The Origins of Cambridgeshire

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DOI: 10.1017/S0003581500044954, Published online: 21 April 2011

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0003581500044954

How to cite this article:
doi:10.1017/S0003581500044954

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THE ORIGINS OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE

By Susan Oosthuizen

This paper examines the effects on the landscape of Anglo-Saxon immigration in a frontier zone, on either side of the Cam valley which formed the ancient boundary between East Anglia and Mercia. An examination of the placenames, institutions and landscape archaeology on either side of the Cam frontier appears to reveal an unexpected degree of continuity in landscape use between the Roman and middle Saxon periods. This apparent continuity is more marked on the eastern side of the frontier which was subject to centralized East Anglian control from an early date, than on the western bank where political and administrative fragmentation is more easily demonstrable.

The present county of Cambridgeshire, created in 917 by Edward the Elder, straddles the Cam valley, which formed the Saxon boundary between Mercia and East Anglia.1 The landscape of the region, in the period between the Anglo-Saxon settlement from the late fourth century to Mercian domination in the mid-eighth century, poses interesting questions about continuity in the landscape on either side of this frontier – which might reasonably be expected to exemplify flux and discontinuity on farms, fields, pastures and estates which lay so far away from the political heartlands of the early Saxon kingdoms of Mercia and East Anglia. The putative instability of earlier landscapes along this frontier might additionally be expected to have been enhanced by substantial early Saxon settlement which, it has long been believed, entered the region through the fenland basin and its tributary rivers.

Landscape historians in East Anglia and in Mercia have done seminal work in reconstructing the early landscapes at or near the centres of these two great Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.2 Frontier regions, however, have received little detailed attention, although they are areas of great potential interest in assessing the impact of the Anglo-Saxon settlement on existing landscapes. Cambridgeshire provides a useful contrast to these studies of Mercia and East Anglia for three reasons. The area was a political frontier for much of the Anglo-Saxon period; the region was also a cultural ‘melting pot’ with the fen basin acting as a receiving area for much early Germanic settlement; and, the region is divided topographically between fen and upland, linked and divided by the waterways which drain the area.3

The question of continuity between late Romano-British and early Anglo-Saxon settlement has been the subject of much stimulating and inspirational research in recent years.4 On the side of continuity, shifts in archaeological ideology in explanations of cultural change argue against earlier interpretations of the depredations of the Anglo-Saxon settlement. Genetics, population estimates, changing interpretations of grave goods in fifth and sixth century cemeteries, and landscape evidence are all part of this reassessment of cultural change as part of a complex indigenous process which need not necessarily be dependent on the immigration of foreign groups for initiation or influence.5 Taylor’s forthright summary exposition of the lack of archaeological support
for the arguments for discontinuity has yet to be bettered. On the other hand, Esmonde Cleary has noted that it is as difficult to argue for continuity without more conclusive evidence that apparent correspondence of some Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon settlement are not necessarily any more significant than random coincidence.

The major difficulty with the problem of continuity is that it is almost impossible to prove conclusively. There is no reliable documentary evidence; archaeological, landscape and placename evidence is suggestive, but can be interpreted either way without explicit documentary evidence to push the argument in one direction or the other. Each piece of evidence presented here is similarly inconclusive and cannot be used on its own to support an argument for continuity; together, however, they support one another and the argument presented here is generally for rather than against continuity between the two periods. Without final documentary proof – which cannot be forthcoming since it does not, as far as we know, exist – it is a ‘best fit’ hypothesis given the fragmentary evidence which remains for interpretation.

The evidence discussed below for the extent of continuity in the landscape in this region between the late fourth and the mid-eighth centuries AD suggests that differences in the scale of continuity from sub-Roman to later settlement between the west and east banks of the Cam may be a matter more of degree than contrast. In east Cambridgeshire the kingdom of East Anglia provided the larger framework for mid-Saxon settlement, while the political context in which local settlement developed in west Cambridgeshire appears to have been one of smallish political groupings, whose emergence may have been part of an indigenous process of political evolution. On either side of the Cam the middle Saxon political order appears to have had its roots in the political and economic instability of the sub-Roman period rather than the immigration of more dominant groups from north-west Europe or the control of a major Anglo-Saxon kingdom.

The question will be approached from four directions: the antiquity of the Cam valley as a recognized frontier; political institutions in the period leading up to Mercian hegemony in 730; continuity and change within the landscapes first east, and then west, of the Cam.

ANTIQUITY OF THE RIVER CAM AS A FRONTIER

The Cam and its major tributaries form an easily recognizable frontier zone. The area is limited by three plateaux, each acting as a watershed with the region beyond (fig. 1). To the south the Icknield Way forms a substantial boundary; to the east, a clay plateau defines the watershed between the Cam and the Suffolk Stour; a similar clay plateau in the west divides streams leading east to the Cam and others flowing west to the Ouse. These plateaux are linked and divided by the three tributary streams which merge to form the Cam: the Ashwell Cam rising from the west, the Essex Cam from the south and the Granta from the east.

This valley may have marked a frontier since antiquity, when it lay between the peoples of the Iceni to the east, the Trinovantes in the south east, and the Catuvelauni to the west and south, since it is marked by a ring of hillforts which runs from Wandlebury, to Borough Hill (Sawston), Littlebury (Essex) and Clare (Suffolk). The Cam’s status as a frontier appears to have been diminished during the Roman period. In the first century AD the Ouse and the Icknield Way, lying at right angles to the main Cam valley, appear to have been more significant, with camps and, later, towns
Fig. 1. The geology of the Cambridgeshire region
Fig. 2. Cambridgeshire parishes and the distribution of major Roman roads, major Romano-British settlements, pagan Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and the Cambridgeshire dykes
at Great Chesterford, Godmanchester and Cambridge. Perhaps the delineation of the territorium around the Roman town at Cambridge, which appears to have included land on both banks of the Cam, may have been a deliberate attempt to unite these previously divided territories.9

In the sub-Roman period, however, it seems that the Cam once more became a significant frontier. Dark has suggested that pre-Roman tribal territories may have re-emerged in the sub-Roman period.10 It has been suggested that the retention of British names for rivers, which function as both frontiers and thoroughfares (as the Cam/Granta did), is characteristic both of early German penetration and the recognition of existing administrative structures. In this respect, the application of the Cam’s earlier British name, Granta, to the entire length of the river throughout the Saxon period is most significant.11 It implies that the re-emergence of the Granta as a frontier – a recognized administrative feature – may have occurred very soon after 410.

It was not a peaceable frontier. There was open conflict between Mercia and East Anglia throughout the seventh century, accompanied by political manoeuvring as each side attempted to gain the upper hand through diplomatic means.12 East Anglia attempted to assert her hegemony through alliances with some of the smaller polities which divided the great kingdoms. For example, with the marriage of the East Anglian princess Ethelthryth to Tonbert, prince of the south Gyrwe in the mid-seventh century, while Mercia established a network of religious houses along the western fen-edge from Peterborough to Crowland, via Thorney and Peakirk in the same period.13 By the eighth century, however, Mercia had gained the upper hand and had established a burh within the ruined Roman town at Cambridge.14

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS BEFORE c. AD 750 (FIG. 3)

There are some sources which throw a little light on the extent to which administrative continuity existed in Cambridgeshire from 410 up to about 750. They appear to show that political organization was much more fragmented on the western bank of the Cam than on the eastern bank, where the early East Anglian kingdom appears to have exerted extensive control from an early period.

The evidence of the Tribal Hidage

The Tribal Hidage, a list of groups paying tribute to the Mercian kings in about the mid-seventh century, provides a tantalizing insight into the political organization of the mid-Saxon landscape.15 Nine small polities, believed to be Mercian satellites, appear to have lain west of and against the Granta/Cam frontier which formed the Mercian border with East Anglia, along a line extending from the Wash to north Hertfordshire (fig. 3).16

A number of interesting features are shared by these nine buffer states. First, they generally appear to have controlled land only to the west of this frontier – with the single exception of the Wissa whose territory may have straddled the fen estuary from Wisbech to the Wissey.17 The contrasting lack of small independent kingdoms on the eastern bank of the Cam implies that East Anglian control extended to the Cam itself. This supports the conclusions of Peter Warner that the centralization of the East Anglian kingdom had very early origins, derived from links with its Romano-British predecessor,
and that seventh century East Anglian kings may have been anxious to maintain direct control over their frontiers. This conclusion is supported by recent work on the north-eastern Cambridgeshire fen edge.

Second, the places which are believed to have formed the cores of these polities are generally situated a considerable distance to the west of the river, which suggests that the Cam/Granta river valley lay on the periphery of their territories too – a true frontier. For example, Hurstingstone Hundred in Huntingdonshire may have been the focus of settlement of the Herefinna, while the Gifla may have been centred around the headwaters of the River Ivel.

Third, although the names of these groups were derived from old English rather than Romano-Celtic, it is notable that they refer to local topographical features. English may have become the major language of communication, but identification with the locality appears to have been more important than immigrant origins. The Herefinna (possibly named from the heavily wooded Huntingdonshire claylands), the Willa (referring to the
Well Stream), and the Gyrwe (named from the fen) all appear to have demonstrated their unity in this way. This may imply that they were rooted in a process of indigenous political evolution developing from the economic instability of the sub-Roman period rather than from a structure imposed by incomers.

In conclusion, the evidence of the Tribal Hidage implies greater political subdivision in west, compared with east, Cambridgeshire. Further evidence suggesting that centralized control of the area to the west of the Cam/Granta appears to have faltered and broken down in the sub-Roman period, with local leaders each seeking hegemony over a relatively small area is examined in more detail below. It is possible that political fragmentation in the wake of the economic and administrative collapse after 410 may have led to the emergence of a multiplicity of competing warlords controlling small areas of what had once been a centralized region. Perhaps this is the origin of the ‘thirty “duces regii” who accompanied [Peada of Middle Anglia] with their forces at the Battle of Winwaed’ in the conclusive battle against East Anglia in AD 655.

Secular and religious institutions

The evidence for suggesting that the earliest Anglo-Saxon secular and religious institutions appear to have been on the eastern rather than the western bank of the Cam is examined below.

The secular institutions

Haslam has suggested that the nine ancient estate centres listed in 1086 as nine manors, part of the ‘king’s ancient demesne’, may be indicative of the survival of Romano-British estate centres into the sub-Roman period. Significantly, these manors are the first nine in the list of the king’s manors in Domesday Book, and are given in two non-random groups. The first five lie on the eastern bank, the next three lie on the western bank, with Chesterton (whose name referred to and whose parish included the ruined Romano-British town) following last. The ordering of the list is also interesting: those manors which might have formed part of an estate centred on the East Anglian kings’ villa regia at Exning – Soham, Fordham and Isleham – are listed first and consecutively. Furthermore, as table 1 and figure 2 show, four of the first five are also the sites of early Saxon cemeteries or Romano-British villa sites or both. This, taken together with the more detailed discussion of other evidence below, may suggest greater continuity with the Romano-British past under the centralized political control of East Anglian overlordship, rather than imposition of a completely new administrative order.

The religious institutions

The pattern of religious institutions follows the pattern suggested by Blair of the establishment of royal minster churches on manors near, but not at, the estate centre, ‘their parishes coterminous with the territories which the [royal] vills controlled’. The best accumulation of evidence combining religious and secular institutions with Romano-British origins occurs in north-east Cambridgeshire.

The earliest known monastic house in the county was founded by St Felix – under his royal patron, king Sigebert of East Anglia – at Soham, on the eastern fen-edge, in
The importance of this site is underlined by the use of the parish name for Longstowe Hundred. Although no major Romano-British site is known within the parish, the parish boundaries suggest Longstowe was part of an estate which included Bourn and Caldecote (the three parishes together were assessed at 25 hides in 1086: Bourn at 20 hides, Longstowe at 3 hides 1 virgate and Caldecote at 1 hide 3 virgates). In this context a tenth century minster with two priests at Bourn, and some land in Bourn outlying from manors in Longstowe, may indicate that religious focus may have been moved from Longstowe to Bourn in the later Anglo-Saxon period, but there is no evidence to distinguish between possible continuity and a fascinating coincidence.
The noticeably high incidence of early secular and religious institutions on the eastern bank of the Cam/Granta, each associated with a substantial Romano-British centre, coincides with the evidence of the Tribal Hidage in indicating greater continuity from sub-Roman to Anglo-Saxon administration on the eastern bank of the Cam/Granta. The corresponding lack on the western bank, where the only indicative centre is not known to have significant Romano-British settlement, suggests greater flux in the west.

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE LANDSCAPE OF EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE

The Cam valley in east Cambridgeshire is characterized by lighter soils along the main stream as well as along its tributaries flowing in from Essex and Suffolk. The chalk ridge of the Icknield Way transects the southern part of the region in a north-easterly direction, capped by clay on the east as it rises to a plateau along the Suffolk border. Three sets of evidence for continuity between Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon settlement and institutions are examined here: Romano-British settlement and early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, placenames and Dark Age earthworks. 35

Romano-British villa sites and early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries

Pagan Saxon burials or cemeteries or other significant finds are distributed throughout the area from Wilbraham to Shudy Camps along the Granta, and to Soham along the fen-edge (see tables 2 and 3). Table 2 summarizes the results for both areas of the county.

Thirteen of the seventeen sites (76 per cent) in east Cambridgeshire lie in parishes which also contain a Romano-British villa. Fourteen out of eighteen parishes (78 per cent) containing a Romano-British villa or major settlement site also contain pagan Saxon burials or cemeteries, or (occasionally) other significant finds (table 3). Although the sample sizes are small, these high percentages argue against coincidence and support Taylor’s view that many immigrants were absorbed into the existing social structure and landscapes alongside their sub-Roman inhabitants. There appears to be a strong possibility that there was significant continuity of local administration from late Romano-British institutions into the Anglo-Saxon period in east Cambridgeshire. (The Camps and the Wilbrahams are each treated as one unit in this context, as neither appears in documents as two parishes until the thirteenth century, and other parishes with shared names – like the Abingtons and Swaffhams – are also counted as one occurrence.) 37

Other tentative evidence suggests that the following Romano-British villa estate centres may have evolved into middle Saxon estate centres. Each is associated with a topographical placename – 'potentially the earliest English [placenames] in any region' 38 – and with names with a religious element, following Blair’s suggestion that early minsters were founded away from estate centres. 39 In each case the evidence of parish boundaries supports the suggestion. For example, the estate of the East Anglian villa regia at Exning (still in Cambridgeshire in 1086) may be coterminous with Staploe Hundred, given the association with topographical names at Landwade and Snailwell
Table 2. Parishes in east and west Cambridgeshire with coincident significant Romano-British and pagan Anglo-Saxon finds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>East Cambridgeshire</th>
<th>West Cambridgeshire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of parishes.</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parishes containing both a major Romano-British site and a pagan Anglo-Saxon cemetery or significant find.</td>
<td>13 (18%)</td>
<td>10 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parishes containing either a major Romano-British site or a pagan Anglo-Saxon cemetery or significant find but not both.</td>
<td>8 (11%)</td>
<td>10 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parishes with no major significant finds of either period.</td>
<td>51 (71%)</td>
<td>28 (58%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% parishes with major Romano-British sites where pagan Anglo-Saxon cemeteries or other finds also occur.</td>
<td>78% (14/18)</td>
<td>55% (10/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% parishes with pagan Anglo-Saxon cemeteries or other significant finds where major Romano-British site also occurs.</td>
<td>76% (13/17)</td>
<td>83% (10/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% pagan Anglo-Saxon cemeteries or other significant finds in parishes with no major Romano-British site.</td>
<td>12% (2/17)</td>
<td>16.6% (2/12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(40) Stow (a possible minster site) and Quy (a topographical name) may have been subordinate to Wilbraham, while Teversham may have incorporated Hinton (a possible minster site) and Fulbourn (a topographical name). In each case there is a common pattern: a possible estate centre, two of whose names end in -ham and may derive from ‘the gift of estate to king’s thegns’, together with a minster site and a topographical name which may represent the focus for an early Saxon settlement nearby.

The indentation of the western and southern parish boundaries of Linton around Hadstock (Essex) parish, together with the continuation of the line of the southern parish boundary of Hildersham as the southern parish boundary of Hadstock to create a regular rectangular unit, indicate that Hadstock was at one time part of a larger estate.
Table 3. Major Romano-British sites and pagan Anglo-Saxon cemeteries or other significant finds in East Cambridgeshire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Villa/major Romano-British site</th>
<th>Major pagan Anglo-Saxon cemetery/find</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Babraham</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartlow</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottisham</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burwell</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camps</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chippenham</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exning</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fordham</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hildersham</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>other significant find</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinxton</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horningsea/Fen Ditton</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseheath</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isleham</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linton</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pampisford</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sawston</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soham</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swaffham Prior (Reach)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teversham</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wickham</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilbraham</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Cambridgeshire County Council SMR; VCH 1980, 43–7; Charge 1997, 215

which included Linton. A Romano-British villa, an Anglo-Saxon cemetery and a sixth century *Grubenhaus* have been found at Linton, while Hadstock is the site of a middle Saxon minster church.43

Placename evidence

There is a marked cluster of placename-names derived from Latin loan-words or referring to British communities in the south-eastern corner of east Cambridgeshire. This survival taken together with the archaeological and other evidence examined above suggests considerable continuity from late Romano-British settlement into the Anglo-Saxon period in this area (table 5).

First, names derived from Latin loan-words: [West] Wick[ham] is derived from *vicus*, the smallest self-administering unit of Roman Britain (*wichamme 974*).44 Gelling has suggested that name indicates a place and a territory which ‘survived without being swamped by Germanic settlers’ and that ‘all the *wicham* settlements were at one time centres of land-units’.45 The extensive Romano-British settlement straddling the Roman road near Streetley End (*Stradleia 1086, ‘the wood or clearing by the Roman road’*), together with a major domestic and industrial centre in the nearby woodlands around Yen Hall supports this interpretation.46
There is other evidence also to support Gelling's interpretation that the territory of the *vicus* survived, evolving into a mid-Saxon multiple estate. Each piece of evidence is not strong enough to carry this conclusion on its own, but the combination of so many coincidences in the vicinity of West Wickham is compelling. (There are precedents for this elsewhere: Härke notes that it is likely that the fifth and sixth centuries were likely to be characterized by 'ethnically divided communities' which gradually intermingled during the seventh and eighth centuries).\(^47\) The boundaries of the *territorium* appear to include West Wratting and Balsham. The north-eastern boundary of West Wickham and Yen Hall is continuous with the northern West Wratting boundary; all are mentioned in a charter of 974.\(^48\) Balsham's indented eastern parish boundaries based on field boundaries indicate that this parish was also once part of Wickham and as the site of the *vicus* appears to have lain astride the Roman road to Colchester, its *territorium* is also likely to have extended south of the road.

[Shudy and Castle] Camps is derived from a Latin loan-word denoting an area of 'open uncultivated land on the edge of settlements'.\(^49\) It is possible that Camps was a specialist outlier within the Wickham *territorium* or estate. The eponymous name of the neighbouring parish of Horseheath gives the reconstruction of a multiple estate centred on West Wickham a little tentative support.

Continuity of settlement may be implied by pagan burials and cemeteries in Linton Heath, Horseheath and West Wickham — areas of significant Romano-British archaeology.\(^50\) The virtually unique survival of Romano-Celtic placename-names and language in this particular part of Cambridgeshire may indicate that substantial Romano-British culture in the area around West Wickham survived into the eighth century, absorbing early Germanic immigration.

The evidence for a British enclave is supported by the only occurrence of *walh* placenames in the county at Walworth Hill in West Wickham, and Walworth in Horningsea.\(^51\) (Horningsea, it will be remembered, may have been a prehistoric estate, contained a substantial Romano-British population and also a mid-Saxon minster, as well as a pagan cemetery at its subsidiary settlement at Fen Ditton). The only early Saxon name in the area occurs at Yen Hall in West Wickham, where there are also mid-sixth century burials (in a parish whose significant Romano-British occupation has already been mentioned).\(^52\)

The distribution of immigrant names along the fen-edge at Swaffham and at Anglesey (*Suafham* c. 1050 'the Swabian home'; *Anglesheye* twelfth century 'isle of the Angle?) is heavily biased towards east Cambridgeshire, and has been noted by Taylor as indicating likely islands of immigrant concentrations among a largely sub-Roman population.\(^53\) There are further occurrences in east Cambridgeshire south of Exning at Saxon Street and Saxon Hall.\(^54\)

The combination of placenames derived from Latin loan-words and others indicating Romano-British groups and the small number of immigrant placenames contribute to suggest that this was an area of continuity from the sub-Roman period. An area in which most immigrants lived alongside their predecessors in the landscape, with only some immigrant populations becoming large and distinct enough to merit comment.

Furthermore, the placenames of east Cambridgeshire contain almost all the *-ham* placenames in the county (table 5). Twelve out of forty-eight (25 per cent) of placename names in East Cambridgeshire are *-ham* names, compared with about two out of
seventy-two (3 per cent) in west Cambridgeshire. Gelling has suggested that there is 'evidence for ham being a guide to early settlement in East Anglia and the east Midlands'. This may imply early renaming of Romano-British multiple estates which survived relatively intact into the new order. A regime under which they were granted to new lords by the emerging East Anglian kings – an inference supported by Malim's conclusion that almost all these names lie north-east of, and therefore beyond, the four great Cambridgeshire dykes.

The Cambridgeshire dykes

There are four major dykes running across the Icknield Way in east Cambridgeshire. Each transects the chalky heathland of the Icknield Way, running between marsh in the west and dense woodland in the east. Their strategic positioning is also interesting: Heydon Ditch, the most westerly, is the only dyke west of the Essex Cam, whose approach it presumably guarded; the Bran Ditch similarly looks to the defences of the Granta (flowing from Suffolk); while the longest and most splendid, the Devil's Dyke, may have been deliberately focused on Reach Lode. In each case, the bank lies on the east and the ditch to the west of the dyke, defending approaches to East Anglia from the west along the Icknield Way.

While the dates of their construction are not precisely known, a fifth or sixth century date is generally agreed. The only dyke to have been precisely dated is Fleam Dyke, the first phase of which appears to have been built in the fifth century. Individually and together they represent excellent physical evidence for the extent of centralized sub-Roman or later control from the East Anglian kingdom in this part of the Cam valley. The inclusion of all the territory north of the Devil’s Dyke in the Diocese of East Anglia confirms that this area lay firmly within the grasp of the East Anglian kingdom. South of Fleam Dyke, control may have been more loosely exerted, in what was perhaps regarded as a buffer zone, particularly as the known early East Anglian royal manors and religious sites generally lie north of Fleam Dyke.

The early date for the establishment of Anglo-Saxon institutions in east Cambridgeshire, together with placename evidence and the archaeological evidence, all suggest considerable continuity from Romano-British institutions and land use into the early and middle Anglo-Saxon periods.

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE LANDSCAPE OF WEST CAMBRIDGESHIRE

West Cambridgeshire is characterized by a western clayland plateau from which three ridges stretch eastwards into the Cam valley. The tributary streams running between these ridges, and the Cam valley itself, are bordered by light alluvial gravels, while the region is bounded to the south by the chalk ridge of the Icknield Way. The evidence examined here includes Romano-British villa sites and early Saxon cemeteries, evidence of landscape change, evidence of landscape continuity and placenames. The political map of west Saxon Cambridgeshire appears to have been more fragmented than that of
the east. Nevertheless, within this picture of political chaos and perhaps rapidly shifting personal loyalties, field and placename evidence suggests some continuity with the Romano-British past.

**Romano-British villa sites and early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries**

The early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in west Cambridgeshire lie almost exclusively along the river gravels, particularly along the southern reaches of the Cam (table 4). As table 2 demonstrates there is a remarkable skewing of distribution of these sites to sites where Romano-British villas or other significant sites have been found. Ten of the twelve known burial or cemetery sites (83 per cent) lie in parishes which contain a major Romano-British site or villa; of the eighteen parishes in which major Romano-British sites occur, ten (55 per cent) also contain a pagan cemetery. Only two of the twelve (16.6 per cent) Anglo-Saxon sites occur in parishes with no known major Romano-British site. This mixed evidence suggests two processes at work. On the one hand, some Romano-British communities continued to farm the same areas as their predecessors, alongside Anglo-Saxon immigrants. On the other hand, there may also have been areas in which the settlers were pre-eminent from an early stage. This is consistent with evidence, to be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish name</th>
<th>Major Romano-British site/villa</th>
<th>Major pagan Anglo-Saxon cemetery/find</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barrington</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comberton</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croydon</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foxton</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamlingay</td>
<td>possibly</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girton</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grantchester</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilden Morden</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>other significant find</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlton</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>possibly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haslingfield</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Histon</td>
<td>possibly</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ickleton</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litlington</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourn</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakington</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelford</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepreth</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whittlesford</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingham</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wimpole</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sources: Cambridgeshire County Council SMR; Fox 1923, 246–61; Haigh 1975; VCH 1980, 43–7; Taylor 1977*
considered below, for some retrenchment in the sub-Roman landscape, leaving some land to be brought back into formal cultivation by new groups.

Changes in landscape use in the sub-Roman period

The sub-Roman landscape of west Cambridgeshire shows stronger evidence than that east of the river for potential landscape change through population decline and reversion to woodland and/or a major change in land use in the period after 410. This process may have been most intense on the high clayland plateau, mirroring the experience of the north-west Essex clays, as most parish names indicating woodland and/or its clearance lie along the western clay plateau and its ridges. At Hardwick, for example, a Romano-British settlement lies on heavy clays in an area which was still significantly wooded in 1086.

To a lesser extent, woodland or scrub also colonized the valley slopes. The process should not, however, be over-emphasized since field rather than parish names are the primary source of evidence for this woodland, and references in Domesday Book generally mention managed woodland for fences rather than unmanaged (and therefore plentiful) woodland for pigs. The clayland parishes of Toft, Coton and Whitwell in Barton each contained a Wood Field in the Middle Ages, and woodland for fences at Domesday. There is evidence for re-growth on alluvial as well as clay soils. At Barton, for example, Breach Field lies south of the settlement on alluvial lands bordering the Bourn Brook, suggesting that in the early Middle Ages there was significant scrub or woodland on land which should have been among the best in the parish. It includes the line of the Roman road within the parish, which was lost before settlement nucleation and the development of the open fields in the parish (presumably in or after the tenth century). The modern road follows medieval field ways, no footpath follows the line of the Roman road, nor does the settlement plan make any reference to it. Local knowledge of the road appears to have survived only to the extent that the church stands upon it. Similarly, the late Saxon road which led to Whaddon from Ermine Street (in the valley of the Ashwell Cam) still ran through woodland (Lunway: from lundr 'forest or wood').

The evidence for changes in land use in the sub-Roman period is therefore for retrenchment and changes in agricultural emphasis rather than necessarily large-scale reversion to woodland. This is consistent with the evidence discussed above for substantial late Roman settlement and early Saxon settlement in the area, allowing for some co-occupation of estates and some colonization of outlying land which had been abandoned or turned to pasture.

Continuity of landscape use

There is some evidence for Romano-British survival in west Cambridgeshire although it is not extensive, echoing the evidence for landscape change. It tends to take the form of field evidence rather than placenames, implying continuity of occupation and land use within a smaller cultivated area (see above) rather than necessarily administrative continuity.

For example, a rectilinear system of trackways, some followed by parish boundaries, extends over much of the Bourn valley between the Mare Way and the Romanized ridgeway running between Cambridge and Eltisley. The antiquity of this system is
emphasized by the way in which Ermine Street and the present A 603, both Roman roads, cut across it.

A significant prehistoric co-axial field system appears to survive at Caxton, while there are hints of similar field systems at Great Eversden and Haslingfield. The regularity underlying other field systems, particularly those on the light soils, for example at Grantchester and Litlington, suggests that they may also originally have been laid out in the prehistoric period and survived in use for long enough to be used as the framework on which the late Saxon open fields were laid out.

In addition, detailed analysis of common land and other features at Whaddon and Knapwell has suggested that these commons may have pre-Saxon origins, and may have implications for similar areas in other parishes. Continuity in use of common land implies at least some continuity of the broad parameters of agreement between the farmers of each parish about its use; and if there was agreement about the continued use of commons, there is no reason why continuity of Romano-British field systems and, perhaps, administration in the parish may not also have occurred.

An example of administrative continuity may, however, exist in south-west Cambridgeshire. The boundaries of Armingford Hundred suggest that this unit may have originated as a pre-Roman estate. The semicircular hundred boundary from Guilden Morden in the west to Melbourn and Meldreth in the east is defined by the Ashwell Cam in the west and north, by a stream in the east, and the Icknield Way in the south. There was an important Iron Age settlement at Abington Piggots, which may have formed the core of the estate. In the first century AD, the unit was bisected by Ermine Street, and appears soon thereafter to have been subdivided into three administrative units, centred on villas at Guilden Morden and Litlington and a major Romano-British settlement at Melbourn. A folk-memory at least of these units appears to have survived up to the early tenth century when the area became a hundred, for by Domesday it was partitioned between three manorial lords each with a holding roughly echoing the Romano-British division: Algar (Mordens), Edeva (Bassingbourn) and the monastery at Ely (east of Ermine Street).

Fields, commons and administrative units in west Cambridgeshire together imply a picture of some continuity in land use and administration from the Romano-British period into the Anglo-Saxon. Both the evidence and the inferences to be drawn from it are less strong than on the eastern bank of the Cam, reflecting the role played by the area as the frontier region not only between Mercia and East Anglia, but also between East Anglia, Mercia and the small Mercian tributaries considered in the discussion of the Tribal Hidage. This conclusion of some underlying continuity is confirmed by the placename evidence.

Placename evidence (table 5)

The only placenames suggesting administrative continuity in west Cambridgeshire by making a direct reference to Romano-British occupation are, perhaps significantly, both at sites considered to be part of the king’s ancient demesne in 1086: at Chesterton (whose unique position alongside the Roman town has already been mentioned) and at Comberton. Although the latter placename suggests a pocket of Romano-British administrative survival, it also indicates that this was an uncommon community (Combertone 1086). Cumbre is a ‘politer name’ for Romano-Britons than Walk- and
### Table 5. Significant placenames in west and east Cambridgeshire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>West Cambridgeshire</th>
<th>East Cambridgeshire</th>
<th>West Cambridgeshire</th>
<th>East Cambridgeshire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnic placenames</strong></td>
<td><strong>Latin loan-words</strong></td>
<td><strong>-ton Placenames</strong></td>
<td><strong>-ham Placenames</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comberton</td>
<td>Chesterton</td>
<td>1. Abington</td>
<td>1. Abington (Great &amp; Little)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swavesey</td>
<td>Swaffham (Bulbeck &amp; Prior)</td>
<td>2. Arrington</td>
<td>2. Carlton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Walworth</td>
<td>3. Barrington</td>
<td>3. Ditton (Fen &amp; West)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Barton</td>
<td>4. (Cherry) Hinton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Caxton</td>
<td>5. Hinxton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7. Conington</td>
<td>7. Trumpington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8. Coton</td>
<td>8. Weston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9. Croxton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10. Drayton (Dry &amp; Fen)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11. Foxton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12. Girton</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13. Harston</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14. Hauxton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15. Histon</td>
<td>1. Armingford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16. Ickleton</td>
<td>2. Armshold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17. Impington</td>
<td>3. Arrington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18. Kingston</td>
<td>4. Ermine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19. Litlington</td>
<td>5. Gamlingay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20. Longstanton</td>
<td>6. Grantchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22. [Newton]</td>
<td>8. Shingay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23. Oakington</td>
<td>9. [Papworth]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24. Rampton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This list is taken from the modern parish names in the county. There are forty-eight placenames in total in east Cambridgeshire and seventy-two in west Cambridgeshire made up as follows: 1. Each placename is counted only once: in west Cambridgeshire Dry/Fen Drayton, Water/Landbeach, Great/Little Eversden, Guilden/Steeple Morden count as one occurrence. In east Cambridgeshire Great/Little Abington, Castle/Shudy Camps, Fen/Wooodditton, Great/Little Wilbraham are counted only once. Shelford is counted as occurring only in west Cambridgeshire as Little Shelford appears to be the older settlement. 2. Parish names where *cum* indicates the union of two parishes are counted individually: so in west Cambridgeshire Croydon, Clopton, Wendy and Shingay are treated as individual parishes, as are Stow, Quy, Ashley, Silverley, Willingham and Carlton in east Cambridgeshire. 3. Lost parishes are discounted of which the most obvious are Whitwell and Wratworth in west Cambridgeshire. 4. Parishes created in the post-medieval period, e.g. Reach, are discounted.
this, together with the Roman villa in the parish, may suggest that the unusual feature about Comberton was continuity of Romano-British leadership in an area of predominantly Anglo-Saxon control.\textsuperscript{73}

There is only one Germanic tribal name in west Cambridgeshire – at Swavesey (\textit{Suauesheda} 1086 ‘Swaebians’ inland port).\textsuperscript{74} It seems that even in west Cambridgeshire the Anglo-Saxon settlers were assimilated into sub-Roman society, even though they appear to have taken over many of its leadership functions. Taken together, Comberton and Swavesey may indicate that, while the Romano-British population continued to farm west Cambridgeshire – the landscape showing considerable continuity – administrative and political control had passed to Anglo-Saxon immigrants, in a more fragmented and uncertain political context than that east of the Cam.

This conclusion is supported by a considerable body of placename evidence for the emergence of small seventh century ‘tribal’ groups controlling much of this area. There are several placenames which incorporate an \textit{-ingas} element, denoting an area centred around a particular group, in west Cambridgeshire.\textsuperscript{75} It is possible that these groups might be the precursors or the dependencies of those mentioned in the Tribal Hidage. They generally border onto the Cam, and can be mapped with reasonable accuracy. Like the names of the Tribal Hidage, they are usually formed from local names rather than from immigrant groups.

The \textit{Earningas}

There are four placenames in west Cambridgeshire which have their origin in this folk name, two with more than parochial significance. This distribution appears to record the territory of the \textit{Earningas}, who seem to have controlled an area along Ermine Street between the Icknield Way to the south and the Romanized ridgeway which ran between Cambridge and Eltisley to the north.

\textit{Armingford Hundred} (‘the ford of the \textit{Earningas}’) is the most significant of these four names.\textsuperscript{76} The ford – where the hundred met – lies on the northern boundary of the present hundred and it has been suggested that ‘the name once covered a larger area than the present hundred’.\textsuperscript{77}

\textit{Arrington} (‘the farm of Earna’s people’) lies just \textit{outside} Armingford Hundred on the other side of the ford in Wetherley Hundred.\textsuperscript{78}

\textit{Ermine} Street (which ‘passed through the land of the \textit{Earningas}’) is part of the Roman road from London to Lincoln, and the contemporary importance of the grouping may be indicated by the fact that the name has achieved national significance, well beyond the horizons of west Cambridgeshire.\textsuperscript{79}

\textit{Armshold Lane} (‘the hill of Earna or \textit{Earning}’) forms part of the parish boundary in Longstowe Hundred between Kingston (west) and Great Eversden (east), and focuses on an ancient ford over the Bourn Brook.\textsuperscript{80} The southern parish boundary of Toft leaves the Bourn Brook to form a protective corridor on either side of Armshold Lane as the latter approaches the ford across the Brook, and may indicate that the territory of the \textit{Earningas} also reached north of the stream. It is interesting in this connection that as late
as the tenth century Toft made up an equal third of a 25 hide estate which included Kingston and Eversden.\textsuperscript{81}

The *Earningas* therefore appear to have controlled a large territory stretching from the Icknield Way to the Romanized prehistoric ridgeway north of the Bourn valley, and perhaps including much of the watershed and the upper reaches of the tributary streams.

The *Grantasaete*

Grantchester's placename (*Granta-saete* 'settlers on the Granta') is derived from the river whose regional importance has already been established and from *-saete* 'names for groups of people who constituted administrative units [which] were characteristically formed by the addition of Old English *-saete* to the name of a prominent feature of the landscape' (my emphasis).\textsuperscript{82} The prominent feature was the Granta, whose administrative importance was its role as the frontier. There was a Romano-British villa at Grantchester, as well as an early Anglo-Saxon settlement and possibly a cemetery.\textsuperscript{83} Parish boundaries indicate that Barton was likely to have been part of this unit, while Coton has long been recognized as a daughter settlement of Grantchester.\textsuperscript{84}

The *Haeslingas*

'Haslingfield' contains two early elements: *Haslingas*, a group name which is probably, like those of the Tribal Hidage, derived from a local name, + *-feld* 'open country in sight of woodland'.\textsuperscript{85} The parish includes a Romano-British villa, was part of the king's ancient demesne in 1086, and – like Comberton – contains an Aldfield which may represent the earliest cultivation area of early immigrant groups.\textsuperscript{86} The placename suggests some retrenchment from arable to produce the *feld*, and some recolonization to produce the Aldfield.

The area controlled by this group may have included Barrington and Harlton, as the three contiguous parishes of Haslingfield, Barrington and Harlton are each the site of early cemeteries as well as of uniquely large sub-oval greens.\textsuperscript{87} The indented parish boundary between Harlton and Haslingfield supports this suggestion. Interestingly, the sixth century Barrington cemetery is reported to have included many tall skeletons since Harke suggests that greater height may be one way of distinguishing Germanic settlers from the indigenous population.\textsuperscript{88} The major argument against including Barrington in this unit is the antiquity of the ridgeway which forms the parish boundary between Barrington to the south, and Haslingfield and Harlton to the north.

Gamlingay and Shingay

Schram has suggested that Gamlingay and Shingay should also be included in this group of *-ingas* names.\textsuperscript{89} The distribution of *-ingas* placenames indicates the existence of several early polities, which between them controlled considerable stretches of west Cambridgeshire. It is interesting that these small, tribal territories do not appear to have existed east of the Granta/Cam where there is, by contrast, good evidence for continuity of centralized administration compared with the greater fragmentation of sub-Roman administrative units in the west. Furthermore, none of these small groups is mentioned in the Tribal Hidage, and there is tantalizing uncertainty of their status: to what extent were they
contemporary with the polities mentioned in the Tribal Hidage, and what was the relationship between the two groups? It is also curious that the distribution of these placenames is concentrated in Wetherley Hundred – precisely that part of Cambridgeshire on which Palmer has commented that while the east bank of the Cam was ‘as highly manorialised as parts of old Wessex. Not so in Wetherley Hundred’. Yet, since it has been shown that Wetherley Hundred is also the part of the county in which there appears to be considerable survival of prehistoric trackways and field systems, political fragmentation does not appear necessarily to have coincided with landscape reorganization.

Finally, placenames in -ton appear almost exclusively on the western bank of the Cam (table 5). They often appear in association with topographical names which Gelling has suggested may have been Anglo-Saxon renamings of Celtic topographical placenames and which may indicate the central settlement in conglomerate estates. The suggestion that -ton names may indicate eighth century subdivisions of earlier estates sits well with the west Cambridgeshire evidence, where the flux between cohesion and fragmentation seems to have been a dominant feature in estate administration throughout the middle Saxon period. There are about twice as many occurrences of -ton in the west as in the east – twenty-four out of seventy-two (33 per cent) in the west compared with eight out of forty-eight (16 per cent) in the east. The disparity between the incidence of -ham on either bank (commented on above) and also of -ton, echoed by evidence of significant differences in distribution between east and west of Latin loan-word names and regional placenames, suggests that immigrants settled in very different political situations on the west as compared with the east of the river.

The picture in west Cambridgeshire is one of considerable continuity of landscape elements in a shifting and rather more chaotic administrative framework than existed in the east. The breakdown of the Romano-British economy appears to have led to fragmented political control, although it is difficult to distinguish the internal chronology of the tribal placenames which are so striking in west Cambridgeshire. The evidence of the Tribal Hidage does not illuminate the question of whether these small polities were swallowed up by those listed as paying tribute to Mercia, or whether the influence of those mentioned in the Tribal Hidage did not stretch quite to the banks of the Cam, where a buffer zone of smaller, more local allegiances separated the two kingdoms. The picture of administrative anarchy and disruption which led to competing tribal groups in west Cambridgeshire appears to overlie considerable continuity of land use: an illuminating contrast.

CONCLUSION

The evidence presented above is frustratingly fragmented. Each piece cannot individually be regarded as important, but taken together they indicate significant differences in settlement and administration between the areas east and west of the Cam in the early to middle Saxon period. These differences are supported by a wide range of evidence from placenames, the Tribal Hidage, archaeology and field evidence, as well as from Domesday Book and the conclusions of other landscape historians.

The remarkable distribution of major Romano-British sites and significant pagan Anglo-Saxon finds on each side of the Cam demonstrates this very well. On the one
hand, there is a marked coincidence of pagan Anglo-Saxon presence in parishes which also contain a major Romano-British site of either side of the Cam, which indicates a strong possibility of continuity from one administrative system to the other. On the other hand, this coincidence is less on the western than on the eastern bank (55 per cent in the west compared with 78 per cent in the east), suggesting that continuity in west Cambridgeshire was rather more patchy and occurred in a rather more fluid political and administrative framework than that in east Cambridgeshire.

All this evidence suggests that east of the Cam Germanic settlers came into a landscape which may well have continued to be administered by Romano-British landowners and their successors under overall East Anglian control. West of the Cam the Romano-British order disintegrated into smaller independent political units, nevertheless occasionally recognizing and perpetuating earlier Romano-British land divisions and organization. Here there appears to have been considerable mobility of wider political organization, as small political units assumed control of contained areas of the western escarpment. It is quite possible that those which have been preserved in placenames represent only one stage of what may have been a very fluid process.

Nevertheless, the varying and limited evidence which survives on each side of the Cam suggests that the new order may have evolved from earlier local institutions, and it is likely that the differences between settlements to the west and to the east of the Granta/Cam were ones of degree rather than major contrasts.

The impact on local political structures of the re-emergence of the Cam as a frontier in the years after 410 therefore appears to have been less severe than might have been expected, particularly given the characterization of the fen basin as a receiving area for Anglo-Saxon immigrants. In the east strong centralized control from the East Anglian kingdom appears to have allowed for greater continuity of institutions, compared with weaker and more fragmented polities in the west. On the ground, however, there is considerable evidence for the survival of Romano-British landscapes on both sides of the river. The evidence does suggest that overall continuity of institutions and land use was stronger in the east than in the west. Nevertheless the apparent survival of administrative structures in Armingford Hundred and perhaps at Comberton together with extensive Romano-British landscapes in west Cambridgeshire may mean that – despite some desertion of the land and despite overlying long-term political chaos – these changes had little substantial impact on the ploughman or herdsman whose day-to-day political and agricultural realities would have been substantially recognizable to the different generations which separated late Roman from mid-Saxon peasant cultivators.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr Timothy Reynolds for his help in accessing information on the Cambridgeshire County Council Sites and Monuments Records, and Dr Margaret Gelling, Dr Nicholas James, Dr Audrey Meaney and Miss Alison Taylor, together with other friends and colleagues for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper. Phillip Judge drew the figures. The mistakes are all my own.
1. The pre-1974 county of Cambridgeshire was created by Edward the Elder in about 917, binding Mercia and East Anglia together across their ancient frontier (Haslam 1982, 13). It should be distinguished from the Isle of Ely with which it was united in 1955.


4. For example, Taylor 1983; Esmonde Cleary 1989; Bassett 1989.


8. Dark 1994, 101, Fig. 23; Taylor et al. 1993, 7-9; Warner 1996, 33.


17. Davies and Vierck 1974, 236.


20. Davies and Vierck 1974, 267, Fig. 7A.


24. Chesterton is the best-known placename referring to Romano-British settlement in the county (Cestreteone 1086 DB – Reaney 1943, 147; Gelling 1978, 79, 151-3). The later parish included the site of the Roman town and territorium, straddling both sides of the Cam (Haslam 1982, 15-17). The place of Chesterton in the present account is not clear: in an otherwise flawless paper Haslam has not accounted convincingly for the reconstitution under Edward the Elder of the territorium on the eastern bank of the Cam with that on the western side.

25. The others on the western bank were Comberton (1:6), Haslingfield (1:7) and Kingston (1:8), Rumble 1981.


27. Munby n.d., 9. The Cambridgeshire County Council Sites and Monuments Record (hereafter SMR) quotes Tanner and in EPNS as the source for this information (SMR record 07124).


29. Gelling 1982, 188.


32. Gelling 1982, 188.


35. Since the pagan period in Cambridgeshire more or less coincides with the settlement period, that is, the period between about AD 400 and 600, and since many of older cemetery sites are assigned no more accurate date than ‘pagan’, this paper assumes that ‘pagan’ and ‘early Saxon’ are relatively coterminous. This assumption is not entirely accurate, since the introduction of Christian burial only became widespread in the county from the mid-seventh century onwards, but it may be the best we can do with this older evidence available, although this is not entirely satisfactory.


37. Reaney 1943, 103, 139. Shelford is counted in west Cambridgeshire: see note to table 5.

38. Gelling 1984, 126.


41. Reaney 1943, 133, 143.

42. Gelling 1978, 183.

43. Etté and Hinds 1993a, 5, 18; Rodwell 1974.


45. Gelling 1978, 70-1; Balkwill 1993, 11.

46. Reaney 1943, 112; Charge 1993, 22.


48. Fox and Palmer 1921-2, 32.


52. Taylor 1974, 51; Charge 1995, 54.


55. Williamson’s suggestion that placenames in -ham may be significant indicators of multiple-estate centres is not borne out in east Cambridgeshire, where they are far too closely distributed (Williamson 1984, 86). Gelling has suggested three criteria for distinguishing names in -ham from names in -hamm (Gelling 1978, 112–16), however Reaney does not suggest any origins for parish names in -hamm in Cambridgeshire (Reaney 1943). Reaney’s scholarship was well-regarded at the time of its publication and it is no slur on his work to suggest that, after more than fifty years of subsequent research, the time has now come for a revision.

57. Malim et al. 1997, 111.
58. RCHM 1972, 139–44.
62. Cambs. SMR.
63. Barton pre-enclosure map c. 1839 CRO 152/P2.
64. Reaney 1943, 27.
69. VCH 1982, 4.
70. VCH 1980, 43–7.
71. With the exception of Armingford and Staploe, neither the hundred nor the deanery boundaries are generally significant in establishing the constituent elements of middle Saxon multiple-estates. The Cambridgeshire hundreds are generally agreed to be a late imposition on an already existing landscape, given the extent to which they cut across earlier units: for example, the Hatleys and the Gransdens are divided not only between different hundreds, but also different counties. One of the most prominent examples is Odsey, a deserted settlement in the south of Guilden Morden parish, which gives its names to a Hertfordshire hundred. The deanery boundaries usually follow those of the hundreds.
75. Dodgson has commented that ‘the -ingas placename seems to be the result of a social development contemporary with a colonisation process later than, but soon after, the immigration-settlement’ (Dodgson 1966, 19). See also Gelling 1978, 112.
76. Reaney 1943, 50; Meaney 1993, 70.
77. Reaney 1943, 51; Meaney 1994, 70.
78. Reaney 1943, 70.
79. Reaney 1943, 23.
80. Reaney 1943, 163.
82. Reaney 1943, 75–6; Gelling 1992, 82.
84. RCHM 1968, 59.
85. Reaney 1943, 77–8; Gelling 1984, 244; Rackham 1994, 7.
87. Oosthuizen 1996b, 14. The identification of a pagan cemetery at Harlton is not certain.
89. Schram 1950, 434.
90. Palmer 1987, 149. Wetherley Hundred is made up of Arrington, Barrington, Barton, Comberton, Coton, Grantchester, Harlton, Haslingfield, Orwell, Shepreth and Wimpole. In 1086 it also included Whitwell and Wratworth.
91. Gelling 1978, 123. It is worth noting that the percentage of topographical place-names is more or less similar on each bank of the Cam.

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