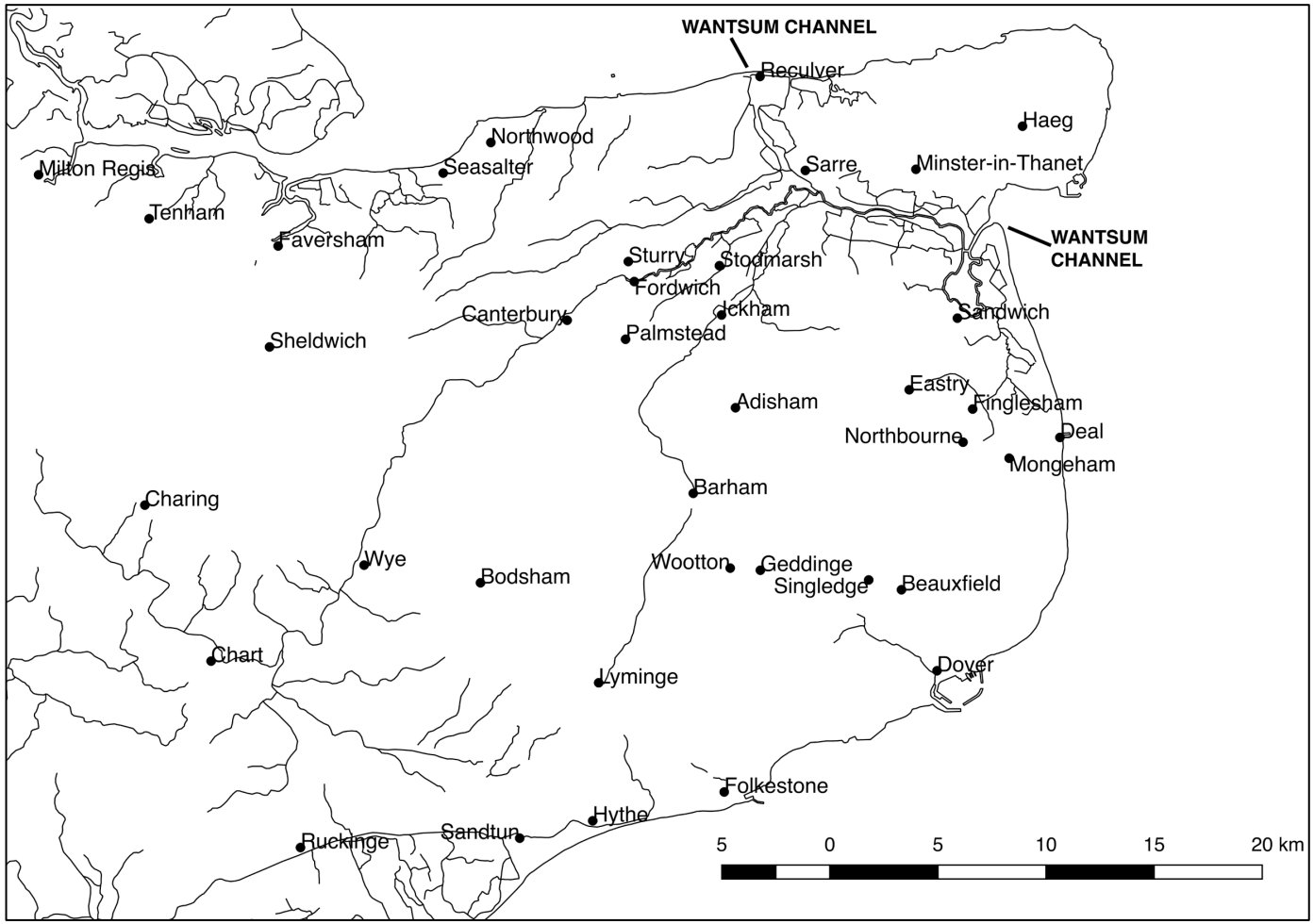


Map 1.4: Kent – Sites and finds in relation to salterns listed in Domesday Book

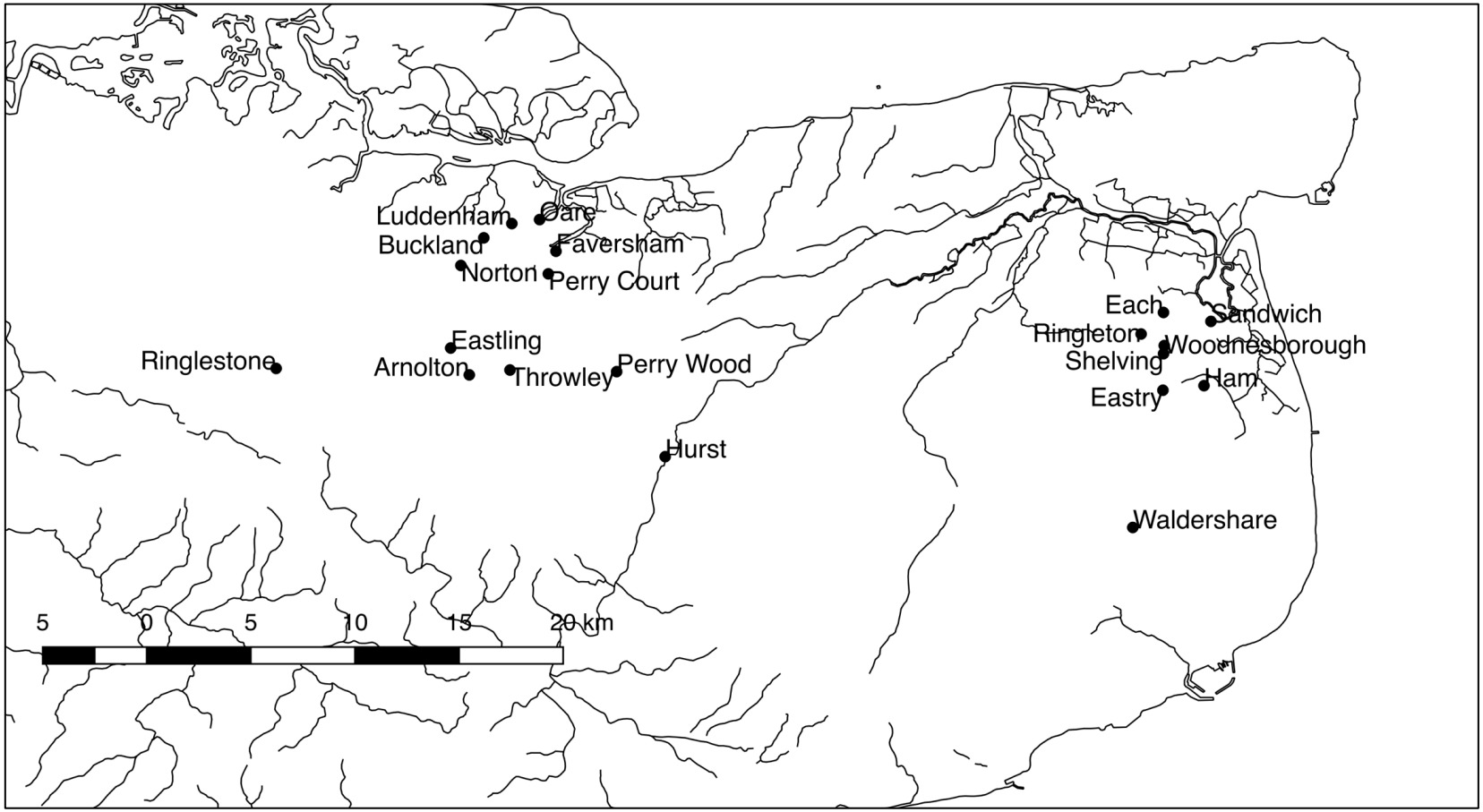
After Campbell 1962



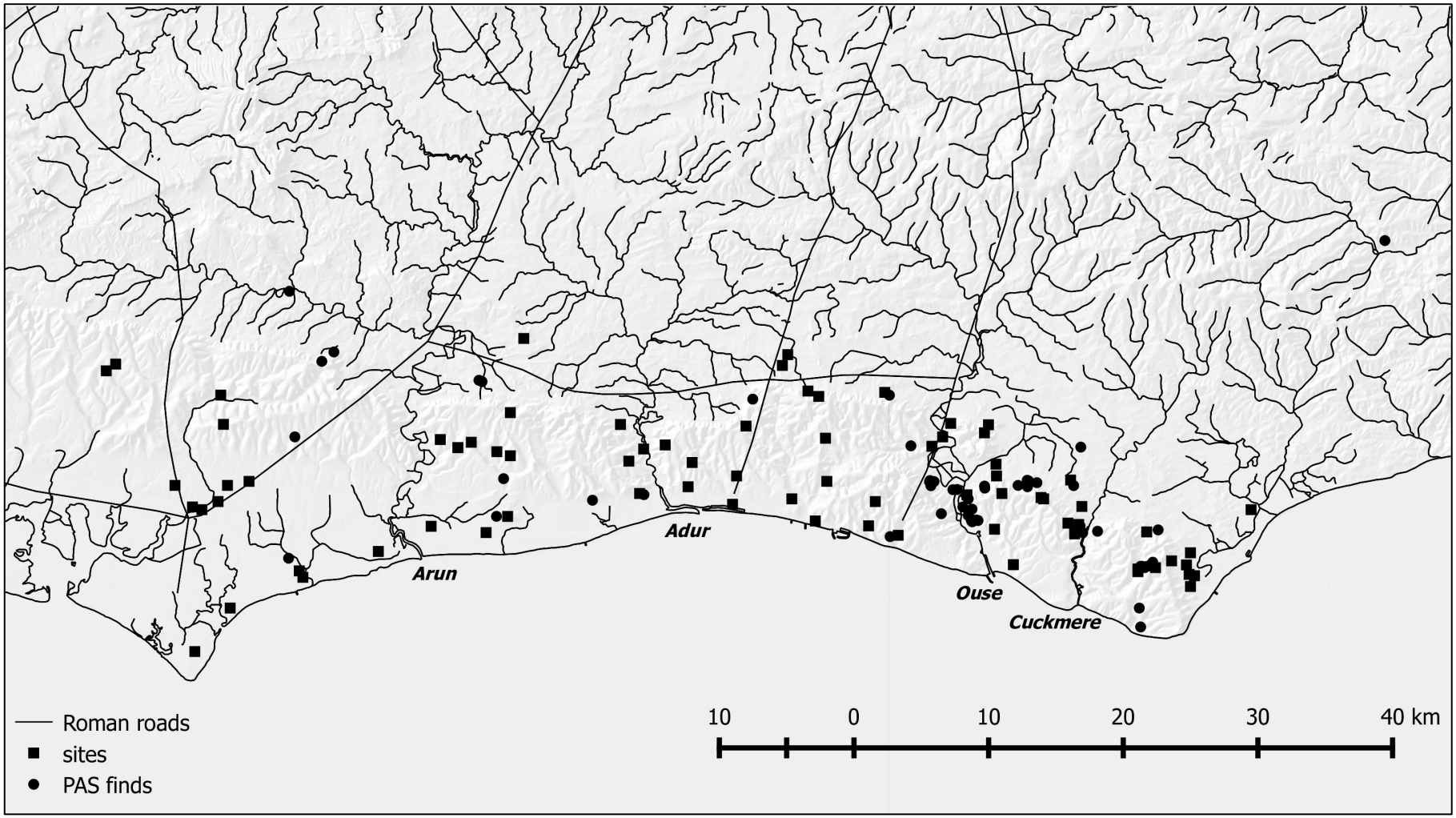
Map 1.5: Kent – Places mentioned (I)



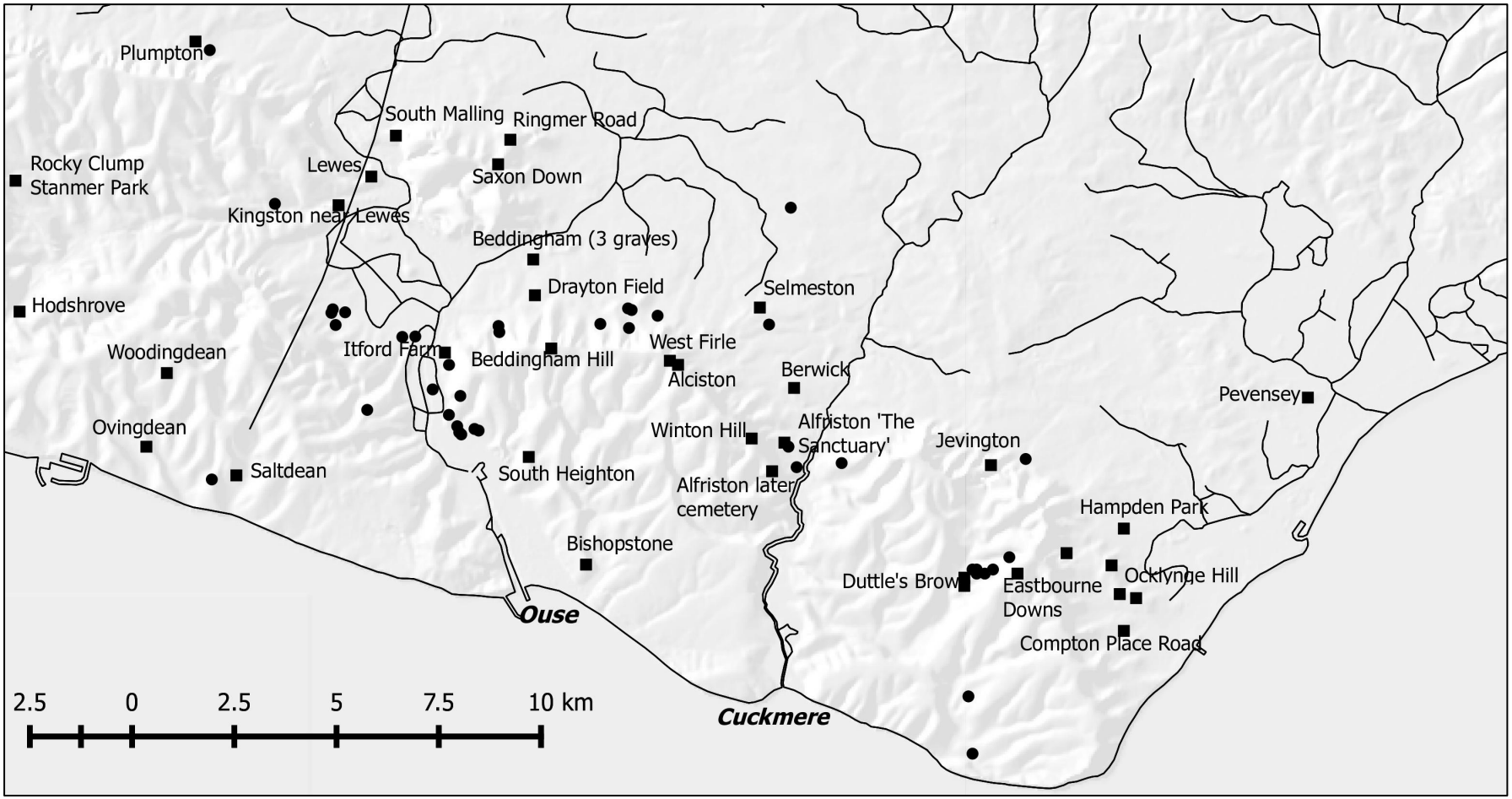
Map 1.5.1: Kent – Places mentioned (II)



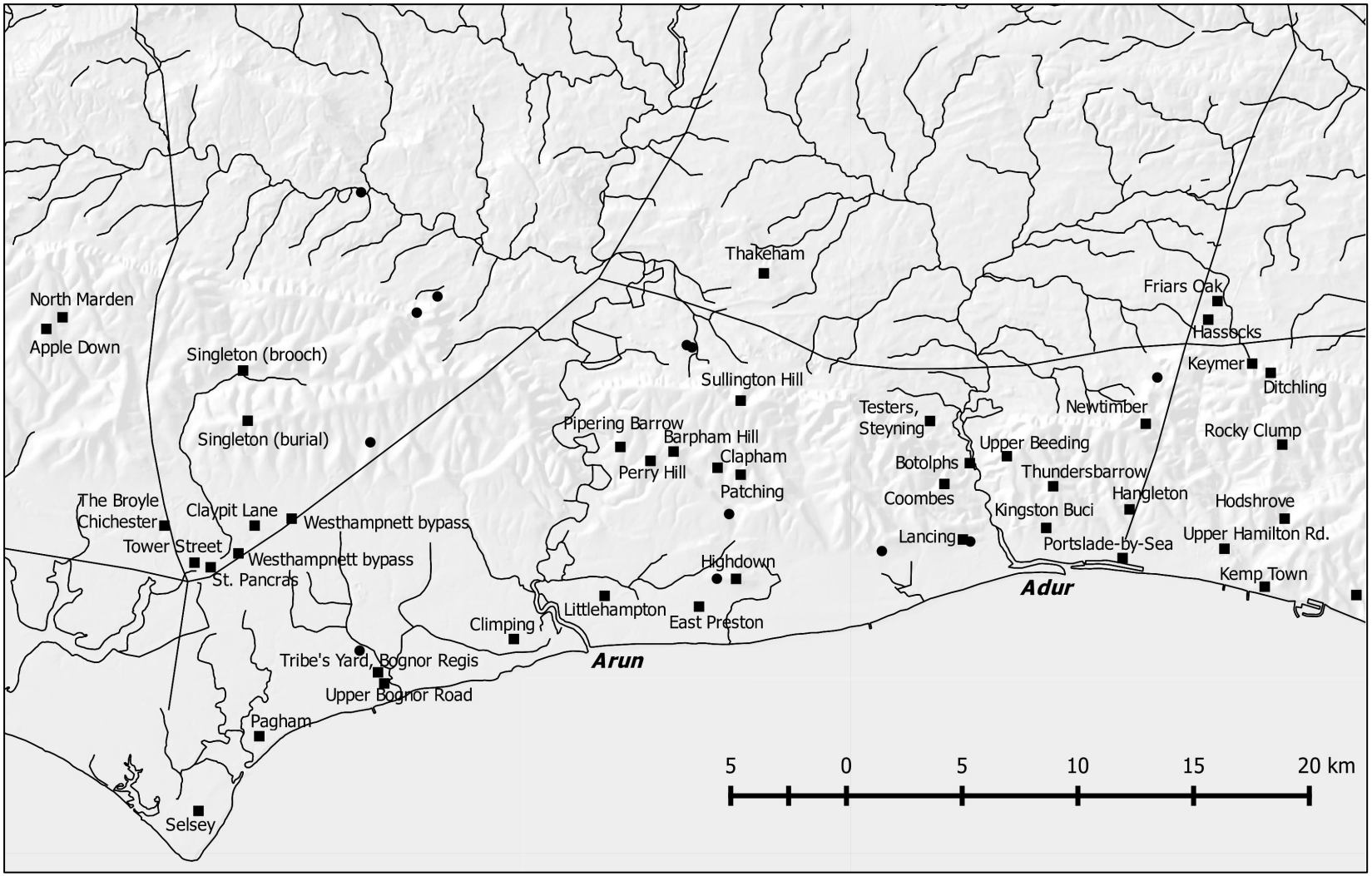
Map 1.6: Kent – Domesday Book sites mentioned



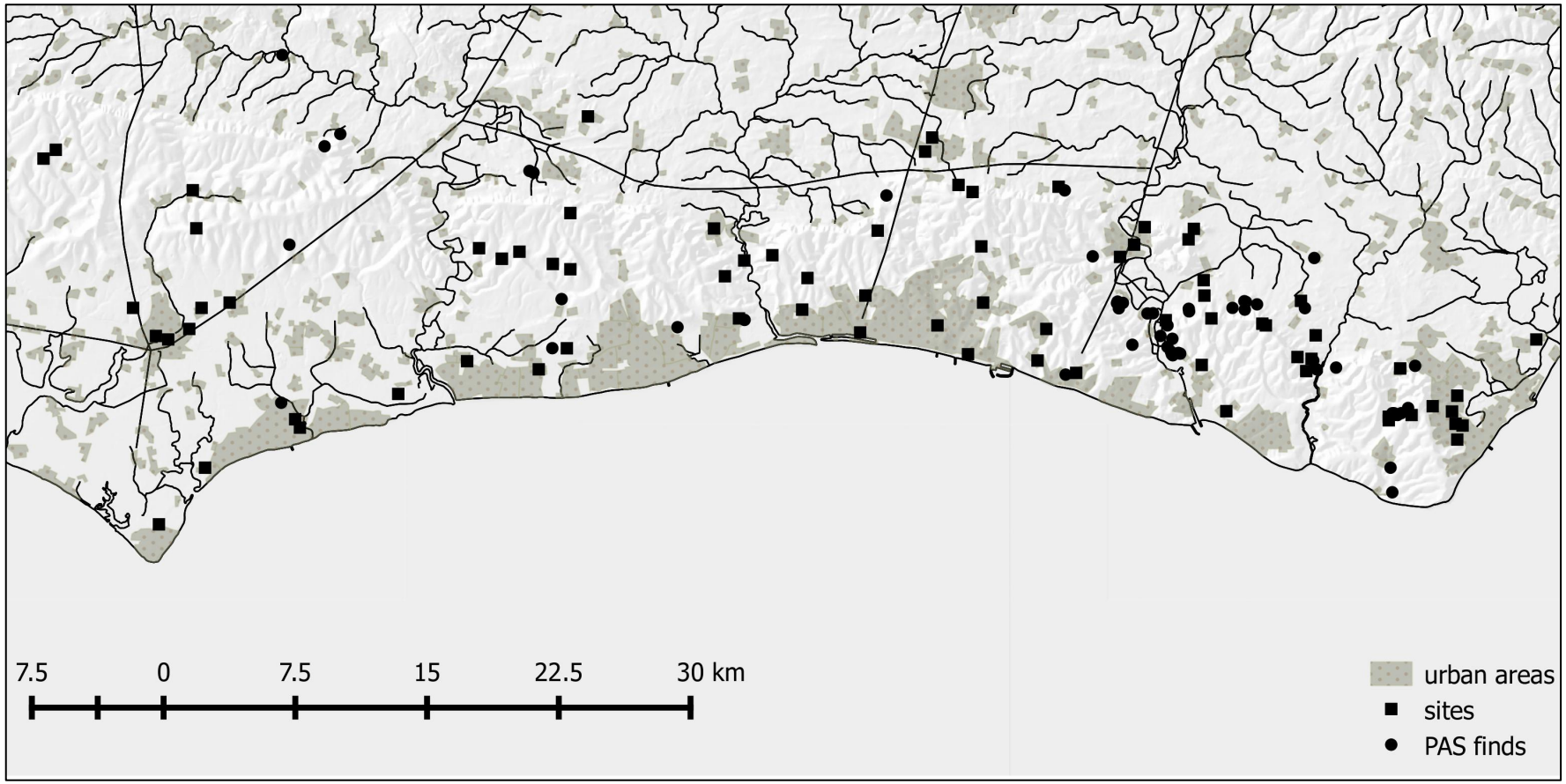
Map 2.1: Sussex – Early Saxon sites and finds



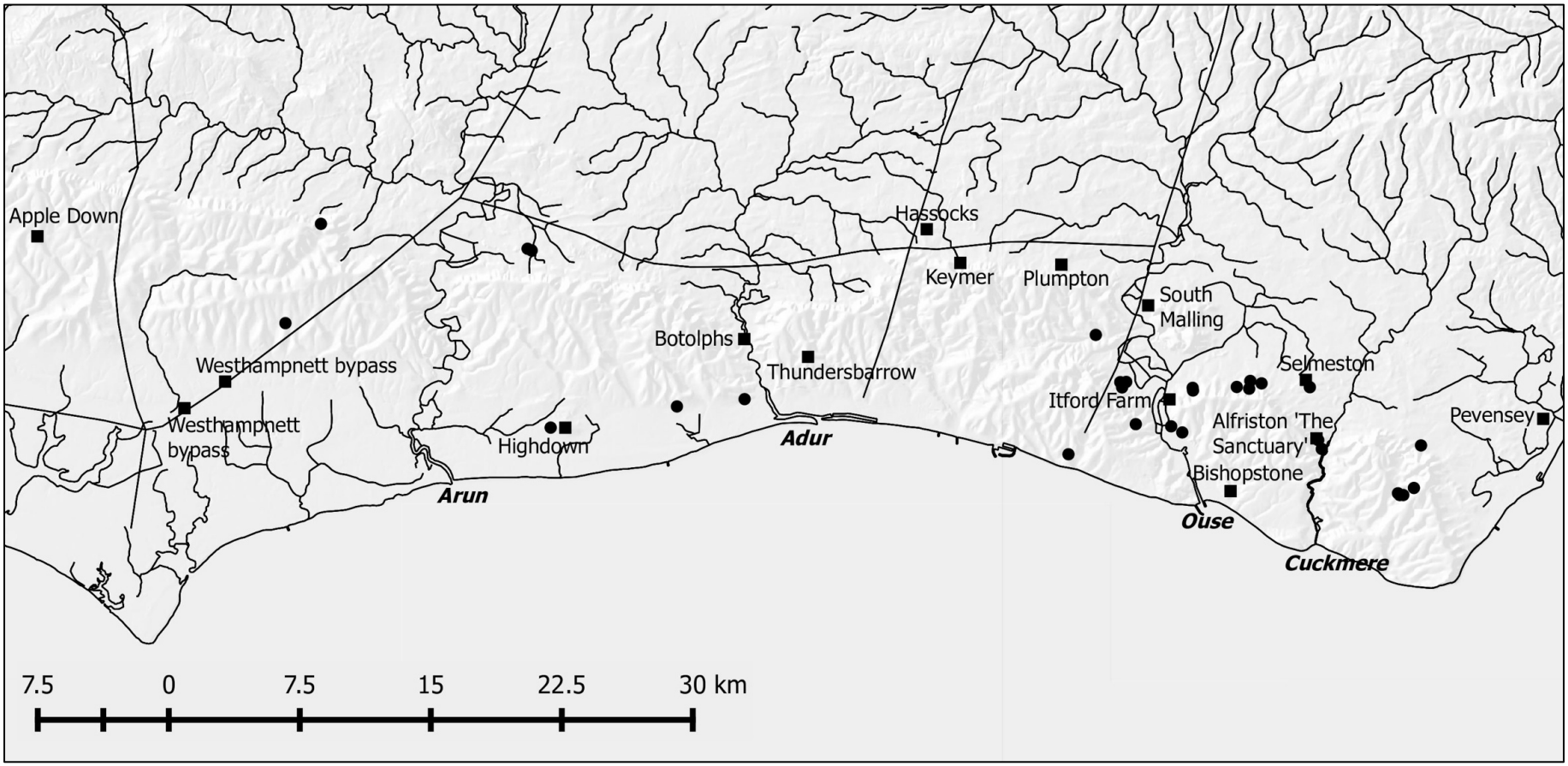
Map 2.1.1: East Sussex – Early Saxon sites and finds



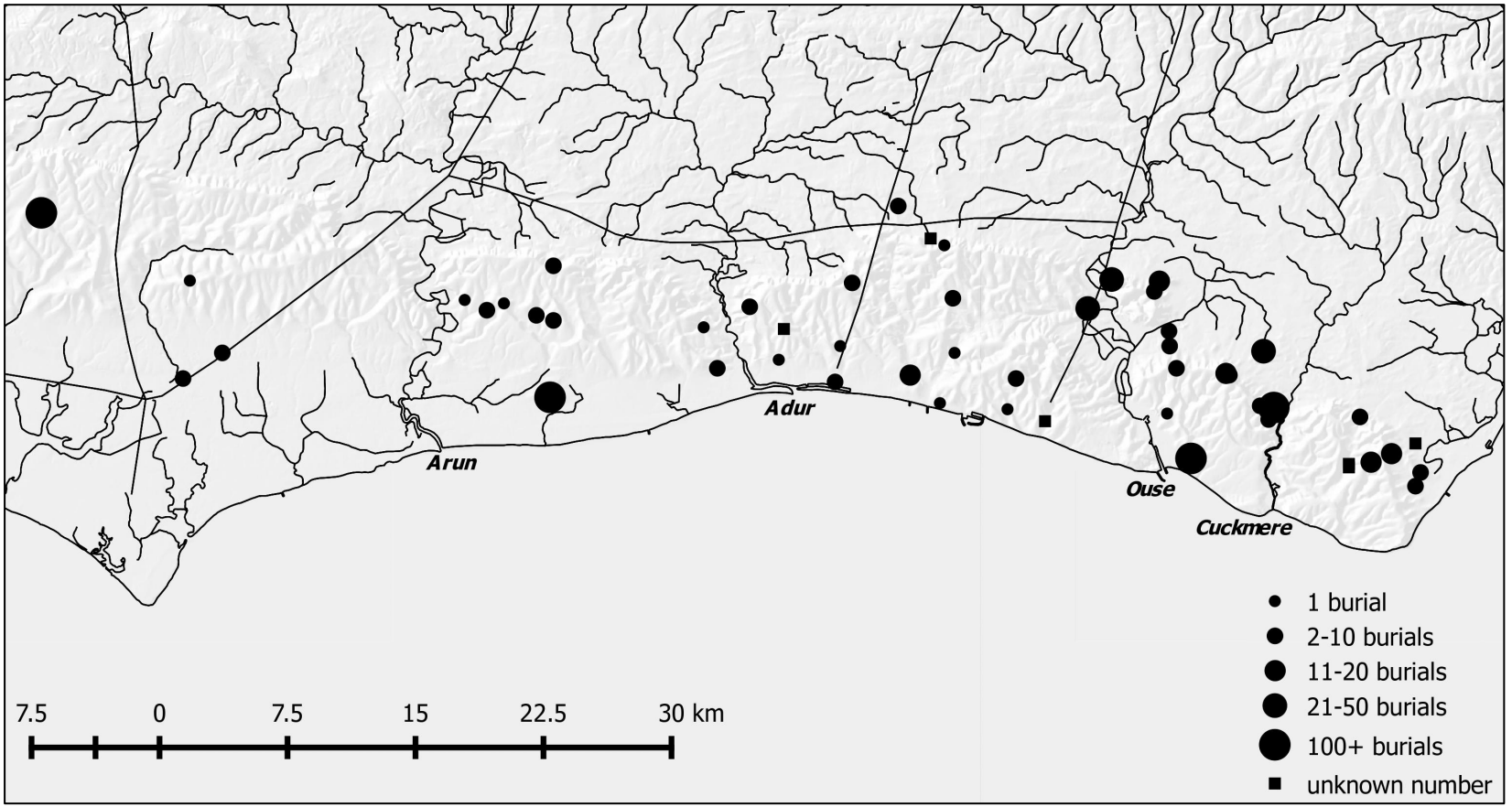
Map 2.1.2: West Sussex – Early Saxon sites and finds



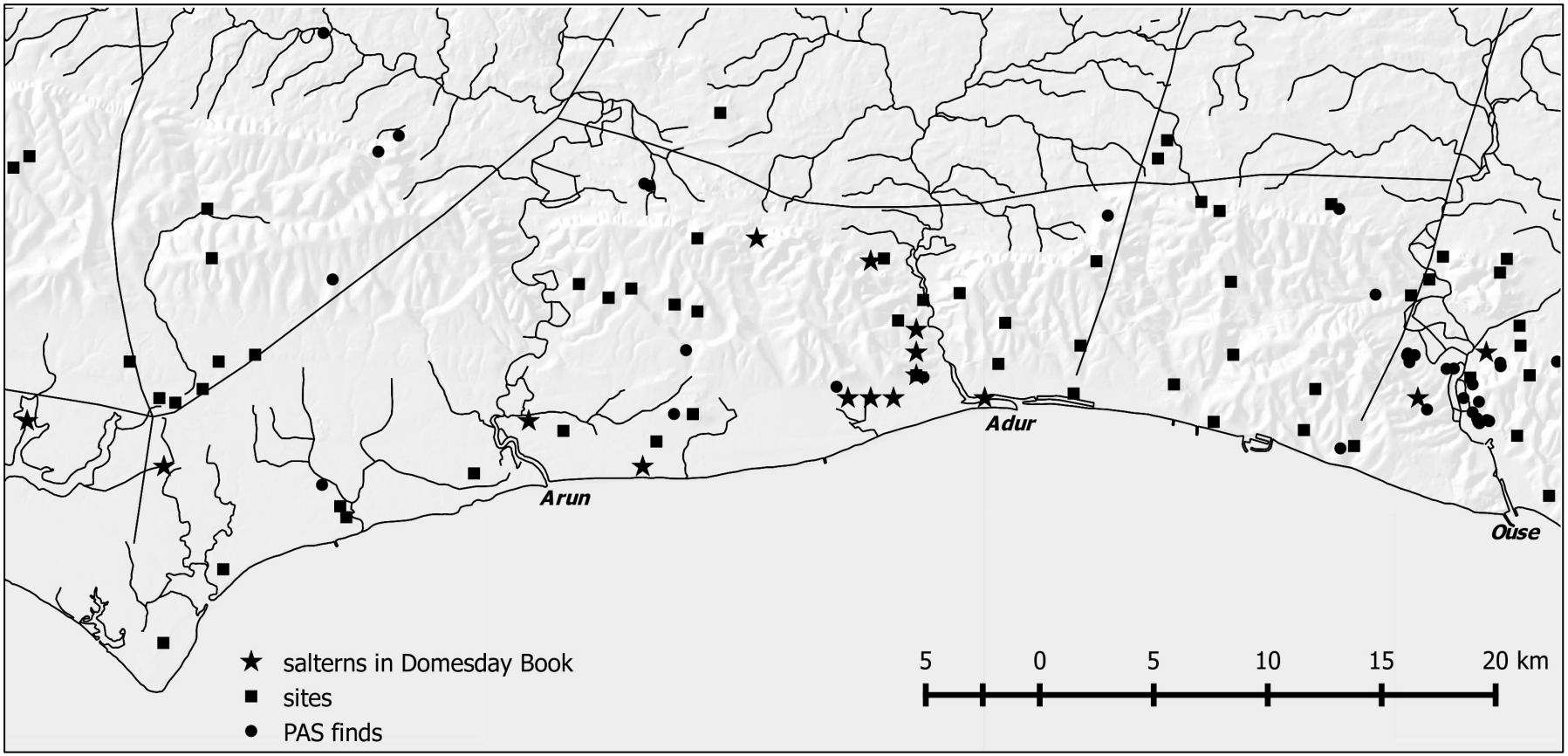
Map 2.2: Sussex – Sites and PAS finds in relation to modern urban areas



Map 2.3: Sussex – Fifth-century sites and finds

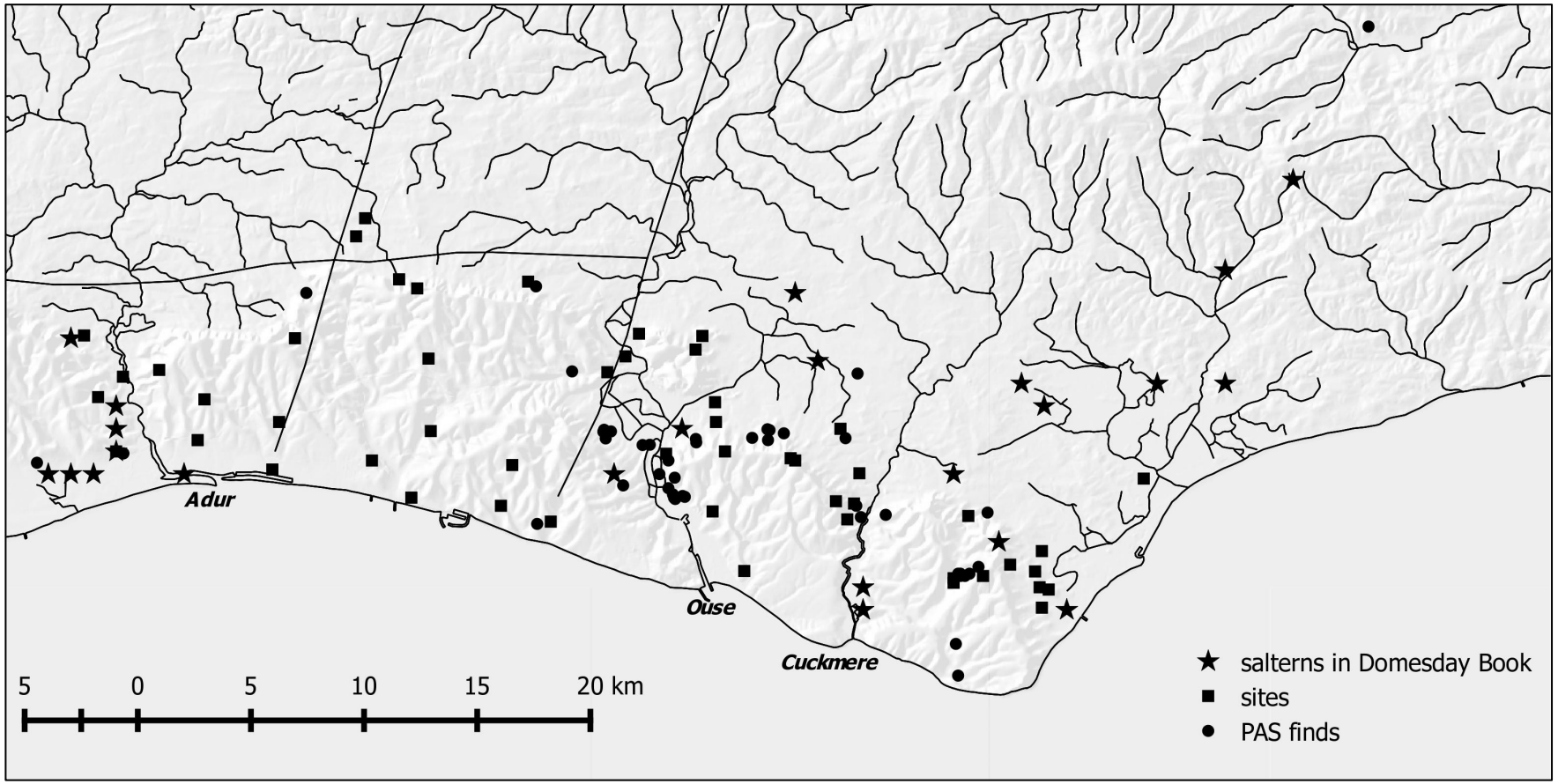


Map 2.4: Sussex – Cemetery sizes



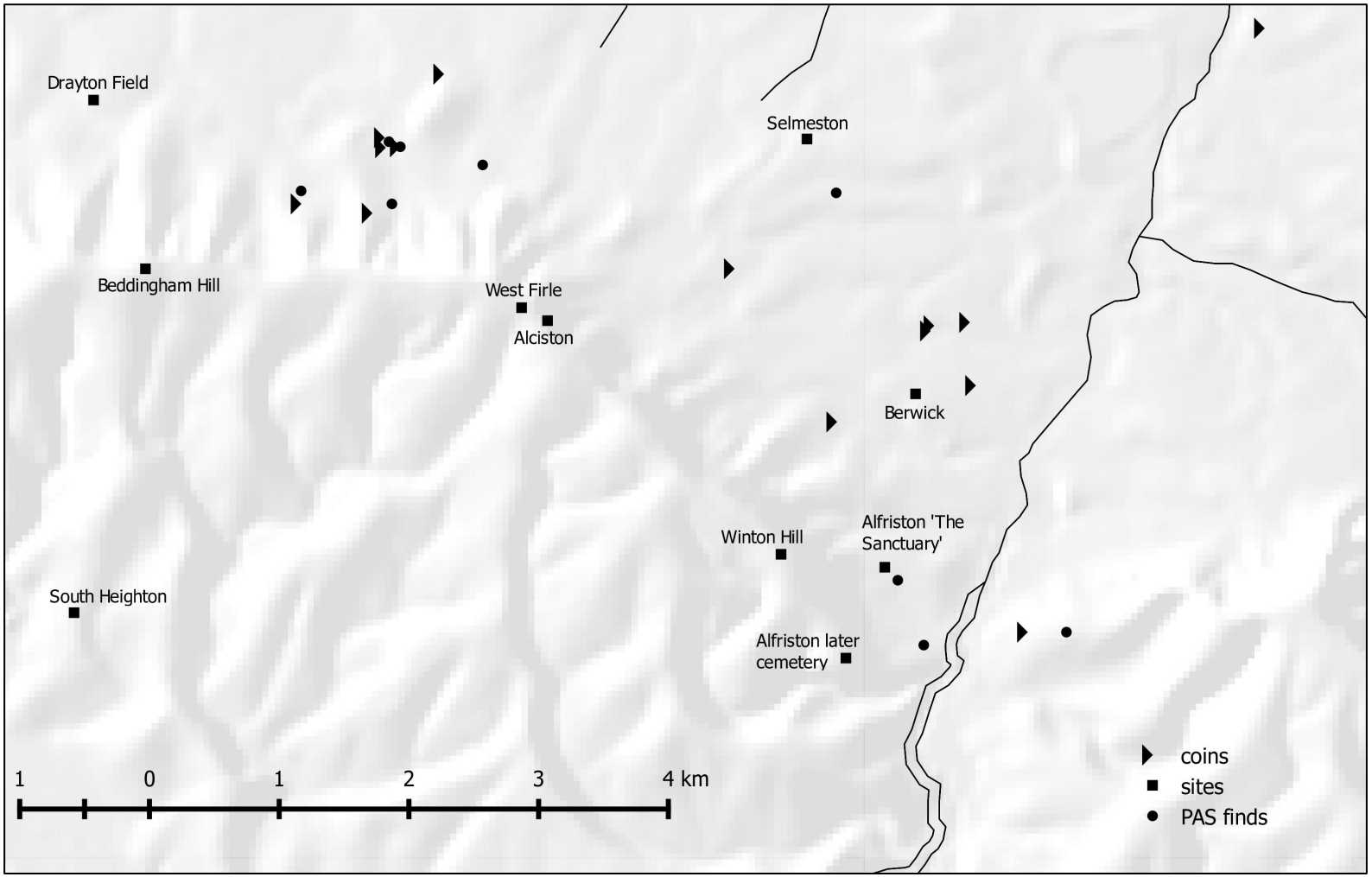
Map 2.5: Sussex – Sites and finds in relation to salterns listed in Domesday Book (I)

After King 1962, 457

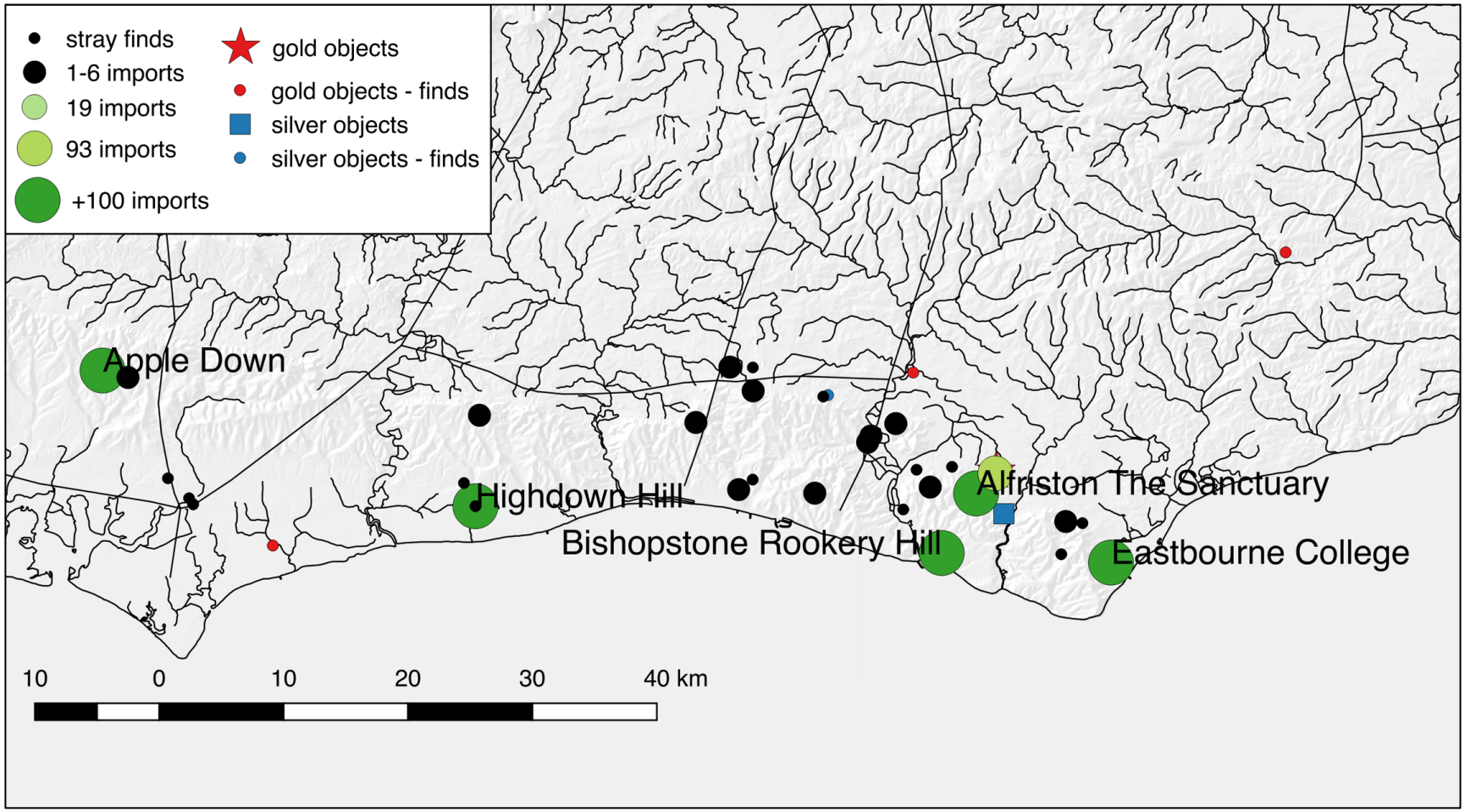


Map 2.5.1: Sussex – Sites and finds in relation to salterns listed in Domesday Book (II)

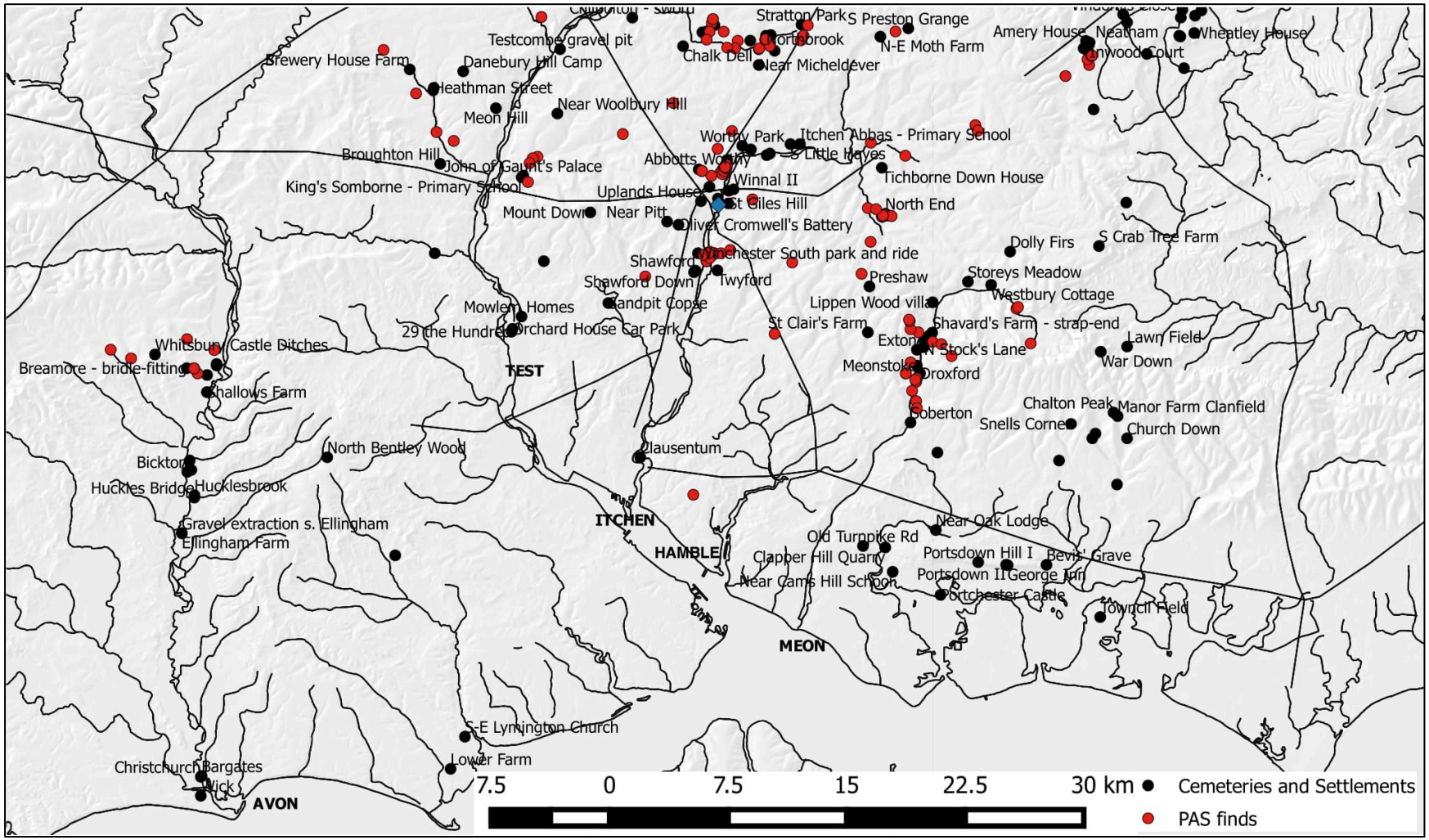
After King 1962, 457



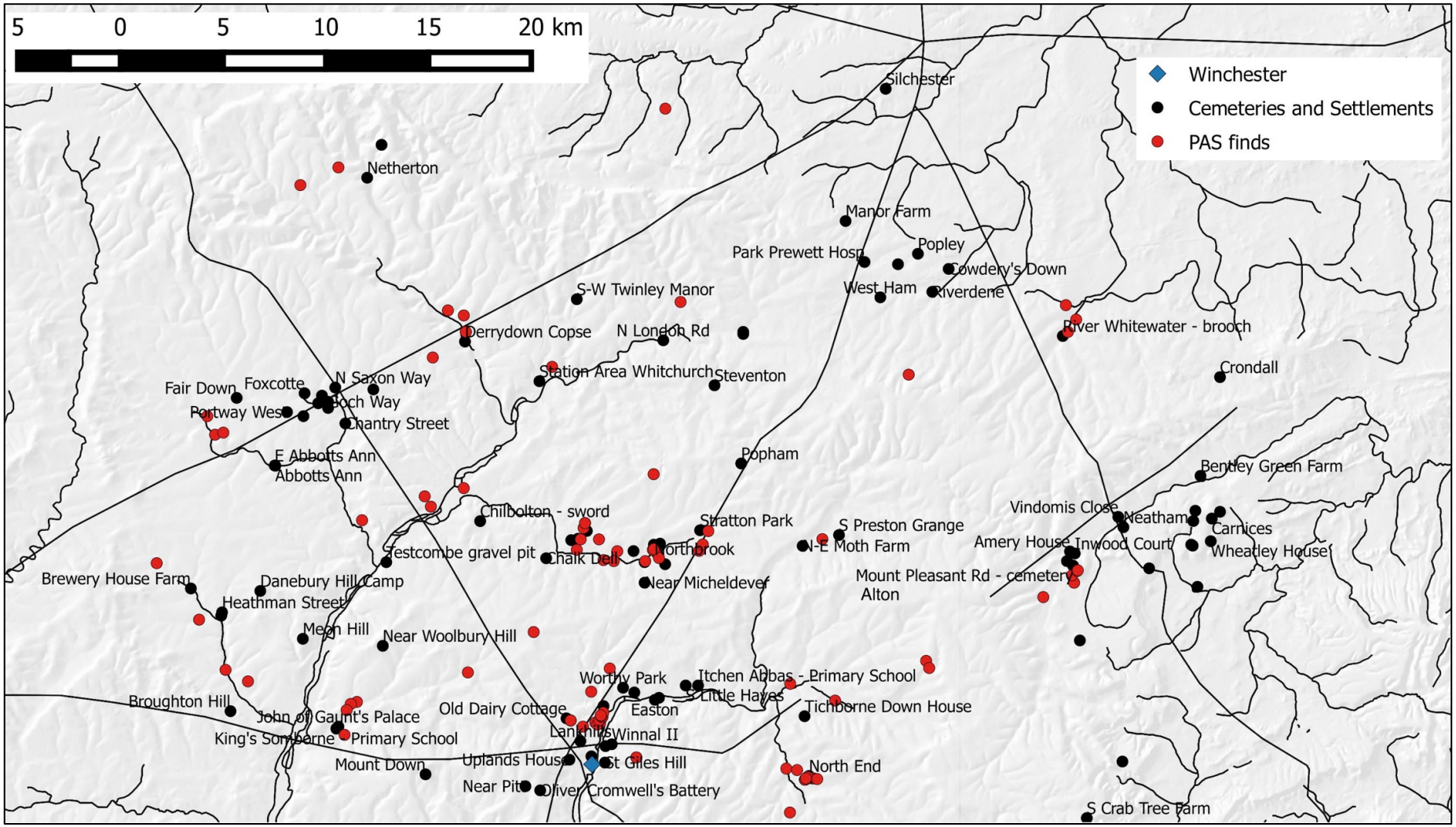
Map 2.6: Sussex – Coins in the area of Alfriston



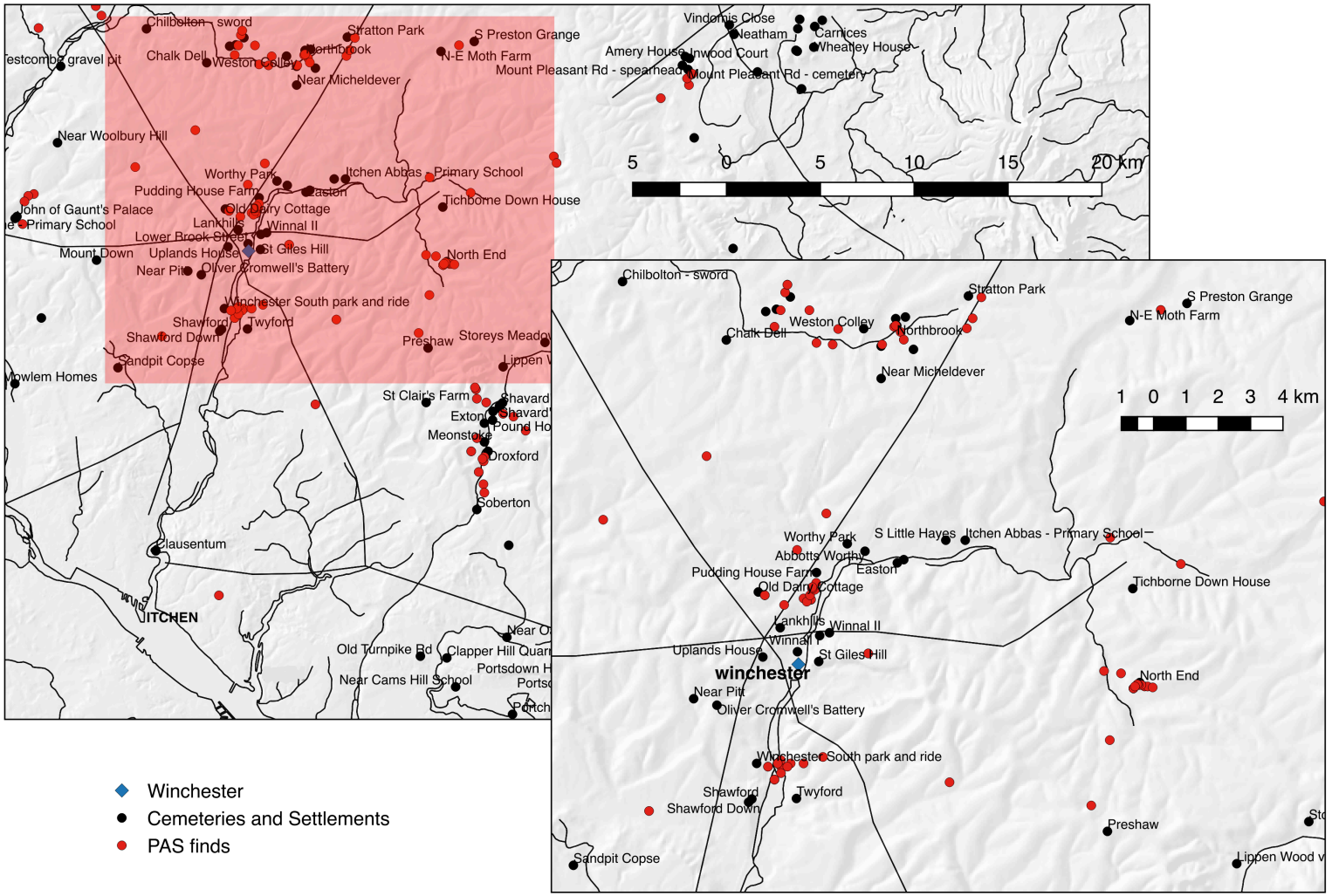
Map 2.7: Sussex – Distribution of imports, gold and silver



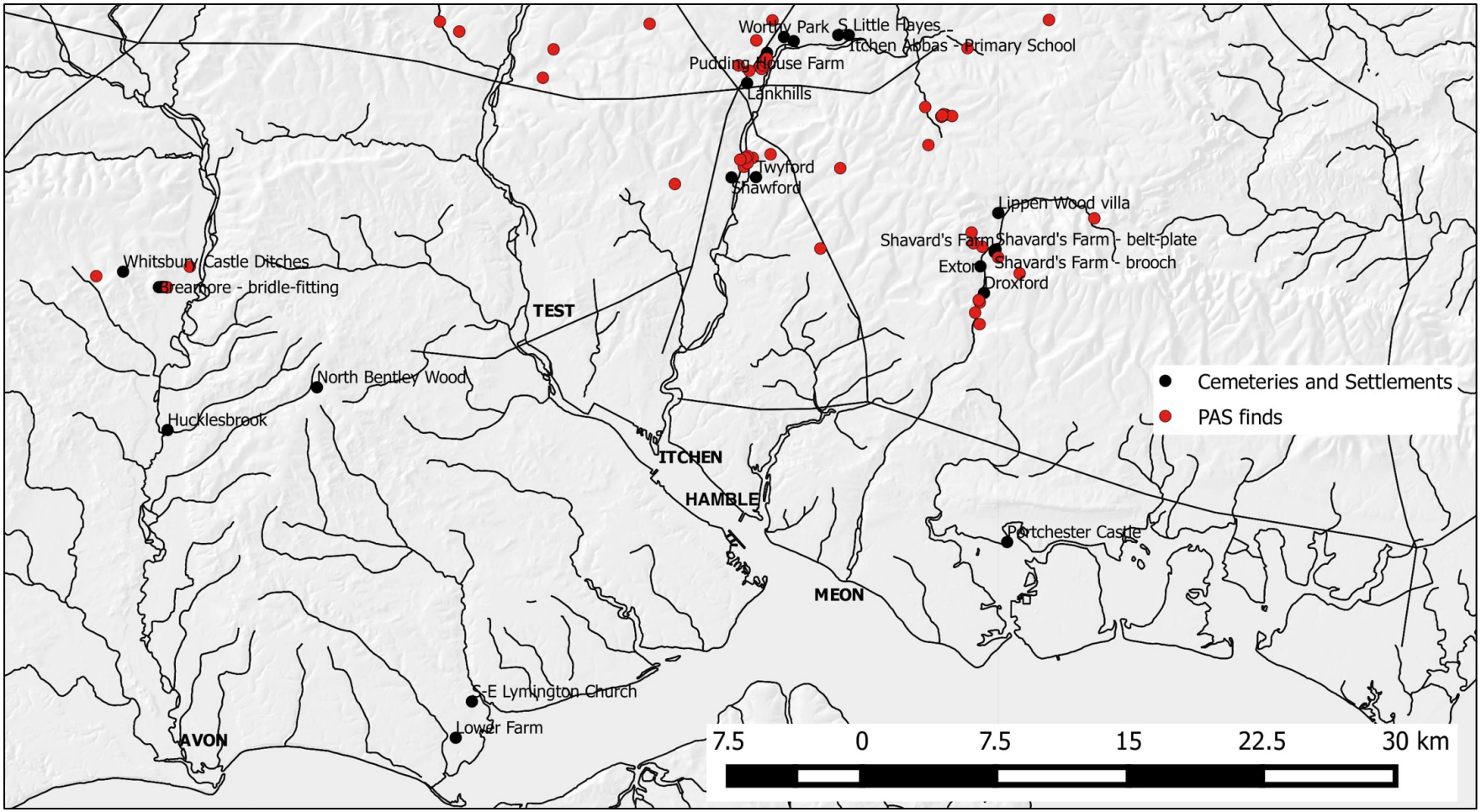
Map 3.1: Hampshire – Early Saxon sites and finds (coast)



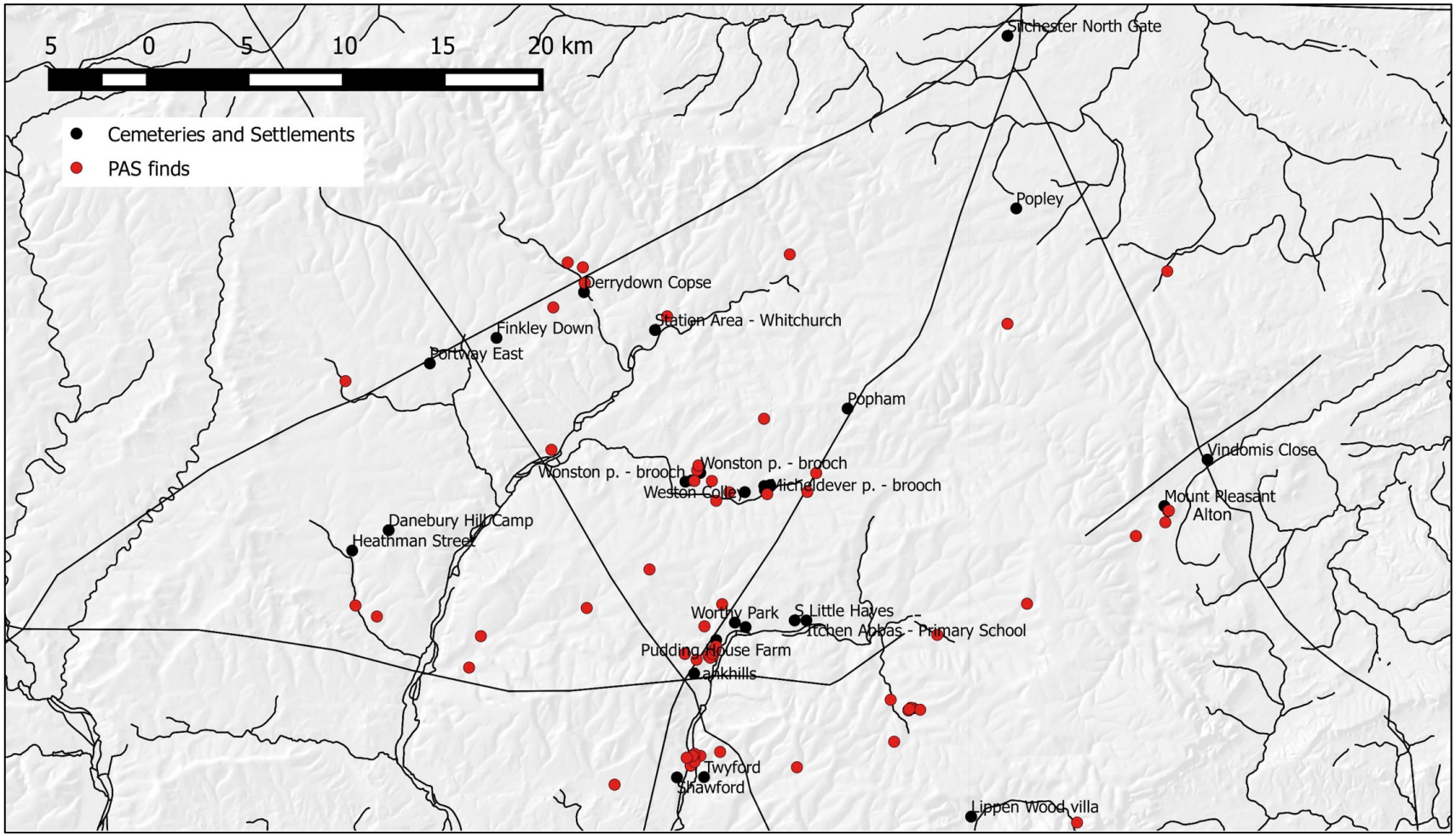
Map 3.1.1: Hampshire – Early Saxon sites and finds (hinterland)



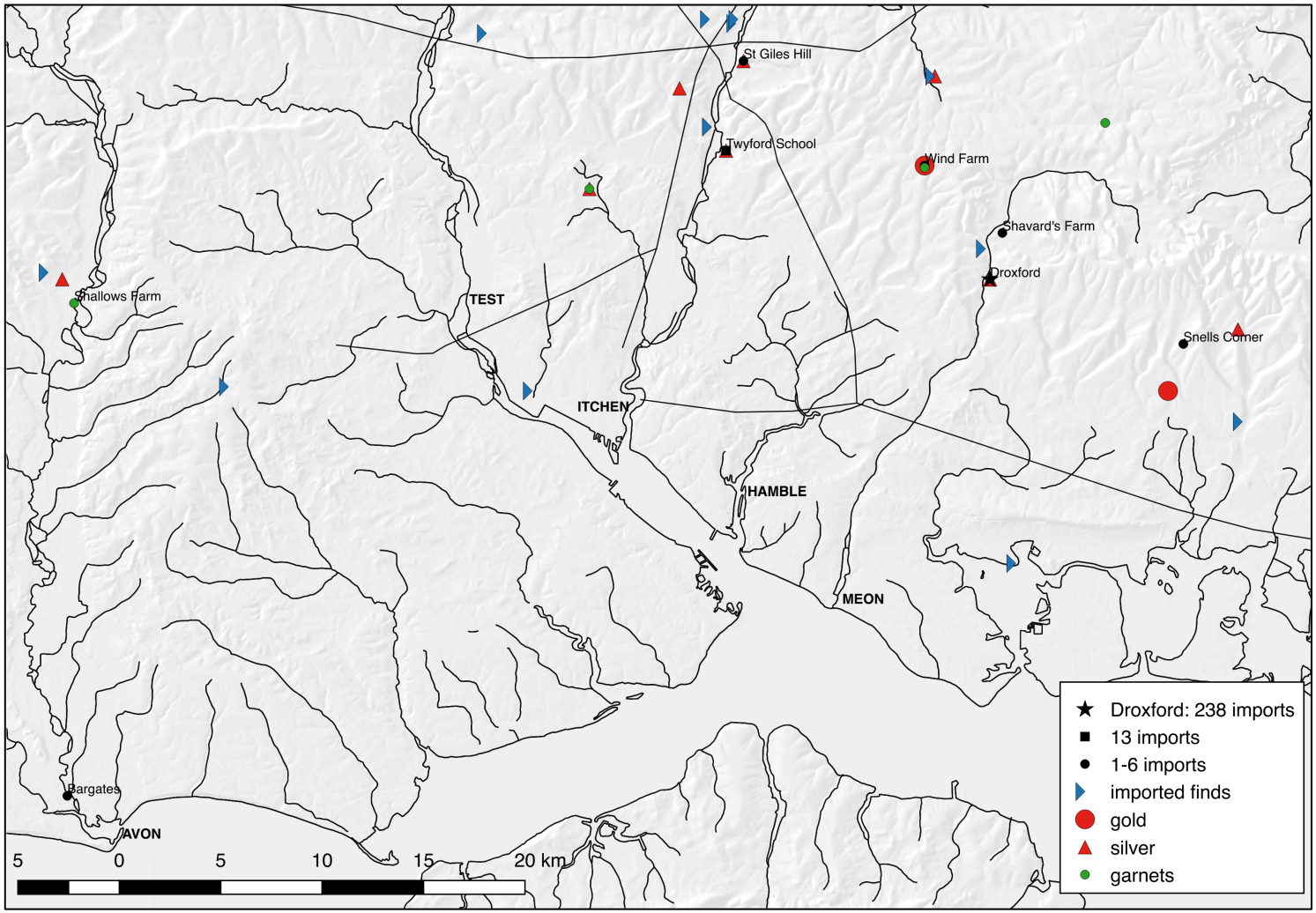
Map 3.1.2: Hampshire – Early Saxon sites and finds (Winchester area)



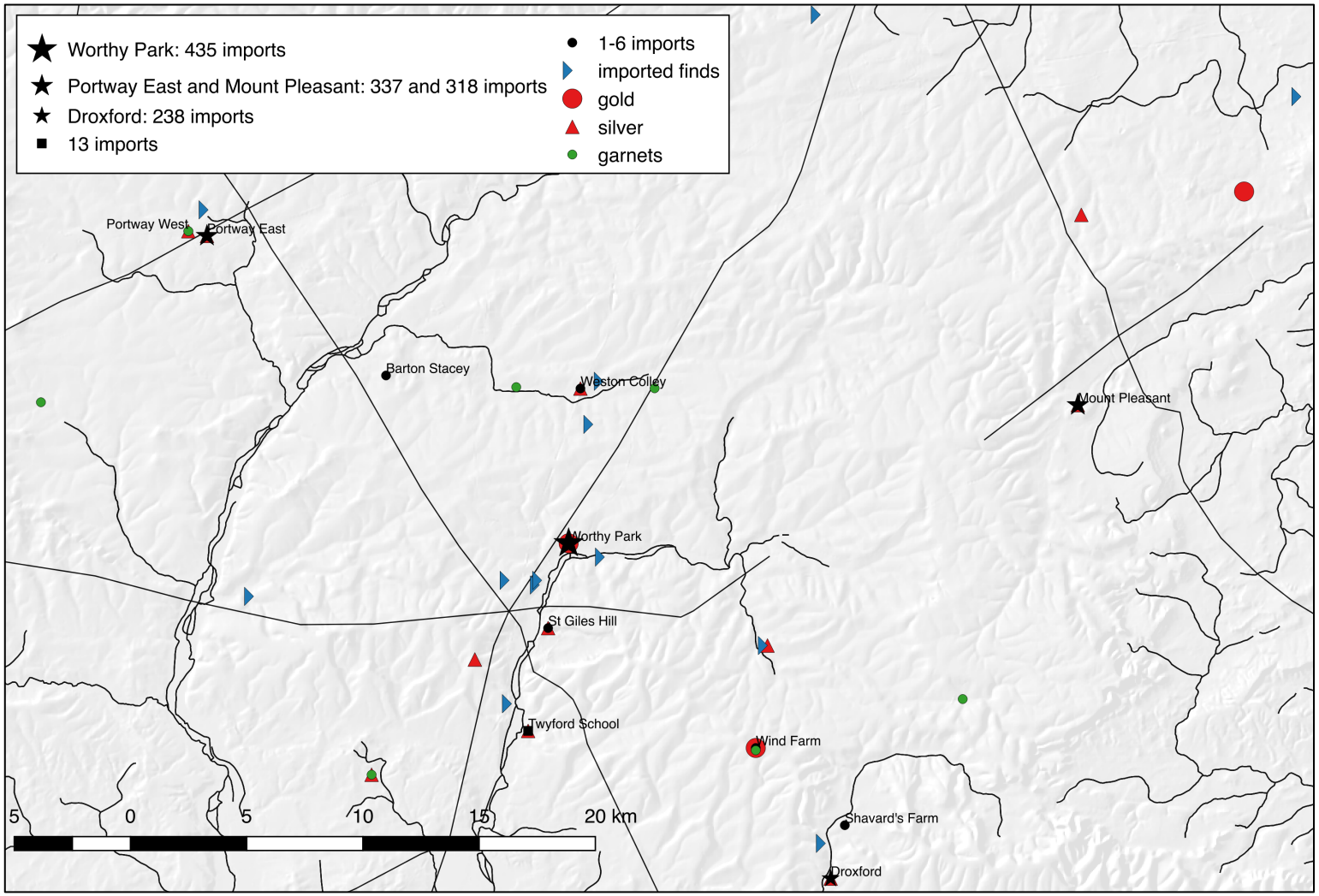
Map 3.2: Hampshire – Fifth-century sites and finds (coast)



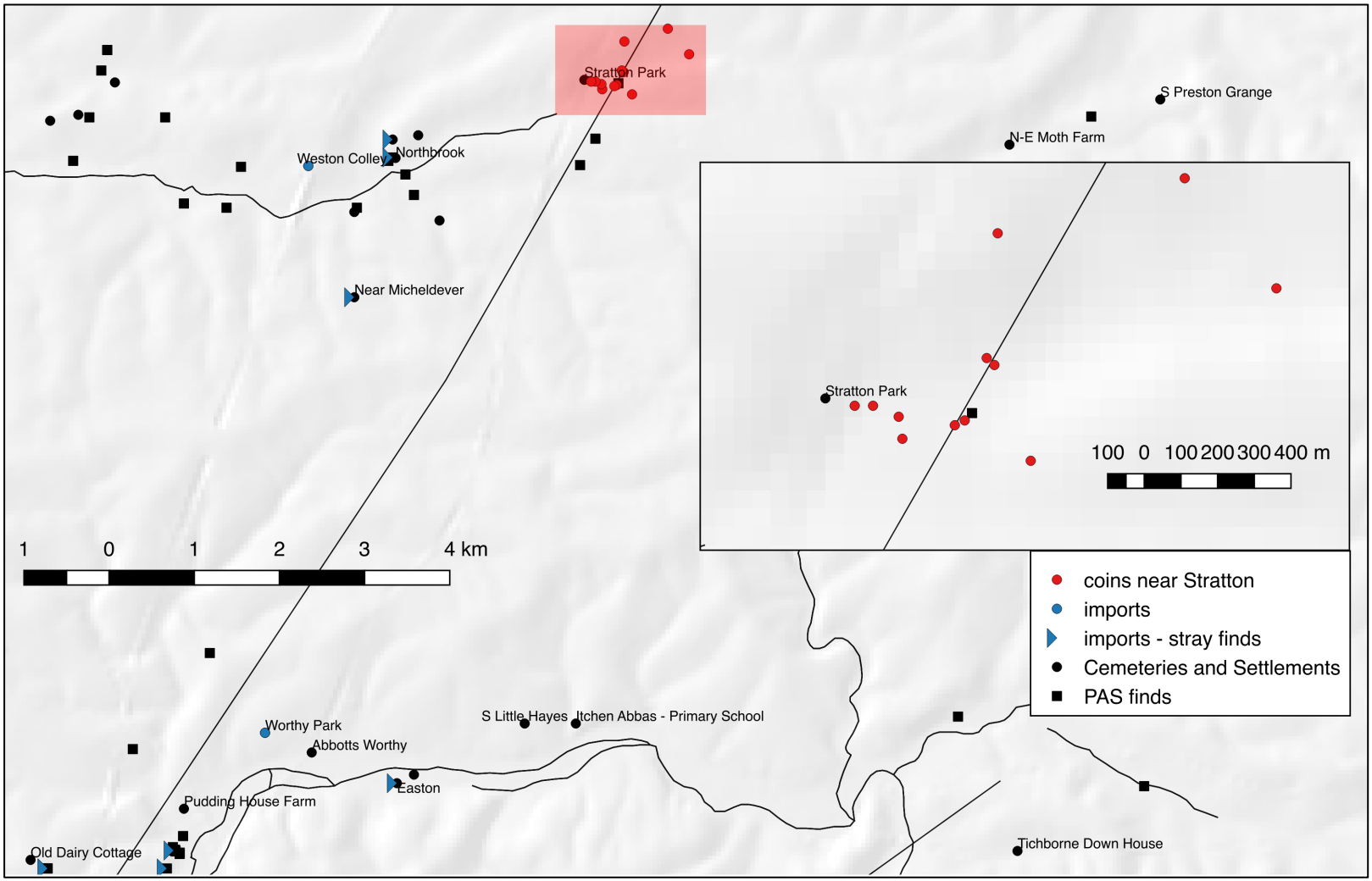
Map 3.2.1: Hampshire – Fifth-century sites and finds (hinterland)



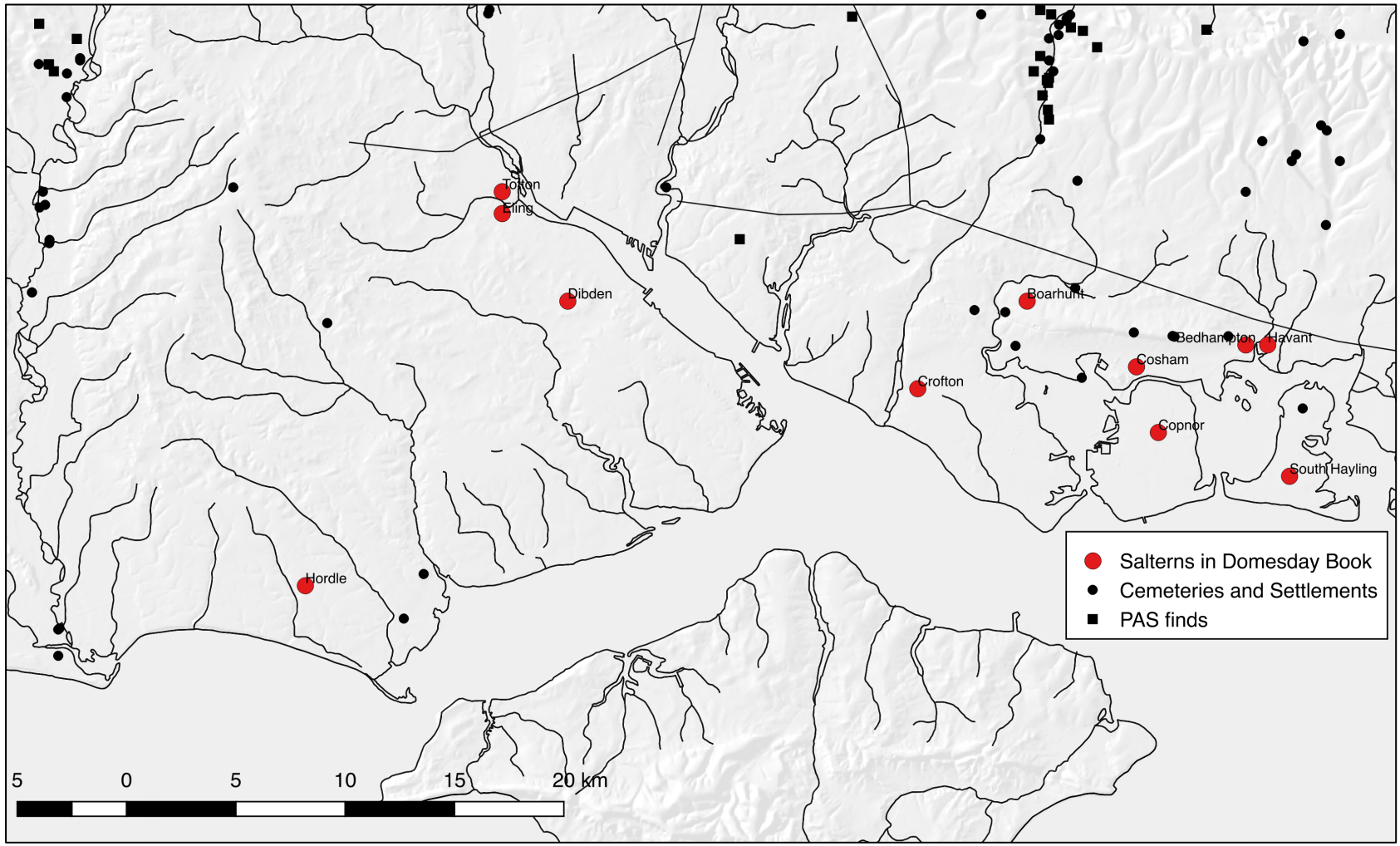
Map 3.3: Hampshire – Imports, gold, silver and garnets (coast)



Map 3.3.1: Hampshire – Imports, gold, silver and garnets (hinterland)

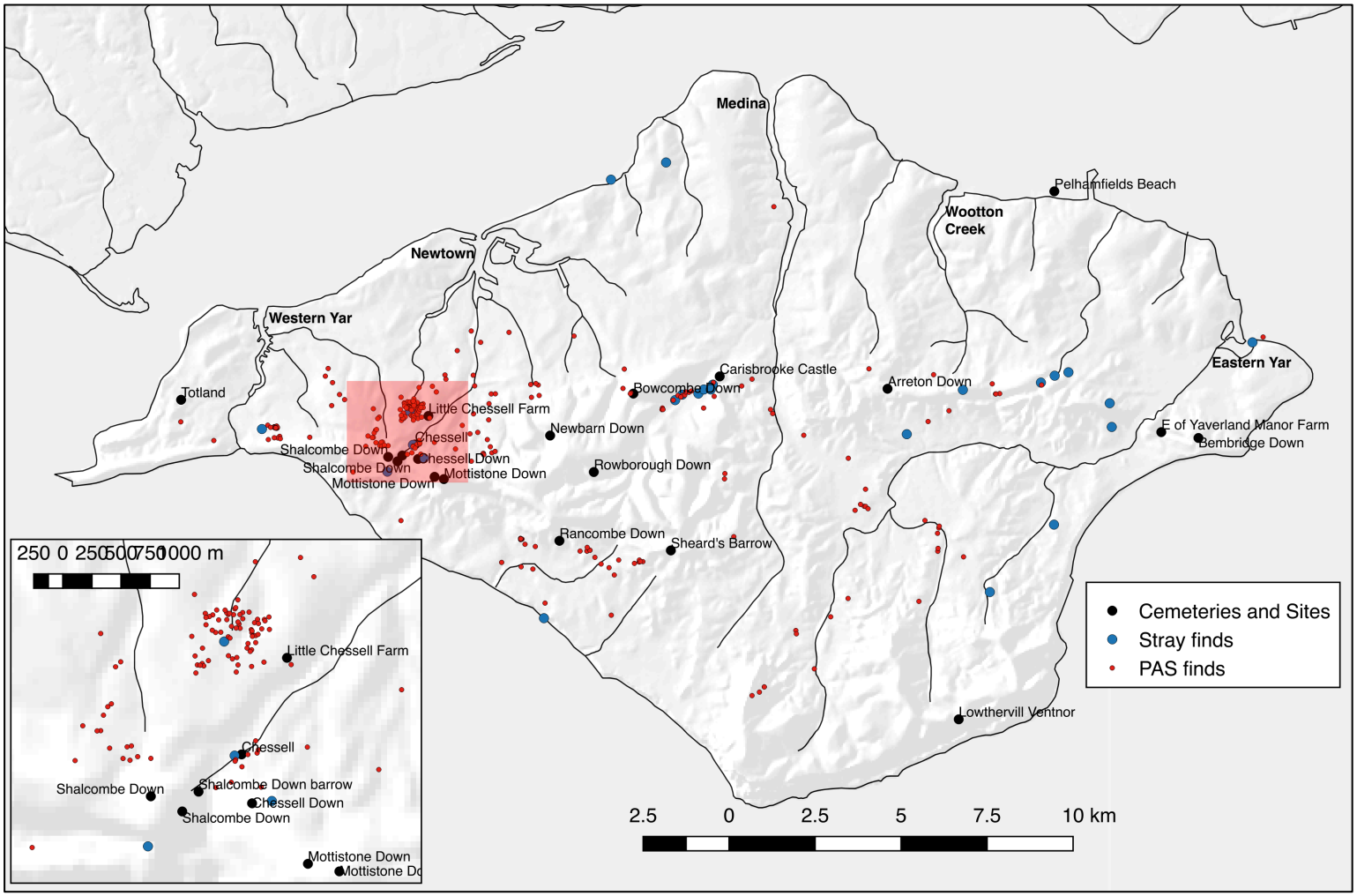


Map 3.4: Hampshire – Coins in the area of Stratton Park

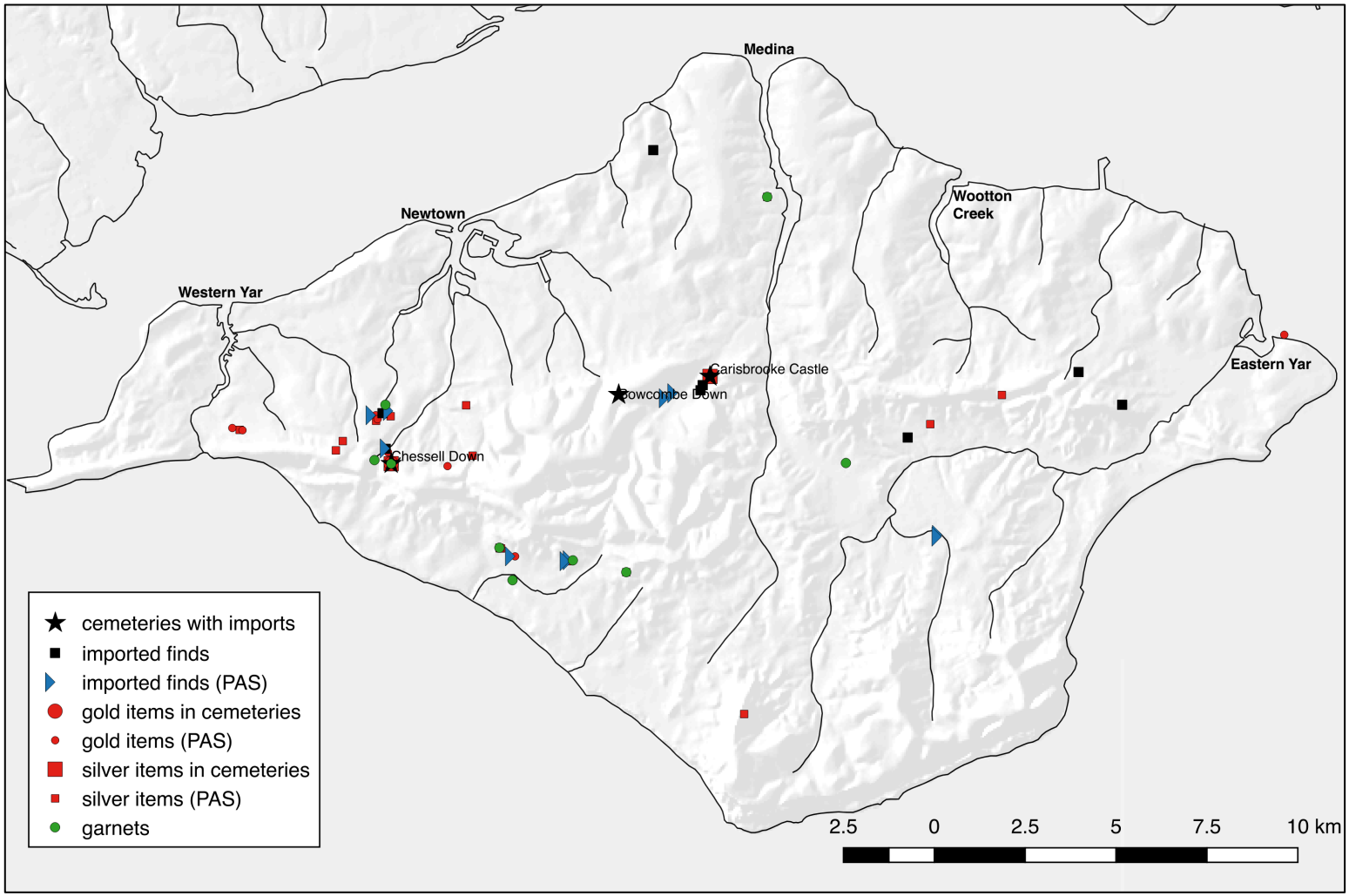


Map 3.5: Hampshire – Sites and PAS finds in relation to salterns listed in Domesday Book

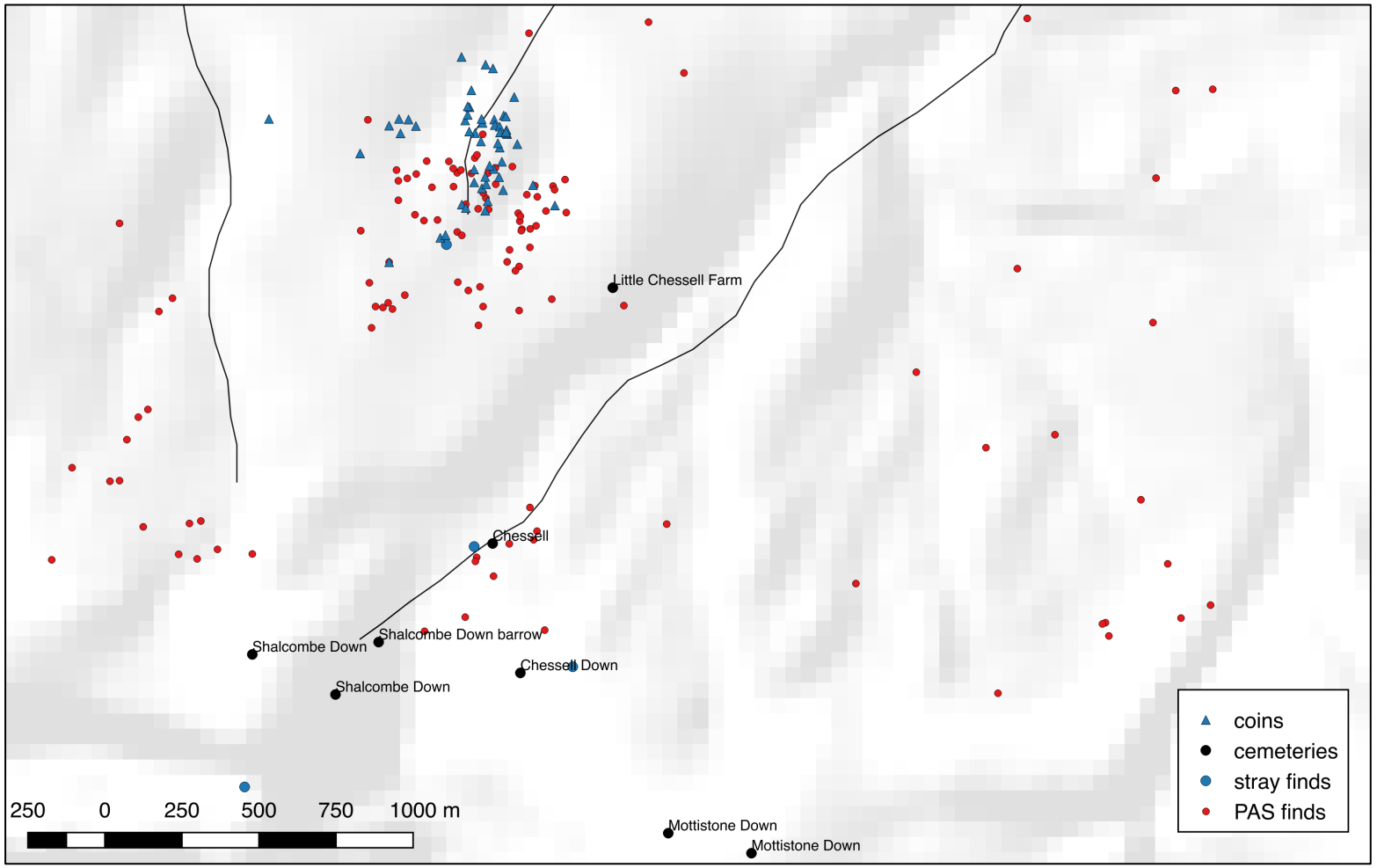
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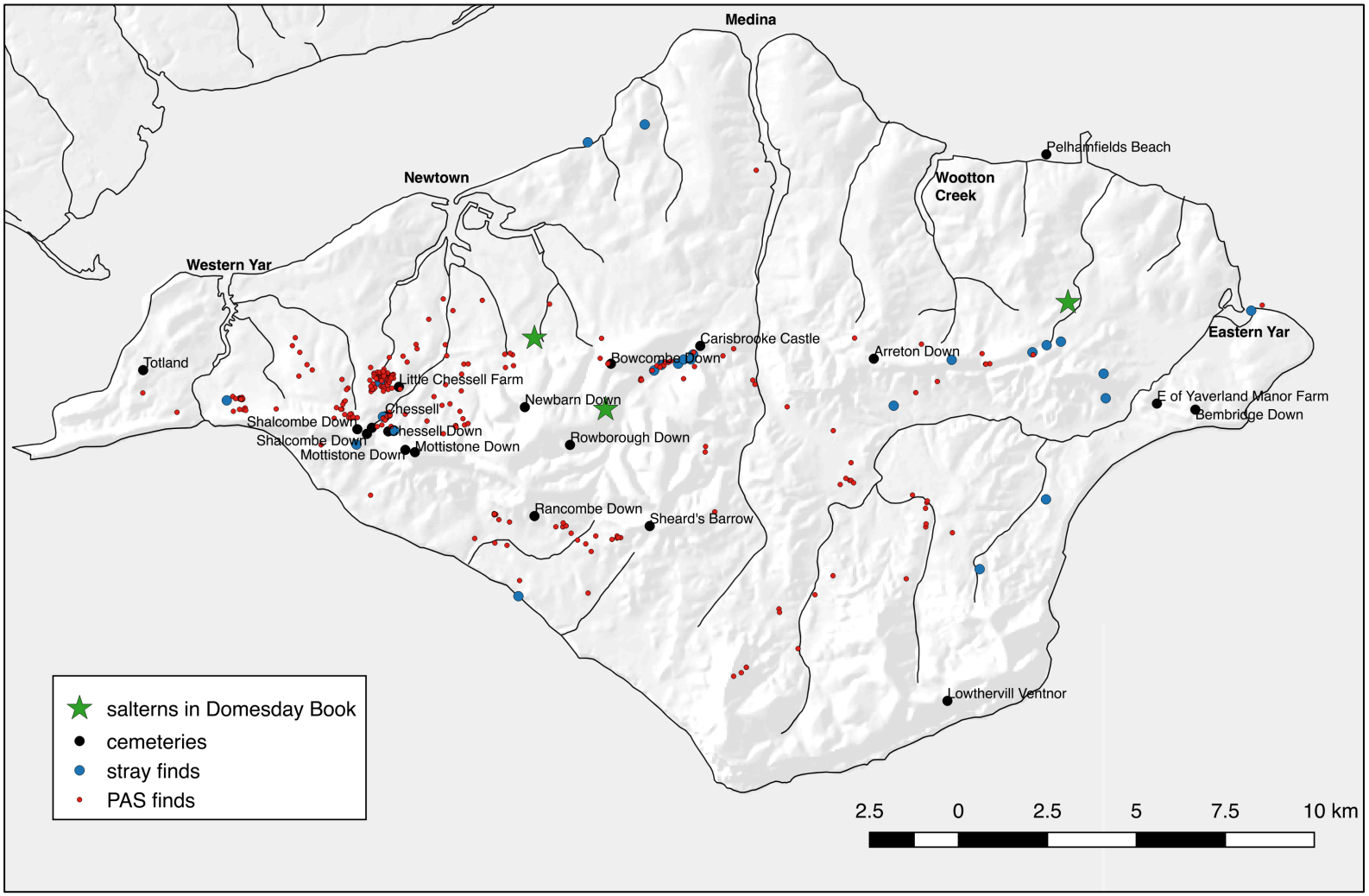
Map 3.6: Isle of Wight – Early Saxon sites and finds



Map 3.7: Isle of Wight – Imports, gold, silver and garnets

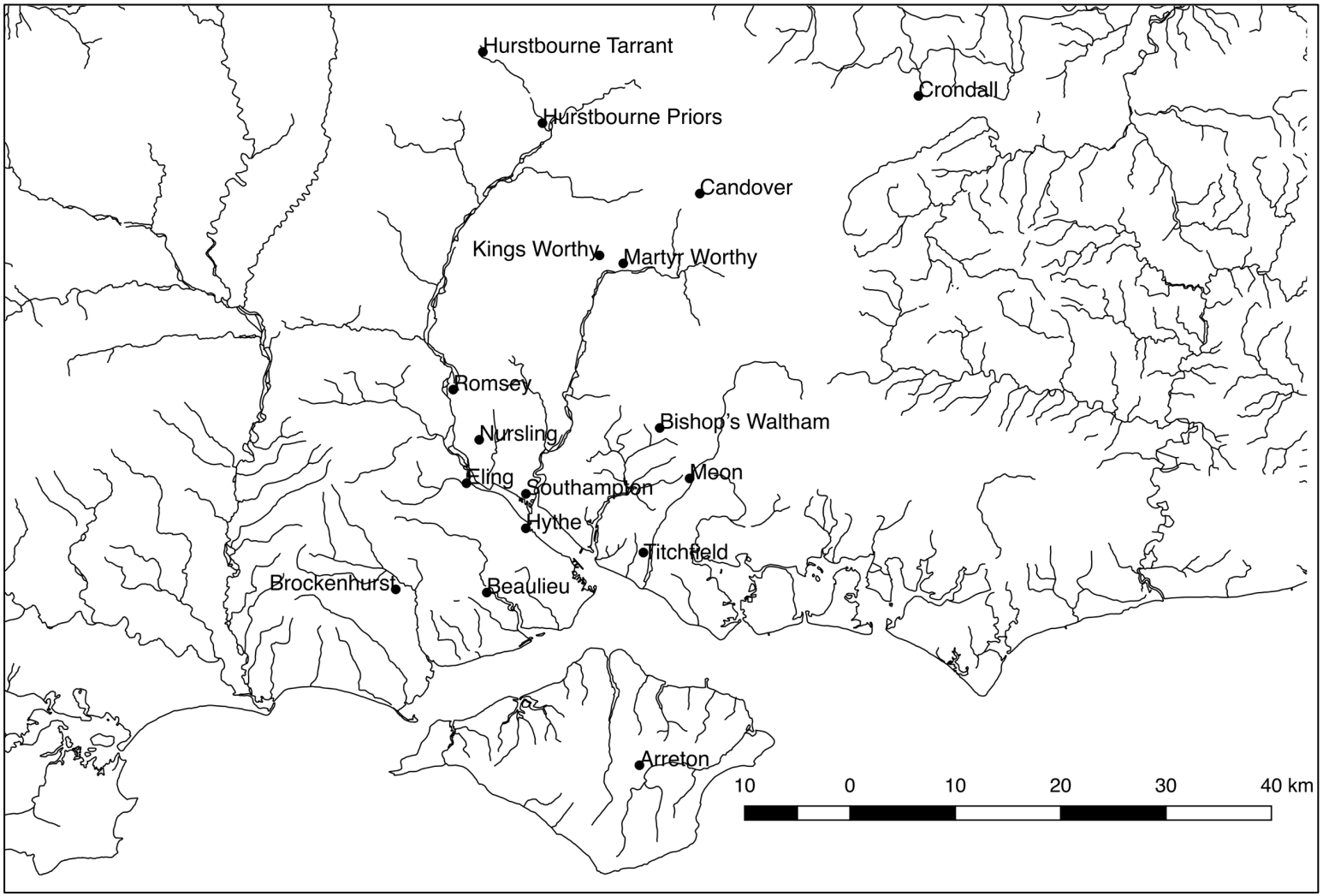


Map 3.8: Isle of Wight – Coins in the area of Chessell Down

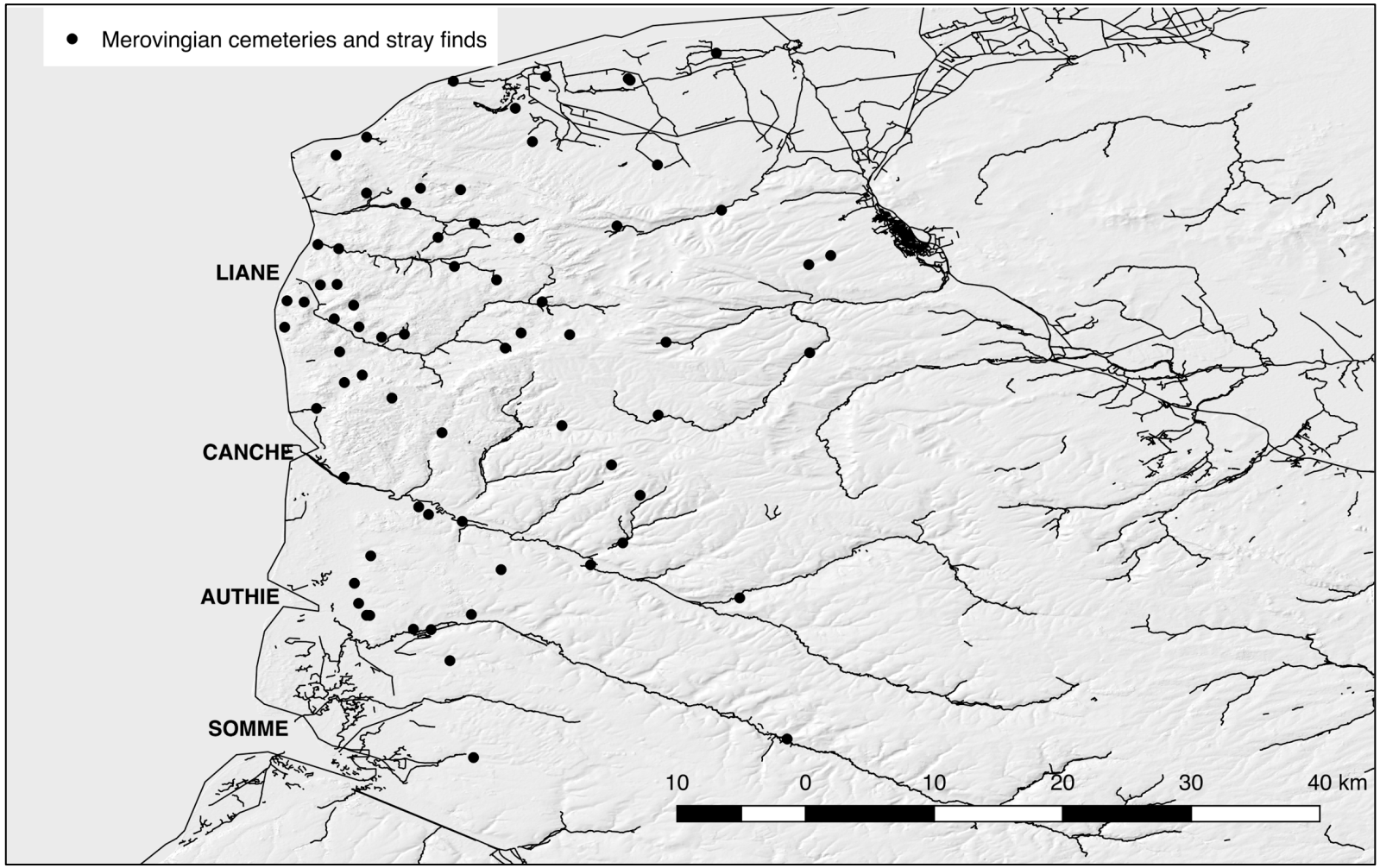


Map 3.9: Isle of Wight – Sites and PAS finds in relation to salterns listed in Domesday Book

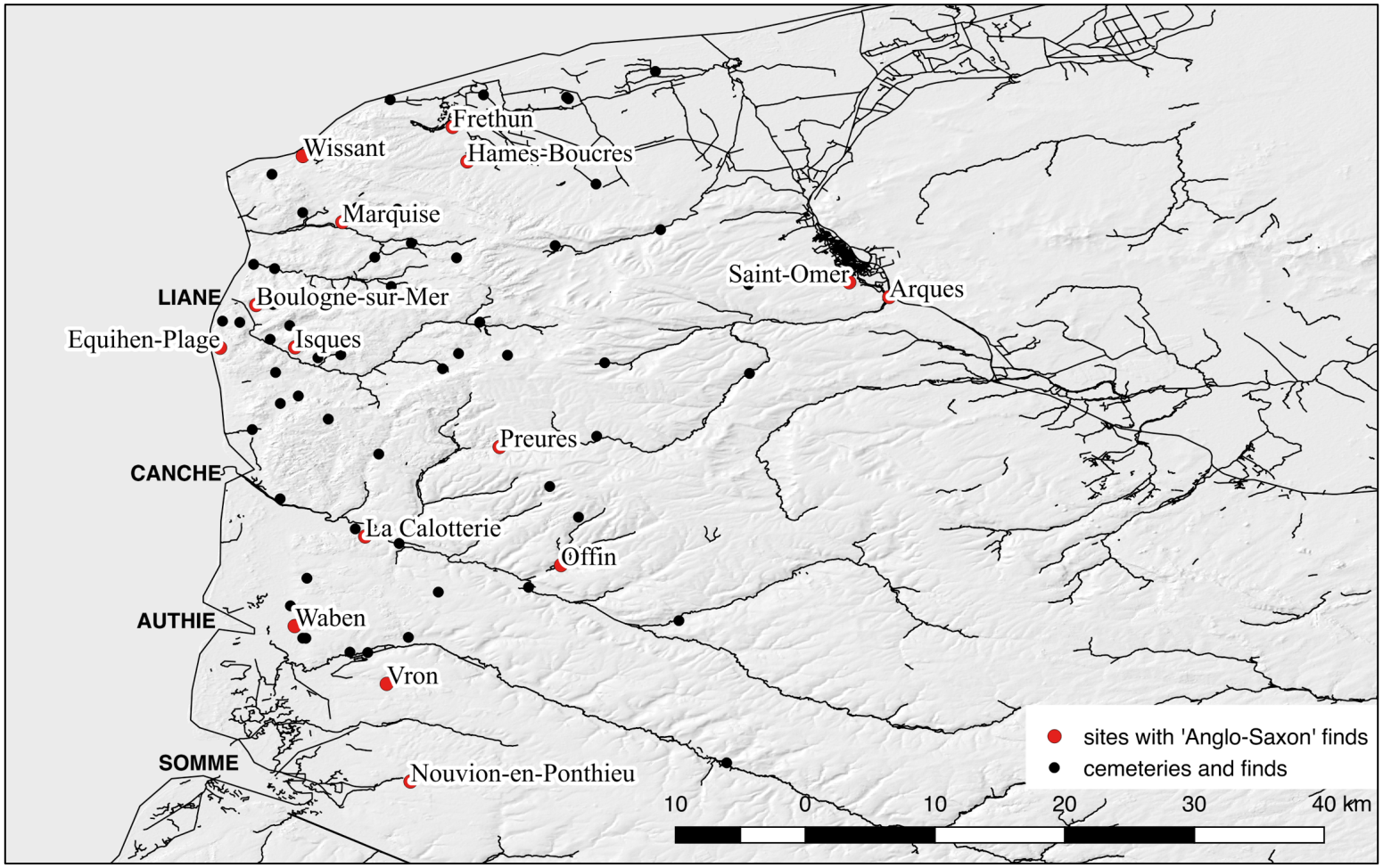
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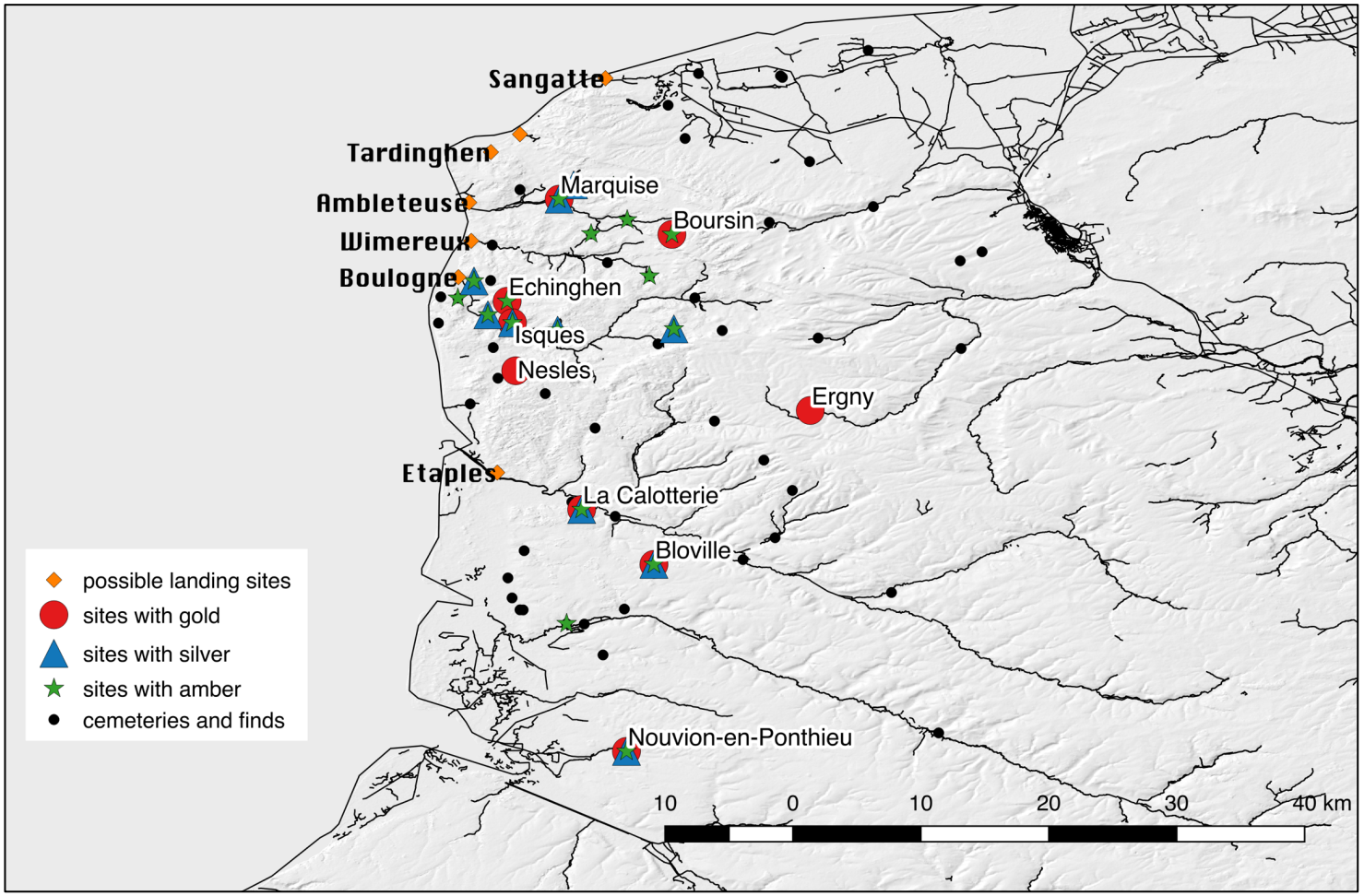
Map 3.10: Hampshire and Isle of Wight – Places mentioned



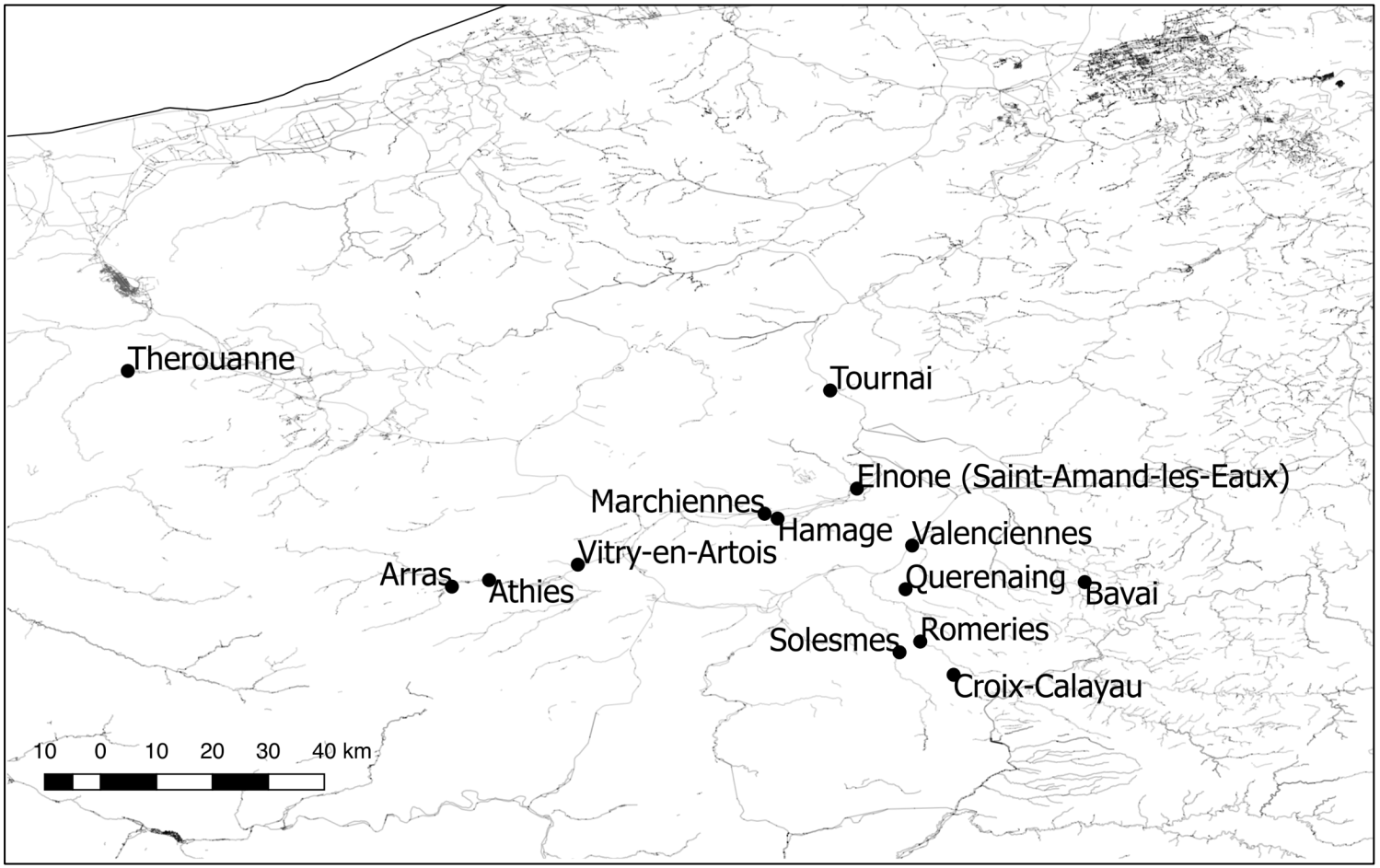
Map 4.1: Pas-de-Calais – Archaeological evidence in coastal areas (c. 30 km)



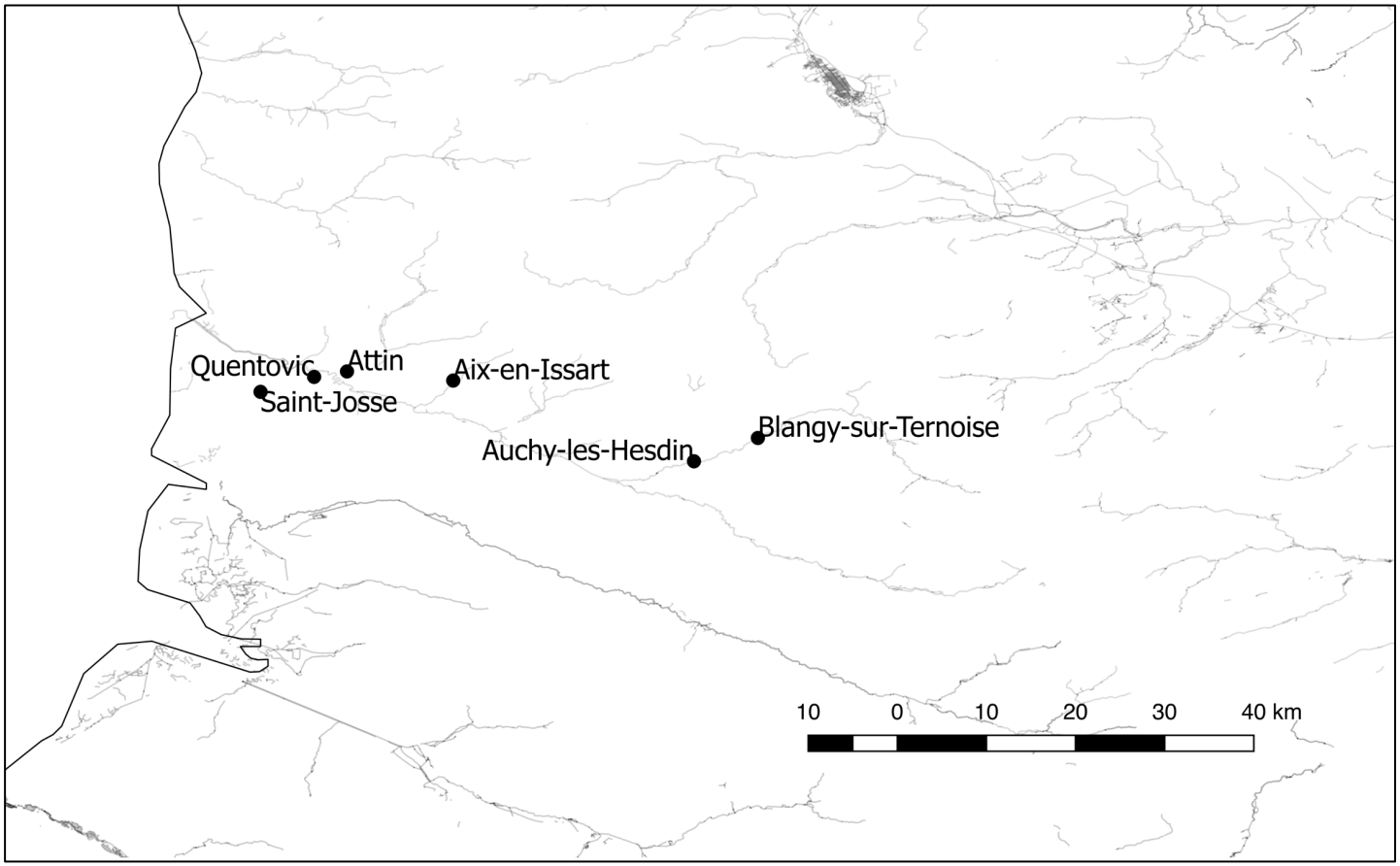
Map 4.2: Pas-de-Calais – Sites with 'Anglo-Saxon' finds



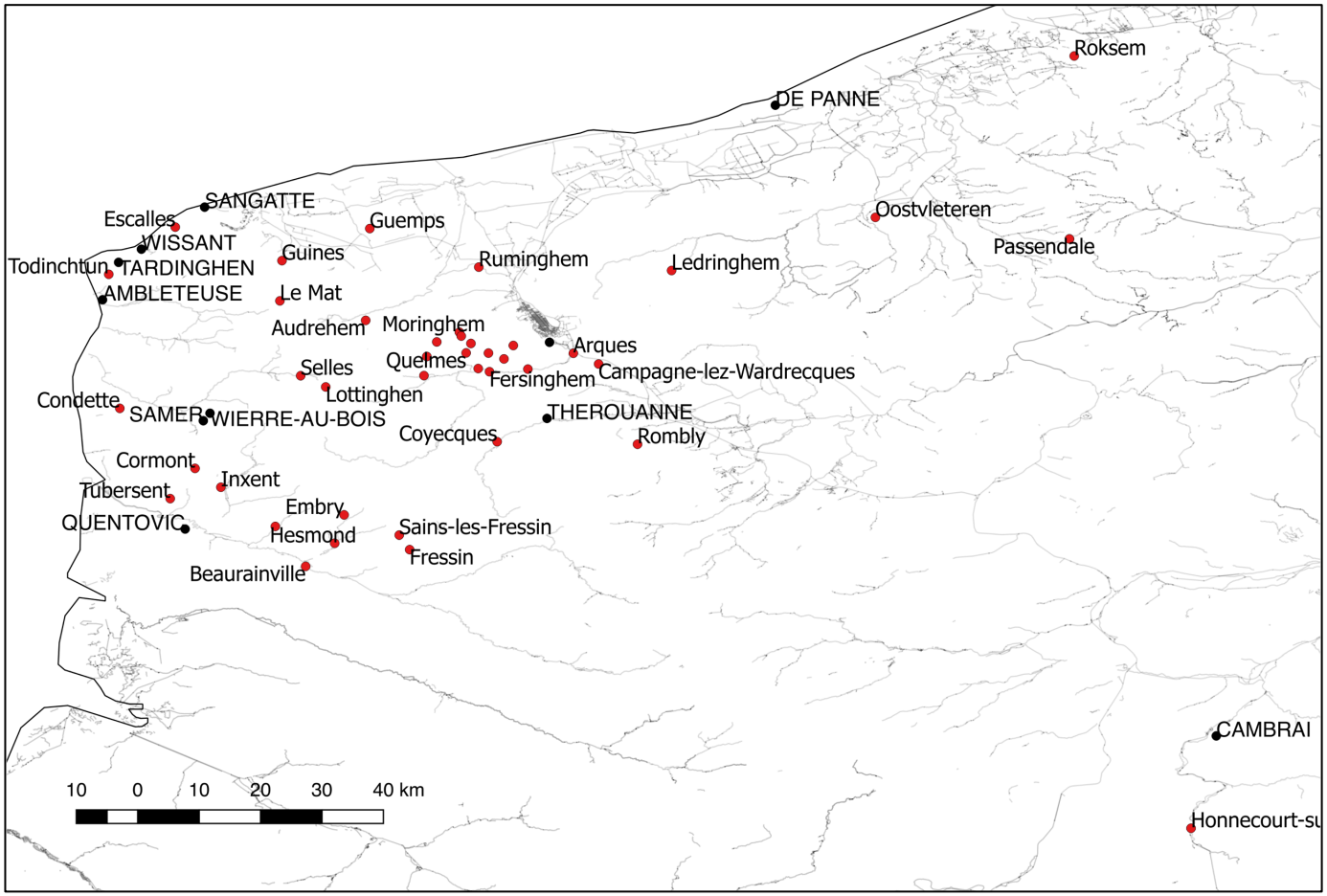
Map 4.3: Pas-de-Calais – Sites with gold, silver, amber, and possible landing sites



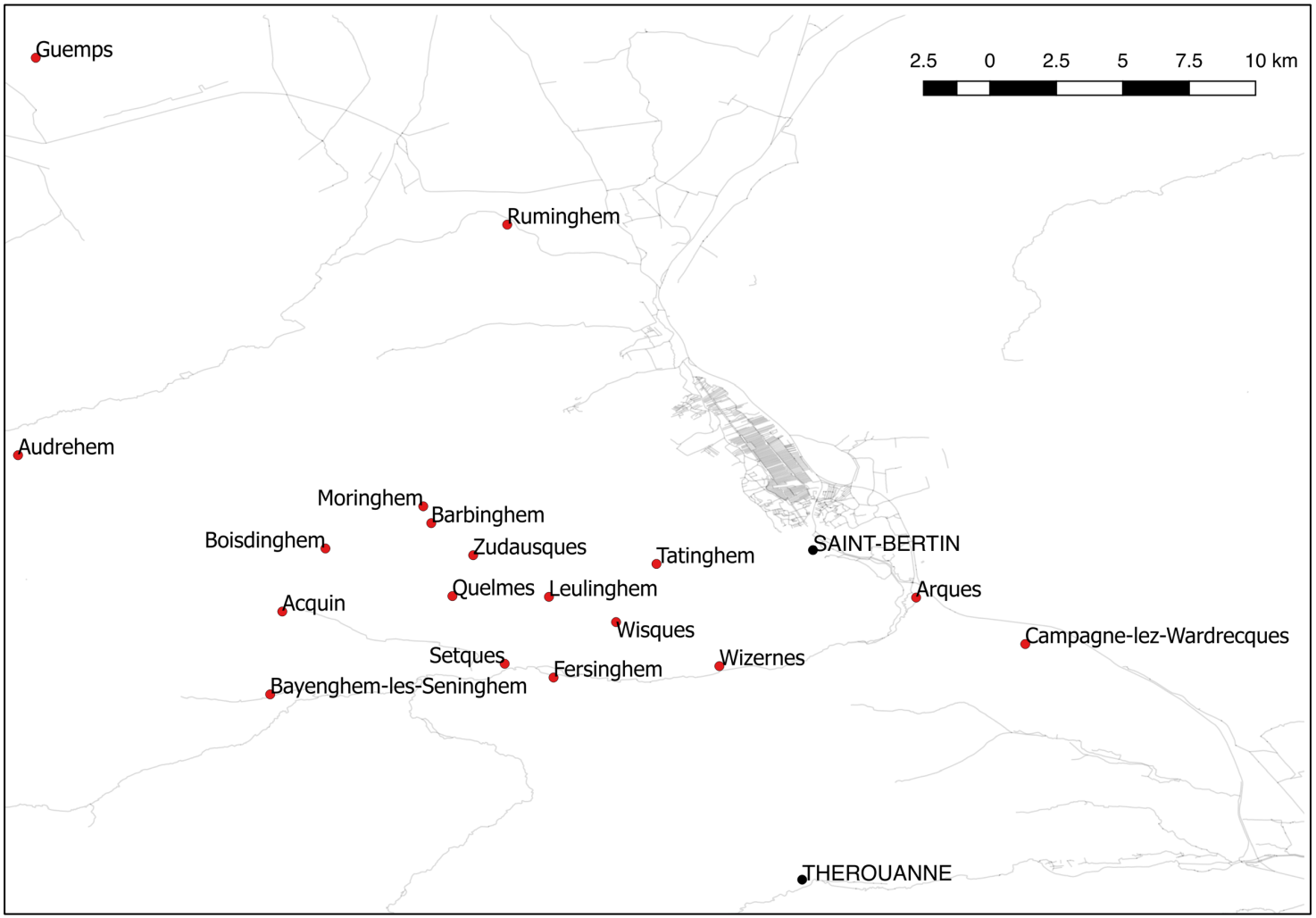
Map 4.4: Pas-de-Calais – Places mentioned (hinterland)



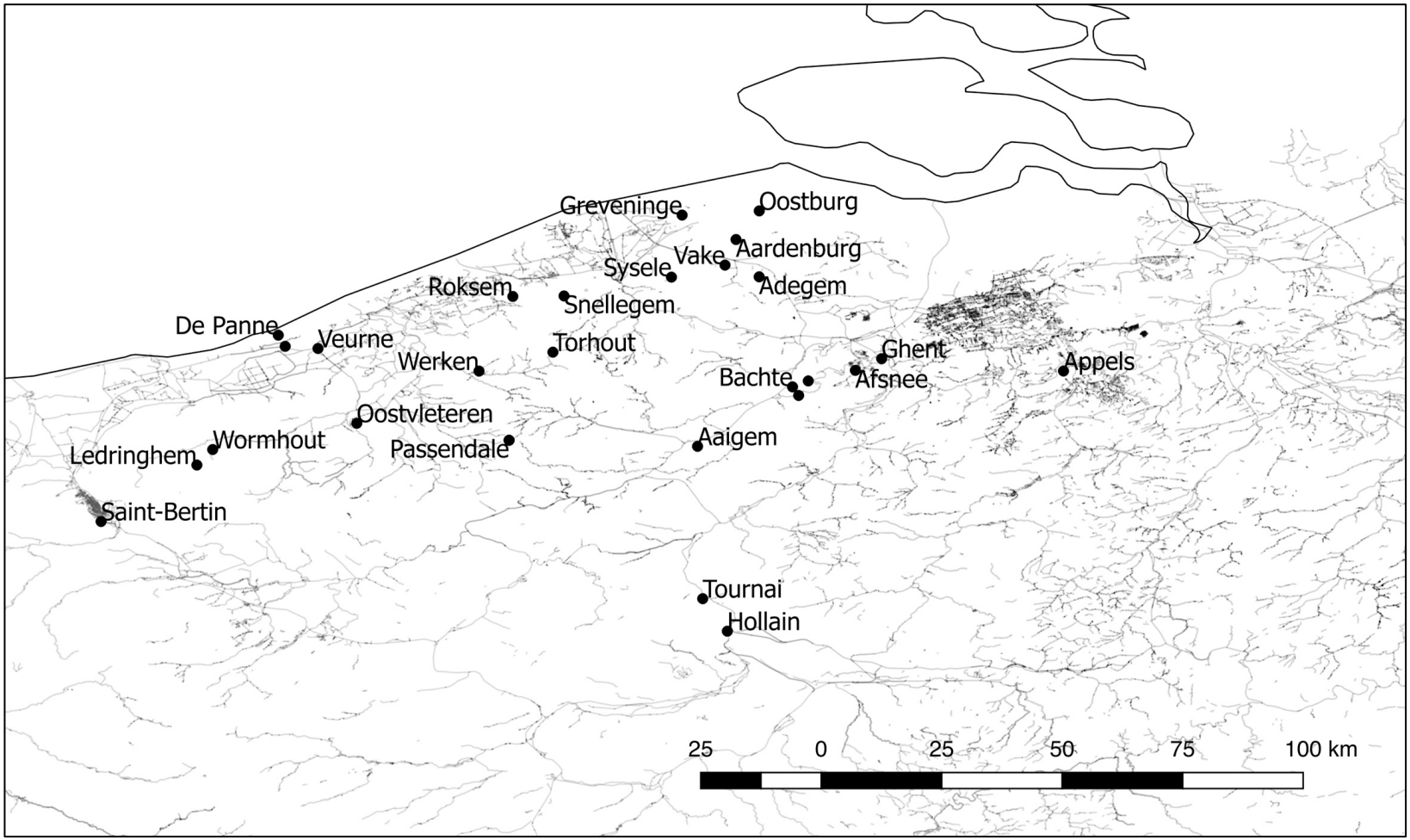
Map 4.5: Canche – Places mentioned



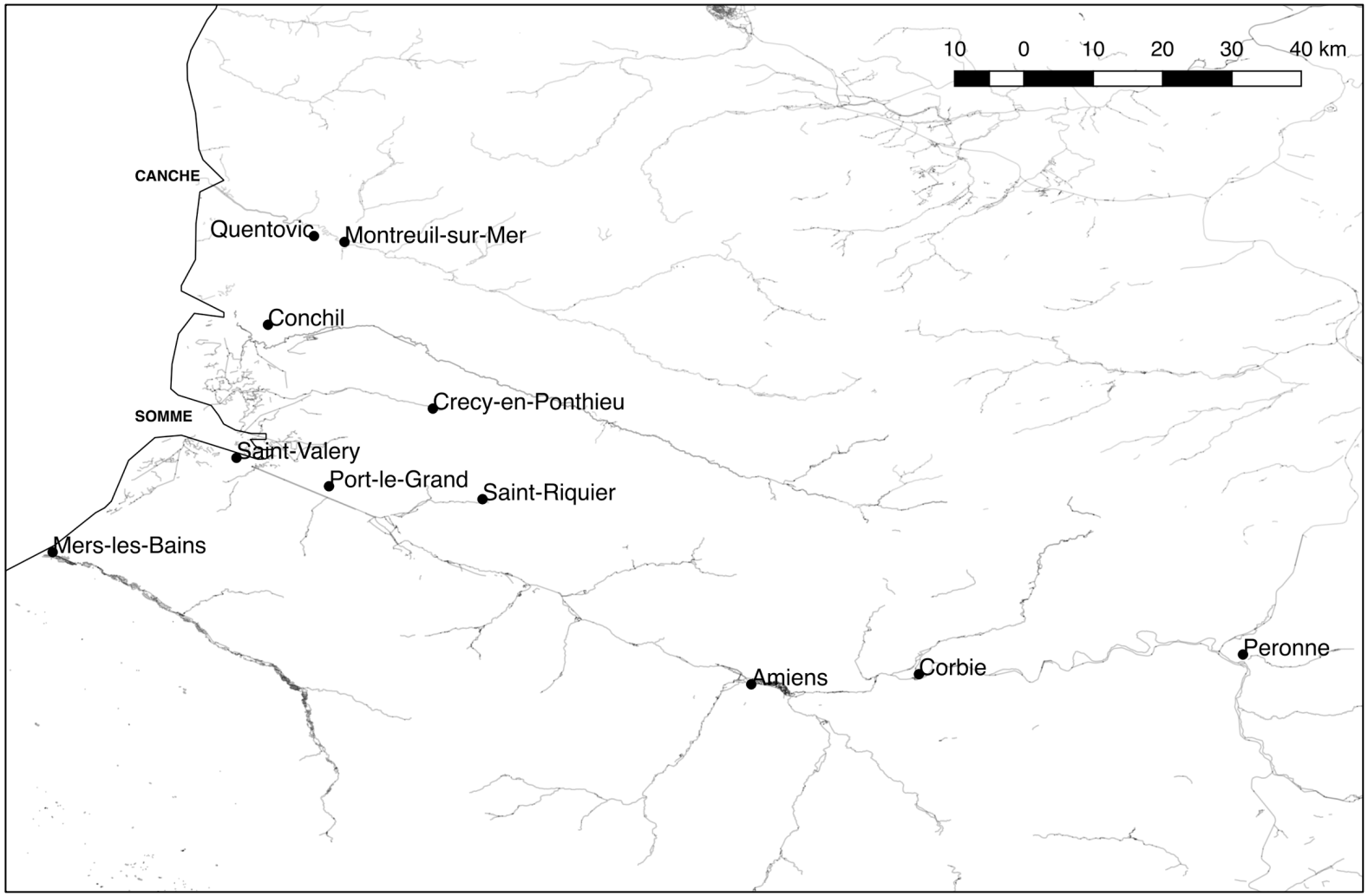
Map 4.6: Places mentioned in the text (black) and properties of Saint-Bertin (red)



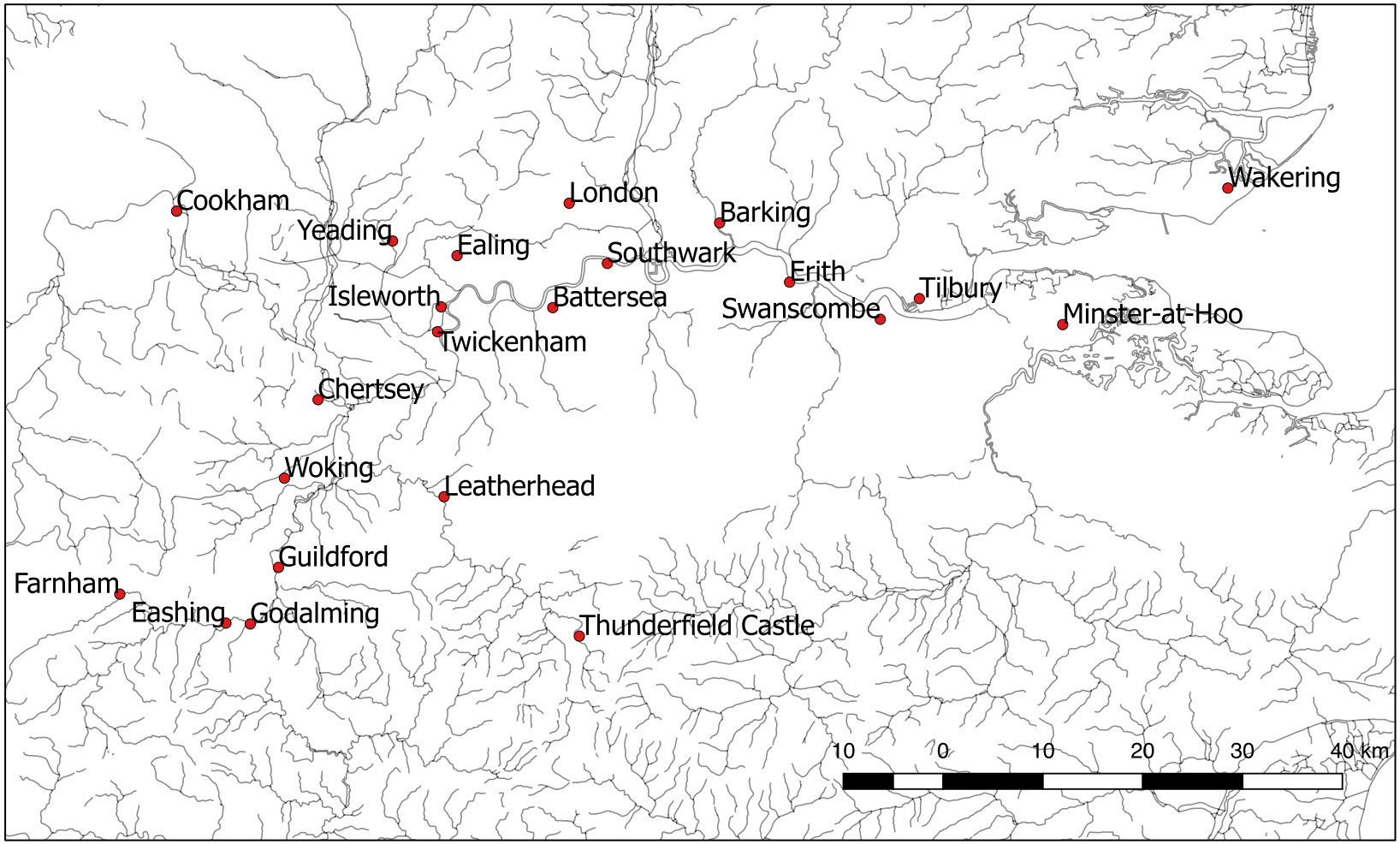
Map 4.6.1: Properties of Saint-Bertin



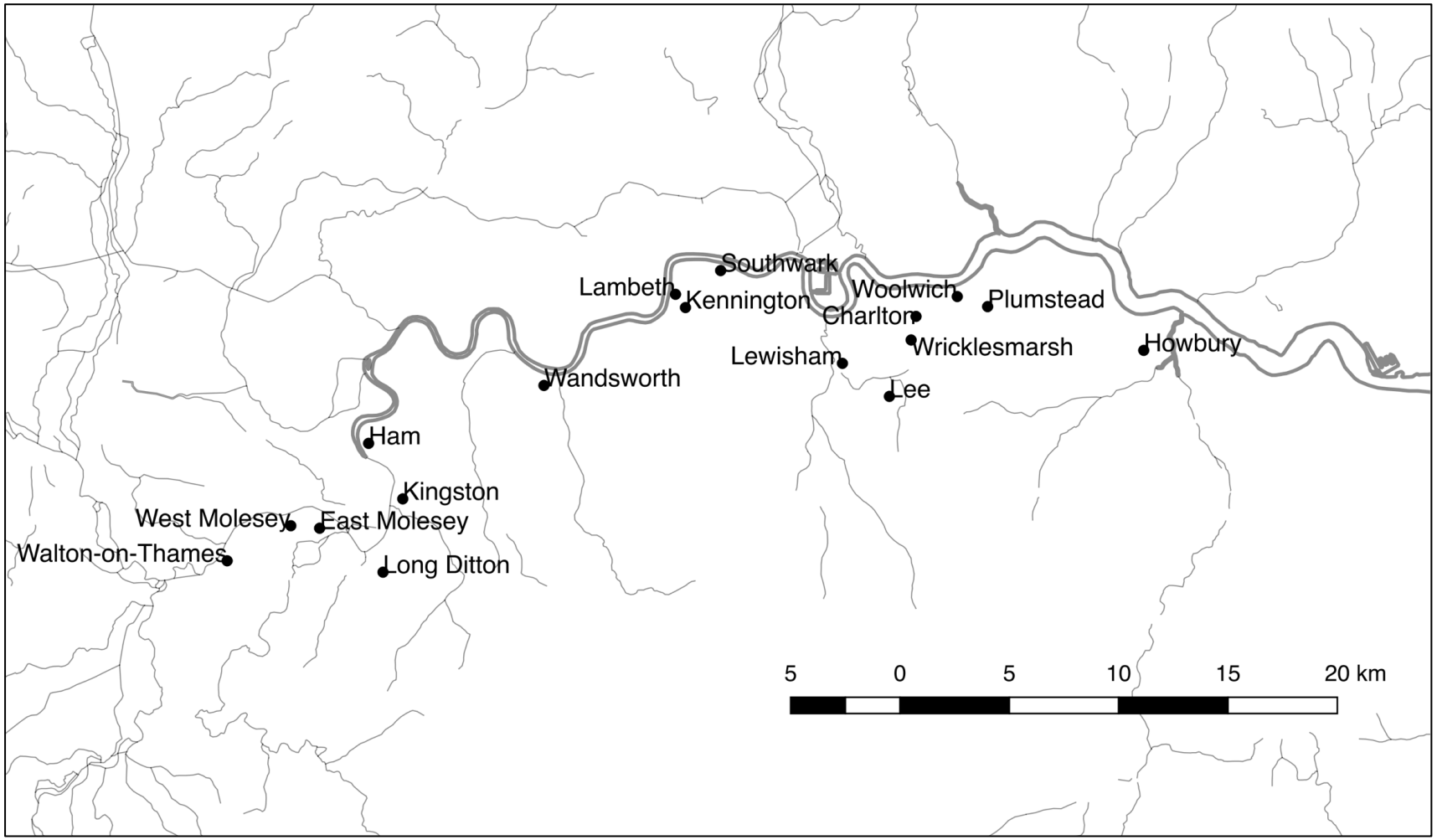
Map 4.7: Saint-Bertin and Ghent – Places mentioned



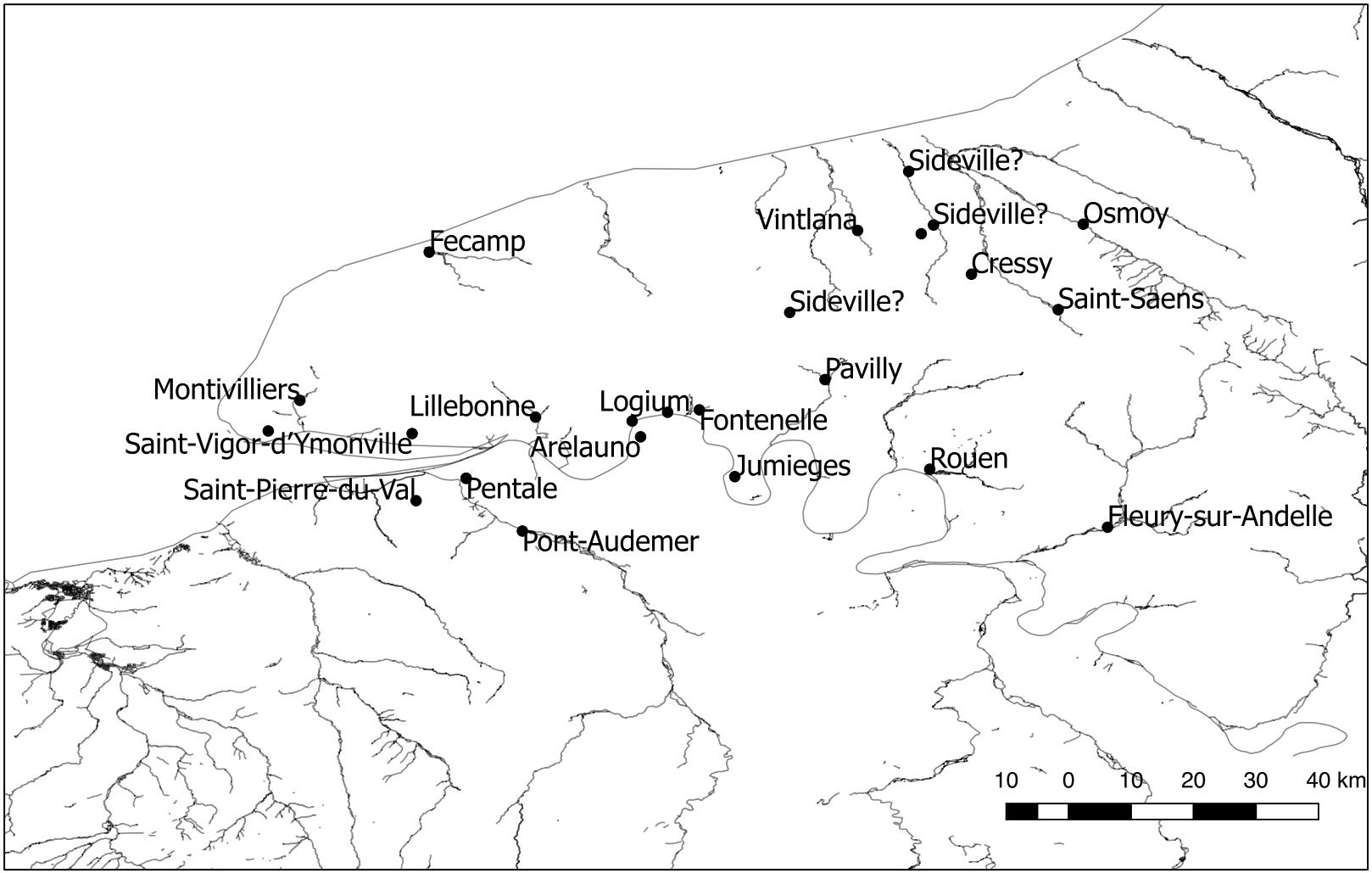
Map 4.8: Somme – Places mentioned



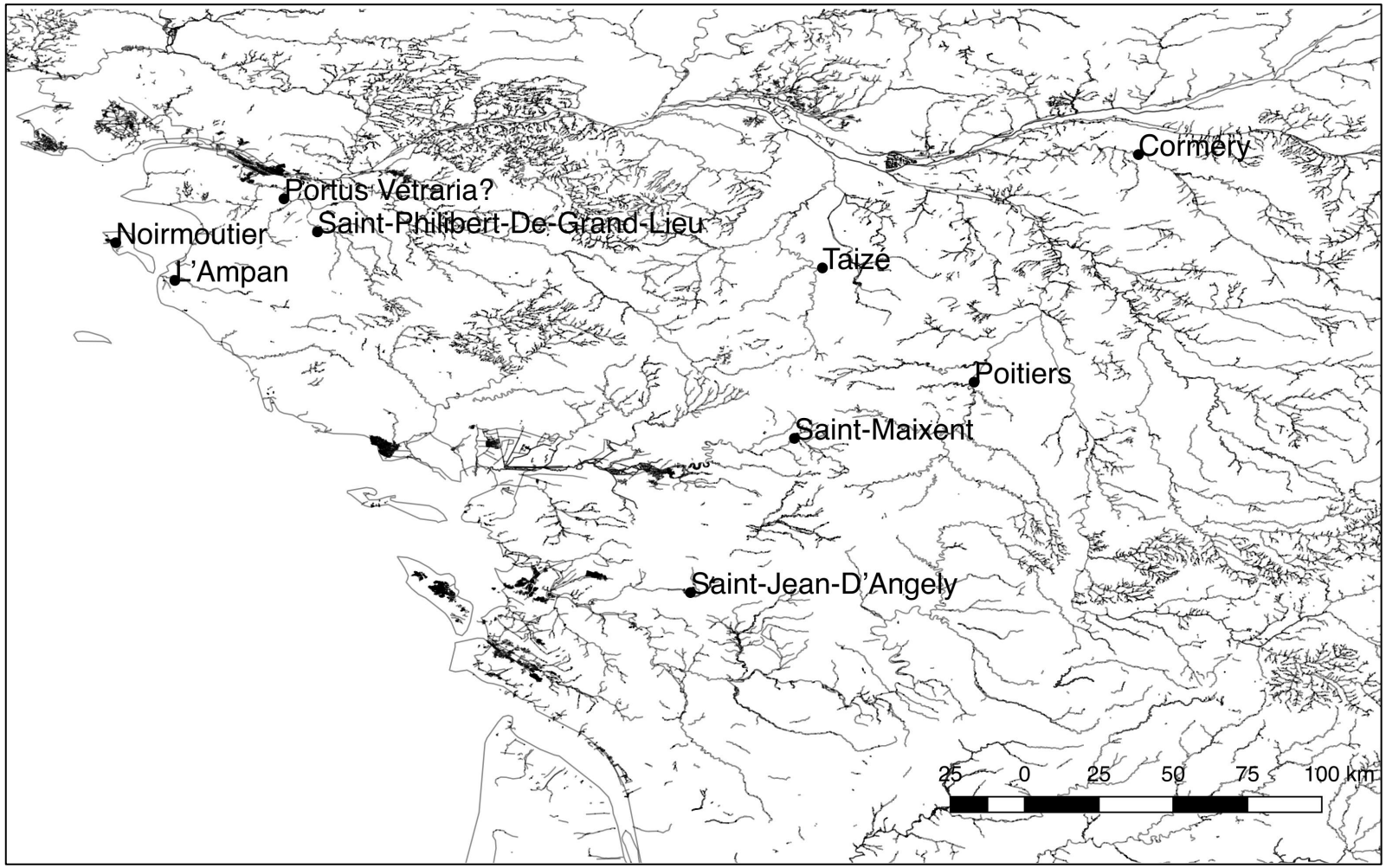
Map 8.2.1: Thames Valley – Places mentioned



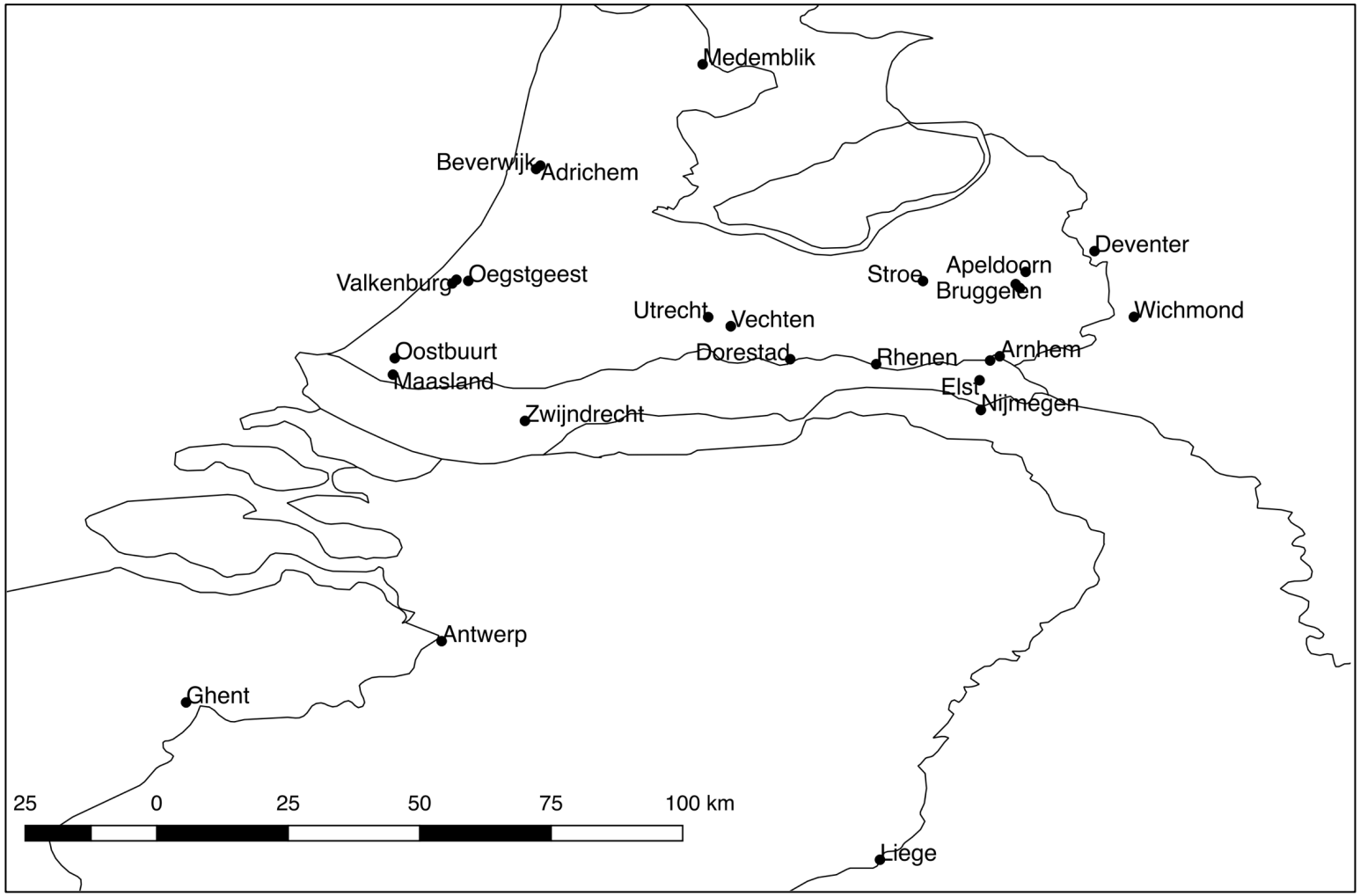
Map 8.2.2: Thames Valley – Places mentioned in Domesday Book



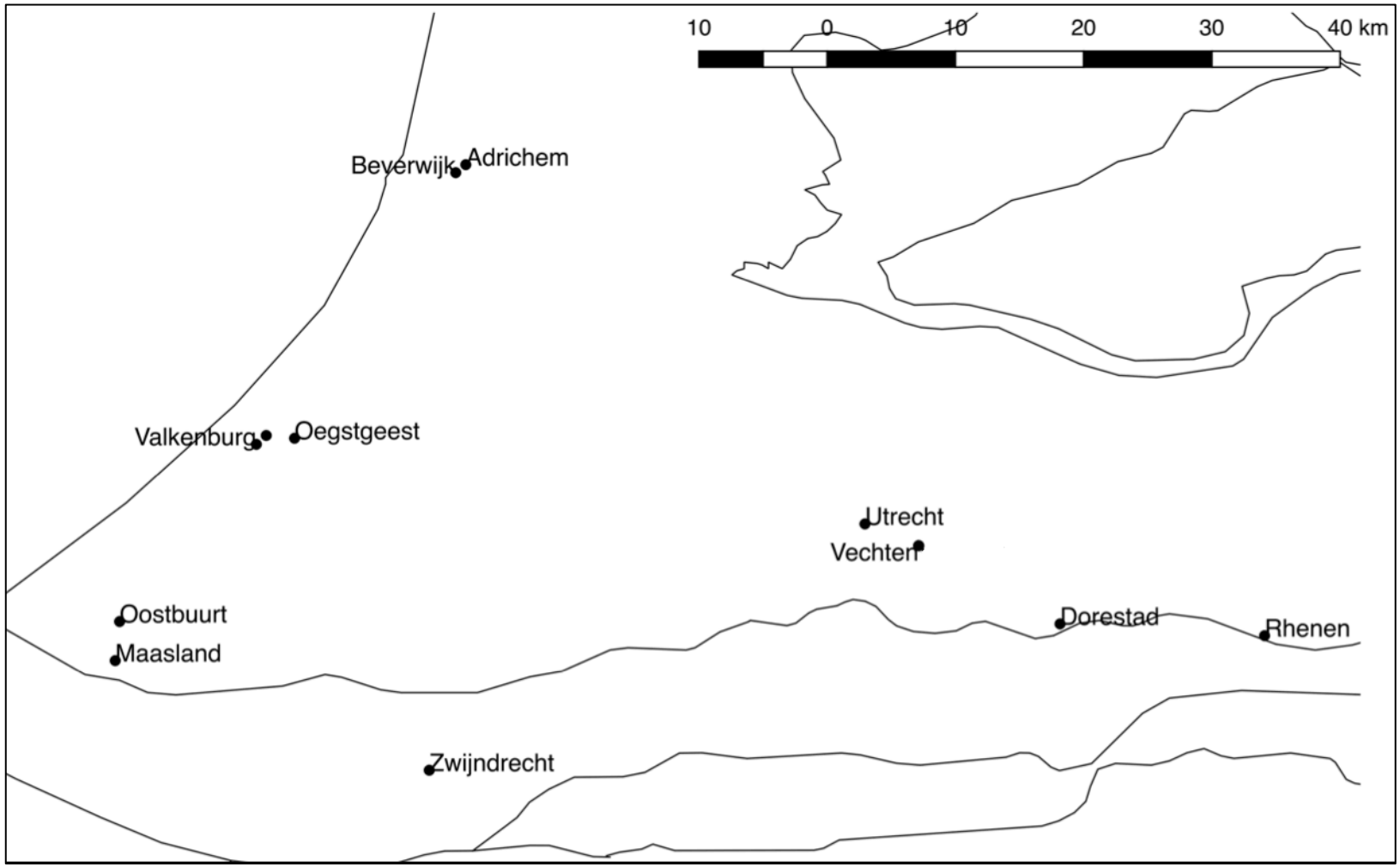
Map 8.3.1: Seine – Places mentioned



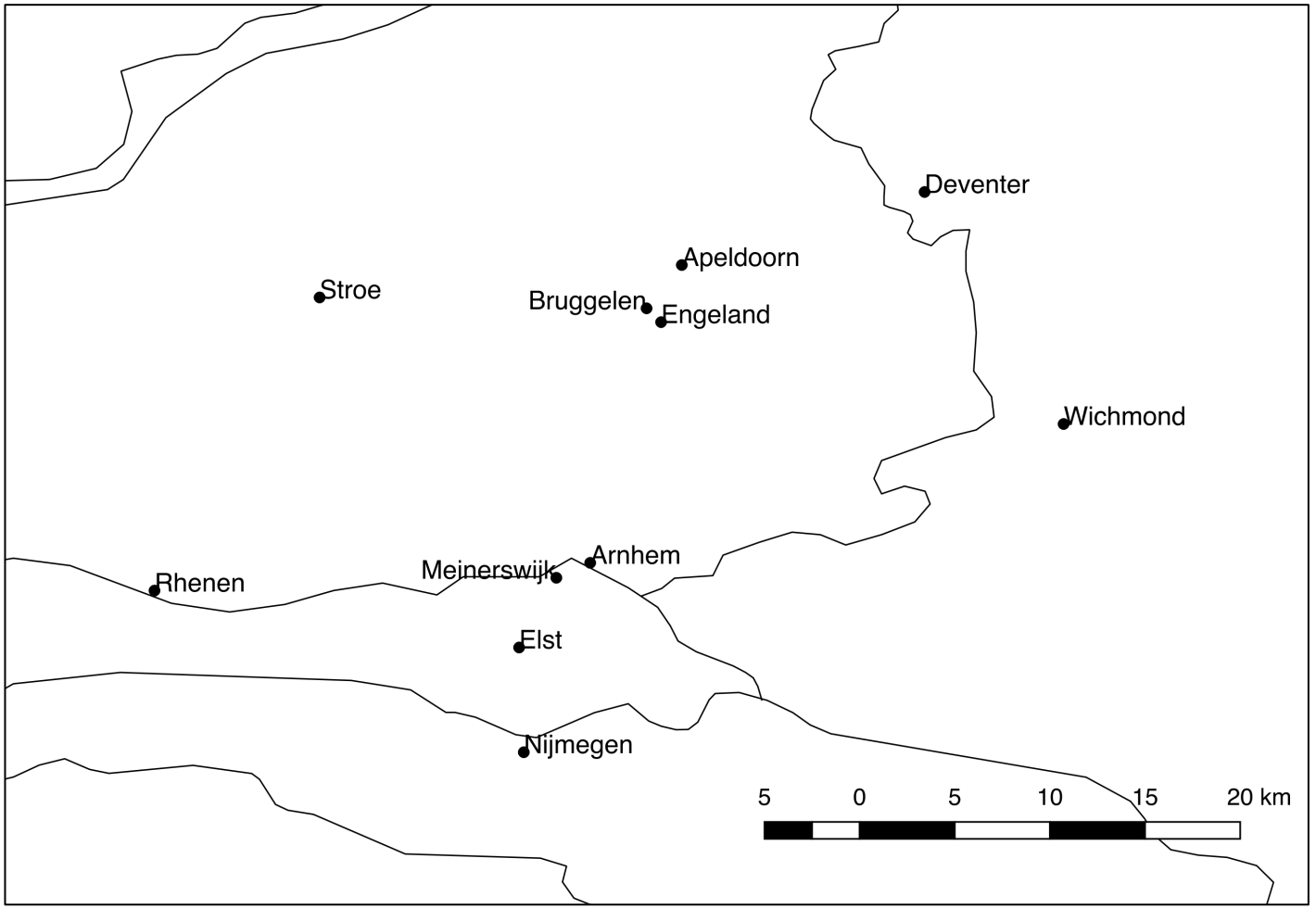
Map 8.3.2: Loire – Places mentioned



Map 8.4.1: Rhine Delta – Places mentioned (I)

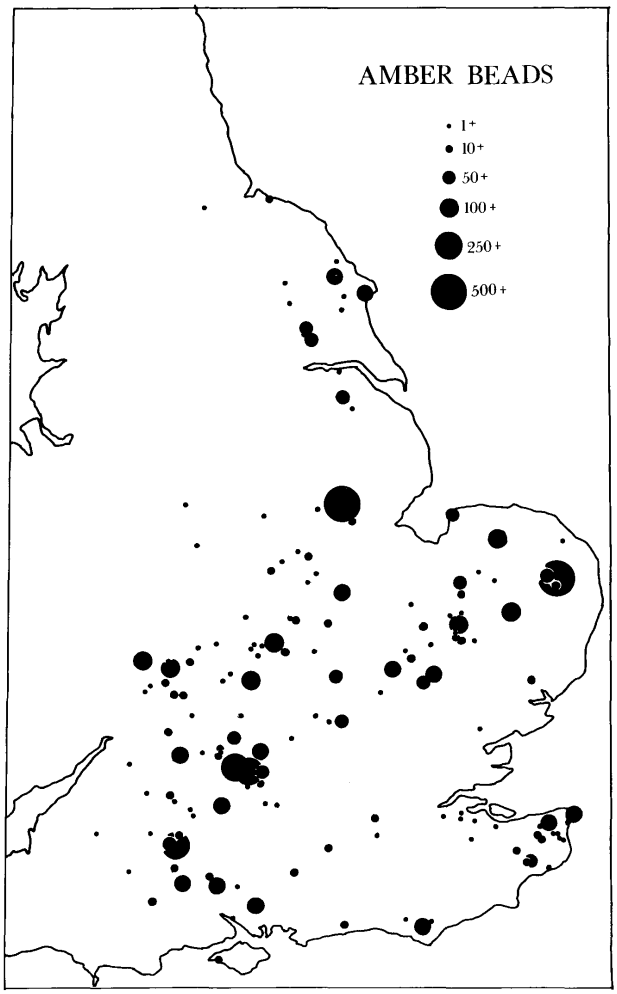


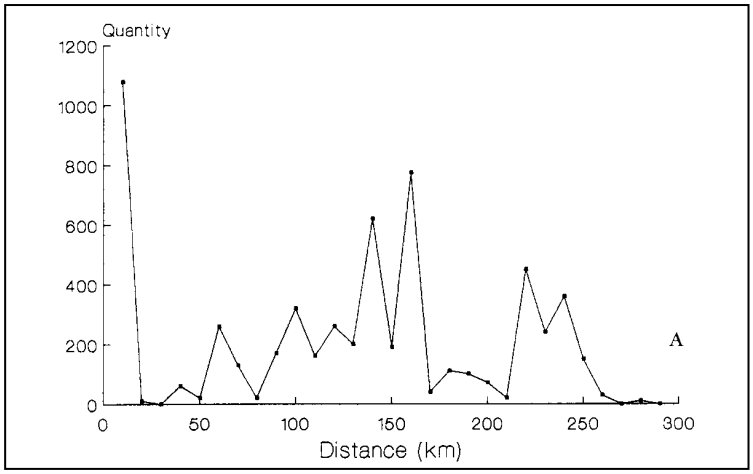
Map 8.4.2: Rhine Delta – Places mentioned (II)



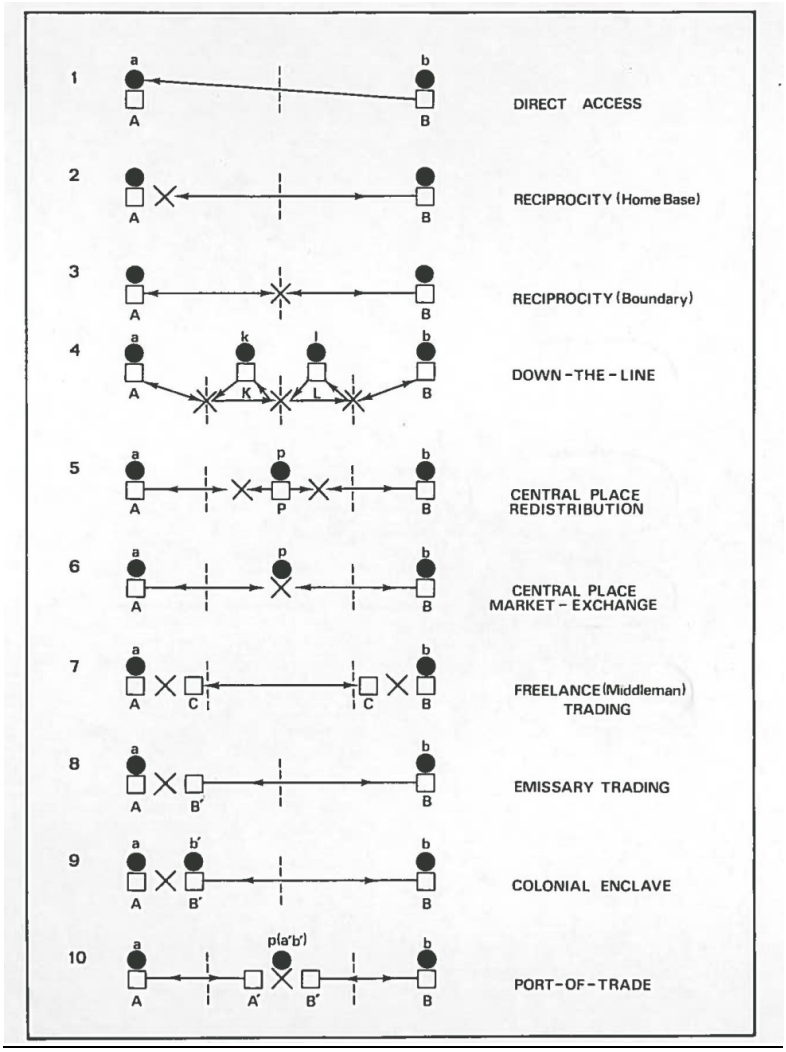
Map 8.4.3: Rhine Delta – Places mentioned (III)

Huggett's map of the distribution and frequency graph of amber beads
(From Huggett, J.W. 1988, 'Imported Grave Goods and the Early Anglo-Saxon Economy',
***Medieval Archaeology* 32, 63-96.)**





Renfrew's modes of exchange and fall-off curves
(From Renfrew, C. 1975, 'Trade as action at distance: questions of integration and communication', in Sabloff, J. – Lamberg-Karlovsky, C. (eds.), Ancient Civilization and Trade, Albuquerque, 3-59)



Fall-off curve for modes 2-3-4

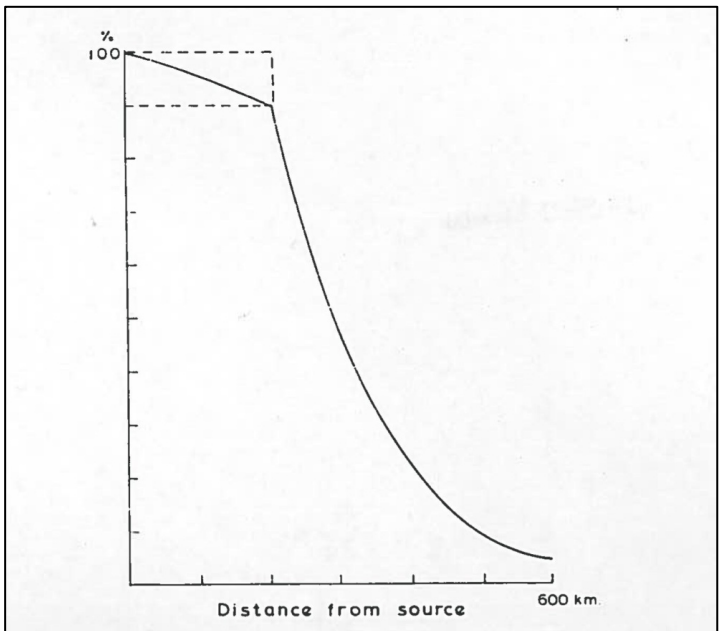


FIGURE 11. DOWN-THE-LINE TRADE: fall-off in abundance of commodity with distance from source.

Fall-off curve for modes 5-6

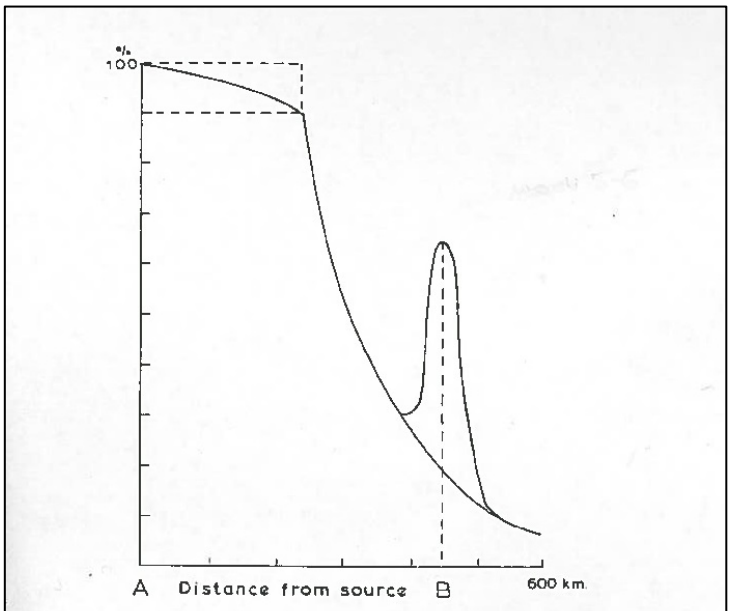


FIGURE 12. DIRECTIONAL TRADE (redistribution): fall-off in abundance with distance from source.

Fall-off curve for mode 7

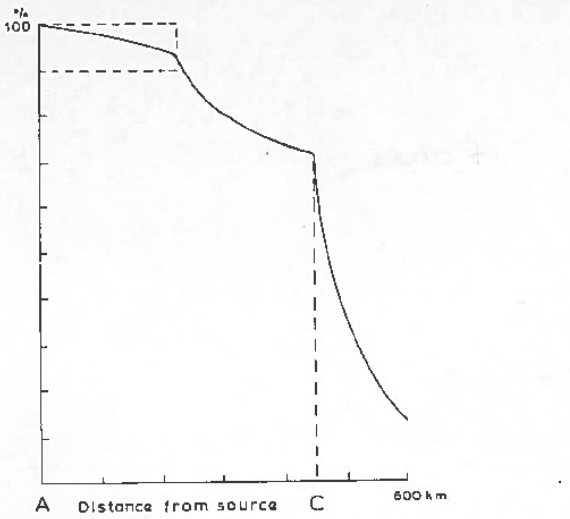


FIGURE 13. FREE-LANCE TRADE: fall-off in abundance with distance from source.

Fall-off curve: variant of mode 4

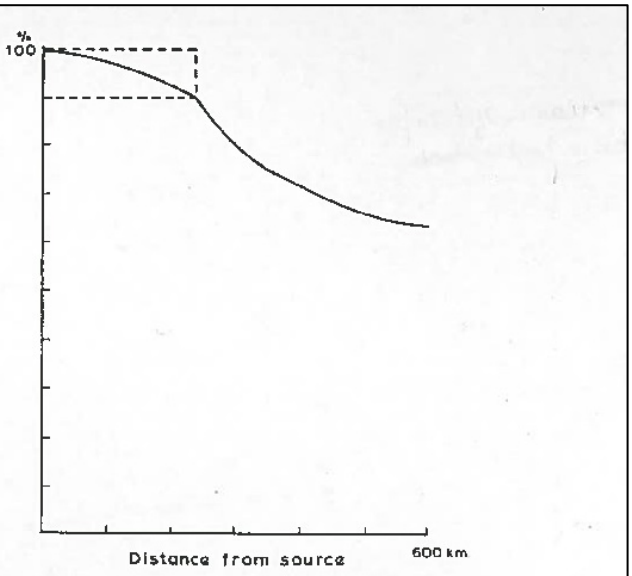


FIGURE 14. PRESTIGE-CHAIN TRADE: a modification of down-the-line trade (see fig. 11).