Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon

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Introduction

This section considers the Middle (AD *c.* 650–850) and Late (AD *c.* 850–1066) Anglo-Saxon periods, which together comprise one of the most fundamentally important periods in the establishment of the East Anglian landscape. This period saw the transition from the localised and largely transitory practices of the Early Anglo-Saxon (AD *c.* 410–650) period, which gave way to the emergence of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, the foundation of towns, bishoprics, monastic houses, churches and almost all of the settlements which we know today. It saw the conversion of the population to Christianity, the establishment of specialised means of production, the widespread use of coinage, significant advancements in farming and fenland drainage, and the implementation of laws, language and local administration. The period was also punctuated by the arrival of the Vikings and the imposition of Danelaw, before emerging as part of the newly forged kingdom of England in the later tenth century. Indeed, by the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066, it is fair to say that much of the East of England as we recognise and understand it today was well established, as is reflected in the detailed entries recorded in the folios of Great and Little Domesday books.

Given its significance, it is perhaps not surprising that different approaches have been taken to assessing the Anglo-Saxon period in the previous incarnations of the *Regional Research Framework*. These changes reflect the growing wealth of material and increased understanding of the period which have developed during the last two decades or more, and it is worth reflecting on them here. In the original version of the *Research Framework*, which comprised a *Resource Assessment* (Glazebrook 1997) and *Research Agenda and Strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000), the Anglo-Saxon period was divided along rural and urban lines and considered alongside the medieval period in the case of the former (Wade 1997; 2000) and the medieval and post-medieval periods in the case of the latter (Ayers 1997; 2000). This division in part reflected the contrasting archaeological character of urban and rural sites (deeply stratified, complex deposits vs. relatively simple, flat sequences) and also the ideological separation of urban production centres from their agricultural hinterlands, economically distinct, but two sides of the same coin.

In the revised *Research Framework*, published in 2011 (Medlycott 2011), these rural and urban themes were amalgamated and the assessment of the entire Anglo-Saxon period (AD *c.* 410–1066) was presented in a single chapter (Medlycott 2011, 49–59). The discussions of the medieval and post-medieval rural and urban landscapes were similarly merged and each period was presented separately, along with discussions of the other main archaeological periods. Although not explained at the time, this approach allowed for a more equitable discussion of the main archaeological periods, and was perhaps a tacit recognition of the interrelatedness of the urban and rural elements of the Anglo-Saxon and medieval landscapes.

As has been seen, in this latest review, many of the traditional archaeological periods have been broken down into sub-phases, which enables the more subtle nuances of each period to be explored and the often quite dramatic changes which occurred during these periods to be more readily understood. Such is the case with the Anglo-Saxon period, which in this review is divided into discussions of the Early Anglo-Saxon period (see Hills, this volume) and the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods, considered here. As with all such attempts to encapsulate the past, there is a degree of artificiality about these divisions, but there is an underlying rationale to the split.

Within the eastern region, there is a strong contrast between the archaeological record of the Early Anglo-Saxon period and that of the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods. As has been seen, the former is characterised by its funerary archaeology, dominated by the cremation and inhumation cemeteries which have been regularly recorded discoveries since the 17th century, and which have been greatly added to since the rise of metal-detecting as a hobby and the development of the Portable Antiquities Scheme. Early Anglo-Saxon settlements are archaeologically considerably less visible and, although new examples continue to be excavated and analysed, they are still very much the poor relation.

The archaeological record of the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods, by contrast, is dominated by the archaeology of settlements, many of which continue to thrive today, with the related funerary remains all but becoming invisible in a period which saw the cessation of the use of grave-goods and the development of churchyard burial as the norm. The transitional period which witnessed this near-complete reversal was one of immense social, economic and political change, encapsulating several major research questions of its own, and these are explored more fully below.

At the later end of the period considered here stands the milestone of the Norman Conquest – 'the most famous date in English history'. This marks a fitting chronological end to the period, although again there is a degree of artificiality here, as the cultural influences of the Normans were already being felt in the region before the Conquest and the indigenous Anglo-Saxon traditions continued well beyond that date.

National Overview

At a national level, both academic and popular interest in the Anglo-Saxon period has grown considerably during the time which has elapsed since the previous Research Framework was compiled. This is doubtless in no small part due to nationally significant, high-profile discoveries, such as the finding of the Staffordshire Hoard in 2009 (Leahy *et al*. 2011), the excavations at Lyminge (Kent) conducted between 2008–15 (Thomas and Knox 2017), the discovery of the Winfarthing pendant[1] and the Great Ryburgh cemetery in 2016 (Fairclough and Holmes 2016), and the initial results of the long-running Rendlesham project, which were also made public in 2016 (Scull *et al.* 2016). It is notable that many of these discoveries were made in the East of England. At the time of writing, the British Library is preparing to open a major exhibition entitled *Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: Art, Word, War*, which will bring together manuscripts and artefacts from across the country, including a significant number of East Anglia artefacts, including the Winfarthing pendant. To a lesser extent may also be felt the popular effect of the Alfredian novels of Bernard Cornwell (2004–) and their BBC adaption screened as *The Last Kingdom* (2015–), along with the television series *Vikings* (2013–) and *Beowulf* (2016), and the perennial interest in the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, all of which serve to raise the Anglo-Saxon period in the public consciousness.

Perhaps the most significant national publication to have appeared during the review period is the series of landmark overviews brought together in the *Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*, published in 2011, which features the work of numerous scholars and covers a wide range of themes (Hamerow *et al*. 2011). Although the contents of the volume take a high-level view of their subjects, many of these themes have been complemented by the rich series of more specific publications and wide-ranging research projects which have been undertaken during the intervening years. As well as producing stimulating results, all of these large-scale projects mark something of a watershed for academic researchers, who have at last begun to realise the potential offered by the vast collections of unpublished archaeological grey literature and other information contained within the country's Historic Environment Records and other archives.

One of the most significant national research projects from the review period has been the *English Landscape and Identities (EngLaId)* project, which ran at the University of Oxford from 2011 to 2016, and its results are of relevance to many of the periods considered in this volume (see Green *et al.* 2017). This 'big data' project combined a mass of existing artefactual and mapping data from the National Mapping Programme, the Portable Antiquities Scheme, the Archaeology Data Service, Historic Environment Records and other sources in order to analyse change and continuity in the English landscape from the middle Bronze Age (*c.* 1500 BC) to the Domesday survey of 1086. As might be expected, the resultant analyses are to some extent limited by the twin factors of initial artefact use and subsequent archaeological discovery, but from the results which have emerged from the project so far it is clear that strong, albeit broad brush, conclusions are able to be drawn from the data and the integration of information from the Domesday Survey means that the Late Anglo-Saxon period is particularly well represented. The full publication of the project's results and supporting datasets is something which will have a significant effect on archaeological studies of many different periods.

A second exercise in 'big data' analysis was undertaken by the *Fields of Britannia* project, undertaken by Stephen Rippon at the University of Exeter, between 2010 and 2012 (Rippon *et al.* 2015). This project specifically examined the evidence for agricultural land-use during the first millennium AD, with a view to understanding the relationship between Romano-British and medieval fieldscapes

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[1] https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/659168

across the area of Late Roman Britain. Drawing on a wide variety of archaeological data, including animal bone assemblages and pollen sequences, and assessing these against soil types, geology and topography, the study generated a series of regional case studies, of which East Anglia was one.

A third 'big data' project is the *People and Places in the Anglo-Saxon Landscape* project, undertaken by John Blair at the University of Oxford between 2010 and 2013, the resultant monograph of which was published as this review was being written (Blair 2018). In this work, Blair has made extensive use of published and unpublished archaeological reports nationwide to develop a new model of Anglo-Saxon settlement patterns, which highlights the regional diversity of Anglo-Saxon settlements and identifies the regularity with which they were planned and laid out. While the full implications of Blair's work remain to be digested, it is clear that, as with his earlier study of the role of the Anglo-Saxon church (Blair 2005), this latest volume is destined to become a standard reference work and will doubtless cause us to reassess the evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlements.

Our chronological understanding of Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon periods nationwide has also been affected by the results of another large, long-running research project, that pertaining to the high precision dating of Anglo-Saxon graves and grave-goods from the sixth and seventh centuries (Hines and Bayliss 2013). Drawing on examples from across the country, over several years this study has developed a new chronological framework for Anglo-Saxon furnished burials. As was discussed in the previous section, while the conclusions of this project have several major implications for our understanding of the burial practices of the Early Anglo-Saxon period, one of the most significant findings pertaining to the Middle Anglo-Saxon period is the conclusion that the practice of furnished burial ended relatively suddenly *c.* AD 680 and apparently did not continue on into the early decades of the eighth century, as had previously been thought to be the case. This has implications for our understanding of the use of grave-goods in the Conversion period, and in particular the role which the early Church might have played, but it also has chronological knock-on effects for numismatic dating which has hitherto been closely entwined with the later dating of such burials. The ripples caused by this report are still radiating through the established chronologies, and many of the conclusions drawn in previous years are being revisited as a result.

Finally, as with many of the archaeological periods discussed here, due reference must be made to the Portable Antiquities Scheme, which continues to accrue invaluable data by recording metal-detected artefacts from across the country. The PAS builds on decades of tireless work undertaken by the authorities in Norfolk and Suffolk especially to ensure that a positive relationship was built up between detectorists and archaeologists. Annual reviews consistently show the Anglo-Saxon period to be amongst the most well represented in the PAS data set, within the East of England in particular, and the discovery and recording of the Winfarthing pendant was cited as one of the most significant discoveries made by the scheme during the marking of the 20th anniversary of the introduction of the 1996 Treasure Act.[2]

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[2] https://finds.org.uk/news/story/293

Regional Overview

While there might not have been as many new archaeological sites coming to light during the last decade as there have been for the earlier archaeological periods discussed here, for reasons which are explored below, the review period has seen a considerable amount of synthetic research and analysis conducted using existing data, building models into which new fieldwork data can be fitted as and when they are recovered. The last decade has seen the publication of a number of key research projects and excavations which have greatly furthered our understanding of the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods in the region. This section reviews the progress on the research topics highlighted in the 2011 framework (Medlycott 2011), which in turn carried forward many of the research aims highlighted in the 2000 edition (Wade 2000; Ayers 2000). While none of these questions can be considered to have been fully answered, significant progress has been made on a number of fronts.

Regional Differences

One of the shortcomings of a research framework such as this is the artificiality of the boundaries within which the study area is contained. Many research areas, this one included, are defined by modern administrative boundaries, some of which can be traced back to the Anglo-Saxon period, and others of which are arbitrary political creations of the last few decades. Within the East of England region, at least, we are fortunate that the physical boundaries of our eastern counties are defined by coasts and rivers, although some of these too have be subject to considerable physical changes (see below), while to the west the borders are more fluid and due consideration needs to be given to the research frameworks of the contiguous research areas.

Within the boundaries of the area covered by the research framework we are also aware of a number of regional differences, some of which are known historically and others of which are inferred. Several different Anglo-Saxon kingdoms are represented, each with their own separate histories and identities, but each increasingly interrelated by the power politics of the later Anglo-Saxon period. The Anglo-Saxon kingdom of East Anglia may be broadly thought to have been coterminous with the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk. The Tribal Hidage, which records the relative sizes of the tribal territories of seventh-century England, lists several small territories within the area of the fens, including the North and South Gyrwe, the Winxa and the Willa (Yorke 1990, 9–15). This would suggest that when the Tribal Hidage was composed the boundary of East Anglia lay to the east of the fens. In the eighth century Bede described Ely as lying within the East Anglian kingdom, suggesting that the smaller territories recorded in the Tribal Hidage had been subsumed by this date (Colgave and Mynors 1969, *HE* IV, 19). A fluctuating western boundary to the kingdom is also suggested by the series of north-west–south-east linear earthworks of Anglo-Saxon date which crowd the land to the south of the fens, the most famous of which is the Devil's Dyke (Malim *et al.* 1997). The processes by which such polities emerged have been hotly debated; the most popular model is currently Bassett's 'FA Cup' analogy, in which numerous smaller tribal units gradually knocked each other out of contention until the larger kingdoms were achieved (Bassett 1989, especially 26–7; Yorke 1990, 1–24). The recognition of individual cultural groups or identities from this period is something which should be bourn in mind when thinking about the period.

To the south lay the kingdom of the East Saxons, which looked to London, the boundary between the two is thought to have followed the Stour, much as does today. It has been suggested that the Anglo-Saxon boundary lay further north and followed the line of the Rivers Lark and Gipping, but while the Lark–Gipping corridor has clearly marked a cultural boundary within the region at various

points in the past (Rippon 2008; Williamson 2013), there is little evidence to support its having been an Anglo-Saxon political boundary (Parker Pearson *et al*. 1993, 28–41; Newman 2005, 478).

In addition to the known political boundaries, the resurgence of interest in the environmental factors which lie behind the structuring of the Anglo-Saxon landscape has led to the recognition and acknowledgement of the vastly different topographies and terrains which are present within the research framework study area. Studies conducted simultaneously and independently by Stephen Rippon (2008), Tom Williamson (2013), Sue Oosthuizen (2017) and John Blair (2018), amongst others, have all identified a distinctive area demarcated by the main watersheds which feed into the fen basin and the Wash which appears to have formed the heartland of the earliest Anglo-Saxon settlers and which remained a distinctive zone throughout the Anglo-Saxon period.

The renewed focus on the central role of the physical environment has also reminded us that we still have very little data pertaining to the Anglo-Saxon climate and more work is required in order to better understand the long-term processes of coastal and climate change throughout the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods. In an assessment of the progress made in coastal archaeology since 1997, drawing on the results of the Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment Surveys, Peter Murphy has highlighted the inherent difficulties in reconstructing the extent of historical coastal erosion (2014, 40–1) and has previously stated that we may have lost as much a 2km from the north and eastern coasts of the region since the end of the Roman period (Murphy 2005). Additional changes to the coastline and estuaries have been brought about by fluctuations in the level of the North Sea, although these are not well understood for the period. We are used to seeing maps presented with an 'Anglo-Saxon coastline', wet fenland basin and wide river estuaries, but many of these conventions are based upon supposition and modern GIS interpretation, and the subject has not apparently been discussed in much detail since the 1960s (Green 1961). More work needs to be done in order to understand coastal change and fluctuating water-levels in this period.

Settlements

The need to be able to locate, identify and characterise the settlements of the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods has been a standard research objective since the original Research Framework, and although a considerable amount of research has been undertaken in the interim period, this still remains the case (Wade 2000; Medlycott 2011). Unlike the settlements of the Early Anglo-Saxon period, of which an increasing number is steadily being revealed by development-led and research-focussed fieldwork, considerably fewer Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon settlements have been identified during the same period.

It has long been recognised that there was a dislocation of settlement between the dispersed and often transitory settlements of the Early Anglo-Saxon period and the more settled, nucleated and increasingly regularly laid out settlements of the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods. The reasons behind this 'Middle Saxon Shuffle' (Arnold and Wardle 1981) are complex, multi-faceted and are still poorly understood, although research is beginning to provide more answers. This dislocation and the relative stability which followed it are the direct causes of the primary difficulty facing the archaeological study of Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon settlements: the fact that the vast majority of settlements established during these periods are still occupied today. This effectively means that the formative archaeological phases are either sealed beneath and/or have been heavily disturbed and truncated by some 1500 years of continuous occupation. It is telling that the best-known and most extensively excavated examples of Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon settlement evidence are derived from settlements which failed, drifted or were deliberately relocated during their later histories, leaving the earlier phases exposed. As a consequence, different approaches to fieldwork,

interpretation and development management have to be taken if we are to realise the full archaeological potential of these periods, and these are explored more fully below.

During the last decade, the East of England's Anglo-Saxon settlements have been the focus of a string of theses from researchers at the Universities of East Anglia, Cambridge, Nottingham and Exeter. Many of these theses have benefited from the emergence of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) as a core tool for landscape studies, which has resulted in several attempts to model and analyse the Anglo-Saxon landscape. Several researchers have revisited data collected during the numerous large- and small-scale fieldwalking surveys undertaken across the eastern region and used them to map and analyse the horizontal stratigraphy of Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon settlements, with a particular emphasis on their tendency to 'drift' (Hoggett 2010; Wright 2012; 2015a; 2015b). This serves to demonstrate the inherent value in historical survey data of this kind which exists for all periods, not just the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon, and many of these fieldwalking surveys would lend themselves to full GIS analysis. It should be noted that the large-scale fieldwalking undertaken for the Suffolk elements of the Fenland Survey and John Newman's Deben valley survey remain unpublished in all but the most cursory forms (Hall and Coles 1994; Newman 1992; 2005), and these shortcomings should be addressed as a matter of priority.

Surface finds and metal-detected artefacts formed the subject of Mary Chester-Kadwell's doctoral thesis at the University of Cambridge and subsequent book (Chester-Kadwell 2008; 2009), in which she developed a series of interpretative tools for use in identifying and characterising the function of archaeological sites from their artefact scatters alone. Although primarily developed for application to the Early Anglo-Saxon period, with suitable refinement and calibration of artefact types these techniques would be equally applicable to the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods (see Davies 2010; 2011), and their development for this purpose should be seen as a key research aim.

Such a suite of techniques would be especially useful given the large quantities of artefact data collected by the Portable Antiquities Scheme, which although voluminous can be difficult to interpret. While PAS data is fully imported into the Norfolk HER, most of the region's other HERs hold PAS data as a parallel dataset, making it difficult to routinely integrate and analyse PAS data alongside HER data. As a consequence, most studies tend to focus on one data-set or the other, rather than attempting both. The differential uptake and implementation of the PAS is also clearly visible in the data, but despite these issues a considerable degree of our understanding of the Anglo-Saxon landscape is now inferred from surface scatters of this kind.

Gareth Davies' doctoral thesis completed at the University of Nottingham (Davies 2011) explored social transformations in the settlement and economy between AD 450 and 1100 in a number of settlements in west Norfolk (Wormegay, Congham, Rudham, Burnham, Sedgeford, Bawsey and West Walton). Based upon detailed analyses of HER and PAS data, Davies augmented his research with new geophysical surveys and archaeological interventions to produce a series of interrelated case-studies which illustrate the complex developmental sequences and transformations which give each settlement its unique identity. One of Davies' most important conclusions was to demonstrate conclusively something which has been suspected for some time, specifically that, rather than being an homogenous group, west Norfolk's so-called 'productive sites' have little in common with one another, except that they are all sites at which unusually large quantities of Middle Anglo-Saxon coins and metalwork have been discovered (Davies 2010; 2011). Davies' sub-regional approach has demonstrated that a multi-stranded, integrated approach to landscape investigation, complemented by targeted fieldwork, can make a very significant contribution to our understanding of the development of the Anglo-Saxon landscape over time and his approach should be developed and implemented elsewhere in the region.

A considerable quantity of synthetic and analytical work on the development of the East Anglian landscape during the Anglo-Saxon period has come out of the University of Exeter. This began with Stephen Rippon's analysis of greater East Anglia – Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex – as one of a series of regional case studies exploring the diversity of British landscape character (Rippon 2008). Rippon's discussion highlights the radically different landscape characters of southern and northern East Anglia. In southern East Anglia he draws attention to some areas in which a degree of Roman to medieval continuity occurred, while noting that in others there was marked discontinuity, yet in no parts of southern East Anglia was there a sudden transformation of the landscape. In northern East Anglia, by contrast, the evidence unequivocally indicates that a marked transformation of the landscape occurred during the eighth century, which included the abandonment and relocation of settlement, resulting in the creation of many of the nucleated settlements which underpinned the later landscape.

Duncan Wright's 2012 doctoral thesis at the University of Exeter and subsequent book focussed exclusively on the settlements of the Middle Anglo-Saxon period, presenting a series of multi-disciplinary county-based case studies, which from this region include Norfolk and Cambridgeshire (Wright 2012; 2015a). Although not conducting new fieldwork, Wright deploys a number of different analytical tools and makes extensive use of HER data and archaeological grey literature to challenge the prevailing view that the settlements which we know today have their origins in the Late Anglo-Saxon period, and he makes a strong case for the significance of the Middle Anglo-Saxon period as the crucial phase in settlement development and landscape. Of course, within this region his arguments perhaps seem less controversial, but his conclusions do have significant implications for the practical field-based approaches which might be taken to recover new evidence, and these are considered further below.

Also at the University of Exeter, Fiona Fleming's 2013 doctoral research examined the evidence for long-term continuity of Romano-British settlement patterns into the Anglo-Saxon period, using Norfolk, Kent and Somerset at test areas (Fleming 2013; 2016). Fleming undertook a GIS-based analysis correlating surface scatters of Early, Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon artefacts with Roman sites and later markers of settlement, such as churches and manors. These correlations were then cross-referenced against soil types and landscape *pays* to produce a narrative of landscape development throughout the Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods. She also presents a detailed case study of the landscape development of the parishes of Barton Bendish and Fransham (Norfolk), using data extracted from Andrew Rogerson's 1995 Ph.D. and the Norfolk HER. Full publication of Rogerson's own analysis of Fransham is imminent.

Fleming's results present some interesting conclusions, and her methodology highlights the potential which the use of GIS and detailed landscape data present. However, her work also highlights some of the larger problems which are presented by the interpretation and characterisation of surface scatters as 'sites' of particular types, and the use of particular classes of features, such as moated sites, as proxies for later settlements. Ultimately, Fleming's analysis demonstrates that settlement can only be understood at a sub-regional level, and highlights the importance of detailed data and local knowledge to their interpretation and analysis.

Turning specifically to the Late Anglo-Saxon landscape, as part of an MA in Landscape History at the UEA, George Barlow has undertaken a detailed GIS-based analysis of the Suffolk entries in Domesday Book, focussing especially on the physical and economic geography of the county, represented by carucates, woodland, meadow, plough-teams and livestock (Barlow 2011), and the interrelationship between freemen and manors (Barlow 2013). Barlow's work is very significant, bringing the kinds of analyses undertaken longhand by Darby (1971) into the digital age, but in doing so also bringing new

nuances to the analysis, interpretation and mapping of the data compiled during the Domesday survey. This is an approach which could and should be employed in other counties to great effect.

Taking high-level GIS analysis one-step further, Bill Wilcox's doctoral research at the UEA, completed in 2012, employed a detailed GIS of known archaeological and historical data drawn from a range of sources, including the HER and the PAS, in an attempt to build a predictive model of the archaeological landscape of Late Anglo-Saxon Norfolk (Wilcox 2012). This was achieved with some success, although Wilcox found that modelling across county boundaries was rendered more difficult by the different recording methods employed in each of the county HERs. He also found that crossing different landscape types, for example the Fens, made it difficult to produce a consistent model, reinforcing some of the conclusions drawn in the other research discussed here. The usefulness and desirability of archaeological predictive and deposit models is currently being widely debated (Carey *et al*. 2018), and this work makes a useful contribution to the debate, emphasising that GIS is a very useful tool, but that the full automation of landscape analyses of these kinds is still some way off.

One of the threads which runs through all of these pieces of research is just how difficult it is to access good archaeological data pertaining to settlements of this period and that this primarily due to the presence of later and extant settlement evidence. One methodology which has risen to prominence in recent years is the archaeological test-pitting survey, comprising the excavation of a series of test-pits within and around the environs of what have come to be known as Currently Occupied Rural Settlements ('villages'), with the resulting presence or absence of material being used to infer something of the origins of these settlements (Lewis 2010; 2014). Although by no means a new method, within the eastern region it has been widely adopted by the Higher Education Field Academy and to date over 50 settlements have now been investigated in this fashion. While these surveys have produced useful data for the extent of Late Anglo-Saxon settlement (and later periods; see Martin, this volume) and have involved a great number of people in the archaeological process, it is apparent that the methodology is not sufficiently subtle for it to be able to be used to identify Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement.

In a synthetic assessment of the results of the surveys, Lewis observed that most of the test-pits within the eastern region have revealed little evidence for the colocation of Middle and Later Anglo-Saxon settlement (Lewis 2010). However, Wright has convincingly argued that there are sufficient methodological weaknesses in such test-pitting as to render a negative result meaningless, and points to examples where more conventional developer-funded excavations within the same settlements have revealed Middle Anglo-Saxon evidence (Wright 2015a; 2015b). While test-pitting offers a limited method for accessing early material, it is clear, then, that the main avenues of investigation for Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon settlements lie in development-led archaeological fieldwork and research excavations.

Wright's work, and that of others, has demonstrated that significant results can be obtained by development-led work within existing settlements, and this is something which the increasing prevalence of infill housing would lend itself towards. However, at the same time, it seems that the pressures placed on the region's development management officers by the numerous National Strategic Infrastructure Projects has seen a move away from the routine placing of archaeological conditions on small developments of these kinds, although where they are applied they often produce positive results. One of the most significant discoveries to have been made in recent years, that of the well-preserved Middle Anglo-Saxon cemetery and attendant buildings at Great Ryburgh (Norfolk), was made as a result of the development control process (Fairclough and Holmes 2016). At the time of writing, post-excavation analysis of the Great Ryburgh site, which included

waterlogged evidence for timber-lined graves and log-coffins, is still ongoing, but the initial conclusions support the identification of a Middle Anglo-Saxon cemetery with attendant chapel situated on low-lying ground in the valley floor, with the Late Anglo-Saxon settlement focus and medieval parish church lying slightly higher up the valley side to the north-west.

In addition to development-led archaeology, research projects also continue to produce good data. In north-west Norfolk, the Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project has been engaged in excavating the extensive archaeological remains of a Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon settlement and cemetery since 1996. Following a series of interim reports published in *Norfolk Archaeology*, a 'popular monograph' on the results obtained up to 2007 was published in 2014 (Faulkner *et al*. 2014). Excavations thus far have revealed a Middle to Late Anglo-Saxon cemetery with associated settlement evidence, including several buildings laid out on a gridded-plan within a large D-shaped enclosure. Fieldwork continues, and there remains a substantial body of unpublished material, and it is hoped that this report marks the beginning of a sustained programme of post-excavation and publication.

One of the most significant projects to have taken place in the region, if not the country, during the review period is the Rendlesham Project, focussed on the south-east Suffolk settlement identified by Bede as having been one of the royal vills of the East Anglian kings (Scull *et al*. 2016). Under the auspices of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, between 2007 and 2014 intensive metal-detecting surveys have been conducted across 150 ha of land, complemented by geophysical surveys and excavations in 2013 and 2014, and aerial photographic interpretation by the National Mapping Programme in 2015. This work has revealed an exceptionally large and high-status settlement spanning the Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon periods, which can be confidently identified as Bede's *vicus regius* and from which a wide range of artefacts has been recovered, but the survey has also revealed a much longer period of occupation both before and afterwards. Of particular note is the decline of the high-status element of the settlement in the second quarter of the seventh century, which seems to coincide with the rise to prominence of Ipswich and may be related. There is still a lot of analysis and publication to come from the Rendlesham project and its successor *Lordship and Landscape in East Anglia* project (2017–2020),[3] both of which promise to transform our understanding of the south-eastern part of the region in many different ways and provide a context for this most exceptional of sites.

Despite the great leaps forward which have been made, there still remain a substantial number of unpublished or partially published sites which are of fundamental importance to our understanding of Anglo-Saxon East Anglia. The publication of some of these sites has been highlighted as a key research priority since the earliest incarnations of the Research Framework, while others relate to fieldwork undertaken more recently. Foremost among these is the Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement at Wicken Bonhunt (Essex), which was excavated during the late 1960s and early 1970s and published in outline in 1980, but which still warrants and awaits full publication (Wade 1980).

Another key site highlighted in the first *Research Agenda*, was the then recently excavated site of a Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon enclosure, with associated buildings and burials, at the Whitehouse Industrial Estate, Bramford, on the edge of modern Ipswich (Suffolk). An early casualty of the development-led archaeology, this site was excavated in 1995 and reached the post-excavation assessment phase before funding ran out. The site remains unpublished beyond a short summary in the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History* (Martin *et al.* 1996, 476–9). More recent examples include the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon settlement and cemetery remains

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[3] http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/research/directory/lordship-landscape-east-anglia

evaluated by two different contractors at Whissonsett (Norfolk) in 2004–05 and subsequently excavated by one of them, for which only the evaluations have ever been written up as grey literature (Mellor 2004; Trimble and Hoggett 2010).

Unfortunately, the handful of key sites referred to here represent the tip of an iceberg. The workings of development-led archaeology are such that there remain numerous other unpublished archaeological excavations recorded in the region's HERs, for which the available funding has proved to be inadequate, developers have gone out of business, or archaeological contractors have simply failed to write sites up. The excavation archives for many of these sites are precarious, as they are often still in the hands of commercial contracting units and in many cases cannot be accessioned until the projects are completed, effectively leaving them in limbo. Recent years have seen the closure or outsourcing of many archaeological contracting units, creating problems of funding, ownership and responsibility for particular projects, and this needs to be addressed. This issue cuts across archaeological periods, and while the scale of the problem may be understood at a county level, it would perhaps be in the interests of archaeology in the region for a centralised list of such projects to be compiled.

That said, there are an enormous number of archaeological projects which are conducted every year to a very high professional standard, the results of which are properly analysed, reported on and lodged promptly with the relevant archives, repositories and HERs. With the increasing prevalence of HERs going online via the Heritage Gateway or via their own Heritage Explorer websites, it is no longer deemed necessary to list individual projects here, and the interested reader is directed online. As has been seen, many of these reports have directly informed the national 'big data' research projects referred to above, and have also fed into the numerous regionally-focussed research projects and syntheses referred to here.

Cemeteries

The desire to study the physical remains of the Anglo-Saxon population in order to better understand their physical identity, pathologies, diets and lifestyles has been a key research aim for the period since the earliest iteration of the Research Framework (Wade 2000; Medlycott 2011) and continues to be so today. Such is the rarity of well-preserved funerary assemblages from Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon contexts, it is imperative that the most is made of opportunities to employ a full range of osteological and scientific techniques as and when new sites are discovered. The range of scientific techniques which are available to study the human remains of past populations has expanded considerably throughout this time, with techniques such as DNA profiling and isotopic analyses becoming much more prevalent, and affordable, in archaeological contexts. In order to fully capitalise upon the potential offered by these techniques, it is necessary to ensure that they are applied to newly excavated specimens where appropriate, especially where the period of active use of a cemetery can be demonstrated to be relatively short lived, giving a snap-shot of a particular period of time, or where stratigraphic sequences of intercutting burials can be identified, allowing for greater refinement of phasing. There is also a case to be made for systematically revisiting some of the important Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon skeletal assemblages which have already been brought to light and which are curated within the region, as new techniques developed since their excavation would enable them to be compared to more recently excavated assemblages.

As is discussed by Hills (this volume), the archaeological record of the Early Anglo-Saxon period is dominated by funerary archaeology, comprising cremations and inhumations, a significant proportion of which were furnished with grave-goods, making them particularly suitable for location by metal-detecting. The review period has seen the discovery of a considerable number of new Early

Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, including some spectacular high-status female burials at Trumpington[4] and Winfarthing[5] as well as more conventional cemeteries, but the nature of the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon archaeological record is such that new discoveries are relatively rare by comparison.

Unlike the cemeteries of the Early Anglo-Saxon period, which were separate landscape entities from their contemporary settlements and which appear to have served multiple settlements or sub-regions, the cemeteries of the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon period were physically and ideologically integrated into their settlements. This means that their discovery and recovery is affected by the same post-depositional processes as those affecting the settlement evidence discussed above. As a consequence, the recovery of cemetery evidence and human remains from these periods is to a great degree dependent upon later landscape changes causing the associated settlements to fail, move or drift away, leaving earlier phases preserved and able to be investigated archaeologically. Where such landscape changes do not occur, it seems that settlements and cemeteries continue to be occupied, with many Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon cemeteries being the precursors to the medieval churchyards, resulting in the disturbance and loss of the earliest archaeological phases. The review period has seen several significant publications and research projects pertaining to the funerary archaeology of the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods, over and above some of the new discoveries alluded to above, and these are referred to below.

Burial practice is one of the areas where there is a continuum of practices which spans the 7th century, meaning that in this instance the divide into Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon periods is largely artificial and cuts across cultural trajectories. We are fortunate that the East of England is one of the regions in which we have archaeological evidence for differing burial practices throughout the entire Anglo-Saxon period, and a significant number of research questions still remain pertaining to the changes in burial practice in evidence in the 7th century, not least how the transition occurred from the furnished burials of the Early Anglo-Saxon period to the 'churchyard' style burials which rapidly came to typify the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods. One strand of this question pertains to the burials belonging to the 'Final Phase' which have now been identified at a number of sites across the region. Like the Early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, these cemeteries are separate entities to settlements, and were often founded on new sites in the 7th century. Most of these cemeteries were relatively short-lived, and were largely thought to have extended into the early decades of the 8th century, although one of the strong conclusions of the *Anglo-Saxon Graves and Grave Goods* project was that furnished burial ended c. AD 680, meaning that it is necessary to revisit the chronologies in several of the region's published cemeteries (Hines and Bayliss 2013).

Our current understanding of the origins of 'churchyard' style burials in the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods is still relatively poor, with inferences being drawn from a small, but growing number of excavated examples. Notable among these examples is the significant programme of post-excavation analysis undertaken on the assemblage of Middle to Late Anglo-Saxon burials excavated from Sedgeford (Norfolk), the preliminary results of which were published in 2014 (Faulkner *et al*. 2014, 137–66). The monograph summarises analyses of the 417 excavated individuals, examining demography, diet, health and disease, including the results of a small-scale sampling of bone collagen which revealed that the population ate a largely non-marine diet, despite living close to the sea. Particularly notable is a rare example of a bladder stone, as well as several skeletons exhibiting traumatic injuries inflicted by bladed weapons. A full monograph focussing on the burials is projected, but currently has no publication date.

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[4] https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/586813
[5] https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/659168

Among the most notable publications from the review period is the final monograph on the high-status Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement excavated at Staunch Meadow, Brandon (Suffolk), between 1980 and 1988 (Tester *et al*. 2014). Previously only know from an interim report in *Antiquity* (Carr *et al*. 1988), the monograph contains detailed analyses of the two cemeteries excavated from the site, the first of which was associated with a timber building interpreted as an early church and represents one of the region's very few completely excavated cemeteries from the Middle Anglo-Saxon period. This epithet makes the Brandon assemblage nationally significant, although it cannot be assumed that the buried population is representative of the wider society at the site during the period. The Brandon assemblage tells us a great deal about Middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices, including the use of coffins, from which many iron coffin fittings survive. Like Sedgeford, isotope analysis shows that the Brandon population also enjoyed a terrestrial diet, and much of the population seems to have survived into middle and old age. There are examples of unusual pathologies, including possible instances of leprosy, tuberculosis and poliomyelitis, which are also suggestive of individuals having been cared for during illnesses.

The Brandon excavation is also notable for the presence of a second, smaller cemetery, located to the north-east of the first. This seems to have partially overlapped the first chronologically before succeeding it into the Late Saxon period, but it was not fully excavated (Tester *et al*. 2014, 186–218). Its being part of a larger cemetery would account for the strong bias towards child and infant burials among the excavated assemblage, with 20 of the 30 burials falling into this category, although the sample was not large enough to draw statistically valid conclusions.

Archaeological fieldwork undertaken over a number of years by the Aldeburgh and District Local History Society at Barber's Point, Friston (Suffolk), has revealed evidence for a Middle Anglo-Saxon enclosure on an small promontory in the River Alde (Mereditch 2015). Here a total of 19 inhumations has been recovered, with a highly variable degree of bone preservation. The application of high-precision radiocarbon-dating and Bayesian modelling to the burials indicates a founding burial of *c.* AD 600, followed by the laying out in a row of 10 more 7th-century burials and up to 14 8th-century burials. The founding burial was furnished with a wooden box containing a variety of artefacts, including iron rings, a piece of amber and a cowrie shell hailing from the Red Sea or further afield. The later burials were all largely unfurnished and the site is interpreted as straddling the conversion period. The burials are associated with a number of timber buildings, the latest of which was oriented west–east and contained a number of the burials, leading to the suggestion that this might have been an early chapel or church. The historically attested establishment of Botolph's minster at Iken on the opposite bank of the river provides a tantalising context for the site.

The waterlogged cemetery at Great Ryburgh produced 89 burials, although only the southern and western extents were reached, while the eastern extent was possibly reached, but the northern extent was not located (Fairclough and Holmes 2016). There were very few examples of intercutting graves, and the burials, which exhibited extremely variable bone preservation, were laid out in orderly rows. Only seven burials showed no signs of containing a wooden coffin or lining, making the assemblage truly exceptional in terms of its preservation and hinting at what is likely to have been lost in the other excavated sites referred to here. Six burials had planked coffins, which the remainder contained dug-out coffins made from split and hollowed sections of oak trees, some of which retained their lids. At its centre, respected by the burials, stood a rectilinear structure, which can be tentatively interpreted as an early chapel or church. Post-excavation analysis of the site is ongoing, and the results of this work will make a significant contribution to our understanding of Middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices and landscape context of early Christian cemeteries.

In 2012, a 1.2 ha site at Stoke Quay in Ipswich, on the south bank of the Orwell, was excavated, revealing a dense complex of features dating from the Middle Anglo-Saxon to post-medieval periods, a probable 7th-century Anglo-Saxon barrow cemetery and the cemetery of the church of St Augustine, thought to have been founded in the 9th century. The cemetery was demarcated by a boundary which might have had Middle Anglo-Saxon origins, and the church remained in use until the 15th century. Over 1,100 burials were recorded from the cemetery, along with the stone foundations of the 11th century apsidal church and post-holes which might relate to an earlier structure (Brown and Dodd 2014). The Stoke Quay site therefore has the potential to make a very significant contribution to our understanding of the Middle and Later Anglo-Saxon sacred and secular landscapes on the periphery of Ipswich, as well as informing our understanding of the emergence of the town and the growth of the local pottery industry (see below).

The Impact of Christianity

While the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods witnessed an enormous number of social, technological and economic upheavals, one of the major changes which occurred during the period was the gradual conversion to Christianity which occurred at different points across the region throughout the 7th century and, probably, into the early decades of the 8th. The need to understand the mechanism of the conversion to Christianity across the region was highlighted in the first research agenda, and by the time of the second had been addressed in part by the current author (Hoggett 2007; 2010), although this work only focussed on the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of East Anglia (Norfolk, Suffolk and the eastern Fens) and parallel studies examining the other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in the region would be rewarding.

The association between walled Roman sites and the sites chosen for early churches and monastic sites has long been recognised, and there are several good examples of this in the region. Foremost among these is the chapel of St Peter on the Wall, founded within the Roman fort of *Othona* at Bradwell-on-Sea (Essex) by Cedd in AD 653. The long-running debate about the location of the episcopal see of *Dommoc* is now pretty much settled on the Roman fort at Walton Castle, now lost to the sea off Felixstowe, rather than Dunwich, providing another good case in point. Additional examples are to be found at Burgh Castle and Caister-on-Sea on the Norfolk coast, and potentially also at the Roman town of Caistor St Edmund (Norfolk). These sites, and others like them across the region, still have the potential to reveal much about the early missionary phase of the conversion effort and they, and their excavation archives, would repay further fieldwork and investigation.

The degree to which religious conversion impacted on burial practice is a question to which we still do not have any definitive answers, but the increasingly identified use of Christian iconography in high-status burials of the 7th century suggests that is a strong factor. The close correlation between the ultimate cessation of furnished burial *c.* AD 680 identified by Bayesian modelling is also suggestive of a growing Christian influence following the early re-ordering of the church during the reign of Archbishop Theodore (Hines and Bayliss 2013). It is possible also to see the influence of early Christianity on the integration of cemeteries in the 'churchyard' style into settlement cores during the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods as an indication of the emergence of the concepts of consecrated ground and belief in the resurrection.

Of course, the most visible testament to the effects of Christianity is the establishment in the landscape of a new class of feature – that of the *minster* church, followed during the Late Anglo-Saxon period by the establishment of monastic houses proper and also parish churches as larger land units fragmented, so that by the time of the Domesday survey the vast majority of the region's churches were likely to have been founded. The processes of *minster* foundation throughout the

Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods are still poorly understood, again primarily due to a lack of surviving evidence, but there is a growing body of evidence from across the region to which piecemeal discoveries made in around church sites is incrementally being added.

One such site is the ruined church at Bawsey, to the east of King's Lynn (Norfolk), which has long been recognised as a significant Anglo-Saxon foundation and has been subjected to systematic metal-detecting for a long period of time. The first *Time Team Live* was broadcast from the site in 1998, and in 2014 a comprehensive interim report on the excavations was presented (Pestell 2014) as part of a *festschrift* published to mark the 65th birthday of Andrew Rogerson, whose personal contribution to our understanding of Anglo-Saxon East Anglia is arguably second to none (Ashley and Marsden 2014). Full publication of the Bawsey site is promised and eagerly anticipated.

The rescue excavation undertaken on Burrow Hill, Butley (Suffolk) between 1978 and 1981 recovered a Middle Anglo-Saxon inhumation cemetery of at least 200 individuals, together with contemporary settlement evidence and an unusually high quantity of metalwork, indicative of high-status occupation. To date, the only publication of the site is the short interim report (Fenwick 1984) and the full publication of this crucial site remains a priority.

With regard to characterising sites of this period which may have a Christian element, the excavations at Brandon (Suffolk) are of particular significance (Tester *et al*. 2014). Issues of interpretation have always dogged the Staunch Meadow settlement and others like it, with much debate about whether the site was a secular establishment or perhaps an early monastic foundation. Here, the excavators conclude that there *was* a clear monastic presence on the site during the first half of the 8th century and that this grew into a more complex and highly controlled monastic site, perhaps under a strong secular patron, during the later 8th and 9th centuries. The infamous overwintering of the Vikings in Thetford in AD 869 and ensuing events are seen as a direct cause of the decline of the site, one which the archaeological record would seem to support (see below).

In addition to the unnamed early monastic sites which need to be inferred from the archaeological record, the region is also host to a significant number of historically attested foundations, the histories of which are rehearsed by Bede and others, and which indicate that the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon landscape was richly populated with monastic houses. Historical sources, and to a lesser extent archaeological evidence, indicate that many of these sites foundered in the face of the Danish incursions of the 9th century, only for a new wave of sites to be founded (or in some case, re-founded) in the Benedictine image during the Late Anglo-Saxon period as Wessex asserted its control on the region, from whence they continued to grow until the Dissolution (see Pestell 2004). Foremost amongst these sites are St Benet at Holme (Norfolk), Bury St Edmunds, Ely, Peterborough, Ramsey, Thorney and Crowland, amongst others. Although some of these sites continue to be in active use, others now only survive as archaeological sites, and their archaeological potential remains incredibly high.

Excavations undertaken between 1978 and 1980 by the Ministry of Works within the precinct of the Abbey of St Edmund in Bury St Edmunds (Suffolk) revealed an extensive sequence of Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon features lying beneath the later monastic buildings (see Hoggett 2018). A substantial amount of post-excavation analysis and illustration was undertaken before the project floundered, and the completion of this work is considered a matter of some priority in order that the early incarnations of the abbey can be better understood.

Agriculture and Economy

Like all pre-industrial societies, the primary focus of the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon economy was agricultural production, combining arable and pastoral regimes, with the vast majority of the population actively engaged husbandry of some kind (Banham and Faith 2014). In this initial research framework, the need to determine the extent of agricultural specialisation and surplus production was highlighted as a key research priority, to be achieved by sampling the full range of identified settlement types. The excavation and analysis of good animal bone assemblages and charred cereal deposits were also seen as key to achieving this aim, and all of these aims were carried over into the revised framework and continue to be relevant today (Wade 2000; 2011).

While archaeological excavations have routinely collected and analysed faunal assemblages and environmental samples from Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon sites, enabling detailed interpretations to be developed on a site-by-site basis, until comparatively recently the vast majority of these data have sat in grey literature reports and archaeological archives. Fortunately, the past decade has seen a resurgence of interest in the fundamental subject of Anglo-Saxon agricultural practices, with a particular emphasis on farming regimes, and there have been several studies undertaken which have attempted to use primary excavation data of this kind and synthesise it to produce regional and national overviews of the subject (Williamson 2013). These are subjects to which archaeological fieldwork is able to contribute a great deal, but the best surveys have been those which are able to combine archaeological evidence with corroborative historical sources.

An overarching synthesis of Anglo-Saxon farms and farming practices has recently been published by Banham and Faith (2014), in which they present the evidence for the different agricultural practices undertaken by the Anglo-Saxons, the crops grown, animals reared and products obtained. These are complemented by landscape-type-based analyses of the different balances struck between arable and pastoral practices in different regions across the country, including the East of England, from which numerous case-studies have been drawn. Their work is complemented by the ongoing work of Pam Crabtree (2010; 2012; 2013), who has published a series of analyses of animal husbandry across Middle Anglo-Saxon East Anglia, derived from faunal assemblages collected at key archaeological sites, including Brandon (Suffolk), Wicken Bonhunt (Essex) and Ipswich.

Perhaps the most significant, and certainly the most wide-ranging and detailed analysis of Anglo-Saxon farming in the East of England is that undertaken by Mark McKerracher, whose doctoral research at the University of Oxford (2014) and subsequent book (2018) examined the transformation of farming practices during the Middle Anglo-Saxon period. Taking the eastern region as one of two large case-study areas, McKarracher uses archaeological data – excavated features, faunal assemblages and environmental samples – from a wide range of East Anglian sites to present sub-regional analyses of farming practices, animal husbandry and crop cycles (McKarracher 2018). What emerges from the data is that the Middle Saxon period in the East of England, like other places in lowland England and the Continent, witnessed an agricultural revolution which saw farming spread and intensify throughout the landscape, adapting its practices to differing terrains and landscape types in the process. McKarracher's work clearly demonstrates the potential contained within the archaeological data collected and is destined to inform our understanding of the period for some time to come.

The exploitation of the coast during the Anglo-Saxon period is also a subject which warrants further investigation. As was noted in previous Frameworks, the RCZAS programme has identified numerous surviving timber structures within the estuarine and intertidal zones. Fishweirs in particular have been highlighted in a series of recent publications, with examples known from Norfolk, Suffolk and

Essex (see Robertson and Ames 2010, 339–40; Meredith 2015). On Holme beach (Norfolk) alone, a programme of regular and systematic walkover survey recorded a complex of five fish weirs comprising over 500 posts which were subsequently radiocarbon dated to the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods (Robertson and Ames 2010; 2015). In order to further our understanding, a more systematic approach needs to be taken to the recording and dating of such structures as and when they are exposed.

The second major indicator of economic prosperity which has been consistently highlighted in the original and revised research frameworks is craft production, and in particular pottery and metalwork (Wade 2000; Medlycott 2011). Again, the review period has seen significant progress in this direction, but there still more to do.

After many years, 2012 saw the final publication of the results of the Ipswich Ware Project, the conclusions of which have been anticipated since the first research framework (Blinkhorn 2012). As the first post-Roman pottery to be kiln fired and produced on an industrial scale, Ipswich Ware is a crucial archaeological marker for the location, identification and dating of many of the region's Middle Anglo-Saxon sites. Apparently solely produced in the eponymous *wic*, the ware is found widely distributed throughout the East Anglian heartlands, with a diminishing, but significant distribution further afield. One of the most significant findings of the Ipswich Ware project concerns its production dates. Originally thought to date from AD 650 to 850, making it coterminous with the Middle Anglo-Saxon period itself (see Hurst 1976), the report concludes that production is likely to have begun *c.* AD 720. This conclusion was anticipated, and has emerged gradually over a series of pottery reports published in monographs during the last ten years, but for the first time the arguments have been set out clearly. The excavations at Stoke Quay, Ipswich, also revealed a well-preserved Ipswich Ware kiln, adding to our knowledge of the production process and presenting a good opportunity to subject such a structure to modern archaeological techniques and attempt scientific dating, which may help to refine this work further (Brown and Dodd 2014). The revised dating of the end of furnished burial may also have an impact here (Hines and Bayliss 2013), as the lack of association between Ipswich Ware and furnished burials is cited as one of the reasons for focussing on a *c.* AD 720 start date, but it is possible that the new date of *c.* AD 680 might pull the dating of Ipswich Ware back into the 7th century again.

There is also evidence from Stoke Quay, in the form of wasters and seconds, that Thetford-type ware was subsequently produced on the site (Brown and Doss 2014). The Thetford-type ware industry, which emerged in the mid-9th century saw manufacture at an number of regional production centres, and an equivalent project to the Ipswich ware project focussing on Thetford-type wares is long overdue. Across the wider East of England region, significant contributions to our understanding of regional pottery traditions have been made by Paul Spoerry, whose assessment of the production and distribution of pottery in Cambridgeshire contains detailed discussions of the contemporary fabrics (Spoerry 2016). Further studies of this kind focussing on other parts of the region would be very beneficial, and it is to be hoped that the new project looking at the pottery sequences for Suffolk and Norfolk, funded by Historic England and managed by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service paves the way for further progress.

With regard to Anglo-Saxon metalwork, although now published 20 years ago, Stanley West's *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Material from Suffolk* is still in print (West 1998) and is still a widely used reference volume, although it has now been somewhat superseded by the PAS database and the online HER. Similarly, work on the proposed Norfolk sister volume, mentioned in several previous regional research frameworks, has largely ceased, as the digitisation of the Norfolk HER's finds illustrations and full integration of PAS data into the HER has rendered the catalogue elements of the project

somewhat unnecessary, although there is still scope for synthetic assessments and discussions of artefact classes across the region.

As was discussed above, there is a need for better integration of the data held in the PAS into the region's HERs, and the same can be said for the Fitzwilliam Museum's Early Medieval Corpus of Early Medieval Coin Finds,[6] to which details of many pertinent discoveries are passed without data making into the HERs as well. The emergence and use of coinage during the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods is an important subject, and one in which a number of people are actively engaged. Rory Naismith has recently published a very accessible overview of coinage in what he calls pre-Viking East Anglia (Naismith 2013), which is complemented in the same volume by Gareth Williams' more detailed assessment of the circulation, minting and use of coins in East Anglia during much the same period (Williams 2013). Recent publications have seen considerations of the usage of coins in Middle Anglo-Saxon furnished burials (Scull and Naylor 2016), as well as detailed catalogues published of a string of *sceatta* hoards found in Norfolk, at Aldborough, Loddon and Fincham (Marsden 2014). The coin assemblage recovered during the course of the Rendlesham survey is particularly significant, with gold and silver coins indicating trade within the region and long-distance high-value trade (Scull *et al*. 2016, 1604–5).

In terms of trade networks within the region and beyond, recent years have also seen a series of studies which have placed East Anglia into its North Sea context, recognising that to the Anglo-Saxons the North Sea was key focus of communication routes and trade and exchange networks, rather than a physical barrier. Indeed, in many ways, Anglo-Saxon East Anglia had a stronger relationship with lands across the water to the east than it did with the western parts of Britain in this period, reminding us that we need to look outside the research framework area in every direction if we are to truly understand the nature of the region's Anglo-Saxon economy (e.g. Loveluck 2013; Bates and Liddiard 2013; Ayers 2017; Pestell 2017).

Urbanism

The need to understand and characterise the origins and development of the region's urban centres is another long-standing research aim (Ayers 2000; Medlycott 2011). While the main thrust of the urban research framework is contained within a separate discussion (see Antrobus and Ayers, this volume), the review period has seen significant inroads made into the study of these urban centres during the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods.

Foremost among the East of England's Anglo-Saxon towns is Ipswich, which emerged in the 7th century and blossomed into a major trading port during the 8th and 9th centuries and beyond (Scull 2002). The ancient topography of Ipswich is relatively well understood, and since the 1970s numerous excavations have been conducted within the boundaries of the Anglo-Saxon town and its wider environs, of which the excavations at Stoke Quay, on the opposite side of the Orwell to the core of the town, are among the latest and most significant (Brown and Dodd 2014). Many of these early excavations remain unpublished, but in 2015 the results of the English Heritage-funded *Ipswich 1974–1990 Excavation Archive* project (undertaken 2009–15) were placed online via the Archaeology Data Service.[7] The archaeological archives of 36 excavations undertaken on 34 sites within the historic core of the town (25 of them within the line of the Anglo-Saxon defences) have been consolidated and digital narrative summaries produced for each of them.

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[6] https://emc.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/
[7] http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/ipswich_parent_2015/

While certain aspects of Ipswich's development have been discussed extensively, such as the Ipswich ware industry (Blinkhorn 2012) or cemeteries (Scull 2009; 2013), other aspects still remain relatively unexplored in print and there is a lot of work still to be done. The new online summaries cast light upon many of the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon deposits encountered during these excavations, and further synthetic publication of the several decades of archaeological work undertaken in Ipswich in more traditional monograph form is expected to form part of a follow-on project. Our archaeological understanding of the Ipswich area (during all archaeological periods) has also been greatly enhanced by the successful completion of the Ipswich Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) project, undertaken between 2015 and 2018. This work has ensured that the HER records for Ipswich are as up-to-date as they can be so that informed development management decisions can be made and that as much information as possible can be put into the public domain (Cutler 2018).

Similar issues surround the origins of Norwich, which emerged in the 9th century, but expanded rapidly so that by the 11th century it was the foremost town in the eastern region (Ayers 2014). Extensive excavations have been carried out within the city, not all of which have yet been published, and the Norwich UAD compiled in the late 1990s is in need of updating and full integration into the Norfolk HER proper. Our knowledge of early Norwich continues to grow, and one of the most interesting new hypotheses, put forward by Andy Shelley, has highlighted the possibility that the churches of St Clement and St Olave in the South Conesford ward of Norwich, the town's former port, might be related to the establishment of naval garrisons in the early part of the 11th century (Shelley 2015).

Andy Hutcheson's doctoral research, completed at the University of East Anglia in 2009, attempted to model the origins of East Anglian towns, using coin finds as a proxy for economic and administrative functions (Hutcheson 2009). Hutcheson concluded that the earliest urban nucleation occurred in Ipswich, with nucleation becoming a more common administrative strategy in the Late Anglo-Saxon leading to the establishment and growth of several towns, in particular Norwich and Thetford, while some locations, such as King's Lynn, tended towards holding administrative units in a dispersed manner until much later, as late as the end of the 11th century. Archaeological excavations also have the potential to inform us about the development of Thetford, which was a major Late Anglo-Saxon town and centre of religiosity, briefly housing the episcopal see, before its translation to Norwich in the late 11th century. A Danish influence is also suspected in Thetford's early history, not least because of references contained within the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, although this has yet to be proved archaeologically. At the time of writing, an Urban Archaeological Database is also being produced for King's Lynn, which should shed similar light on the origins of the town (Hutcheson 2006), and this project is due to be completed in early 2019.

Scandinavian Presence

This review of archaeological research in the region finishes with a consideration of one of the most enigmatic episodes in the history of the Eastern region, that of the Vikings. There has always been a marked discrepancy between the archaeological evidence for the 9th-century Danish occupation of East Anglia and the descriptions of the destruction provided by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. This famously culminated in the execution of the last East Anglian king, Edmund, in AD 869, and was followed by a period of occupation under the tenets of the Danelaw before the region was reconquered and amalgamated into the emerging kingdom of England under the kings of Wessex.

While the touchstone for the period is the work of Sue Margeson, whose *Vikings in Norfolk* (1997) remains one of the most significant publications on the subject, the vast amount of metalwork which has accrued as a result of liaison with metal-detectorists, latterly under the auspices of the PAS,

means that it is now possible to infer considerably more about the nature of the Scandinavian influence in the region during the 9th and 10th centuries.

In her doctoral research, completed at the University of Oxford in 2010, Jane Kershaw examined large quantities of Scandinavian metalwork from across the area of the Danelaw, and concluded that the presence of the majority of these objects, which primarily comprise cheaply-made everyday items, indicate that there was indeed a large cohort of Scandinavians in the region to whom these objects belonged (Kershaw 2010; 2013). However, this only tells part of the story, and it is clear that as well as objects being brought across or imported directly from Scandinavia, there was also an extensive regional trade in locally-made copies of Scandinavian objects, especially brooches, which were presumably catering for a strong local demand for Scandinavian-style objects (Cattermole 2005; Pestell 2013).

Of more direct relevance to the identification of specifically ethnic Scandinavians in the region are the growing corpus of more personally significant items, such as Thor's hammer amulets, which are seen as being a particularly unambiguous indication of Scandinavian beliefs and an outward expression of cultural identity (Pestell 2013). At the same time, more culturally idiosyncratic artefacts are also strongly indicative of a primary Scandinavian presence. The implications of items such as ingots and hack-silver, which are indicative of trade using the bullion value of precious metals, are particularly compelling, especially as coinage also continued to circulate in the region during the same period (Pestell 2013).

While historical evidence and place-name evidence ae both strongly indicative of a significant Scandinavian presence in the region, to date archaeology archaeological evidence has failed to corroborate this. It is clear that significant progress can be made in this area via the interrogation and integration of the large, and growing, quantities of genuinely Scandinavian and Scandinavian-style metalwork being recorded by the PAS. That such material indicates the presence of a sizeable population of ethnic Scandinavians in the region during the 9th and 10th centuries should make us think again about many of the themes discussed here and contemplate the degree to which their influence might more readily be detected, in settlements, burial, agriculture, economy and the rise of urbanism.

Conclusion

The East of England is one of the best places in the country for the study of the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods, a period of fundamental importance to the development of the society and landscape which we see around us today. Any short summary such as that presented here cannot hope to do more than characterise in very broad terms the progress made during the last decade or so, which has seen much new archaeological data collected and a considerable number of synthetic and academic research projects focussing on the area. It is particularly telling that many of these researchers are based at institutions outside the region and are drawn here by the quality and quantity of the archaeological record, which we can too often take for granted.

In presenting this summary, it is apparent that significant progress has been made on many of the different research priorities highlighted in the relevant sections of the original (Wade 2000; Ayers 2000) and revised (Medlycott 2011) versions of the research framework. None, however, has yet been progressed to such a degree that we can now say that a subject has been comprehensively investigated and that we have a definitive answer. Indeed, in moving towards partial answers, much of the research undertaken and new evidence brought to light has raised suites of new research questions. Such is the nature of research.

What we also see in the preceding discussions are a range of emerging and exciting methodologies and interpretative models – many of which use GIS to manage the increasingly large and detailed datasets available to us – which present great hope for the future of Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon research in the region. We are fortunate to be working in one of the archaeologically richest and most well studied regions of the country, something which can equally be said of many of the archaeological periods considered here, and it will of considerable interest to see how our understanding of the region has changed in another 10 years' time.

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