

An Archaeological Analysis of Anglo-Saxon Shropshire

A.D. 600 – 1066:

With a catalogue of artefacts

By

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Abstract

The Anglo-Saxon period spanned over 600 years, beginning in the fifth century with migrations into the Roman province of Britannia by peoples' from the Continent, witnessing the arrival of Scandinavian raiders and settlers from the ninth century and ending with the Norman Conquest of a unified England in 1066. This was a period of immense cultural, political, economic and religious change.

The archaeological evidence for this period is however sparse in comparison with the preceding Roman period and the following medieval period. This is particularly apparent in regions of western England, and our understanding of Shropshire, a county with a notable lack of Anglo-Saxon archaeological or historical evidence, remains obscure. This research aims to enhance our understanding of the Anglo-Saxon period in Shropshire by combining multiple sources of evidence, including the growing body of artefacts recorded by the Portable Antiquity Scheme, to produce an over-view of Shropshire during the Anglo-Saxon period.

This approach has revealed that Shropshire was evolving throughout the period. The research demonstrates that through engagement with the Anglo-Saxon Mercian administration, the Catholic Church, Scandinavians and Normans, there were marked changes in religious practices, settlement and trade centres, and political and cultural structures.

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1. Introduction

This research focuses on the use of combining new artefact data from the Portable Antiquities Scheme database with existing sources of archaeological and historical data to create an overview of the religious, economic and settlement changes in Shropshire during the Anglo-Saxon period.

Shropshire is located in the western midlands of England on the border with Wales (Figure 1.1). The county of Shropshire was formed during the later Anglo-Saxon period from two areas of tribal territories; the northern half of the territory of the Magonsaete and the southern half of the territory of the Wrocensaete (Hooke, 2005:161). For the purposes of this research the modern county boundary is used to define the study area as this coincides with those of the Historic Environment Record (HER) and the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) for the county. This approach will also make it possible to integrate the findings with other county-based projects in the future.



Figure 1.1: Shropshire location map.

The usefulness of the PAS database to archaeological studies is becoming increasingly recognised with 422 research projects currently utilising the record (<http://finds.org.uk/research>). The Viking and Anglo-Saxon Landscape and Economy (VASLE) project has used the PAS dataset in a national study of Anglo-Saxon England which demonstrated the comparatively low level of artefacts from this period discovered in Shropshire and West Central England in general. The authors suggest this may be due to differences in the use of dress accessories in different regions, arguing higher levels of migration in eastern England resulted in a greater use of material objects to display cultural identity (Richards *et al*, 2009:69). The majority of finds recorded by PAS are discovered by metal-detectorists resulting in an inherent bias in the dataset which needs to be considered. The quantity and location of metal-detectorist finds are subject to numerous factors including the number of detectorists within a given area and the accessibility of land.

For this research finds recorded by PAS for Shropshire will be combined with artefact records from the Historic Environment Records (HER) to create a catalogue of Anglo-Saxon finds for the county. This will be combined with other data sources including place-name studies, stone sculpture and architectural studies, excavation reports and historical records. This data will be entered into ArcMap to create both spatial and temporal distribution maps which can be analysed to contribute to our knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon period in Shropshire.

This study is focused on the date range A.D. 600-1066. Prior to this there is little information available for the Anglo-Saxon period from which a character assessment could be formed. The seventh century however marks the beginning of a 'revival' (<http://www.york.ac.uk/archaeology/vasle/vasleoverview.html>); an increase in trade,

settlement and production, as well as the re-emergence of coinage, all seen in England by the end of this century. The spread of Christianity was an important religious, social and economic factor which shaped the development of religious activities and also stimulated the economy and prompted the establishment of new settlements. Although the west of England and Wales remained largely Christian after the end of the Roman period the emergence of a new wave of Christian evangelism following the arrival of Augustine in Kent in 596 and the conversion of Anglo-Saxon kings resulted in a strong bond between Church and State. This powerful combination was to influence both the religious and secular aspects of people's lives. The construction of Church buildings and the subsequent development of markets along with the creation of urban centres changed the landscape of England dramatically during the period.

The ninth century was also a time of immense change as Shropshire became subject to incursions by the Vikings as did the rest of England. Although there are not thought to have been any Viking settlements in Shropshire, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (ASC) does record sporadic Viking attacks from the later ninth century into the early tenth century when Aethelflaed responded by constructing fortresses at Bridgnorth and Chirbury. An increase in the number of artefacts found dating to the later Anglo-Saxon period is seen in Shropshire as elsewhere in England, suggesting an increase in wealth, or in the display of wealth, and a stabilisation in the trade of raw materials and finished objects, further suggesting political and social stabilisation.

The Norman Conquest of 1066 is the traditional date marking the end of the Anglo-Saxon period. The Conquest brought social, political and economic changes, some of which are recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086. The Domesday survey provides a valuable

snapshot of England at the end of the Anglo-Saxon period recording landholders and their tenants, the number of households, buildings and resources.

The Anglo-Saxon period covers over 600 years and as Pelteret (2000:xix) states 'change was inevitable, in mental and religious outlook, in material culture, in social organisation, in political and legal practice'. However as a 'proto-historic' period often less is known about the Anglo-Saxon period than the earlier Roman period. There are many forms of documentation from the Anglo-Saxon period, notably the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of England*. But even these respected writings are limited in their geographical and political scope with the authors being constrained by their own beliefs, experiences and social contacts (Pelteret, 2000:xxii). Hines (2002) has argued that archaeology can tell a 'better' story for this period than can history and indeed archaeology is shedding new light on the period. In the West Midlands region Research Framework (Hines, 2002) it is suggested that finds recorded by PAS will be an important and significant contribution to studies on the Anglo-Saxon period. Recent finds such as the Staffordshire Hoard (www.staffordshirehoard.org.uk) are leading to radical changes in the way in which we think about power, wealth and warfare at this time. However the VASLE project has shown that the finds recorded by PAS for the Anglo-Saxon (Early Medieval) period are considerably lower than those for the preceding Roman period and the following Late Medieval period (Figure 1.2). Due to the lower level of artefact finds, the usefulness of place-name studies and aerial photography were also highlighted in the West Midlands Research Framework. It was concluded that the combined use of these sources together with results from excavations, placed within a regional and national context will be a positive contribution to the study of the Anglo-Saxon period of the West Midlands region.

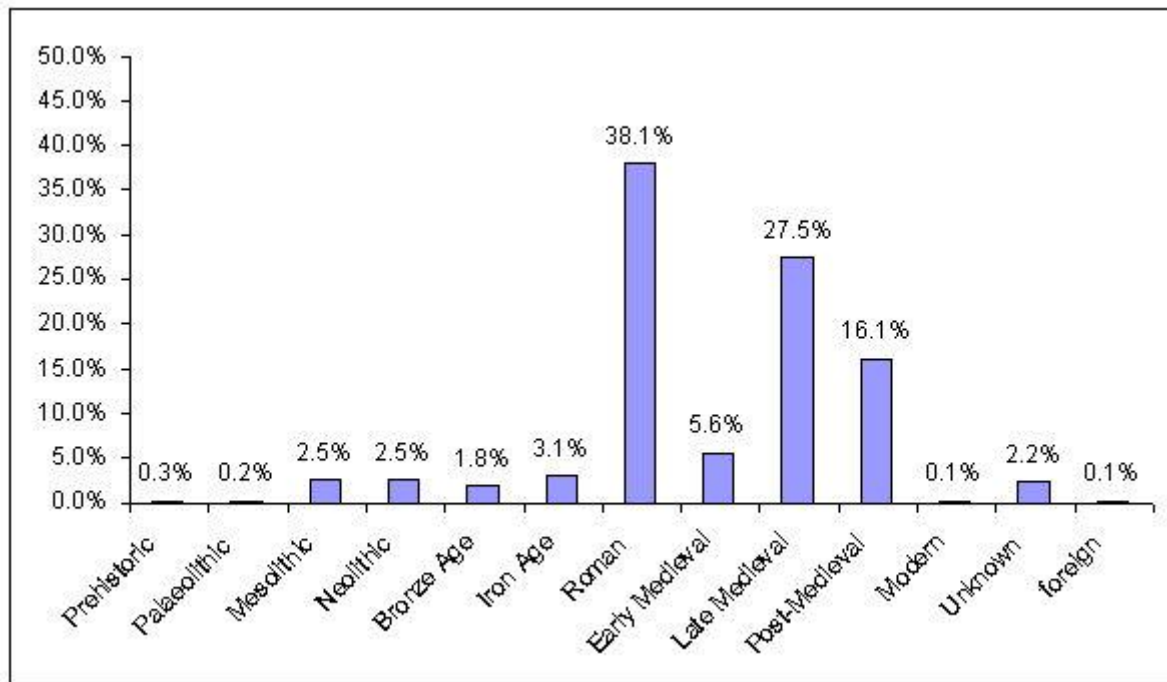


Figure 1.2: PAS finds by period (<http://intarch.ac.uk/journal/issue25/2/2.4.1.html>).

The aim of this research is to address some of the issues raised by the West Midlands Research Framework. As a border region, Shropshire is of particular interest in understanding cultural interactions and changes in the Anglo-Saxon period and yet there is currently little physical evidence available from the county with which to make such assessments. This research will therefore utilise the new artefact evidence available from the PAS dataset and combine it with existing archaeological and historical sources to assess the value of a multi-disciplinary approach to forming an overview of the Anglo-Saxon period in Shropshire. As a means of assessing the data, it will be discussed within the three themes of religion, settlement and economy. These broad themes encapsulate many elements of the changes which occurred during the Anglo-Saxon period and were chosen as there is enough data available to make general but positive interpretations within each theme, leading to a constructive analysis of Anglo-Saxon Shropshire. The data for each theme will

be considered separately before the analysis from all three sections will be brought together in the discussion chapter.

2. Literature Review

The general dearth of written and material evidence from Mercia led Hodgkin (1939:194) to conclude that 'the early history of Mercia is so dark that it is better to pass it by and admit the impossibility of putting together any trustworthy story'. By the 1970s new approaches to studying the past led Dornier (1977:11) in the edited volume *Mercian Studies* to pose a more optimistic view of piecing together our knowledge of Mercia with many chapters based on re-readings and new interpretations of the historical evidence (Davies, 1977; Hart, 1977; Kirby, 1977; Phythian-Adams, 1977). The archaeological evidence available for consideration in the 1970s consisted primarily of coins (Metcalf, 1977) and earthworks, which, as Rahtz (1977:127) acknowledged has increased our knowledge of the economy and urbanisation of western Mercia. However, low levels of excavation meant the evidence was far less substantial than that in eastern England.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century the quantity and range of archaeological finds from western Mercia had not greatly improved. During a series of conferences arranged to discuss the archaeology of the West-Midlands, Hines (2002) pointed out the challenges of the scarcity of finds; leading to a reliance on historical evidence for a region which is at best 'para-historical'. Stamper (2003) further argued that Shropshire in particular, is one of the more under-researched counties for medieval archaeology. Hines (2002) concluded however by arguing that through the integration of historical, place-name and archaeological evidence, we can create a 'meaningful, composite picture'.

Baker (2010) has produced a comprehensive volume on the archaeology of Shrewsbury, from the prehistoric to post-medieval period, addressing issues raised by Hines (2002) and Stamper (2003). The origins of Shrewsbury are currently unknown, but its location on a

hilltop within a naturally defensive loop of the River Severn may have made it an attractive settlement site to the first communities (Baker, 2010:89). Finds from the Anglo-Saxon period are sparse however pottery finds have indicated the Anglo-Saxon town was of a similar extent to the late medieval town (Baker, 2010:99). Shrewsbury is first mentioned in a royal charter, signed in 901, awarding a grant of land to Wenlock Abbey by Aethelred and Aethelfled. Baker (2010:89) has interpreted the signing of the document in Shrewsbury as testament to the existence of a royal hall. Baker (2010:89) further suggests that Shrewsbury may have had a 'ceremonial importance' by 1006, when according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, King Aethelred spent midwinter there. The evidence for a mint by the tenth century and Bassett's (1991) study of six pre-Conquest churches within the town, demonstrate the importance of Shrewsbury 'in the secular sphere, as well as the ecclesiastical – which was out of all proportion to its surviving recorded history' (Bassett, 1991:17). Baker's study has created a fuller and rounder understanding of the development and role of Shrewsbury through the Anglo-Saxon period and Stamper (2003) has called for similar work to be conducted in Bridgnorth and Ludlow to further enhance our understanding of the development of the county as a whole.

W.G. Hoskins' (1955) seminal work *The Making of the English Landscape*, was perhaps the first volume to draw together historical studies with place-name studies, archaeology and field work to create an account of the development of the English landscape. Hoskins (1955:45) realised the significance of charter bounds in tracing the boundaries of estates and understanding the Anglo-Saxon landscape and the hierarchies of settlements, work that has been continued by Della Hooke. Hooke has written extensively on the landscape of the West Midlands region, using charter boundary evidence for studies on the Anglo-Saxon

landscapes of Staffordshire (1983), Warwickshire (1999) and Worcestershire (1990). Such detailed evidence does not survive for Shropshire however Hooke (2006:52) does believe that a general picture of whole of the West Midlands region can be postulated; as a landscape dominated by dispersed farmsteads in the early Anglo-Saxon period with new estates centres forming nuclei around which settlements became concentrated by the late 8th century.

The use of place-name evidence in archaeological studies has become increasingly common as landscape archaeology has developed. Ryan (2011:5) argues that place-names were important in the Anglo-Saxon period, to the extent that 'historical' figures were created in order to explain a place-name. Stenton (1969:37) believed habitative place-names were of most value in understanding the social history of the Anglo-Saxon period, considering topographical names to be 'intrinsically trivial'. Margaret Gelling's ground-breaking work since the 1970s has emphasised the importance of topographical place-names and the subtleties of Anglo-Saxon place-names which is often lost in crude translations. Gelling (1997:131) has illustrated the importance of place-names as a means of accessing how Anglo-Saxon settlers interpreted their landscape. Hare (2012:7) suggests that place-names found in charters from 670 onwards, suggest that English was being used in the border region from at least the 7th century, although Gelling (1990:xiv) believes this may represent an initial small group of English administrators in the area, with an increasing English population from the eighth century as Mercia expanded westwards. Gelling's (1990 *et seq.*) volumes on Shropshire place-names are particularly informative as to the origins and meanings of place-names. They demonstrate how place-names can be used to re-create the

landscape of natural and built features, activities and settlements, and understand how people in the Anglo-Saxon period engaged and interacted with their environment.

Through the 8th century minsters were significant developments in the Anglo-Saxon landscape, only gradually losing their importance to the developing network of local churches in the eleventh century (Blair, 2005:505). Blair (2005:6) has argued ecclesiastical centres were dynamic initiators in changing the economic and social structures of secular life in Anglo-Saxon England; whilst hugely variable in size and wealth, they were centres around which communities gathered, and agriculture, industry and urbanism developed. Higham (1997) has described how the organisational, ideological and authoritarian structure of the Christian Church attracted even secular Kings in the early Anglo-Saxon period to convert to Christianity as a means of unifying their subjects and solidifying and displaying their own power. The arrival of the Vikings impacted on many ecclesiastical institutions in the east of England but Blair (2005:306) argues that the west of Mercia remained a far more stable region with a greater level of continuity within minster communities. Archives from Worcester demonstrate the successful continuation of the minster here during the later Anglo-Saxon period and Blair (2005:207) believes the archaeological evidence for other mother-churches in the region demonstrates steady development, with many Mercian towns, including Shrewsbury, having multiple ministers by the eleventh century.

The burh name element in *Scropesbyrig* is indicative that Shrewsbury was fortified at some point, although exactly when is debated; Baker (2010:89) believes this would have occurred during the 930s when the town was appointed a mint. Bassett (2008:232) argues the original defences may have been earlier; his study of the Mercian defences at Hereford, Tamworth, Winchcombe and Worcester suggests that initial defences were constructed at

these sites during the period of Mercian over-lordship in England, with second stage defences constructed during the reigns of Aethelred and Aethelflaed in the early tenth century, with further enhancement during the reign of Aethelred II (975-1016). Bridgnorth was fortified in 912 by Aethelflaed, possibly making use of an earlier fortress constructed here by the Vikings in 895, securing an important crossing point on the River Severn and consolidating Mercian control (Walker, 2000:100). As Hooke (2006:57) states, the construction of minsters and burhs would have made 'a considerable impression on the landscape'. This is especially true in the early medieval rural landscape of Shropshire where the majority of settlements would have consisted of a few small buildings of timber and thatch construction as indicated by the excavations of a settlement at Atcham (Hannaford, 1998).

There are two primary databases which record the material culture of Shropshire: the Historic Environment Record (HER) and the Portable Antiquity Scheme (PAS). With an increase in urban development in the 1960s it was realised that much of the historic environment was being damaged or lost, resulting in the establishment by the end of the decade in the first county archaeologists and the creation of the Sites and Monuments Records (SMR's) (RCHME, 1993:2). Now referred to as the Historic Environment Record (HER), the database contains a broader scope of information including archaeological sites, finds and features, historic buildings, structures and landscapes (<http://shropshire.gov.uk/environment/historic-environment/shropshire-historic-environment-record/>).

The HER for Shropshire holds over 23,000 records although only a small percentage of these relate to the Anglo-Saxon period. Of these, many have broad date ranges beyond the

generally accepted A.D. 410 – 1066 dates of the period; only 26 records have been confirmed as dating to the later Anglo-Saxon period. This supports Baker's (2010:xiii) argument that there are so few artefacts due to the lack of excavation, associated with the low level of modern construction within the county, and also the scarcity of finds from excavations which have taken place.

The Portable Antiquity Scheme (PAS) was launched as a pilot scheme in 1997 as a means of encouraging the voluntary reporting of archaeological finds made by members of the public, the majority of which are found by metal-detector hobbyists, which are not covered by the Treasure Act of 1996 (<http://finds.org.uk/info/advice/aboutus>). The success of the pilot PAS resulted in an expansion of the scheme to encompass the whole of England and Wales in 2003 (Bland, 2004:272). Over the past decade, the finds recovered and recorded from Shropshire by non-professionals has increased due to the establishment of the PAS; currently totalling 62 artefacts dating from 600 – 1066. The majority of these are small metal finds, which can be broadly categorised into horse fittings (strap ends, stirrups, bridle fittings etc.), dress fittings (brooches, pins etc.) and coins.

PAS's contribution to archaeological studies and knowledge has been controversial with some believing it has created a situation in which artefacts are valued primarily as commodities rather than for their 'scholarly and social values' (Saville, 2006:71). However the PAS has currently recorded almost 700,000 objects, forming a valuable collection of artefacts and enhancing our understanding of the past (www.finds.org.uk/research). The standardisation of recording and the improvements in accessing data over the past decade has led increasingly to the PAS data being used by both commercial and academic archaeologists, bringing new avenues of insight into their work (Pett, 2010). This has been

demonstrated by McLean and Richardson's (2010) study of Anglo-Saxon brooches from Kent. The study found that artefacts recovered by metal-detectorists are more likely to have been deposited due to casual loss and come from areas frequently used but not cleaned, for example on the fringes of settlements or the routes between settlements (McLean and Richardson, 2010:170). In contrast, finds from archaeological excavations are more representative of deliberate deposition of objects in a funerary context or from settlement contexts (McLean and Richardson, 2010:163). Through comparison of finds, McLean and Richardson (2010:170) were able to discern that certain types of brooches were worn in life and others associated with the dead, demonstrating the significance of particular styles of brooches with aspects of cultural behaviour and belief.

Although the numbers of objects from Shropshire for the Anglo-Saxon period are still relatively limited in comparison with counties in the south and east of England, excavations from the surrounding region have revealed finds that indicate the type of objects that were coming into the region. The site of Meols on the Wirral Peninsular was a settlement and trading port, with over 5000 finds recovered dating from the Mesolithic to the post-medieval period (Griffiths *et al.* 2007). The proportion of finds dating to the Anglo-Saxon period are again scarce in comparison to finds from the Roman and later medieval periods (Griffiths *et al.* 2007:15). Griffiths (2007b:402) believes the pattern of finds suggest a decline in activity in the area in the 7th and 8th centuries but an upsurge from the end of the 9th century possibly due to the expulsion of Vikings from Ireland at this time. Although there is no evidence of Viking activity or settlement within Shropshire, it is possible that the increase in activity and prosperity in the Wirral would have had an impact on people in the surrounding area.

Another useful source of information providing an insight into the lives of people in the Anglo-Saxon period is sculpture. Although Anglo-Saxon stone sculptures have been an area of study since the late 19th century, the focus has generally been on the more numerous sculptures from eastern and northern England (Hare and Bryant, 2012:1). In Brown's (1937) *The Arts in Early England*, he estimated a total of only 37 sculptures survived for the entire Western Midlands region. The *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture* is a series of regional volumes which catalogues and investigates both previously published and unpublished stone sculptures. Volume X (Hare and Bryant, 2012) covers the Western Midlands area, and is the first comprehensive publication of sculptures from western Mercia recording seventeen pieces of Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture and a further seven pieces from the Saxo-Norman period for Shropshire alone. The various influences on art and sculptures within the region and the development of the Mercian art style are charted. The volume demonstrates that even after the 'fall' of Mercia and the unification of England, the craftsmen within Mercia continued to produce high quality stone sculptures.

In Cramp's (2009:49) discussion of the developments of artefact studies over the last 50 years of medieval archaeology, she argues for the importance of the movement within archaeology away from studying artefacts within the context of a single site to interpreting them within the context of an entire landscape. By bringing together contemporary approaches to the interpretation of material culture with landscape studies, it is hopefully possible to develop an account of the lives of people within later Anglo-Saxon Shropshire which is currently absent from the Anglo-Saxon literature.

3. Method

Several sources of data were used to analyse activity in Shropshire during the Anglo-Saxon period with the two primary sources of artefact records being the PAS and HER online databases (<http://finds.org.uk/>; <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/>). In addition the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture vol. X* (Bryant *et al.* 2012) was used as it is the most complete and recent catalogue of stone sculpture identified within the county. Gelling's (1990) *Place-Names of Shropshire part 1* was also used as a comprehensive survey of the meanings of the major place-names of Shropshire. This volume only was used as it includes all of the place-names recorded in Domesday Book and to have attempted to have included all the minor place-names would have resulted in a project beyond the scope of this current research. Domesday Book as translated by Thorn and Thorn (1986) was also utilised to obtain data relating to the population of Shropshire.

The results of two projects were used to provide a means of cross-checking the data from the sources above and to provide a national context to the data for Shropshire. The Central Marches Historic Towns Survey 1992-6 was funded by English Heritage as part of the Extensive Urban Survey project; the project reports can be found at http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/marches_eus_2005/. A total of sixty-four towns (excluding county towns) were surveyed across Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire. The study utilised a range of sources including HER, historic buildings listings, archaeological reports, museum collections, published historical sources, place-name studies and fieldwork data to identify the archaeological potential of towns relevant local planning authorities. Twenty-nine towns were surveyed within Shropshire, at least

twenty-three of which were found to have existed in some form during the Anglo-Saxon period.

Results from the Viking and Anglo-Saxon Landscape and Economic project (VASLE) were also consulted to provide a national context to the findings from Shropshire. Based at York University and funded by the Arts and Heritage Research Council (AHRC), the digital archive can be found at http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/vasle_ahrc_2008/. The study focused on artefacts recorded by PAS and the Early Medieval Corpus (EMC) (<http://www-cm.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/emc>) in England and Wales, mapping the finds and using the data to 'write a new economic and landscape history of England c.AD700-1000'.

Additional sources of data used to supplement those above were:

- Early Medieval Corpus of Coin Finds (EMC)
- Shrewsbury Museum
- Aerial Photography
- Excavation Reports
- Anglo-Saxon Architecture

In order to analyse the data it was inputted into ArcMap to map the data both spatially and temporally. Patterns and trends within the data could then be identified and interpreted. Before this could be done the data from the various sources was used to create databases. This process involved a standardisation of the data and once completed provided a quick and simple means of grouping and selecting data based on a given criteria such as date range.

The artefact data from the PAS and HER was compiled into a single database with the following fields:

- PAS / HER Record ID
- Object Type
- Classification
- Length
- Height
- Width
- Thickness
- Diameter
- Weight
- From Date
- To Date
- Description
- Notes
- Date Found
- District
- Parish
- Known As
- Grid Reference
- Subsequent Action
- Current Location
- Discovery Method

In addition the following fields were also used for coins:

- Ruler Name
- Mint Name
- Denomination
- Category Term
- Type
- Obverse Description and Legend
- Reverse Description and Legend

The information from this database was then combined with artefact records from excavation reports to create an illustrated catalogue of the artefacts that have been discovered in Shropshire which date from A.D. 600 – 1066 (Appendix 1). Three further objects have been discovered near Wroxeter during the Wroxeter Hinterland Project.

However these have not been included here as detailed descriptions of the objects have not yet been recorded. Where artefacts were recorded on multiple sources the data from all sources was used in order to create a catalogue with the most complete information possible.

Where alternative date ranges were given for objects or differing interpretations of objects have been made, these have been noted in the catalogue. Records for some artefacts were incomplete and in some instances the find location is restricted on the PAS website. Therefore the level of information in the database and catalogue is not as consistent as would have been desired and objects without a spatial reference have not been entered on ArcMap but have been included within the analysis and discussion sections below. An additional record of coins found within Shropshire and held by Shrewsbury Museums was obtained from the museum services. These objects have also been discussed where relevant but have not been mapped as they did not have find locations recorded.

The sources relating to church evidence was combined into a single database (Appendix 2) to list all the named churches for which there is evidence and the types of evidence recorded for each church with the following fields:

- Church, Location
- Grid Reference
- Architectural Evidence (from Taylor and Taylor, 1978)
- CMHTS
- Domesday Book
- Sculpture (from Bryant *et al.* 2012)

118 major place-names taken from Gelling (1990) were also recorded in a database (Appendix 3) with the following fields:

- Place-name
- Grid Reference
- Ancient Parish or Manor
- Meaning of name

The Ordnance Survey 2014 edition 1:50 000 map of Shropshire was downloaded from Edina Digimap to use as a base-map within ArcMap. Line shape files were created to digitise the county border, the four main rivers (Severn, Teme, Corve and Tern) and the Roman road network. Point shape files were created for the various categories of data. Individual point shape files were created for artefacts by type and also by date. The data indicating religious activity, settlements, fortifications, production sites and markets was also mapped using point shape files.

Once digitised the data could then be manipulated to analyse patterns and changes within the religious, settlement and economic practices within Shropshire from A.D. 600 - 1066.

4.1 Settlement

Anglo-Saxon settlements can be notoriously difficult to identify. Before A.D. 900 there were very few settlements that could be considered 'towns' in England; small rural settlements were scattered across the landscape. In the early tenth century the urbanisation of settlements intensified across England due in part to the combination of two factors; the establishment of minsters which stimulated the growth of new settlements and trade, and new laws enacted by Aethelstan (924-39) which limited trade involving transactions over twenty pennies to within towns (Griffiths, 2011:160). Hamerow (2012:2) points out that most Anglo-Saxon settlements now consist only of 'postholes, pits and ditches' and are often 'disappointingly clean' in terms of material remains. Hamerow (2012:3) argues that the scarcity and unpredictable nature of the distribution of settlements during this period compounds the difficulty of identifying potential sites for archaeological investigation. However it is possible to develop a picture of Anglo-Saxon settlement in Shropshire by using a range of information sources.

The sources of data used to assess the settlement character of Shropshire were the Central Marches Historic Town Survey, Domesday Book (Saunders, 1954; Thorn and Thorn, 1986), place-name evidence (Gelling, 1990), evidence from archaeological excavations in Shrewsbury (Carver, 1983), aerial photography, and artefacts recorded with the PAS and the HER.

Central Marches Historic Town Survey

A total of 29 towns in Shropshire were surveyed as part of this project, 23 of which were found to have evidence for some form of settlement during the Anglo-Saxon period. A

further two towns, Ludlow and Wem, are thought to have originated after the Anglo-Saxon period but manors are recorded in Domesday at Ludford, near to Ludlow, and at Wem which CMHTS argue were likely to have contained earlier settlements. Evidence for the presence of Anglo-Saxon settlements came primarily from Domesday Book and place-name evidence. Field-walking was undertaken as part of the project but no artefacts dating to the Anglo-Saxon period were recovered.

Domesday Book

The Domesday Book was compiled in 1086 as a consequence of the Norman Conquest and was initiated as a means for the new King William I and his barons to have an accurate record of whom owned what land, the income generated from that land and the taxes due to the King (Loyn, 2003:19). As a result of this the Domesday survey is not a comprehensive account of the population in the later eleventh century; Loyn (2003:24) warns that caution is required when Domesday is used to attempt to calculate population levels due to the 'uncertainties, omissions, variations in procedure and assumptions' in the Book. The Domesday Book records 440 separate places within the modern county of Shropshire (Saunders, 1954:115), of which 410 have the number of households recorded (Figure 4.1.1). The recorded population was listed under five major categories, giving a total recorded population of 4,907 (Tables 4.1.1 and 4.1.2). Saunders (1954:127) also records 88 bondwomen, 9 female cottars and 2 widows who are not included in the major categories, giving a total recorded population of 5,006. However, it needs to be remembered that this figure reflects the recorded tax-paying population and cannot be assumed to reflect the actual population of Shropshire at the time. The population of Shrewsbury is considered

separately in Domesday with 252 houses recorded, three moneyers and a total tax payment of £30 per annum.

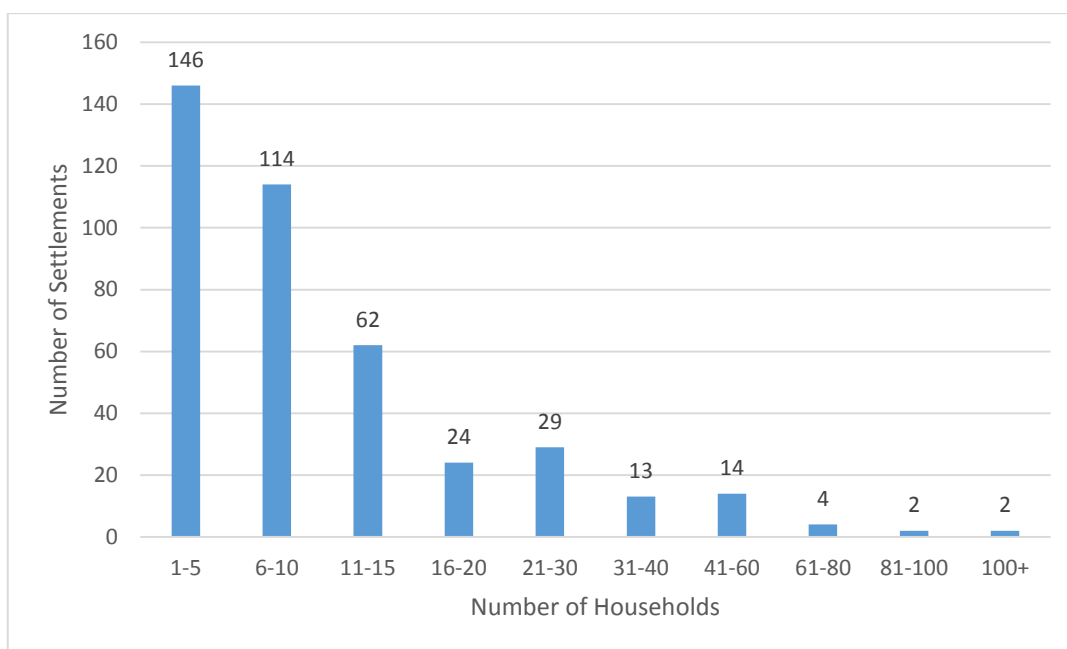


Figure 4.1.1: Household figures for settlements in Shropshire recorded in Domesday Book.

Table 4.1.1: Rural population of Shropshire recorded in Domesday Book (after Saunders, 1954:127).

Category	Recorded Population
Villeins (the wealthiest dependant manorial peasantry)	1,987 (40%)
Borders (dependant manorial peasantry with less land than a villein)	1,196 (24%)
Serfs (or slaves)	922 (19%)
Oxmen (drove the plough beasts)	361 (7.5%)
Radmen (riding escort for a lord)	168 (3.5%)
Miscellaneous	273 (6%)
Total	4,907

Table 4.1.2: Details of the 'Miscellaneous' population of Shropshire recorded in Domesday Book (after Saunders, 1954:127).

Category	Population	Category	Population
Welshman	64	Smiths	8
Priests	53	Coscets	8
Frenchmen	34	Reeves	7
Freemen	23	Hospites	7
Men	17	Serjeants	6
Cottars	16	French serjeants	3
Coliberts	13	Bee-keeper	1
Knights	12	Miller	1
		Total	273

Place-name Evidence

There are 126 major place-names related to the Anglo-Saxon period recorded in *The Place-Names of Shropshire, Part 1* (Gelling, 1990). Gelling (1990:xi) defines 'major' place-names as those of 'all parishes and all identifiable Domesday manors'. There are surprisingly few pre-English names in Shropshire which Gelling (1990:xii) argues is probably due to an effective Mercian administration rather than a dominant Anglo-Saxon population.

Place-names are derived from a range of sources including personal names, geographic locations, topographical features and economies. There are several major place-names which can indicate settlement patterns; eight place-names contain the Old English element *ac-tun*, 'oak settlement or estate', 10 containing *leah*, 'woodland clearing', five containing *byrig*, 'settlement associated with a fort' and three containing *burweard*, 'fort guardian'. A

more detailed study by Gelling (1992:15) maps all of the major and minor place-names in Shropshire containing the *leah* element which shows two predominant clustering's of woodland, one running across the central belt of Shropshire and the other in the south-eastern corner.

Archaeological Excavations

There have been few archaeological excavations of Anglo-Saxon period sites in Shropshire. Excavations in the early 1970s in Shrewsbury at the sites of two medieval houses, Pride Hill Chambers and Rigg's Hall, did provide evidence for occupation from the 10th century (Carver, 1983). Stake-lined cess-pits dating to the 10th or 11th centuries were identified at Pride Hill Chambers and were found to contain eighty-six fragments of animal bone predominantly cattle and pig. The majority of the fragments came from body parts conventionally designated as slaughter or waste (Noddle, 1983:34). A bone tool, 12.6cm in length, and one sherd of Stamford-type ware dating from the 10th-12th centuries were discovered at Pride Hill Chambers (Morris, 1983:27). The pits found at Rigg's Hall also contained domestic and butchery waste; 185 bones from ox, sheep, horse, goose, frog and fish were present and also a partially complete skeleton of a dog (Locker, 1983:61). Plant remains were recovered, predominately containing cultivated oat and also barley and wheat (Colledge, 1983:62). Stafford-type ware, Stamford-type ware and St Neots-type ware, generally dated to the 10th – 12th centuries were recovered from an earth bank, the construction of which possibly occurred c. 1150 – 1220, which Baker (1983:63) argues makes it likely that the pottery also belongs to the 12th century.

Artefacts

The majority of Anglo-Saxon artefacts have been discovered in or near to settlements with the exceptions of two clusters; one in the north of the county (south of Whitchurch) and the other in the north-west near Oswestry.

A total of 11 artefacts have been discovered which could be interpreted as being directly associated with settlements or domestic activities (Table 4.1.3).

Table 4.1.3: Artefacts associated with settlements.

Object	Location	Date
Spindle whorl	Albrighton	410 – 1066
Furniture fitting	Market Drayton	700 – 1200
Handle mount	Prees	700 – 1066
Furniture mount	Corve Dale	800 – 1100
Pottery rim sherd	Wroxeter and Uppington	750 – 850
Pottery sherds	Shrewsbury	800 – 1499
Pottery body sherd	Newport	900 – 1100
Pottery body sherd	Wroxeter and Uppington	1000 – 1200
Pottery	Shrewsbury	Late Saxon
Pottery	Shrewsbury	Late Saxon
Pottery	Shrewsbury	Late Saxon

Aerial Photography

Air reconnaissance in 1975 showed crop marks located at SJ 552115, in the parish of Atcham. The crop marks revealed the outlines of what has been interpreted as two timber buildings, running north-east – south-west, set along the axis of a gravel ridge with a group of overlapping enclosures to the north-east (St. Joseph, 1975:293). Both buildings are rectangular; one has a porch addition giving a total dimension of 8m x 21m, the other has small subdivisions at either end giving a total dimension of 8m x 24m. Faint marks along the interior may be post holes suggesting this structure was an aisled building (St. Joseph, 1975:294). The scale and plan of these buildings is comparable with great halls in the 7th century at Yeavinger (Hope-Taylor, 2009) and the 9th century at Cheddar (Rahtz, 1979) leading to the suggestion that the Atcham site may be a royal palace (St. Joseph, 1975:295).

4.1.1 Analysis

A major issue in analysing settlement in Shropshire during the Anglo-Saxon period is the lack of specific dating evidence for the origins of settlements. However the Domesday Book provides a detailed source of evidence for settlement in Shropshire at the end of the period and as some place-names can be seen to have evolved from pre-English names or to have originated with the arrival of an Anglo-Saxon administrative unit, these settlements can be assumed to have been in existence from the earlier Anglo-Saxon period.

Environment

Shropshire can be viewed as a county of two halves with the River Severn forming the dividing line. The northern half of the county is the southern end of the Cheshire plain, a flat

expanse of land, extending northwards to the River Mersey. The upland southern half of the county has a different topography with parallel ridges of hills and valleys running north-east to south-west.

Place-names suggest that the eastern half of the county was more heavily wooded than the west, with concentrations of *leah* place-names in the north-eastern and south-eastern corners, and two belts of woodland, one running north – south from Leegomery to Meadowley, and the other running east – west from Farley to Leigh (Figure 4.1.2). The dispersal of *leah* place-names corresponds with Hooke's (1998:162) argument that during the Anglo-Saxon period woodland was likely to be of an 'open' character, which would have been more productive for stock grazing.

Hooke (1998:162) argues that settlements in wooded areas across England tended to remain dispersed through the Anglo-Saxon period rather than forming nucleated settlements. This is possibly due to the predominance of pastoral as opposed to arable farming in this type of environment. This is a settlement pattern which can be recognised in Shropshire (Figure 4.1.3) with the vast majority of people living in dispersed settlements with fewer than 10 households at the time of the Domesday survey (Table 4.1.1). Animal bones found at Pride Hill Chambers, Shrewsbury indicate that there was hunting of red and roe deer suggesting open woodland in the vicinity. The variety of other animal bones and plant remains also demonstrate that 'there was a dependency on mixed farming, not dissimilar to modern Shropshire' (Carver, 1983:42). Place-name evidence also gives support to this type of landscape with many places named after the farming which occurred at the site; Bitterley, meaning 'butter pasture', Cheswardine, meaning a 'cheese-producing settlement', Ryton

meaning 'rye farm', and Shipley and Shipton meaning 'sheep clearing or pasture' (Gelling, 1990).

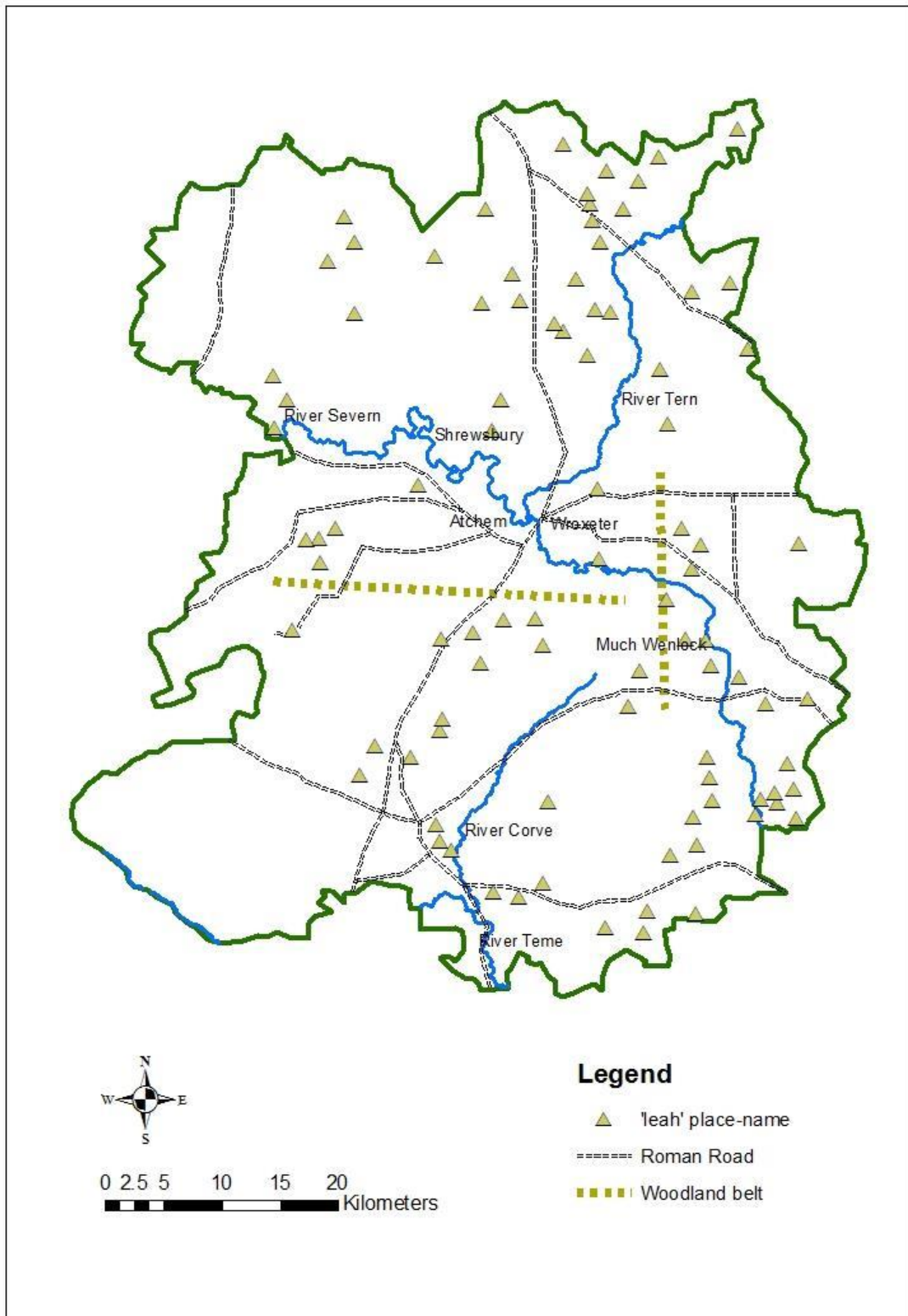


Figure 2.1.2: Map of woodland coverage.

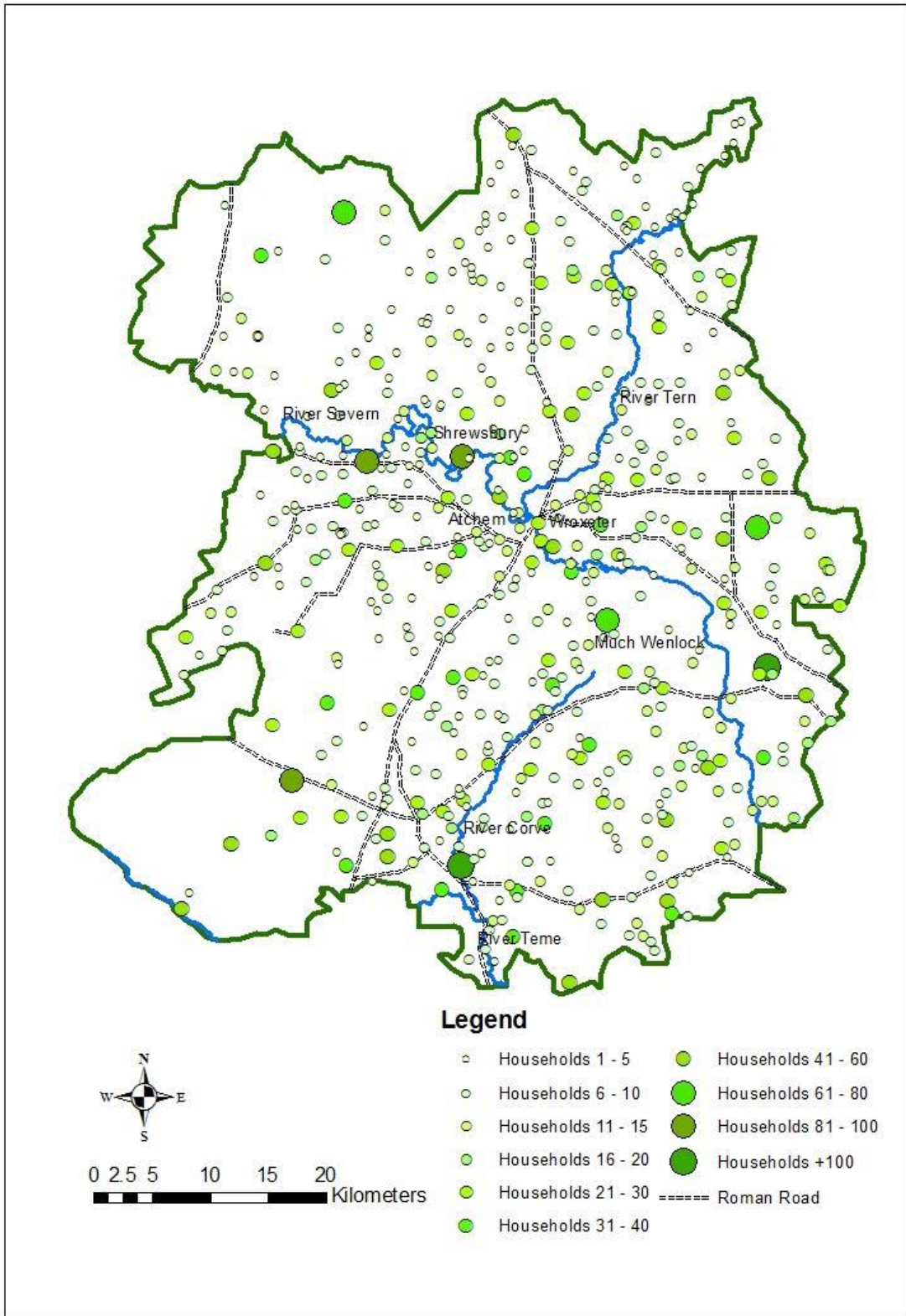


Figure 4.1.3: The size and distribution of Anglo-Saxon settlements recorded in Domesday Book.

Earlier Anglo-Saxon Period

During the Iron Age the hillfort on the Wrekin was the capital of the Cornovii, this moved to Wroxeter in the Roman period, becoming the fourth largest town in Britain. Although the town declined during the fourth and fifth century's, recent evidence suggests the site continued in use beyond the end of the Roman period, with occupation finally ending around 650 (White *et al.* 2013:194). Shrewsbury later became the central settlement within the region, developing at some point during the ninth century. This gives a potential gap of approximately two centuries between the functional uses of the two sites. Aerial photographs of crop marks at Atcham may reveal the missing link in the movement of the power base in the region during the earlier Anglo-Saxon period (pers. comm. Dr R. White). The photographs show the outlines of two structures which have been interpreted as an Anglo-Saxon palace site (St. Joseph, 1975:293). The site has been scheduled but no excavation has yet been conducted which could improve our knowledge of the site. However if the site is a palace, one hypothesis is that it could have been constructed in the early – mid seventh century when Penda was enlarging Mercia and the region came under Anglo-Saxon control. Excavations at Wroxeter have shown that it continued in use after the Roman period, however Barker *et al* (1997:247) have argued that control may have passed to a local 'powerful magnate of some kind', but one with little contact with the outside world. The establishment of a new Anglo-Saxon royal power in the region, in need of displaying their own authority could explain the establishment of a new, central royal settlement at Atcham.

The kingdoms of the Hwicce and the Magonsaete were subsumed into Mercia during the reign of Penda (c.626-655). Following this accession there is no record of Penda having

fought against the Welsh of Powys, indeed they became allied against the Northumbrian Kingdom. However a dynasty of Welsh kings ruled Ergyng (south Herefordshire) through the sixth and early seventh centuries and actively fought against the Saxons (Hooke, 2006:43). A battle is recorded in 760 at Hereford and it may have been this threat from the south which resulted in the need for the construction of forts to protect important centres.

Place-name evidence suggests that there were five sites where forts were located in the earlier Anglo-Saxon period (Figure 4.1.4). Dating evidence would be incredibly valuable in determining when these forts were initially constructed and any subsequent periods of use. The forts are spread throughout the county and Gelling (1990:39) has argued they may have formed part of a system of Mercian defence posts. There are also three place-names, Broseley, Burwarton, and Burford, which refer to 'fort-guardians'. These names form a line along the ridge of the Clee Hills and could indicate this area of land belonged to the fort-guardians or that there was a series of forts in the south-eastern corner of Shropshire. The place-names are located on the lower slopes of hills, but it is not certain whether these locations represent the actual forts or settlements associated with the forts. These positions overlooked access routes along valleys and the River Severn, suggesting that the hills may have provided a natural defence. The forts do not appear to have been situated as central places of protection or refuge for the population at large; given the dispersed nature of settlement this may have been a practical impossibility. The three forts in southern Shropshire are located within the vicinity of important centres and may have been sited to defend these particular locations; the fort at Broughton, on the Welsh border, is 8km away from Lydbury North, the fifth largest population centre in Shropshire at the time of Domesday. The fort at Bourton is only 4km away from Much Wenlock, and may have served

to give warning to and protect the monastery there and the forts at Berrington and Boreton were also 4km away from Atcham. If there was a palace site at Atcham, it would seem appropriate that the site would have been protected from potential raiders. The fort at Baschurch, to the north of Shrewsbury is located on the southern end of a ridge of high land and may have been similarly placed to guard against attacks from the Cheshire Plain.

The relationship between the English and the Welsh deteriorated possibly as Hooke (2006:45) argues, as a consequence of the former fragmented units of the border region developing into a consolidated political entity under Mercian rule. Welsh raids into Mercia are recorded throughout the eighth century. In response to this, the most enduring of the Anglo-Saxon fortifications, Offa's Dyke was constructed. The dyke is thought to have been constructed c.780 during the reign of King Offa (757-796) who had consolidated and then expanded Mercia to its largest extent. There is currently no archaeological evidence to date the construction of the dyke, but Worthington (2005:94) argues there is little reason to doubt that it was constructed under Offa's rule; at this time a 'strong and ambitious' king, Eliseg, ruled Powys and Worthington (2005:93) argues the dyke may have been built as a formidable barrier to protect Mercia from Welsh raids. Despite the massive scale of the dyke, over 100 kilometres in length, there is no evidence that it was heavily garrisoned and Worthington (2005:94) believes it may only have functioned for a short time whilst a threat from Powys existed. Gelling's (1992:105) landscape studies demonstrate that land units in the border region were already established before the construction of the dyke as the boundaries of the majority of settlements do not correlate with the dyke. This indicates that this area was already settled and being farmed before the later eighth century.

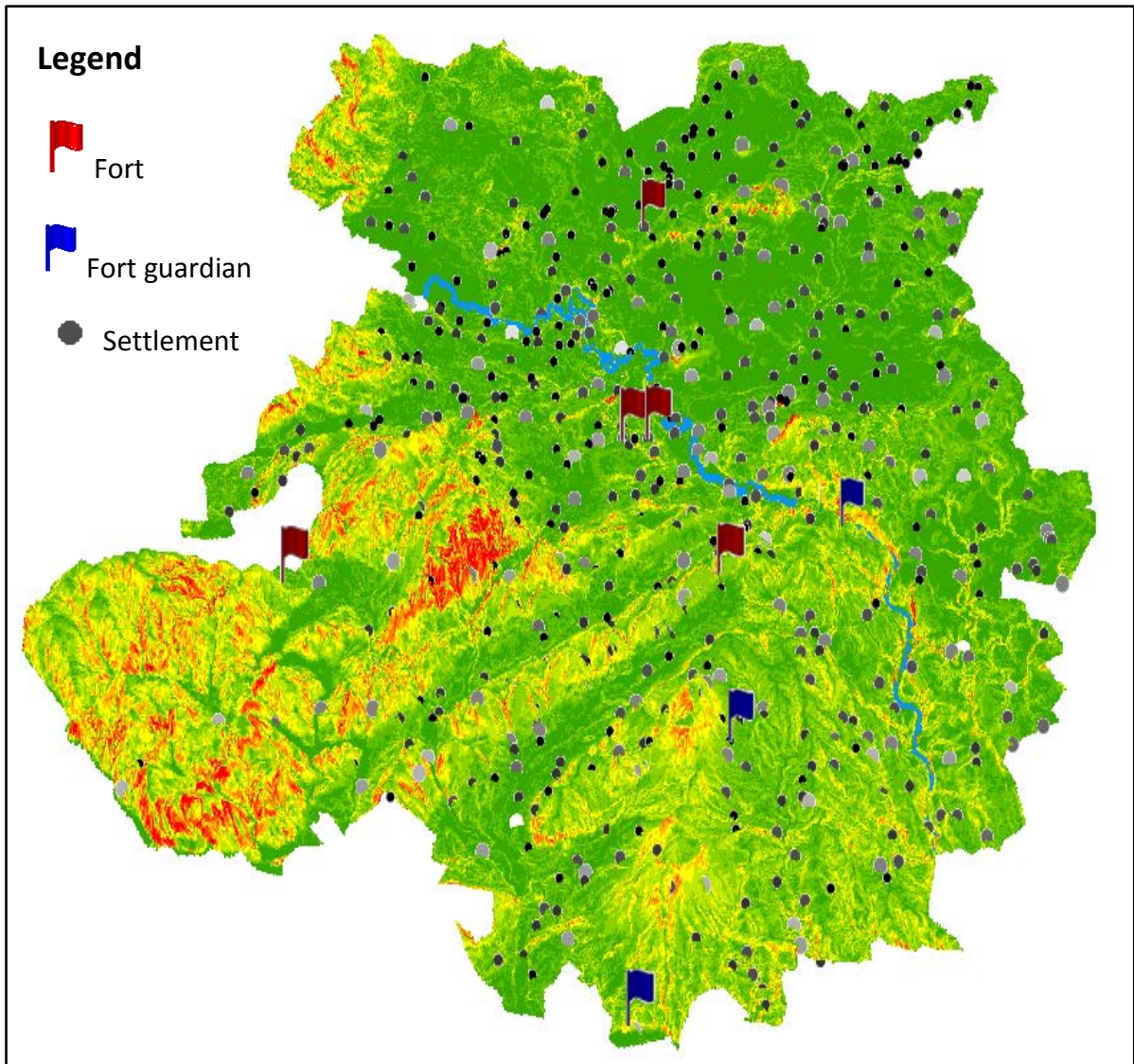


Figure 4.1.4: Early Anglo-Saxon forts and settlement locations.

Within Shropshire, many place-names are repeated which Gelling (1990:ix) believes is an indication of a Mercian administrative system using familiar place-names repeatedly across different estates. Gelling (1990:xiii) argues that the dominance of English place-names, combined with the lack of archaeological evidence for early Anglo-Saxon settlement implies that a British population continued to live in the region, but that a small Mercian administration renamed settlements using geographical terminology such as Aston, Weston, Norton and Sutton, to identify settlements within an area of a large estate.

Place-names were also formed from the function of a settlement indicating that certain activities were centralised; Smethcott means 'cottages of the smiths', and Acton, 'oak settlement or estate' occurs eight times in Shropshire, twice more than in any other county in England (Gelling, 1990:3). Gelling (1990:3) suggests that these sites may have been component parts of large estates with a specialised function of processing or distributing oak timber. Most of the Acton sites lie within relatively close proximity of '*leah*' settlements indicating they were in or near woodland areas. The only exception to this is Acton in Lydbury parish, north of Clun, around which there are no other place-names indicating woodland. However it is within a valley of the Shropshire hills north of Clun which was designated as a Royal Hunting Forest during the medieval period suggesting there may well have been an open woodland environment here in the earlier Anglo-Saxon period.

Later Anglo-Saxon period

Gelling (1990:40) believes the early Anglo-Saxon forts would have been functioning until the Viking invasions of the ninth century. These attacks appear to have been a far greater threat than the Welsh raids; undoubtedly the Mercian rulers would have been aware of the extent of the Viking attacks in eastern England and would have realised the need for stronger defences in the western regions. The origins of Shrewsbury are unknown, but from documentary accounts, we know it was of sufficient status to be the location of a signing of a royal charter in 901 and Baker (2010:89) argues that the use of the term *civitate* in the charter instead of *burh* suggests the administrative and ecclesiastical role of the settlement was sufficient for it to be considered as a town even if the population was not particularly high. In 907 Aethelred and Aethelflaed did established a *burh* here, a term that became synonymous with important urban centres (Draper, 2008:247). The natural topography of

the location, on a spur surrounded on three sides by a river meander would have made it an attractive location for a new defensible administrative and economic centre in the face of the threat of attack. Aethelflaed constructed further fortifications at or near Bridgnorth in 912 and at Chirbury in 915 (Gelling, 1992:129). The forts are all thought to have been constructed in direct response to Viking raids; the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records a Viking presence in the region of the Wreocensaete in 855 and Danes reportedly over-wintered and crossed the Severn at *Cwatbrycg* (possibly Bridgnorth or Quatt) in 895 - 6. The place-name evidence however does not suggest that there was ever any permanent Norse settlement within Shropshire (Gelling, 1992:134).

Administratively, during the later Anglo-Saxon period land was divided into manors and owned by manorial lords. The majority of the population who lived within these manors were tied to the lord, owing him allegiance and also rent, which could be paid in the form of cash, produce or labour. The Domesday Book provides evidence of the nature of the population of Shropshire at the end of the Anglo-Saxon period. It is clear to see the importance and power that the manorial lords would have had at this time; 83% of the recorded population are described as villeins, borders or serfs. Only 0.5% of the recorded population are described as freemen, owning and working their own land. There was a small percentage of the population who did not work the land but were employed by the lord or king as senior officials with seven reeves, or magistrates, recorded in the Domesday Book. Domesday also records 34 Frenchmen who probably arrived in Shropshire as part of the Conquest. 64 Welshmen are recorded in Shropshire and this distinction is also seen in the place-name Walcot, 'cottages of the Britons'. This could indicate that ethnic groups were being distinguished when place-names were formed however Gelling (1990:298) believes

that here, the furthest west example of this type of place-name in the country, it is likely to refer to a continuation of the Welsh language, rather than an ethnic characterisation of the population.

Gelling (1992:128) argues that the shire system developed as a consequence of the Danish wars, creating administrative units around the new central burhs. Without consideration to former territorial boundaries, Shropshire was created by bringing together the northern half of the Magonsaete territory with that of the Wreocensaete, placing Shrewsbury physically at the centre of the shire.

Of the known Anglo-Saxon settlements in Shropshire, Shrewsbury is one of the few which has been excavated and produced artefacts from the period. A pin or stylus (Catalogue no. 28) dated to the 8th – 9th centuries was discovered at Old St Chads and pottery has been found at a total of 13 sites. With the exception of pottery sherds found at the abbey in the eastern suburb, all other pieces were found within the river loop and demonstrate that the extent of occupation was at least as extensive as that of the late medieval town (Baker, 2010:98-100). Just over half of the finds come from stratified contexts and although Stafford ware pottery has generally been dated from the late eighth to the late eleventh centuries Baker (2010:100) believes it was likely to have been used during the tenth and first half of the eleventh century in Shrewsbury. Baker (2010:101) argues there is no evidence for town planning as has been identified in Hereford and Worcester, except for the areas of Pride Hill and Dogpole. Here houses had attended plots which ran down to the river and would have provided land for animal husbandry which Carver (1983:42) believes would have taken place on the peninsula.

The other artefacts which could be associated with settlements contribute towards a picture of domestic settlements which would have been familiar across Anglo-Saxon England. The spindle whorl (Catalogue no. 32) would have been a common household object, but although a practical functioning object, this example is decorated with incised lines and circular indentations. The decoration is described as 'crude' (PAS) but displays a desire for even common objects to be visibly attractive or perhaps personalised. Similarly the furniture fitting (Catalogue no. 36) and handle mounts (Catalogue no's. 37-40) are decorative as well as functional. This suggests that whilst we do not have the physical remains of the structures which comprised the homes of Anglo-Saxon people, it is possible to suggest that settlements, or at least the objects used within them, may have been decorative, individualised places.

Conclusion

The lack of specific dating material for Anglo-Saxon settlements does make it difficult to establish a sequence of development in Shropshire. However we can see a system of small dispersed settlements, many of which can be identified as early settlements through their place-names, which continue throughout the Anglo-Saxon period to be recorded in the Domesday Book. We can however plot the development of the formation of central places as a need to display and establish new power regimes and as a response to the need for greater defences against Viking attacks. The majority of the population would have farmed the land as villeins or serfs for manorial lords. Within larger settlements, including the county town, people would have lived a subsistence lifestyle, growing many of their own plant food staples and rearing animals for meat and milk.

The location, size and function of settlements was influenced in part, by the establishment and expansion of the Roman Catholic Church throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. The Church brought with it many changes to people's lives, and the role of religion will be explored in the next chapter.

4.2 Religion

Religion played a key role in the transformation of Anglo-Saxon England. During the sub-Roman period the west of England remained Christian whilst regions in the east, under the influence of the incoming Germanic tribes became pagan (Gelling, 1992:95). Through the seventh century missionaries from both Ireland and Rome once again spread the Christian religion throughout England and Scotland. Many Anglo-Saxon kings converted to Christianity, but Penda king of Mercia (626 – 655) remained pagan. When his son Wulfhere (658 – 675) became king he became the first Christian King of Mercia. Continuing the practices of kings elsewhere in the country Wulfhere began to endow monasteries, a practice which saw Merewalh, a king of the Magonsaete who is believed to have converted to Christianity about 660, found the first English monastery in Shropshire at Much Wenlock in 680 with his daughter Milburge in place as abbess (Gelling, 1992:95). There is little archaeological or historical evidence for religious practices in Shropshire before the seventh century, however following the conversion of Anglo-Saxon kings to Christianity and their patronage of the Church evidence for religious practice begins to appear in the form of place-names, stone buildings and sculptures, and objects bearing the symbol of the cross. The Church came to dominate many aspects of people's lives; they were often wealthy institutions with members of royal families in senior positions. The construction of monastic sites would have dramatically altered landscapes and the activities of the monastery would have generated a need for workers, goods and markets more often associated with towns. The Roman Church also brought with it literacy and although there are no surviving Church records from Shropshire, monks such as the Venerable Bede did begin to record important religious and

political events in Chronicles and Life stories which provide a detailed insight into the affairs of Church and State during the Anglo-Saxon period.

The sources of data used to assess the religious character of Early Medieval Shropshire were Anglo-Saxon Architecture (Taylor and Taylor, 1965), the Central Marches Historic Town Survey (CMHTS), Domesday Book (Thorn and Thorn, 1986), the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture (Bryant, 2012), place-name evidence (Gelling, 1990) and artefacts recorded with the PAS and the HER.

Domesday Book

The Domesday Book records physical churches at twenty-one locations. However a further seventeen locations are recorded as having 'a priest' and four entries record two or more priests. Gelling (1990) believes that the identification of 'a priest' in Domesday indicates the presence of a church and that two or more priests may indicate a minster, giving a total of 42 locations with a church in 1086. Bassett (1992:9) further argues there were some locations for which neither a church or priest were recorded in Domesday but for which we can still identify the presence of a church; Bassett (1992:9) cites the example of a probable church at Upton Magna 'shown by the gift of two-thirds of the tithes of Upton to the Shrewsbury church of St. Peter & St. Paul before 1066'.

Place-names

The place-name evidence for churches is slight with only two place-names indicating the presence of a church in the Anglo-Saxon period, Baschurch and Ellesmere. Seven place-names indicate areas of land owned by the Church, including five Prestons, meaning 'estate of the priest' (Gelling, 1990:242). Two place-names Wistanstow and Cressage are names

associated with Christian 'Holy places'. There are also five place-names related to '*hlaw*', the OE word meaning barrow or tumulus.

Church Architecture

A total of 13 churches have been identified through the remains of Anglo-Saxon architecture. The church of St Milburga, Much Wenlock was perhaps the earliest foundation with documentary sources confirming it was founded by St Milburga, the daughter of Merewald, king of the Magonsaetan, in the later seventh century (Finberg, 1972:197). On the site now are substantial remains of a later Norman abbey, but excavations by Cranage (1922:107) in 1901 revealed the remains of two earlier foundations, one of which was dated to the mid eleventh century. The other, located in the centre of the abbey, was of a 'confused layout' (Taylor and Taylor, 1965a:454) but appeared to define a small rectangular building approximately 11.6m x 8.5m. Cranage believed this to be the foundations of the original seventh century church foundation although Woods (1987:58) has since argued the evidence suggests an earlier Roman foundation on the site. Woods interpretation was rebuked by Biddle and Kjolbye-Biddle (1988:181) who argue convincingly for an Anglo-Saxon date for the foundation of Wenlock Priory.

The churches of St Eata, Atcham and St Andrew's, Wroxeter contain building material reused from the ruins of the Roman town Viroconium indicating an early date for the construction of these churches. Taylor and Taylor (1965a:32) also believe St Eata to be of an early date due to the characteristics of a triangular head of a north wall window and tall, thin walls. The date of origin of St Andrew's, Wroxeter is uncertain; the original north wall has a horizontal string-course which is generally used to date churches to the later Anglo-Saxon

period however Taylor and Taylor (1965b:695) have dated it to the earlier Anglo-Saxon period on the basis of the original 'simple' window in the north wall.

Some of the churches of Shrewsbury are also thought to have an early foundation date in the middle Saxon period, but the physical evidence is based primarily on observations made during the course of works in the 19th century (Taylor and Taylor, 1965b:546). At St Mary's, earlier foundations were discovered below the nave which were interpreted by Archdeacon Lloyd as an apse belonging to the original church and a nave (21m x 8m) dating to a period of enlargement in the tenth century. Parts of the original fabric of St Alkmund's and St Julian's are thought to have survived until the later eighteenth century when both churches were rebuilt. A mid-Saxon styliform pin or stylus (Catalogue no. 28) was discovered in the original church of St. Chad's which partially collapsed in 1788. The church was subsequently relocated to the north and east of the original church and rebuilt in 1793 (Baker, 2010:202).

Cranage dated the foundation of St Giles', Barrow to the eighth century but Taylor and Taylor (1965a:49) have ascribed it to the 10th century on the basis of a double-splayed window and a pilaster strip on the north wall which are characteristic of this later period. St Peter's, Stanton Lacy is also dated to the later Anglo-Saxon period on the basis of pilaster strips on the north and west walls of the nave and the north transept (Taylor and Taylor, 1965b:569). St Peter's, Rushbury (Taylor and Taylor, 1965b:526) and St Peter's, Diddlebury (Taylor and Taylor, 1965a:211) have been dated to the pre-Conquest period based on other characteristic features of later Anglo-Saxon churches. Herring-bone masonry is in the lower section of the nave walls at Rushbury and can also be seen in the nave and west annexe at Diddlebury which also has a later Anglo-Saxon double-splayed, round headed window. Both churches and also St. Mary's, Stottesdon (Taylor and Taylor, 1965b:580) have Norman period

features which abut the original church fabric, further supporting the interpretation of the original construction date as pre-Conquest.

Sculpture

A total of seventeen pieces of sculpture from Shropshire have been dated to the Anglo-Saxon period on the basis of their style and decoration (Table 4.2.1 and Table 4.2.2), with an additional seven pieces thought to date to the ‘Saxo-Norman overlap period’ (Bryant, 2012:320). These pieces have been found at twelve locations; from within 10 existing churches and also from the River Morda and an eighteenth century shop building in Shrewsbury.

Table 4.2.1: Stone sculpture found within church locations.

Type of Sculpture	Location	Date	Design
Grave Marker	Atcham (St Eata)	11 th C	Cross, wedged shape arms
	Bromfield (St Mary)	10 th C	Cross, tapering arms
	Diddlebury (St Peters)	11 th C	Cross, wedged shape arms
	Shrewsbury (St Mary)	Late 10 th /11 th C	Saltire cross
	Shrewsbury (St Mary)	10 th C	Cross
Grave Cover	Atcham (St Eata)	Late 10 th /11 th C	Cross, wedged shape arms
	Shrewsbury (St Mary)	10 th C	Scandinavian influence
	Shrewsbury (St Mary)	10 th C	Scandinavian influence
Cross-Shaft (or part of)	Diddlebury (St Peter)	10 th C	Tree motif
	Diddlebury (St Peter)	11 th C	Interlace square-knot
	Westbury (St Mary)	Late 10 th / 11 th C	Interlaced decoration
	Wroxeter (St Andrew)	Early 9 th C	Plant-scroll, animal imagery
Fragments:			
Carved panel	Wroxeter (St Andrew)	Early 9 th C	Birds
String-course	Bridgnorth (St Leonard)	11 th /early 12 th C	Interlocking arcading

Panel	x3 Stanton Lacy (St Peter)	11 th C	Relief cross, slightly wedged shape arms
Figure carving	Church Stretton (St Laurence)	11 th C or earlier	Figure, possibly Pan or fertility symbol

Table 4.2.2: Stone sculpture found outside church locations.

Type of Sculpture	Location	Date	Design
Part of Cross-Shaft	River Morda	10 th /early 11 th C	Interlace pattern
String-course fragment	Shrewsbury (Mardol) x3	10 th C	Interlace decoration

Artefacts

A total of twenty-three objects, including seven coins, have been identified which can be interpreted as having a religious association in terms of function or symbolism (Table 4.2.3).

Table 4.2.3: Artefacts with a religious association.

Object	Location	Date	Religious Association
Amber bead	Hoare Edge	Anglo-Saxon	Found within a Bronze Age Barrow
Sundial	Holly Waste	Anglo-Saxon	Interpreted as a means of observing the canonical hours
Spearhead	Bromfield	410 – 800	Found within a Christian cemetery
Knife	Bromfield	7 th – 10 th C	Found within a Christian cemetery
Buckle	Bromfield	7 th – 10 th C	Found within a Christian cemetery
Brooch	Whitchurch area	650 – 850	Central cross design
Pin	Worfield	700 – 900	Vertical cross design
Styliform pin	Shrewsbury, Old St. Chads	700 – 900	Interpretations include a shroud pin or stylus
Pendant	Oswestry	700 – 1050	Image may represent a Norse God or hero, the object may have been a good-luck charm

Furniture mount	Market Drayton	700 – 1200	On the reverse of the object are incised a vertical cross and a saltire cross, interpreted as possibly representing a Chi Rho symbol
Strap end	Prees	9 th C	Design re-worked to depict a human figure in the style of a 'Saint brooch'
Disc brooch	Shrewsbury	800 – 1000	Central vertical cross design
Harness fitting	Oswestry	800 – 1100	Complex cross design
Stylus	Whitchurch	800 - 1200	Cross hatching decoration, use as a writing instrument
Staff terminal	Hodnet	1000 - 1200	Interpreted as a terminal for an ecclesiastical short staff
Hooked tag	Norbury Parish	Post 1016	Short cross design
Coin, Sceatta	?	690 – 700	Bird and cross design (forgery)
Coin	Sheinton	786 – 809	Possibly Islamic design
Coin	Wem	822 – 840	Contains the legend 'Christiana religio'
Coin	Oswestry	979 – 985	Depiction of the Hand of Providence and A (alpha) and W (omega)
Coin	Condover	979 – 985	Depiction of the Hand of Providence and A (alpha) and W (omega)
Coin	Whitchurch	1000 - 1010	Hiberno-Norse long cross design
Coin	Sheinton	1050 - 1053	Short cross design

A total of 62 churches (Appendix 2) were identified across the county with only 11 of these identified through multiple sources of evidence (Table 4.2.4). The source of data with the most prolific evidence for churches is the Domesday Book. However there may have been omissions from the Book and whilst the record does confirm the presence of twenty-one physical churches it does not indicate the date of their foundation. The existence of a

further twenty-one churches is based on the assumption that the record of a priest is indicative of a church.

The date range divisions for churches recorded in the table below are adopted from Taylor's (1978:1068) system of chronology. Taylor categorised Anglo-Saxon churches into three date ranges based on the development of architectural features such as the use of plinths and the use of single or double-splayed windows.

Table 4.2.4: The number of churches recorded in the various sources.

Source	Foundation Date			Date Unknown	Possibly Minster	Total Number
	600 - 800	800 – 950	950 – 1100			
Church Architecture	3	0	6	4 (Pre 950)		13
CMHTS	3	0	0	8	5	15
Place-name	1	0	0	0	1	2
Sculpture	0	1	6 (10/11C) 3 (11/12C)	0		10
Domesday book				35	7	42

4.2.1 Analysis

Earlier Anglo-Saxon period

The earliest evidence for religious activity in Shropshire may come from place-name evidence; five place-names are formed from a compound of the OE word '*hlaw*', meaning mound or tumulus, with a masculine personal name. Gelling (1990:45) says, 'it is tempting to think of the men whose names occur in these place-names as the last generation of pagan

Angles in Shropshire'. However there has been no excavation at any of these locations which could test such a hypothesis, many of the sites have been damaged by ploughing and at Whittingslow there is a quarry which has destroyed any potential archaeological evidence. An amber bead (Catalogue no. 1) was discovered in a Bronze Age barrow on Hoare Edge at some point before 1851, however there is no record of the discovery; it is first recorded by the Secretary of the Society for Antiquaries in 1851 who believed it to be 'Celtic'. The bead was reclassified as Anglo-Saxon by Chitty (1934:111) due to its description as 'large'. The current location of the bead is unknown so it is not possible to carry out any further analysis of the object. If the bead was from the Anglo-Saxon period and had been inserted into the barrow as part of a burial ceremony, then, combined with the place-name evidence, it could suggest that pagan burial practices were occurring in the area in the early Anglo-Saxon period. These potential 'pagan' sites are located across the region, the bead was found in the north-west and of the place-names one is located in the north-east, two in the central belt and a further two sites are in the south-west. Bronze Age barrows and other existing landscape features are known to have been used as important boundaries and meeting places in the Anglo-Saxon period (Pantos, 2003:43). The distribution of the '*hlaw*' sites suggests this may have been their purpose and could have been the reason behind the choice of place-name rather than indicating pagan burials.

There has been no definitive archaeological evidence for pagan burials within Shropshire; the indigenous population remained Christian after the end of the Roman period and it is generally assumed that Anglo-Saxons had converted to Christianity before they reached Shropshire. However the discovery of furnished burials in what has been identified as a seventh century Christian cemetery at Bromfield, north of Ludlow, has prompted debates

about the religious practices conducted here. A total of 31 burials were discovered within the cemetery, three of which contained grave goods (Stanford, 1985:4). Although grave-goods are associated with pagan burial practices, the Church did not explicitly ban the use of grave goods and the practice did continue into the seventh century, only really ceasing in the eighth century (Owen-Crocker, 2004:26). A recent study into Anglo-Saxon burial practices (Hines and Bayliss, 2013) has concluded that whilst the practice of using grave goods cannot be used to distinguish pagan from Christian burials, the use of grave goods is a defining characteristic of the 'Early' Anglo-Saxon Period (Hines *et al*, 2013:517)

The architectural and sculptural evidence suggests the earliest churches in Shropshire were built in a corridor from Much Wenlock to Baschurch, bearing no relation to the location of the barrow sites (Figure 4.2.1). The Church is known to have used earlier Roman and pagan sites to construct its own ecclesiastical centres (Blair, 2005:65) and the lack of evidence for this further suggests that the barrow sites were secular meeting places rather than places associated with pagan practices. Much Wenlock was founded before 690 and Gelling (1990:31) suggests the unusual inclusion of 'church' within the place-name of Baschurch, the most north-westerly church site is a significant indicator of the early origin and hence importance of a church at this location. St Andrew's, Wroxeter is also thought to have had an early foundation; stone sculpture dating to the early ninth century, the earliest in Shropshire has been found here. The concentration of sites along the River Severn clusters in Shrewsbury. This may illustrate the move of the capital of the Wreocensaete from Wroxeter to Shrewsbury during the early Anglo-Saxon period and demonstrates the importance of Shrewsbury as an ecclesiastical centre. Bassett (1991:3) argues that St Chad's is likely to have been the earliest of the churches in Shrewsbury, possibly an episcopal

foundation in the middle Saxon period established as a see of the Wreocensaete. This was closely followed by the royal foundation of St Mary's when the region was absorbed by the Mercian kingdom. The increasing number and the importance of the churches at Shrewsbury throughout the Anglo-Saxon period demonstrates the increasing high status of the town. Bassett (1991:11-13) believes St Alkmund's and St Juliana's were pre-Conquest royal foundations established by the early ninth century, possibly part of an early minster complex linked to St Mary's. Bassett (1991:17) also argues that it is likely the churches of St Michael's and St Peter & St Paul's were founded as minor minster churches also prior to the Norman Conquest. Blair (2005:307) believes the foundation of a second minster church in many of the main towns in Western England was part of a drive by Aethelflaed around A.D. 900 to 'restore the prestige and efficacy of the Mercian Church'. St Mary's was reconstituted by King Edgar in the later tenth century and at some point became the senior church of Shrewsbury (Bassett, 1991:8). The largest number of surviving grave covers and markers from a single church are from St Mary's which may also indicate its importance and status as a senior church.

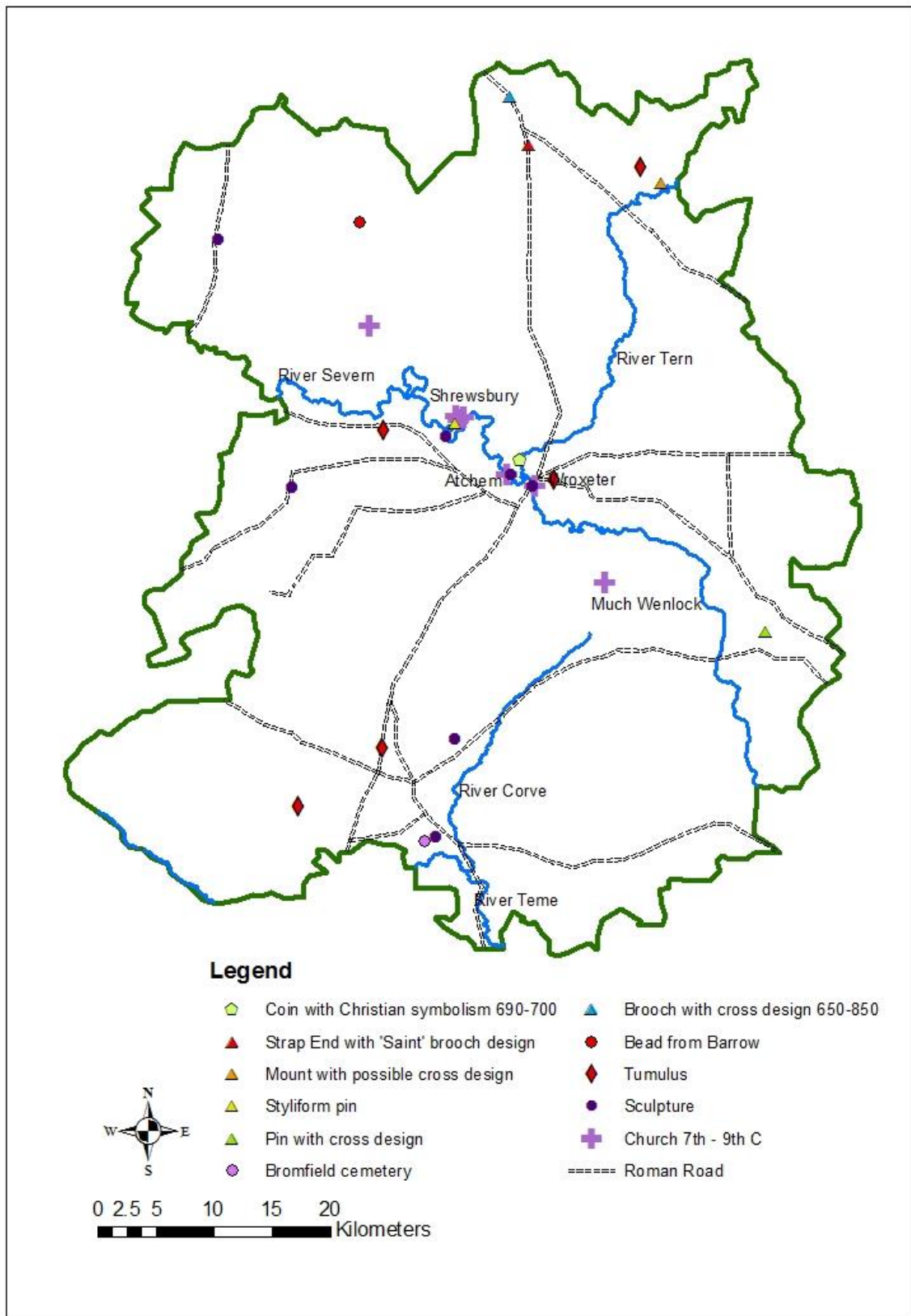


Figure 4.2.1: Map of place-name, architectural and artefact evidence, 7th - 9th centuries.

Place-names indicate other sites associated with Christianity for which we have no other sources of evidence. Wistanstow means 'the Holy place of St Wigstan', who was a member of the Mercian royal family murdered in 849 or 850 (Gelling, 1990:318). Wistanstow was reported as the site of St Wigstan's murder during the medieval period but Gelling (1990:318) believes it was more likely to have been the site of a hermitage associated with St Wigstan during his lifetime. Cressage meaning 'Christ's oak tree' (Gelling, 1990:103), is located to the south-east of Shrewsbury on the Bridgnorth to Shrewsbury road. Gelling (1990:103) suggests this place-name may have originated from a tree located beside the road which may have had a crucifix attached, identifying the settlement as Christian and providing an edifice where travellers could stop and pray (Rumble, 2006:39). Wilks (1972:111) suggests the symbolism of trees associated with pagan traditions were easily accommodated within the new Christian religion through the 'Tree of Life' concept. Wilks (1972:111) states that another oak tree at Bridgnorth, known as the Quatford Oak, was reputed to have been a 'meeting place between Augustine and the Celtic Bishops of the older faith in A.D. 597'. Again, place-names can provide unique insights into the beliefs and practices of people, and the visibility of religious affiliation within the landscape; if crucifix' or other symbols were attached to trees it is likely they would have been made of wood and not have survived in the archaeological record.

There are relatively few artefacts from Shropshire dating to the Anglo-Saxon period however artefacts bearing Christian religious symbols do appear in Shropshire, as in the rest of England, during the seventh century. Objects had a practical purpose but the forms of decoration on them also conveyed powerful messages; 'the cross as an object or gesture was a powerful weapon taken from the liturgical arsenal of the church and applied to

pragmatic concerns.’ (Jolly, 2006:58). A brooch (Catalogue no. 4) found in the Whitchurch area has a typical design of a central cross, formed with five settings or cups which would have held a gem or paste setting. An animal, probably a hound, is depicted in the panel in-between the arms of the cross. The brooch demonstrates high quality workmanship and had an applied gilt surface, a significant display of its value in the ninth century when gold on brooches was rare due to a shortage in the supply of gold (Owen-Crocker, 2004:198). Dr Kevin Leahy has suggested that ‘the object is of the ninth century Insular (Irish) metalwork, brought to Shropshire under the aegis of the Vikings’. If this interpretation is correct then this piece would demonstrate the presence of Scandinavians or contact with them at this time. As this piece was found in the north of the county it could demonstrate a link with the trading centre at Meols on the Wirral.

Also found in the north of the county was an unusual strap-end (Catalogue no. 67) dating to the ninth century. This was another well-made object, made from silver and originally decorated in Trehiddle style with niello inlay, which was re-worked to depict a human figure, possibly in imitation of a Germanic style ‘Saint’ brooch. A pin (Catalogue no. 27) ‘ornately decorated’ with a chip-carved vertical cross and interlocking scrolls was discovered near Worfield, in the east of the county. During the seventh century, changes in artistic design brought the pin to prominence as a ‘luxury’ decorative item of dress with the cruciform design becoming fashionable during the eighth century (Owen Crocker, 2004:141). The high quality of craftsmanship and materials involved in the creation of these objects indicates that they were valued and valuable high-status pieces. The use of the cross symbol and ‘saint’ depiction demonstrates the importance of the public display of religious belief and affiliation to Christianity during the eighth and ninth centuries.

As the Church spread across England so it brought with it literacy. In Old St. Chad's, Shrewsbury an object was discovered with a cross-piece at the base and has been interpreted as either a hair or shroud pin or a stylus (Catalogue no. 28). The object is remarkably similar to a pin found at the Saxon monastery at Whitby, suggesting a religious association for this type of object. If the object is a hair pin it is further evidence of the use of the cross as decoration on personal objects to display Christian beliefs. If it was a stylus, it may well have been used in the creation of manuscripts within one of the religious houses in Shrewsbury. Another stylus (Catalogue no. 34) was discovered near Whitchurch. The church here is dedicated to St Alkmund which the CMHTS argue indicates an Anglo-Saxon foundation, and could suggest a relationship with St Alkmund's, Shrewsbury.

Later Anglo-Saxon period

The stone sculptures, which predominantly date to the tenth and early eleventh centuries are associated either directly with the sites of minster churches or with their holdings (Figure 4.2.2). Exceptions are the fragment found in the River Morda but this is thought to have originally come from St Chad's, Shrewsbury, and the sculpture at St Leonard's, Bridgnorth which is from the Saxon-Norman period and likely to be post-Conquest (Bryant, 2012:320). It is notable that surviving sculptures are also found predominantly near major river routes (the Severn, the Corve and the Morda) with the exception of pieces identified at Westbury which is located on a Roman road. This indicates that communication routes were important factors in the choice of the location for establishing churches as is also seen in the locations of early minsters in Northumbria and south-east England (Blair, 2005:150). The presence of stone sculptures within minster churches is an indication of their wealth and status. It is argued that the majority of churches were constructed of timber, only being

rebuilt in stone after the Norman Conquest (Hooke, 2006:51) which explains the far greater number of churches indicated in Domesday Book than we have material evidence for (Figure 4.2.2).

Shropshire has a diverse geology and it is likely the material for the majority of the stone sculptures came from local resources (Bryant, 2012:35). The dating of stone sculpture is difficult, it is often not precise and usually relies on other contextual evidence or engravings (Cramp, 1991:xlvii). However the development and use of stone sculpture within Shropshire can be seen as part of regional trends in the western midlands (Bryant, 2012). The cross-shaft from St Andrew's, Wroxeter is the earliest of the Anglo-Saxon sculptures from Shropshire. This is the only sculpture in Shropshire made from oolitic limestone and to date to before A.D. 900. There are many similar examples however of oolitic limestone sculptures to the south and east in Hereford, Gloucestershire and Worcestershire suggesting a relationship between Wroxeter and its southern neighbours in the earlier Anglo-Saxon period. The St Andrew's cross-shaft is decorated with a plant-scroll with leaves, berries and fruit, and on a lower panel is a 'deer-like creature' (Bryant, 2012:314). Most of the remains of the cross-shaft have been lost but are illustrated in drawings from the eighteenth century which show one of the panels carved with a plant-scroll 'inhabited with birds and animals'. The design and decoration of the cross shaft indicate it may be part of the 'Cropthorne' group of carvings; a prestigious craft centre centred on Worcester (Bryant, 2012:67).

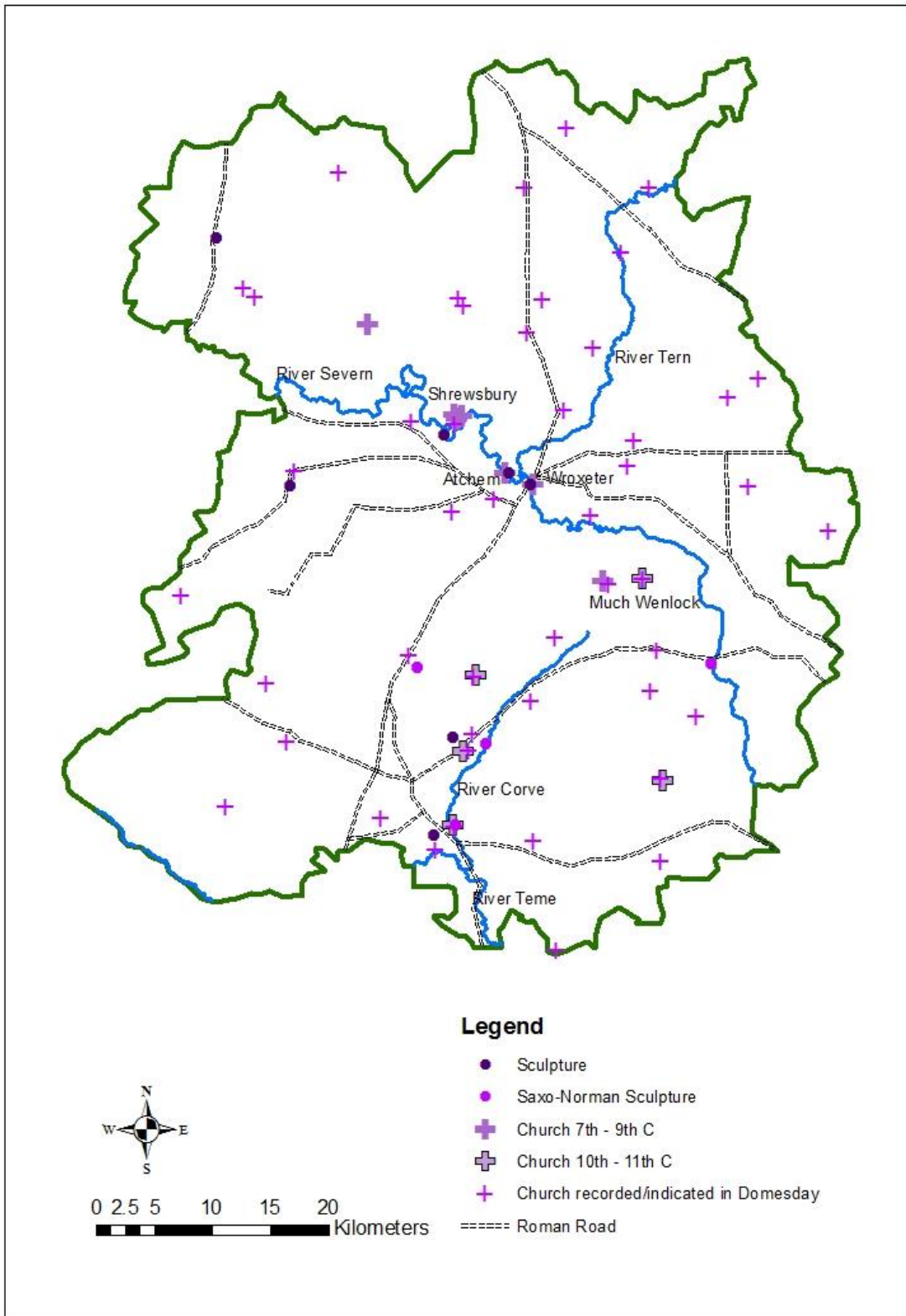


Figure 4.2.2: Location map of churches and sculpture identified in Shropshire, A.D. 700-1066.

Similarly to the cross-shaft from St Andrew's, Wroxeter the cross-shaft from Diddlebury has an elaborate tree scroll decoration incorporating human figures and fruit. Bryant (2012:307) argues this could depict ordinary people frightening away birds from their ripening harvest or be a reminder of the original sin of Adam and Eve getting the forbidden fruit. A deer is depicted on the cross-shaft from St Andrews representing God, whilst another panel shows three geese, birds associated with aggression pecking at snakes, a familiar representation of Satan (Hicks, 1993). A grave-cover also from St Mary's is decorated with an equal-arm cross, to one side of which is a simple plant form with two buds at the top, on the other side is a heavy, flat-bodied serpentine creature biting its own tail. Although the serpent is often associated with the devil, within funerary contexts they can be illustrated biting their own tails, forming a continuous circle, representing immortality and resurrection (Hicks, 1993:83). The saltire cross carved on the grave-marker from St Mary's, Shrewsbury may also represent the 'rising sun of resurrection' (Bryant, 2012:309) reinforcing the message of salvation to be found in Christianity.

Blair (2005:5) has argued that this 'middle zone', located between the Anglo-Saxons in the East and the Britons in the West developed an insular art style that can be seen to have multiple influences from within the British Isles and beyond. The section of cross-shaft found in the River Morda was decorated with an interlace design similar to that seen on several sculptures from western Mercia and also from Wales (Bryant, 2012:308). The decoration on the grave-marker and grave-cover found at St Eata, Atcham has parallels with regional styles in Gloucestershire and further afield in the south-east of England (Bryant, 2012:305). Grave-markers from Bromfield and St Mary's, Shrewsbury are very similar in form and decoration (Bryant, 2012: illustrations 542, 552) indicating they may have come from the same

workshop and the calvary on which each cross stands displays influences from the north-east sculptures of Northumberland and County Durham.

The cross-shaft from Westbury was decorated with an interlace design typical of west Mercian sculpture, although Bryant (2012:314) has suggested the design could be interpreted as a 'free ring' design indicating a Scandinavian influence. A grave-cover from St Mary's appears to be influenced from the Anglian tradition and is also similar to sculptures found on the Isle of Man (Bryant, 2012:310). This may be a rare example of Scandinavian artistic influence in Shropshire which could have originated either from the Isle of Man or a Scandinavian colony in the Wirral established in the early tenth century. The decoration on this cover consists of a cross and shaft with a plant engraving to one side and a serpent on the other. Another grave-cover from St Mary's also has a cross carving similar to that found on tenth century crosses on the Isle of Man which reinforces the argument for a Scandinavian influence from there.

As Hawkes (2003:27) has argued the form of many sculptures as a cross would have taken this powerful Christian symbol outside of the confines of the church building and placed it prominently and visibly within the landscape. The symbols and images depicted on stone sculptures would also have had meanings which conveyed the beliefs and teachings of the Church. Despite the range of influences which changed the style of sculptures, many symbols such as snakes, deer, fish, birds and tree scrolls were used repeatedly throughout the Anglo-Saxon period and their significance would have been understood by the people who saw them (Hicks, 1993:26).

The small artefacts from Shropshire indicate that Christian symbolism was important in people's everyday lives; whether for personal worship or protection or to display to others a

belief in Christianity. The cross would have been a visible, powerful symbol that would have been seen not only fixed within the landscape on church buildings and in cemeteries, on sculptures and on trees, but also as a portable symbol on personal items of clothing, jewellery and on horse fittings such as that found in Oswestry.

A brooch (Catalogue no. 7) from Shrewsbury was decorated with a vertical cross. The brooch was made from lead pewter, a trend which became popular in York workshops from the late ninth century as a growing urban population demanded affordable jewellery imitating that worn by the elite (Owen-Crocker, 2004:140). Nummular (coin) brooches were also popular in the later Anglo-Saxon period, often exhibiting 'rare and exotic connections' (Owen-Crocker, 2004:207). A hooked tag (Catalogue no. 15) found near Norbury was made by adding a hook to the obverse of coin so that the reverse, decorated with a saltire cross, was displayed. It is possible that this style of jewellery was part of a fashionable trend but it is also probable given the importance of the Church within society that the display of a Christian symbol was of significance to the wearer.

The personal significance of the cross symbol can be illustrated by the furniture mount (Catalogue no. 36) found in Market Drayton. The original object was created with 'a great deal of skill' (PAS) but on the reverse were crudely carved a crucifix and saltire which have been interpreted by the PAS as a possible attempt to depict the Chi Rho symbol. This would not have been created for public display but to create an object of intimate meaning for the owner. A silver strap end (Catalogue no. 67) discovered in Prees, also well made, had originally been decorated in Trewhiddle style but was re-worked shortly after its initial manufacture to depict a human figure; the result was an object which resembled the German style 'Saint' brooch. This may have been used in a similar fashion to a pendant

(Catalogue no. 19) found near Oswestry, again a re-worked object, originally decorated with a figure leading a horse and used as a die for creating gold foil mounts. The piece was clipped, redecorated with an incised bird and pierced to form a pendant. It has been suggested by the PAS that the original figure may represent a hero or God from one of the sagas and the object may have been worn as a good luck charm.

Conclusion

The collected evidence for religion in Shropshire shows the expansion of the Christian church throughout the Anglo-Saxon period (Figure 4.2.3). The problems with accurately dating sculpture and artefacts makes it difficult to interpret the rate of expansion and the effect the arrival of the Church would have had on the people living in Shropshire. The construction of all the churches indicated in Domesday Book may have occurred over several hundred years; what can appear to be a dramatic transformation of the landscape from what we encounter at AD 700 to AD 1066 may not have appeared particularly dramatic to people at the time. However, we can say that during the period, Christianity and its symbols would have been increasingly visible throughout the county. The discovery of many of the small finds in locations not associated with settlements indicates that people were travelling around the county and carrying symbols of Christianity with them.

The spread of the Church and the foundation of monasteries stimulated, contributed to and influenced the economy of Shropshire throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. The development of the economy will be the topic of the next chapter.

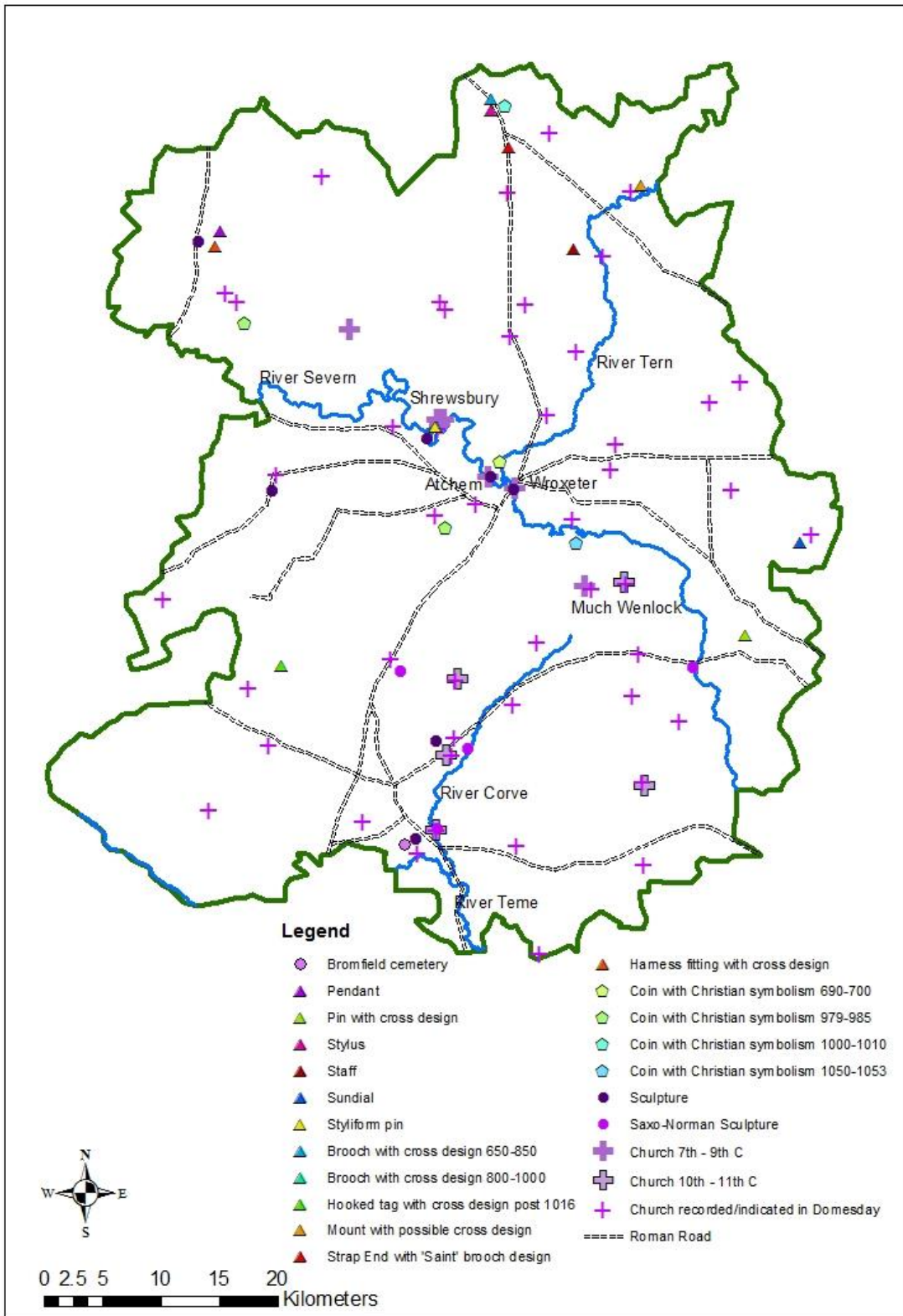


Figure 4.2.1: Map of the collected evidence for religion in Shropshire, A.D. 700 – 1066.

4.3 Economy

The decline of the Roman Empire brought about the decline of the network of trade routes established and maintained by the Empire. The use of coinage ceased and in sub-Roman and early Anglo-Saxon Britain it is thought that the economy was based on barter, gift exchange and the exaction of tribute (Sawyer, 2013:31). The economy of England remained closely related to and influenced by the economies on the Continent, in particular those of Frisia and Germania. From the eighth century there was a general increase in the demand for imported goods from the newly established monasteries and emerging market centres. Fluctuations in the economy occurred frequently throughout the eighth to eleventh centuries in response to Viking attacks and their demands for tribute, which reduced the availability of silver but, Sawyer (2013:110) argues, by the eve of the Conquest England was a prosperous country with a 'remarkably sophisticated monetary control'.

The sources of data used to assess the economic character of Shropshire were the artefacts and coins recorded by the PAS, the HER and Shrewsbury Museum, the database of the Early Medieval Corpus of Coin Finds (EMC), place-name evidence (Gelling, 1990) and the Viking and Anglo-Saxon Landscape and Economy (VASLE) project (Richards *et al.* 2009).

Artefacts

Excluding coins, 92 artefacts have been discovered in Shropshire which probably date to between 600-1066, although some are possibly earlier. The majority of the artefacts have been discovered by metal detectorists and therefore most of the objects are made of metal which does present a bias in the record but still enables trends in the economy and wealth of Shropshire to be identified (Figure 4.3.1). All objects would have to have been

manufactured and as there is currently no archaeological evidence for metal working in Shropshire, it is likely they would have been given as gifts, traded or sold and therefore comprised part of the economy.

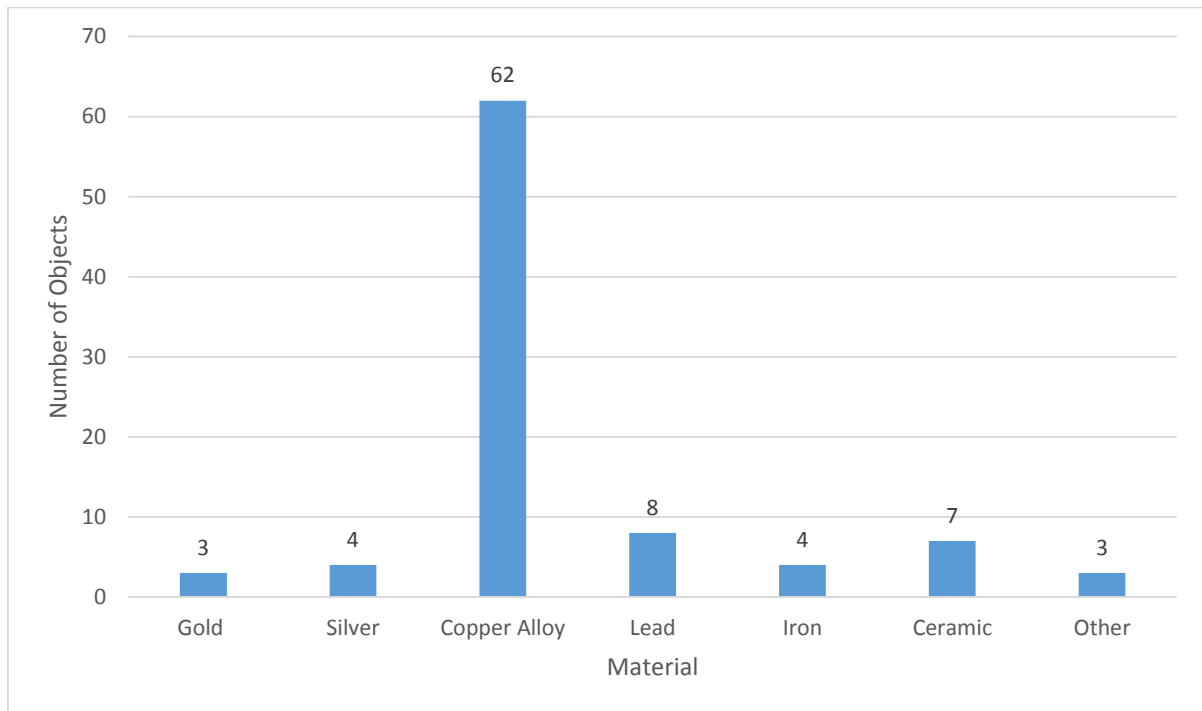


Figure 4.3.1: The number of objects made from different material types.

Ten of the objects have date ranges which cover the entire Anglo-Saxon period and are therefore not particularly useful in analysing the temporal distribution of artefacts. Many of the objects have forms and designs which were commonly used for centuries and so there is an overlap in the period divisions (Table 4.3.1). However, as a general rule it is possible to see that the number of objects dated to this period increase in the middle and later date ranges. There are also three additional objects, two strap ends and a penannular brooch, which were discovered during the Wroxeter Hinterland project but are not yet published (pers. comm. Dr R. White).

Table 4.3.1: Date range of artefacts.

Date Range	Number of Objects
Earlier (450 - 700)	9
Earlier – Middle (450 - 900)	5
Middle (700 - 900)	12
Middle – Later (700 - 1066)	22
Later (900 - 1066)	34

Coins

A total of nine coins (Catalogue nos. 81-90) from the Anglo-Saxon period have been recorded by PAS and a further 39 are held at the Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery (Table 4.3.2). A hoard of approximately 200 coins was discovered in Shrewsbury during construction work, however most of these were destroyed during the works and only six now survive. Two pieces of Viking silver ingot are also held at the museum. Although a mint was established in Shrewsbury by the early tenth century, none of the coins from this mint have been found in Shropshire despite Sawyer's (2013:91) suggestion that, with more than five moneys, Shrewsbury would have been one of the most productive mints during the reign of Aethelstan (924-939).

The EMC database contains records of seven coins minted at Shrewsbury which have been found elsewhere in England: one issued under Eadred (946-955) found in Wadborough, Worcestershire; two issued under Aethelred II (978-1016), both found in Norfolk; one issued under Cnut and found at Meols, the Wirral; and three issued under Edward the Confessor (1042-1066) found in Newbury, West Berkshire and Nether Wallop, Hampshire, the find location of the third is uncertain.

Table 4.3.2: Anglo-Saxon coins found in Shropshire.

Coin	Ruler Name / Type	Date	No.
Coin	Base metal with pellet decoration	500 - 700	1
Silver Sceat	Series E, possibly a Continental issue	675 – 750	1
Silver Sceat	Series E (Variety G3)	680 - 710	1
Silver Sceat	Forgery of Series B	690 - 700	1
Silver Penny	Offa, King of Mercia	774 - 796	1
Silver Coin	Arabic, Harum-al-Rashid	786 - 809	1
Denier	Merovingian Francia, Louis the Pious	814 - 840	1
Silver Penny	AEthelwulf, King of Wessex (New Portrait Issue)	839 - 856	1
Coin	Edward the Elder	899 - 925	6
Silver Penny	Eadred, King of All England	946 - 955	1
Silver Penny	AEthelred II (the Unready), Coin of the Kings of All England, N 766 (First Hand)	979 – 985	3
Silver Penny	AEthelred II (Long Cross)	978 - 1016	7
Silver Penny	Aethelred II (Crux)	978 - 1016	1
Silver Penny	AEthelred II (Small Crux)	978 - 1016	2
Silver Penny	AEthelred II (Helmet)	978 - 1016	1
Silver Penny	Hiberno-Norse (Long Cross)	1000 - 1010	1
Silver Penny	Cnut (Pointed Helmet)	1016 - 1035	1
Silver Penny	Harold I, Coin of the Kings of All England (Fleur-de-Lys)	1035 - 1040	1
Silver Penny	Edward the Confessor, Coin of the Kings of All England, N 823 (Expanding Cross, Heavy)	1050 - 1053	1
Silver Penny	Edward the Confessor (Pyramid)	1042 - 1066	7
Silver Penny	Edward the Confessor (Hammer Cross)	1042 - 1066	4
Silver Penny	Edward the Confessor (Small Cross)	1042 - 1066	2
Silver Penny	Edward the Confessor (Sovereign/Eagles)	1042 - 1066	1
Silver Penny	Harold II (PAX)	1066	1

Place-name Evidence

There are numerous place-names which relate to the economic function of locations (Table 4.3.3). Within Shropshire there are place-names related to arable and pastoral farming, food production, river transport and markets.

Table 4.3.3: Place-names related to economic function.

Place-name	Meaning
Barlow	Barley clearing
Berwick Grove	Outlying or dependant farm
Bitterley	Butter pasture
Cheswardine	Cheese producing settlement
<i>Eaton</i>	Control point for ferry or water transport
Eaton Constantine	"
Eaton Mascott	"
Eaton-under-Heywood	"
Yeaton	"
<i>Middleton</i>	Settlement with a central function e.g. market-place
Middleton (in Chirbury Parish)	"
Middleton (in Bitterley Parish)	"
Middleton Scriven	"
Ruyton of the Eleven Towns	Rye Farm
Ryton	Rye Farm
Shipley	Sheep clearing or pasture
Shipton	Sheep clearing or pasture
Smethcott	Cottages of the smiths
Stottesdun	'Horseman's Hill' where a man looked after a herd of horses
Welbatch	Wheel stream – probably a mill wheel
Wigwig	Probably 'Wicga's dairy farm'

VASLE

The VASLE project examined the data derived from the vast increase in the number of artefacts and coins which have been found by metal detectorists since 1997 and recorded by PAS and the EMC. It has used this data to investigate the Anglo-Saxon and Viking economy and landscape, 700 – 1000. The results of this study provide a context for the economy of Shropshire during this period; the density of the distribution of artefacts and coins giving an indication of the relationship between the economies of Shropshire and that of what became England and Wales.

4.3.1 Analysis

Earlier Anglo-Saxon Period

The evidence for the economy of Shropshire during the earlier Anglo-Saxon period is sparse (Figure 4.3.2). Gelling (1990:xv) argues that the time-scale of the transition from British to English place-names is unknown and could have occurred throughout the period. It could be assumed that the language of place-names changed whilst retaining the original meaning of the name; this is by no means certain but does, perhaps conveniently provide a starting point for exploring the economy of Shropshire. The place-name evidence we have related to the economic functions of locations suggests the local economy was essentially based on rural activities, with place-names referring to pastoral and arable farming activities or the production of dairy foods associated with the keeping of livestock. From early documentary sources and environmental archaeological evidence we know that wool was a valuable commodity, exported from England and prized on the Continent (Hamerow, 2012:157). Two

place-names refer to sheep farming and it is possible that these were associated with the wool industry. Sawyer (2013:73) has suggested that the finds of 'porcupine' sceattas, found in the east of England are representative of Frisian traders travelling to markets to buy wool. The two genuine sceattas (Catalogue nos. 81-82) that have been found in Shropshire are both porcupine types and whilst it would not seem logical for a Frisian trader to travel all the way to Shropshire, it is conceivable that Shropshire wool was traded indirectly with Frisians through the markets in eastern England.

Following the Roman withdrawal coins were not struck in Britain until c.650. In the earlier Anglo-Saxon period there were only half a dozen or so mints, all located on or near the eastern coast to take advantage of the continental trade (Blackburn, 1996:160). Very few early coins have been found in western England and little can be said about the earliest coin find from Shropshire and indeed, the identification of this object as a coin is questionable. However the other coin (Catalogue no.83) from this early period, thought to be a contemporary forgery, suggests that coins would have had considerable value, and also that controls over the production of official coinage were in place in the eighth century.

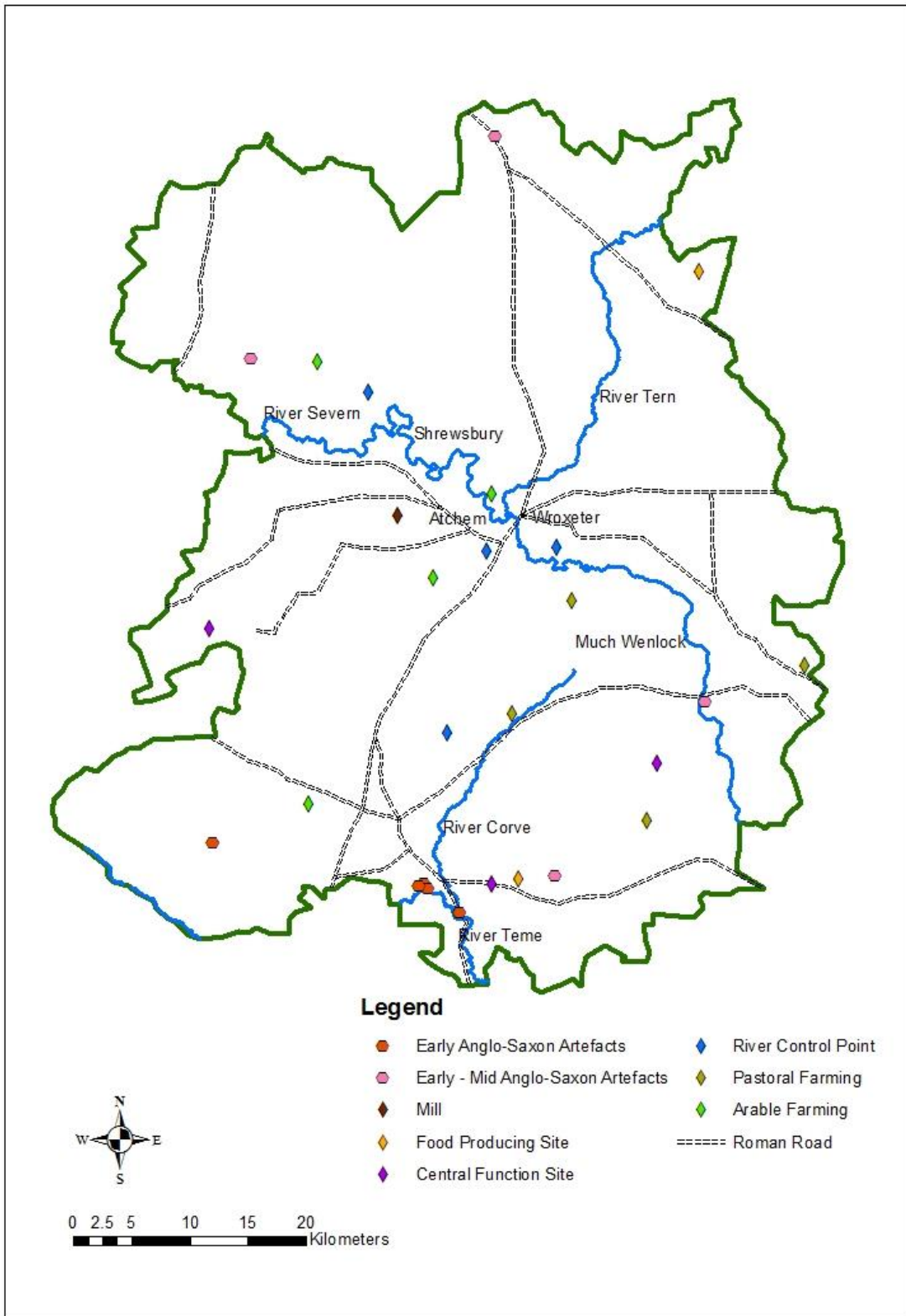


Figure 4.3.2: Map of evidence for the earlier Anglo-Saxon economy.

The place-name evidence indicates three 'central function' places and four river-crossing or control points. Three of the river-control points are located on tributaries of the River Severn and the fourth is on a tributary of the River Corve. As the three main central places of the Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods, Wroxeter, Atcham and Shrewsbury, were all located on or near to the Severn it is likely that the river points could have been used at various times to control the movement of people or goods into and out of these centres. A mill is located on the River Corve and a central market location is also nearby. It is likely that rivers would have served as quick and convenient routes to transport goods through the area.

The central places, which Gelling (1990:205) believes may have functioned as market sites, are all in the south of the county, one in the west, one in the south and one in the south-east. If these sites did have an early foundation as markets their location could be explained as being within the northern borders of the territory of the Magonsaete and may have been places where the people of the Magonsaete could trade with each other and with the neighbouring people. All of the objects dating to this early period for which the find location is known, have been discovered in the south of the county, with objects dating to the early-middle period being more evenly distributed across the county. This may indicate that the south of the county was the focus of trading activity in the sub-Roman and early Anglo-Saxon periods, however three of the objects all come from the cemetery at Bromfield and on the basis of such a small number of objects it is difficult to be confident of any interpretation.

Of the 92 artefacts recorded by PAS and the HER only nine can be dated securely to this period, with a further five dating to the early – middle Anglo-Saxon period. However these objects do indicate some form of exchange between Shropshire and areas in the east of England, further supporting the idea of the movement of goods between Shropshire and the

Continent via markets in eastern England. Gold was used in the manufacture of objects primarily in the earlier Anglo-Saxon period, particularly the late sixth and seventh centuries when supplies from Byzantium via Merovingian kings and south-east England, were still available (Leahy, 2003:153). All three gold items from Shropshire are dated to this period. The gold ring (Catalogue no. 20) found in South Shropshire is unusual and, as a parallel is unknown, it's dating is questionable. However a pendant and pommel held by Shropshire Museum Services are classic examples of early Anglo-Saxon gold and garnet work. Shropshire Museum Services have suggested that the gold pendant, dated to the early seventh century, may have been part of a dowry or gift in a marriage alliance between elite families in the Shropshire region and Kent, or that it may have been looted by the armies of Mercia during its expansion in the later seventh century when client kings were established in Kent. Whatever their origins these pieces indicate that there were wealthy and powerful people in Shropshire with the ability to acquire high status gold objects. Sawyer (2013:53) has argued that the value of gold would have meant great care would have been taken not to lose gold objects and efforts made to retrieve those which had been lost. With this in mind, it is possible to suggest that there would have been many more gold objects circulating in Shropshire and the three which have been recovered are the results of accidental losses which the owners were unable to retrieve. A bead (Catalogue no. 2) found near Clun was made from Whitby jet and may also represent trade, gift exchange or tribute between Shropshire and the north-east of England.

Viking Period

There is an increase in the number of artefacts that have been found dating to after c.800 compared to the earlier period. Eight artefacts have been identified as being of

Scandinavian manufacture or design influence. With the exception of a strap end (Catalogue no. 74) found in Stowe, all of these objects have been found to the north and east of the River Severn (Figure 4.3.3). The distribution of the artefacts suggests that for some reason, Scandinavians, or their goods, rarely passed to the south and west of the Severn.

The distribution could suggest that objects were coming into Shropshire from the coastal market site of Meols on the Wirral. This site has now been extensively studied and found to have been the site of a trading port possibly originating in the Iron Age and continuing into the later medieval period. Activity at the site seems to have declined during the earlier Anglo-Saxon period increasing again from the tenth century (Griffiths, 2007b:402). Over 100 Anglo-Saxon period objects have been discovered at Meols, making it probably the densest concentration of Anglo-Saxon finds in the west of England (excluding hoards) and gives a good indication of the type of objects that were being traded (Griffiths, 2007a:58). The majority of finds from the site are a range of dress accessories. Also found were domestic and agricultural tools and implements, horse equipment and a scale attachment associated with the activities of trade (Griffiths, 2003a:61-71). A significant number of the Meols finds from this period, including pins, strap ends and hooked tags are similar to those discovered in Shropshire. Leahy (PAS website) believes a highly ornate and crafted disc mount brooch (Catalogue no. 4) discovered near Whitchurch was made in Ireland and brought to Shropshire by the Vikings. These objects demonstrate that there was some form of contact between Scandinavians, possibly coming to England from Ireland, and the people of Shropshire. However whether these objects were part of an active trade or were lost by Scandinavians passing through the region is unknown.

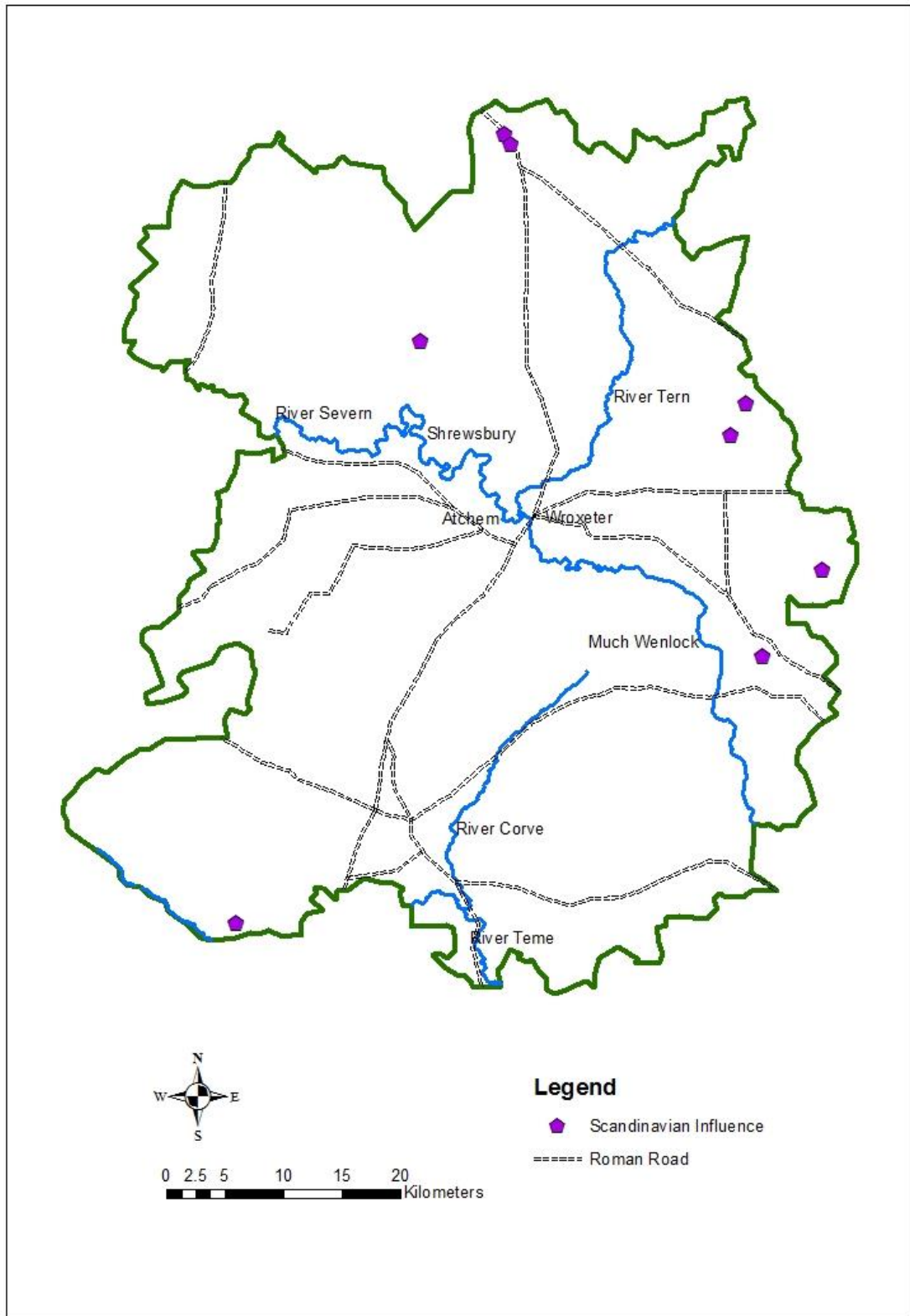


Figure 4.3.3: Location map of artefacts with Scandinavian influence.

An Arabic coin (Catalogue no. 84) has been discovered to the north of Much Wenlock, on the River Severn. This coin and two pieces of bars of silver ingot (held by the Shropshire Museum Services) are again associated with 'Viking' trade and suggests that trade of some form was occurring here.

Later Anglo-Saxon Period

In the later Anglo-Saxon period the use of coins increased as the introduction of silver coinage meant that coinage could be used in less valuable transactions than the gold coinage of the earlier period. By the 920s there were 35 – 40 mints in England, established by Alfred (871-99) and Edward the Elder (899-924), which were all located within burhs, a royal policy which continued through the period. The date of the establishment of the mint in Shrewsbury is unknown but coins were minted here during the reign of Aethelstan (925-39) and Baker (2010:98) argues that the space between the churches of St Alkmund's and St Juliana's may have been a market place from the early tenth century. None of the Shrewsbury coins have been found within Shropshire although the EMC database records seven coins minted at Shrewsbury, the location of one find is uncertain but two were found in Eastern England, two in southern England and two closer to Shropshire, one in Worcestershire and one in the Wirral. The coins date from 946 – 1066 indicating that trade was being conducted between Shropshire and regions across England during this time.

The find spot location for the coins held by Shropshire Museums are not known, but the distribution of the coins which have been found in Shropshire and recorded by PAS do show a pattern (Figure 4.3.4). It can be seen that they are located within a corridor of the River Severn and in the north of the county, possibly showing a route which could have been used by those travelling from the Wirral through northern Shropshire to Shrewsbury. The

distribution pattern of the coins could possibly indicate the extent of an area in which there were Scandinavian cultural influences and economic activity between Scandinavians and the inhabitants of Shropshire. It is likely this indicates an active economic relationship between Scandinavians and the diocese of Lichfield which included the northern and eastern half of Shropshire, discussed further below.

The general distribution pattern of artefact finds from the Middle – Later Anglo-Saxon periods show a similar distribution to that of the coins (Figure 4.3.5) with the vast majority of objects being found in Shrewsbury and to the north and east of the River Severn. Clusters of finds occur in Shrewsbury, Oswestry in the north-west, Whitchurch and Prees in the north, and Worfield and Claverly in the east-south-east. The clustering may in part be subject to the locations in which metal detectorists are active but as a number of single finds have also been made, especially in the east of the county, the clusters could indicate areas which were repeatedly used as meeting or trading sites. Many of the single finds in the east are located near to the main Roman road which connected the region with London and may be the result of the casual losses of travellers. The majority of the pottery which has been identified from Shrewsbury is Stafford ware which also indicates trade with regions to the east of the county.

From the analysis of PAS finds conducted by VASLE we can see a national pattern of finds indicating a far greater level of trade and use of metal objects in the eastern half of England than in the west (Figure 4.3.6). However there is a general increase in finds from the later period compared to the earlier period across England. Shropshire, despite not being as wealthy as areas in Eastern England, does appear to fit into this pattern of greater prosperity, wealth and trade.

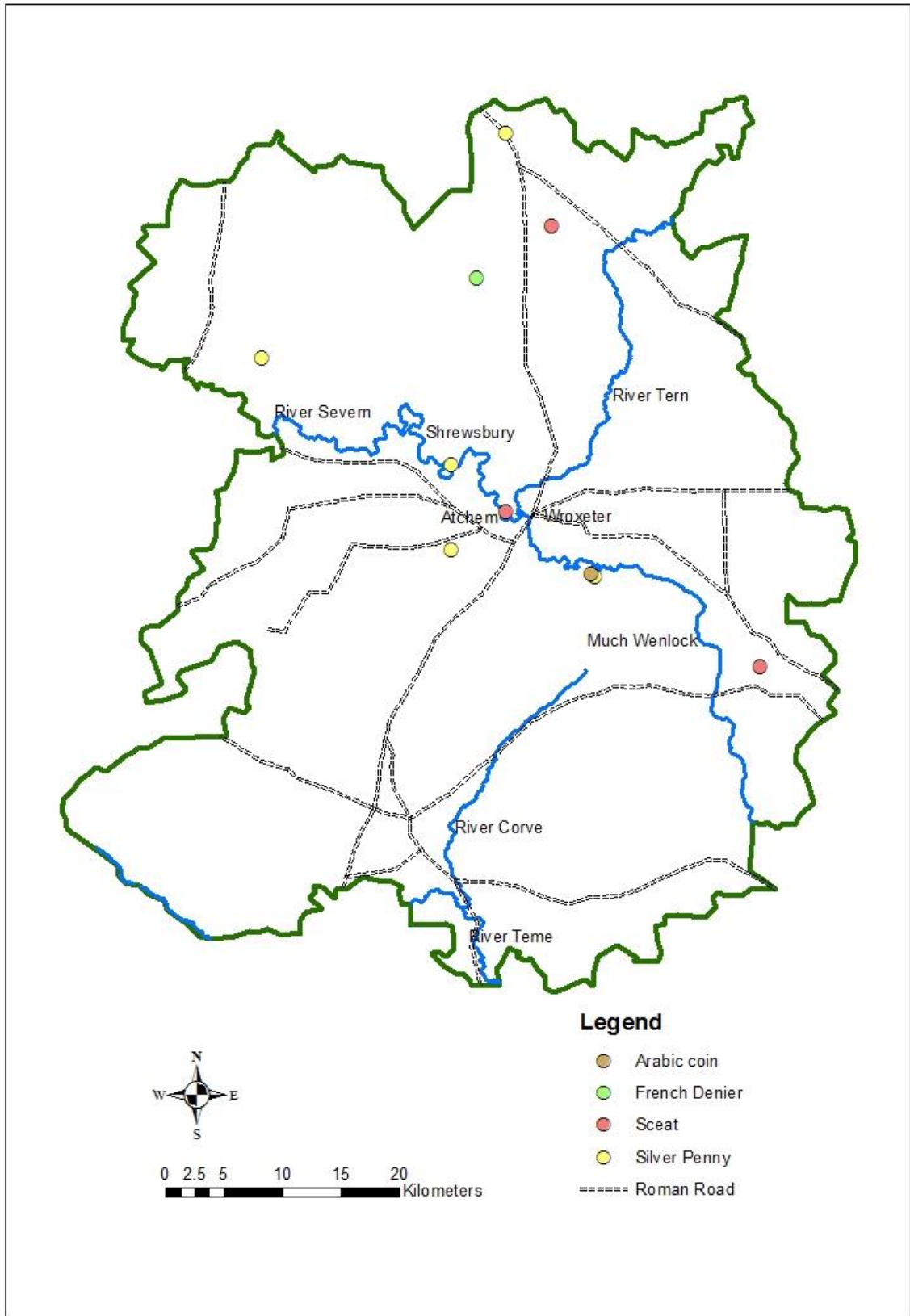


Figure 4.3.4: Location map of coins.

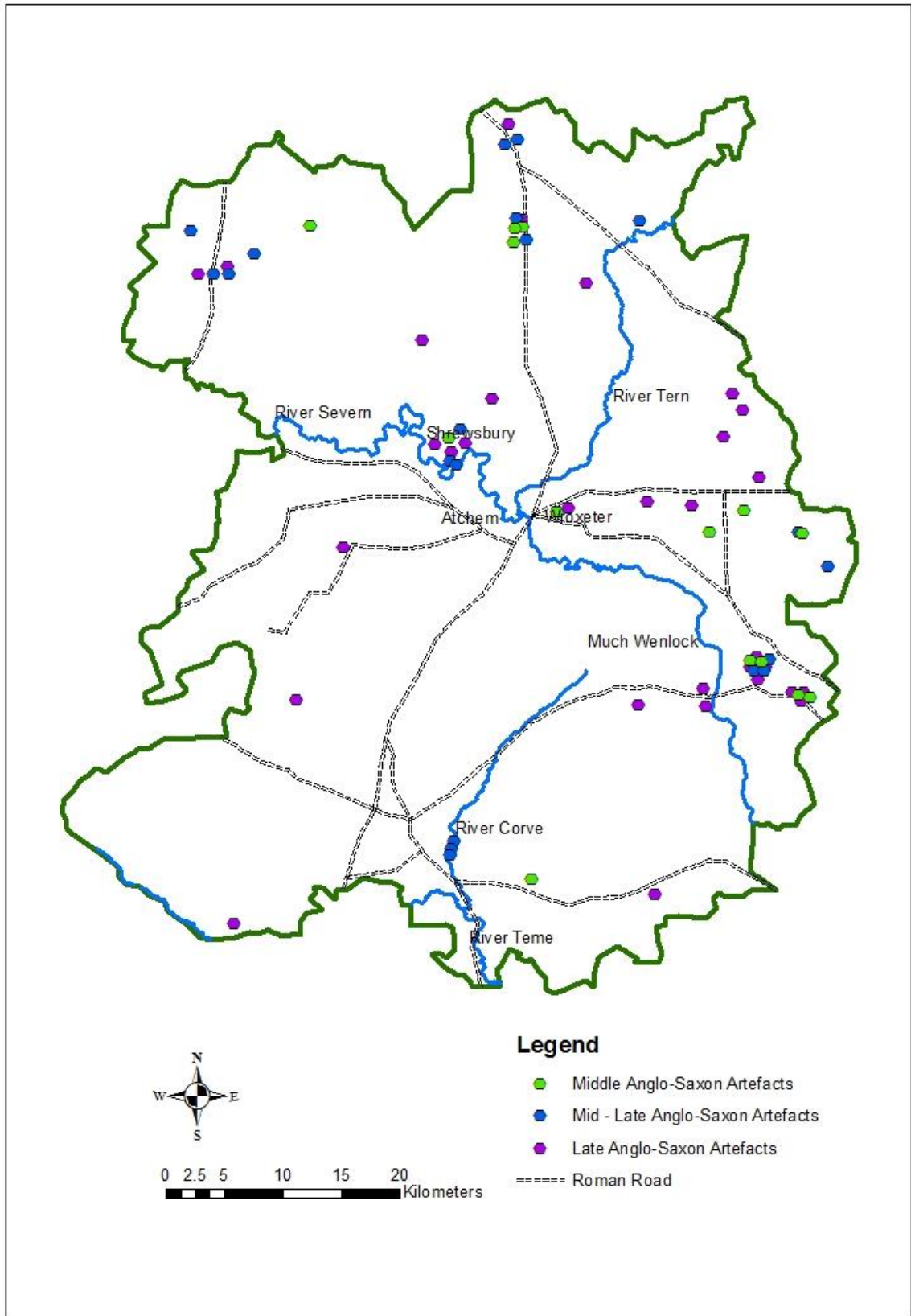


Figure 4.3.5: Location map of mid-later Anglo-Saxon artefacts.

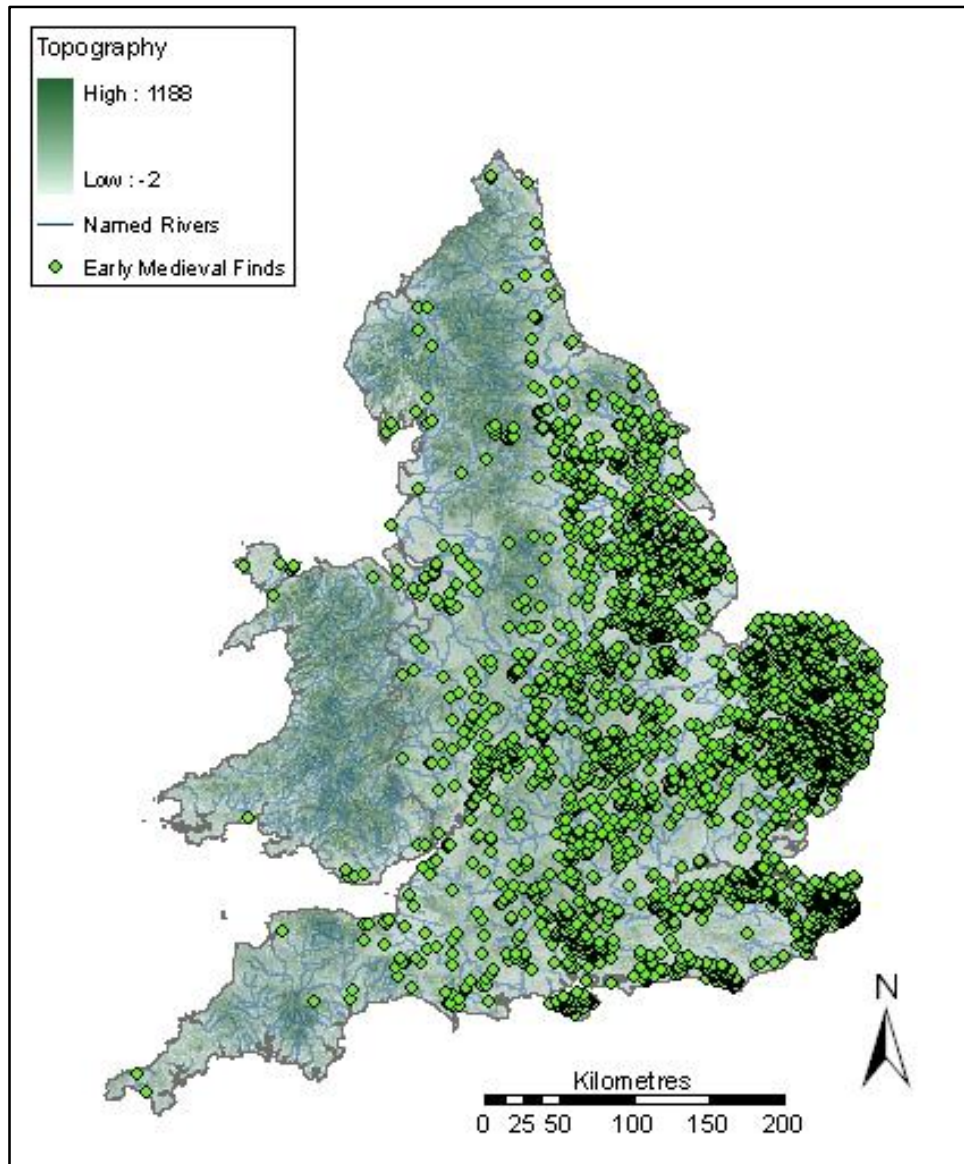


Figure 4.3.6: Location map of PAS Early Medieval finds
 (<http://intarch.ac.uk/journal/issue25/2/2.5.1.html>).

From this later period we can see a general increase in the display of wealth through an increase in the occurrence of finds such as a variety of horse fittings (Catalogue nos. 51-63) and strap ends (Catalogue nos. 64-78). Most of these objects were made of copper alloy, not as expensive as gold or silver, but many were elaborately decorated and the ownership of a horse itself was a significant symbol of wealth and status. The objects from Shropshire follow a trend identified in York, in which an increasingly successful merchant class wished

to emulate the objects worn by the elite and so copper-alloy objects were made which could be afforded by this new class of people. The increasing number of these types of finds in Shropshire suggests that, as elsewhere in England, there was an increasing amount of wealth and trade in Shropshire during the later Anglo-Saxon period.

Conclusion

The combined data suggests that during the earlier Anglo-Saxon period trade and also wealth were predominantly to be found in the southern half of the county, within an area which would have been within the northern territory of the Magonsaete. Due to the combination of multiple factors; integration of the area within Mercia, the founding of the Minster at Much Wenlock in the early eighth century and the development of Shrewsbury as the main commercial centre by the late ninth century, coupled with the arrival of new avenues of trade with Scandinavians from the north of the region, the signs of trade and economic prosperity move to the central and northern areas of the county. Despite the relative lack of urbanisation and wealth in Shropshire compared to areas in the east of England the general pattern of increasing material objects and coinage in the later period corresponds with a general increase in wealth and a successful trading economy in England from the tenth century.

5 Discussion

The VASLE project has demonstrated that the number of Anglo-Saxon artefacts discovered in West Central England is considerably lower than the numbers found in eastern regions, although comparable with finds from the northern region (Figure 5.1). However as Hines (2002:2) commented, the increase in recorded finds from PAS and the integration of historical and place-name evidence with archaeological evidence means archaeologists can be 'positive' about researching the Anglo-Saxon period in the West Midlands region. By drawing together the data analysis from the three previous sections it is possible to begin to discuss the development of Shropshire through the Anglo-Saxon period.

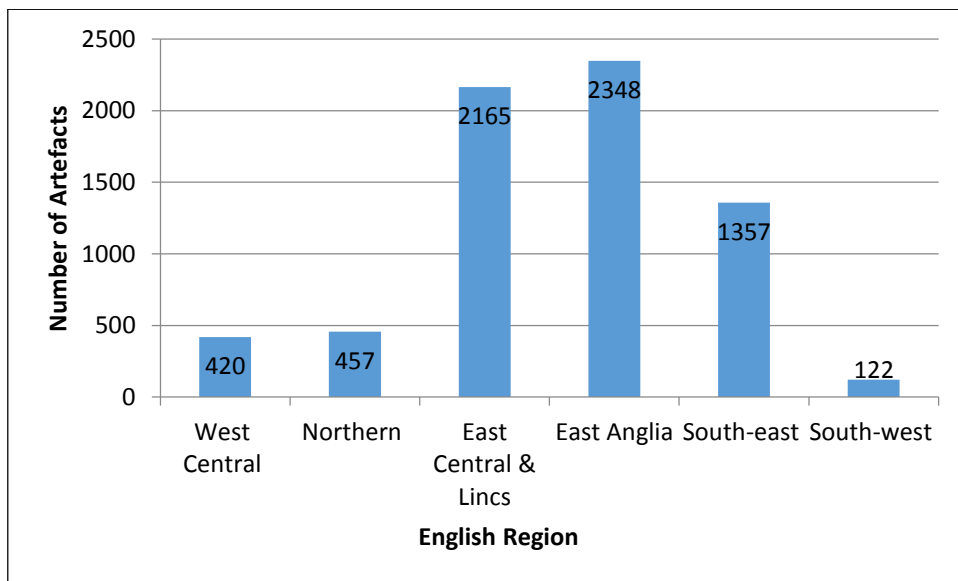


Figure 5.1: The numbers of Anglo-Saxon artefacts recorded by PAS for English regions.

Earlier Anglo-Saxon Period

The evidence we have for the earlier Anglo-Saxon period is largely inferred from place-names and a relatively low number of artefact finds. The number and extent of settlements

in Shropshire during this period is unknown, however we do know that the Roman town at Wroxeter continued in some form of use until the sixth or seventh century (White *et al.* 2013:198). The artefact and place-name evidence suggests that there were two main centres of activity; one centred around the junction of the rivers Teme and Corve in the territory of the Magonsaete, and the other centred near Wroxeter, around the junction of the rivers Severn and Tern in the territory of the Wreocensaete (Figure 5.2). The movement of the Anglo-Saxons, from the east into the western regions of Britain during this earlier period resulted in cultural, political, religious and economic changes altering the landscape and affecting people's daily lives.

The earliest artefacts all come from the southern half of Shropshire and place-names indicate farming activity and 'market' centres were also located predominantly in the south of the county during this period (Figure 5.2). It is likely that there was a subsistence economy with the majority of the population living in dispersed rural settlements, growing wheat and rye crops or rearing sheep, cattle or horses. Enough surplus must have been produced to warrant the creation and use of regular market sites and to support an elite. The presence of an elite is supported by high status finds; gold objects originating from the east of England. All of those with known location recordings have been discovered in the territory of the Magonsaete. The inclusion of grave goods in only three burials in the cemetery at Bromfield also suggests there was an elite in the area around Ludlow. A recent study by Bayliss *et al.* (2013:524) has shown that unfurnished inhumation was the norm in western England and Wales from the post-Roman period through the Anglo-Saxon period. Furnished inhumations became associated with Anglo-Saxon burials from the later fourth century in eastern England, a practice which ended by the later sixth century. However the

authors argue that the use of grave goods cannot be used to identify religious belief as by the end of the furnished burial phase, objects were also placed in Christian graves, including that of St. Cuthbert (Bayliss *et al.* 2013:526). The deposition of valuable items in graves is therefore more likely to demonstrate a display of the wealth or prestige of those conducting the burial. The inclusion of three furnished burials within an otherwise Christian cemetery suggests that the use of grave goods was an acceptable practice by the Christian community at Bromfield and that the use of grave goods was employed to mark out these individuals as different from the rest of the community.

The evidence suggests that in the early Anglo-Saxon period there was an organised, hierarchical society in the south of the county, possibly within the Magonsaete territory, who lived in dispersed settlements, practised Christianity and who had an organised economic system based around the local markets. The likely use of tumuli as meeting locations suggests there was a formal system for debate and the dealing of dispute, which also suggests a politically or 'legally' organised society.

The subjugation of the Magonsaete and Wrocensaete territories by Mercia during the seventh century may be evidenced by a shift in activity within the region which appears to have increased around the Severn, whilst declining in the southern half of the county. The arrival of the Anglo-Saxon Church would also have had a considerable impact on the settlement and economy of the region. Walker (2000:164) has argued that it is possible that the reforms which led to the creation of shires may have been initiated earlier than is often thought, by Mercian rulers and not by the later West Saxon rulers. Although the shire units were designed to bring a form of stability and create a bond within the population to their Mercian overlords (Walker, 2000:165), it is likely that the tribal allegiances of the

Magonsaete and the Wrocensaete were maintained to some degree. Kirby has described the Magonsaete as a 'satellite folk group' (1977:35) of Mercia who continued to be in conflict with the kingdom of Erging, south of Herefordshire. Penda (634-56) forged an alliance with the Britons of Wales and it was not until the reign of his son, Wulfhere (659-75) that conflict arose between Mercia and Powys.

The '*byrig*' place-name evidence suggests the location of the forts and fort-guardians are, with the exception of the fort at Baschurch, all located to the south of the River Severn. The location of three of the forts, to the south of Atcham and Much Wenlock, suggests that the forts were built after the palace and minster had been constructed respectively at these locations. The fort at Baschurch is located on the southern end of a ridge, the first point of high land to the north of Shrewsbury. Although the fort is approximately 10km from Shrewsbury, its location on a ridge means it may have been positioned as an initial defensive or look-out post for Shrewsbury. Another fort was constructed on the Shropshire – Powys border near to the relatively large settlement of Lydbury North. The use of English place-names and the locations of the forts suggest that they were built in the latter half of the seventh century when Mercia was in conflict with Powys.

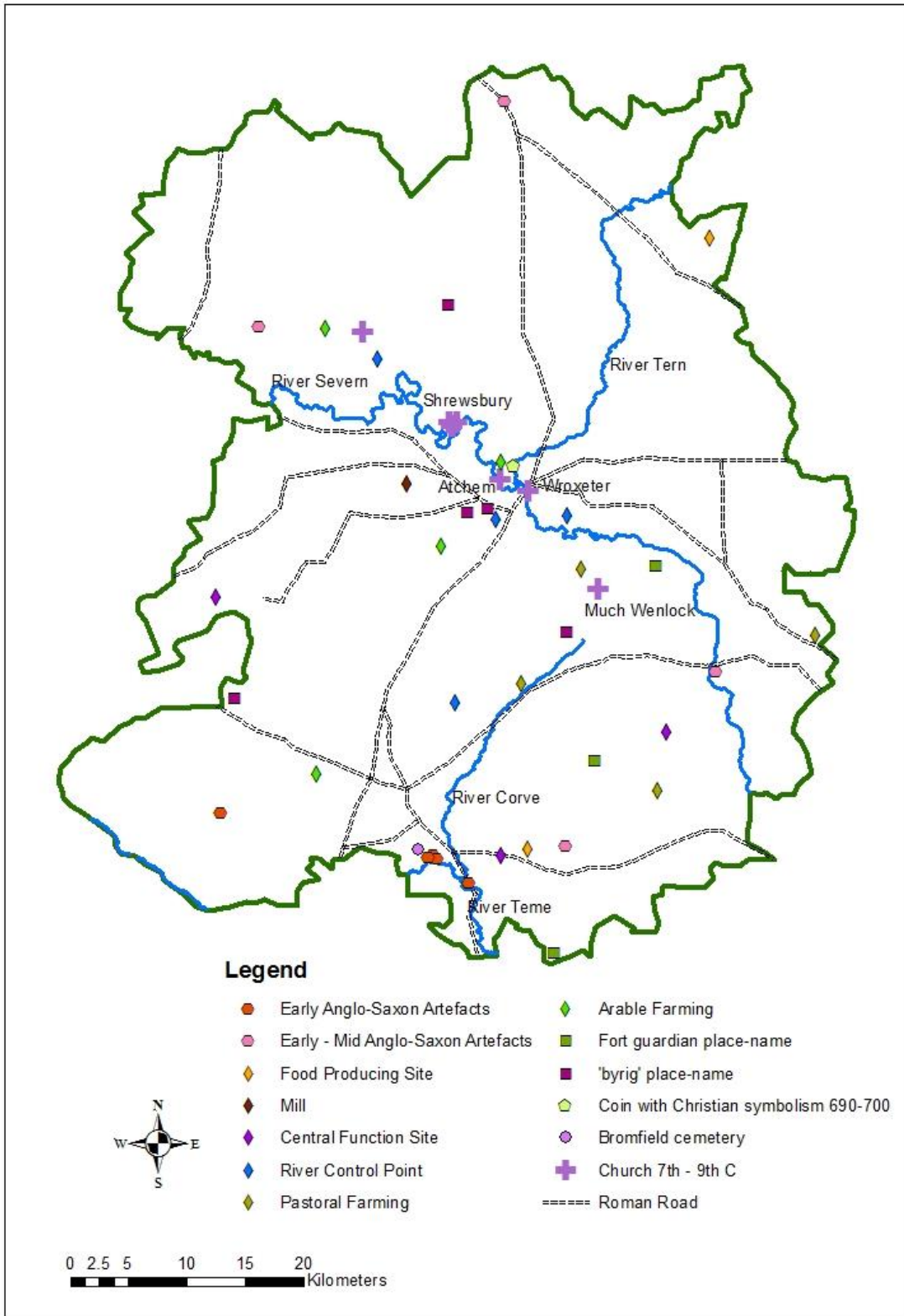


Figure 5.2: Map of evidence from the earlier Anglo-Saxon period.

The evidence for the forts plus a strong possibility of an Anglo-Saxon palace site at Atcham coupled with the foundation of the minster at Much Wenlock before 690 suggests the display of a consolidated political and religious power base in this area in the second half of the seventh century. Combined with the establishment of the earliest churches along the River Severn and the founding of Shrewsbury at some point during the ninth century it becomes clear that this area became the central power base for the region following the absorption of the area into the Mercian kingdom. Although few artefacts date to this early – mid period there is a general pattern of artefact discovery locations also moving away from the south of the county towards the central and northern areas during this time. This could suggest a fundamental change in the power base and relationships between social groupings when the Mercian kingdom subjugated the territories of the Magonsaete and the Wreocensaete.

Many minsters were founded by secular royal families from the later seventh century with the result that the political, social and economic power of the Church increased (Blair, 2005:84). This is seen in Shropshire with the founding of Much Wenlock and the construction of stone churches. The use of stone sculpture in the early ninth century at St Andrew's, Wroxeter demonstrates that there was an elite who founded or donated to this Church, and used their wealth to ensure their closeness to God and to publicly display their devotion to the Christian Church. The development and construction of churches, particularly those constructed of stone, would have had a significant physical and visual impact on the landscape (Blair, 2011:732). To what extent the initial spread of the Anglo-Saxon Church would have affected the local population is debateable. It is likely however that the church would have impacted not only on the religious life of communities but also

on the settlement and economy of the surrounding area. Many churches were endowed with land from which to gain revenue and it is likely that by the middle Anglo-Saxon period the arrival of the Church would have stimulated the need for labourers, produce markets and settlement clusters which had not previously existed.

Middle – Later Anglo-Saxon period

The influence of the Vikings is clearly seen in Shropshire from the early ninth century onwards. From this period it is possible to see a far greater number of artefacts have been recovered from the north and east of Shropshire than from the south and west. No longer is the predominating cultural influence in Shropshire coming from the east and the Anglo-Saxons, but from Scandinavians arriving to the north of the region. Artefacts originating from Ireland, often with a Scandinavian artistic style have been discovered at the site of a beach market located at Meols on the Wirral, where following a decline, activity increased again from the middle Anglo-Saxon period. The artefacts found in Shropshire which have a Scandinavian influence have been found to the north of the River Severn, with only one exception, making it probable that Scandinavians were trading with people in this area or moving through the northern half of Shropshire, possibly from Meols to the Danelaw. This could suggest that Scandinavians had different relationships with people in the north and east of the county to those living in the south and west. It is interesting to note the locations of the fortifications constructed by Aethelflaed in the beginning of the tenth century. These forts are recorded as being constructed in direct response to Viking raids and are located at the central settlement of Shrewsbury and two additional sites, Bridgnorth and Chirbury, both in the south of the county. Attacks on Shrewsbury could indicate changing relations between the Vikings and English, but the location of the forts in the south contrasts with

evidence for trade in the north possibly suggesting that territory south of the Severn was more hostile to Scandinavian traders or more vulnerable to attack from Scandinavian raiders. The Church may also have played a role in these differing relations; the north and east of Shropshire (the region of the Wrocensaete) were part of the diocese of Lichfield whilst the south and west (the region of the Magonsaete) were part of Hereford diocese (Gelling, 1992:98). By placing the evidence into a regional setting it is possible to see that Lichfield, located near to the border of the Danelaw, had a more proactive cultural and economic relationship with Scandinavians than people in the diocese of Hereford (Figure 5.3).

From the artefacts we can see that people in Shropshire were trading not only dress accessories with Scandinavians from Meols but also with the Staffordshire ceramic industries. The distribution of coins found across England which were minted at Shrewsbury and the origins of the coins found in Shropshire also indicate trade was continuing between Shropshire and southern regions of England. It is also possible to see economic influences from the Danelaw. The use of particular materials for objects follows the national pattern at the end of the seventh century in a decline in the use of gold, with elite objects instead being made of silver with niello decoration. During the ninth century we again see a change in the material of objects with the introduction of lead or pewter objects; a fashion which appears to have started in York as a general increase in prosperity resulted in a new class of people wishing to emulate the styles of the elite in an affordable manner.



Figure 5.3: Location of Shropshire in relation to the Diocese of Lichfield and the Danelaw.

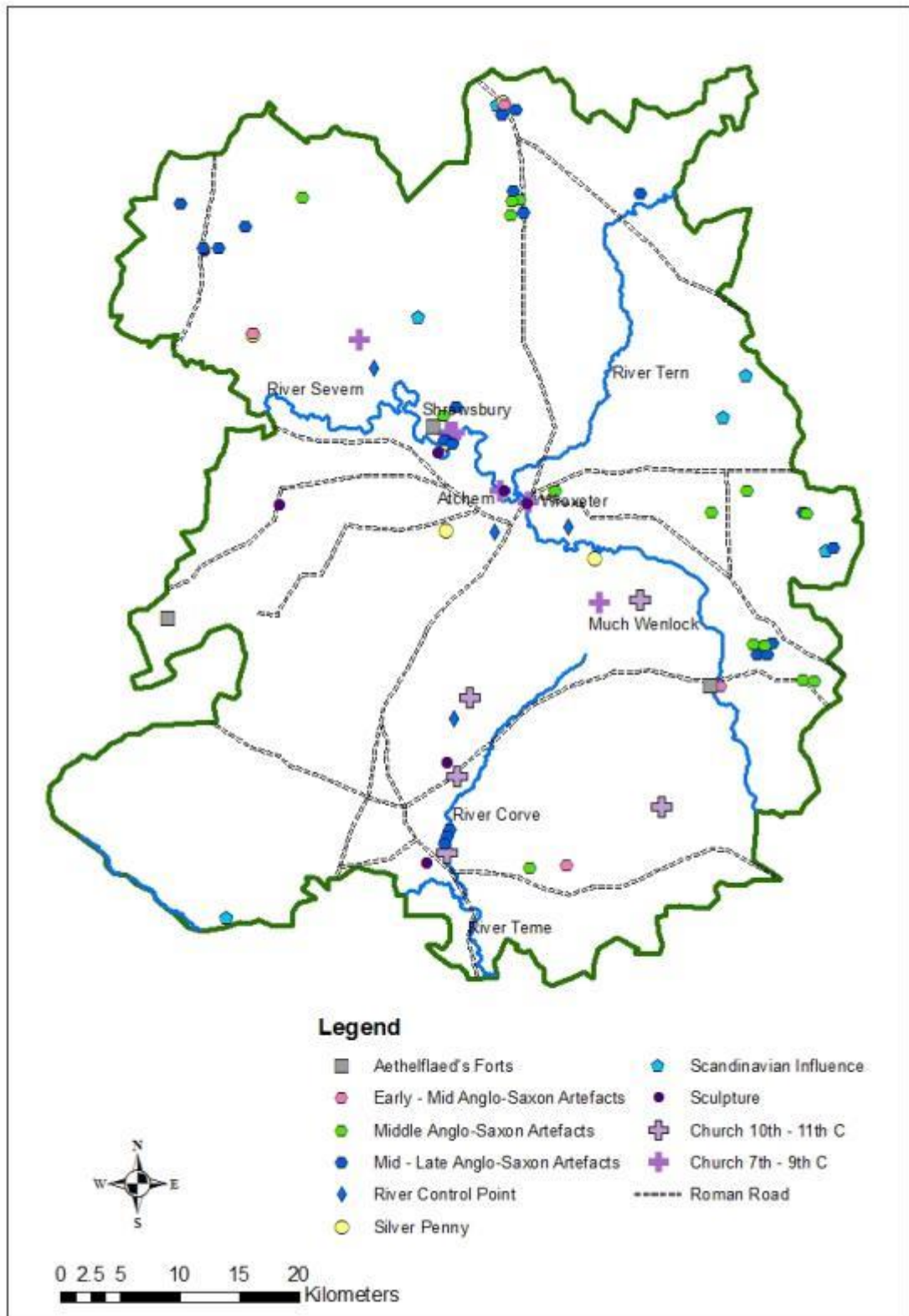


Figure 5.4: Map of evidence from the mid-later Anglo-Saxon period.

Generally the increase in the number of finds from this period in comparison with the earlier period may reflect a greater level of wealth and improved economy (Figure 5.4). It may also be the case that status or wealth were displayed in differing ways during the earlier period but in this later period there appears to be a desire for those in positions of power or wealth to display their status through material objects, particularly portable objects such as dress and horse fittings which would have been clearly visible to people seeing these individuals. Increased trade with Scandinavians bringing new styles of Scandinavian and Irish objects into the area may also have stimulated a new, or different, consumer society. Many of the objects from this period have been decorated with Christian symbols and imagery indicating that it was also important to people to display their belief in or affiliation with the Church. Many of the finds have been found in relative close proximity to others, particularly within Shrewsbury, and within clusters on the Roman roads which run from the north of the county towards Wroxeter, the road from Wroxeter running south-east, the road in the north-west of the county and an area in the south of the county on the River Corve. These clusters may indicate settlements, meeting places or markets where people would have regularly gathered, thereby increasing the likelihood of a greater number of objects being lost within the area. In contrast, the individual scattered finds may represent areas through which people travelled between locations and lost objects in more isolated places.

It is also during the ninth and tenth centuries that we have evidence for an increase in the number of stone churches being constructed and stone sculptures being made. This also suggests an increase in wealth in the area which may also have resulted in an increase in Viking attacks. Following on from the initial location of churches along the River Severn, the location of these later stone churches is focused on the south-east of the county. The only

evidence for stone built churches in the west of the county from this period are two cross shafts, one found at St May's, Westbury and the other found in the River Morda. The increase in the construction of churches from the tenth century probably reflects the fragmentation of large estates into smaller units within which new manorial lords established their own churches (Hooke, 2005:165).

Hooke (2005:165) argues that the break-up of large ecclesiastical and secular estates would have also impacted on local economies, societies and the political framework across England. The gathering of tribute as had occurred under the large estates was replaced by the rendering of services and money, raised from individual estates. In rural areas with low populations such as Shropshire, it is thought that an infield-outfield system of farming developed as opposed to the open field system which developed in more densely populated areas (Hooke, 2005:169). This resulted in the continuation of smaller dispersed settlements as is reflected in the accounts of the Domesday survey for Shropshire.

The End of the Anglo-Saxon period

The Domesday Survey of 1086 provides an insight into the settlement pattern, population, number of churches and the value of landholdings and taxes shortly after the Norman Conquest. Many people and places would have been affected by the Conquest, the cultural, political and economic influences on the region once again coming from invaders pushing from the east into the west. Subsequently there were new divisions and owners of land, however as the new Norman lords were to hold the same responsibilities as well as rights as their English predecessors (Williams, 1977:51) it is likely that the picture of the general population we get from Domesday is similar to that before the Conquest.

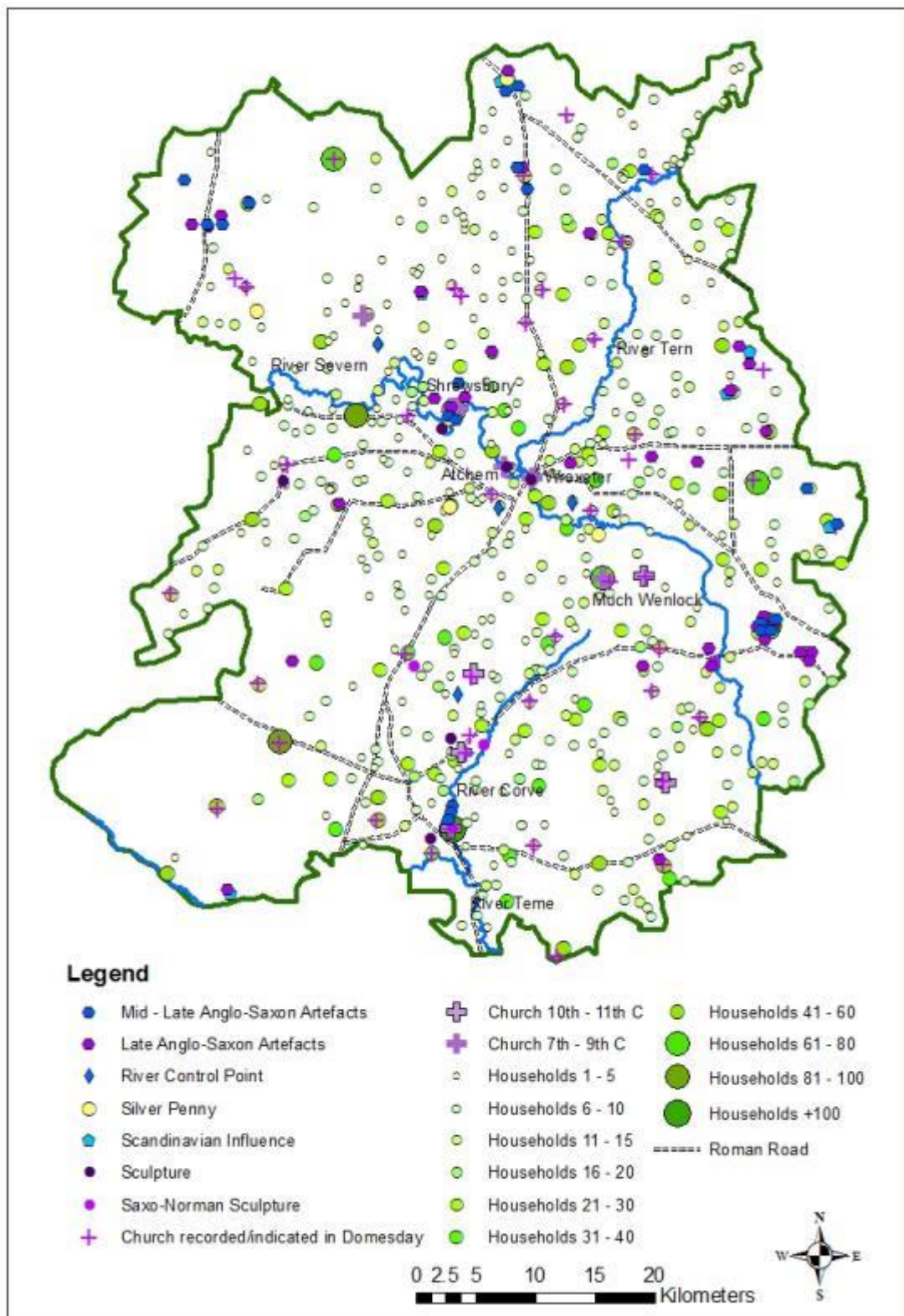


Figure 5.5: Map of evidence from the end of the Anglo-Saxon period.

From the Domesday account for Shropshire we can see a county towards the end of the eleventh century comprised primarily of small scattered settlements, the majority with fewer than five households, with populations who were economically tied to the estate on which they lived and worked. The number of burgesses recorded in Domesday for Shrewsbury along with the multiple churches and the mint demonstrate the development and importance of this town through the later Anglo-Saxon period. Most of the smaller settlements appear to be scattered across the county, but we can see that many of the larger settlements, the churches recorded in Domesday and many of the artefacts recorded by PAS are located on or near to the routes of Roman roads illustrating that these remained important communication routes throughout the Anglo-Saxon period (Figure 5.5).

There is still much to be learnt about the detail of political, social, religious and economic developments in Shropshire during the Anglo-Saxon period. However the compilation and analysis of evidence from various sources has shown that Shropshire was not an isolated region. It was connected to other regions throughout England, Ireland and Wales and through trade with these regions was also connected to the worlds of the Continent and Scandinavia. The people of Shropshire would have been affected by the spread of the Church, the Viking raids, the Norman Conquest, economic fluctuations and developments of urbanisation as people were across all of England.

6 Conclusion

This study has focused on the use of combining multiple sources of data to investigate the character of Shropshire A.D. 600 – 1066. The findings demonstrate that throughout the Anglo-Saxon period Shropshire was a highly active, evolving and integrated part of England. It did not have a central economic, political or religious role as seen in Southampton, York or Canterbury, but the people of Shropshire were engaged with, influenced and affected by the events and trends that occurred across England.

Much of the general literature on Anglo-Saxon England focuses primarily on eastern regions of England. Whilst there is a valuable range of literature on western England, in particular the kingdom of Mercia, these sources also generally focus on the geographical or thematic areas for which there is the greatest amount of evidence. Whilst there is relatively little archaeological evidence from Shropshire dated to the Anglo-Saxon period, this study has sought to address the current gap in knowledge about Anglo-Saxon Shropshire by combining multiple sources of data to create an overview of Shropshire through the Anglo-Saxon period. This study has looked at three specific thematic areas; religion, settlement and the economy, before integrating these themes in the discussion chapter to develop a broad character assessment for Shropshire.

This method has brought to light new insights into this period. Primarily, the artefact evidence demonstrates the changing frontiers or zones of cultural contact and influence in the county; in the 5th – 7th centuries a border ran north-south as the Anglo-Saxon influence came into the west from the east. Then, through the 10th and 11th centuries the frontier ran along the river Severn as contact with Scandinavians arriving across the Irish Sea became a

dominant cultural influence, and then following the Norman Conquest, the north – south frontier returned as the Normans moved from east to west.

The limit of Scandinavian contact or influence is demonstrated in the apparent differences in the trade and economies of the region to the north and east of the River Severn in comparison with the region to the south and west of the Severn. This could suggest that tribal affiliations within the Magonsaete and Wrocensaete continued into the later Anglo-Saxon period, governing the relationship between the peoples of the two regions and the Scandinavians. The inclusion of the region of the Wrocensaete in the diocese of Lichfield and the region of the Magonsaete within the diocese of Hereford may also have resulted in differing trade and cultural contact with the Scandinavians. Given the relative scarcity of artefacts from Shropshire, the proportion of those with Scandinavian or Irish origin or influence is surprisingly high. No Scandinavian settlements have been discovered in Shropshire but the high proportion of artefacts does indicate a considerable presence, which could be explored in future studies.

This study has demonstrated that combining data for PAS finds from Shropshire with multiple other sources can make a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the county during the Anglo-Saxon period. The contribution of the PAS database will continue to increase in value as more artefacts are discovered and recorded. However restrictions on access to the find location information for some of the objects may have influenced the results of this current research which may have been particularly relevant when making interpretations based on such a low total number of artefacts. Aerial photography is another avenue of exploration which may reveal other potential Anglo-Saxon sites such as

the possible palace site identified at Atchem, which if excavated, could vastly improve our current state of knowledge.

This study has produced an over-view of Anglo-Saxon Shropshire, the results of which have the potential to be incorporated into a larger study on western Anglo-Saxon England. Combined with studies from other western counties, issues such as the extent of Scandinavian contact and influence, the wider regional economy and the expression of identity in the border region could be addressed. Such studies could then be used to create both a broader and more subtle body of information and go some way towards balancing our knowledge of eastern and western England during the Anglo-Saxon period.

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Appendix 1. A Catalogue of Anglo-Saxon Objects from Shropshire

Images courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

Dress Accessories

BEADS

Catalogue no.1

Object: Bead

Location: Hoare Edge SO 5963 7683.

Context: Found within a barrow before 1851.

Material: Amber

Size: unknown

Date: Anglo-Saxon?

Current location: unknown

The amber beads were thought to be 'Celtic' by the Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries in 1851 and have been reassigned to the Anglo-Saxon period by Chitty due to their description as 'large' (Chitty, 1932:111).

No Image Available

Catalogue no.2

Object: Bead

Location: Hollybush, Clun SO 2736 8350.

Context: Found near a pond before 1966.

Material : Jet

Size: unknown

Date: 410 – 799

Current location: unknown, previously in the AJ Bird collection

HER ID: 03010

A Whitby jet bead of the Offan period, examined by Christopher Hawkes.

No Image Available

BROOCHES

Catalogue no.3

Object: Brooch

Location: Bridgnorth

Context: metal detector 2011

Material: Copper

Size: length: 30.47mm width: 19.81mm thickness: 2.38mm Weight: 4.4g

Date: 450 – 900

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-60E178

A fragment possibly from a bow brooch. A rectangular shaped object with moulded decoration comprising two circles (or rings), side by side, whilst part of a third circle is visible below and between the others at the break. There is a dark green patina on the reverse and on much of the front, although areas of brown colouration are perhaps the remains of a mercury/gold amalgam for gilding.



Catalogue no.4

Object: Disc mount

Location: Whitchurch area

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 45.4mm width: 34.9mm thickness: 4mm Weight: 11.59g

Date: 650 - 850

Current location: Ludlow Museum, Accession Number 2011.00109

PAS Record ID: HESH-E9D295

A gilt decorative mount, originally circular with a diameter of around 49mm. The face of the brooch bears chip-carved and inlaid decoration, the main feature of which is a central cross dividing the field into four equal parts. The reverse is undecorated and corroded with a much distorted oval, raised fitting.

The face of the mount has a symmetrical design, which has been constructed around a central cross and recessed panels. The cross is formed from four circular settings (or cups) positioned on the outer edge of the brooch. Only two of these outer settings survive. Each setting is joined to its neighbour by curvi-linear raised ribs creating a four armed cross with a large central panel. These ribs are decorated with incised horizontal lines creating a rope-like pattern. At the centre of the cross is a large setting bordered by four semi-circles defined by curvi-linear ribs. The central setting is raised above the other settings, almost like a small boss. The sockets on the face of the mount are empty; it is likely that they would have held a gem, semi-precious stone, or paste setting and their profile suggests that the stone would have been placed in the recessed central cup, around the edge of which is a slight ledge which rises to the circular outer rib. This suggests that the central fitting was not meant to fill the outer setting but solely the inner cup. The face of the mount is further decorated by a series of four recessed panels (of which only one survives) positioned between the arms of the central cross. The surviving panel has an intricate chip-carved design depicting an animal (probably a hound) with open mouth and protruding tongue, with a small nose and eye. The animal's body consists of an interlaced design formed with curvi-linear lines filled with small incised diagonal lines (similar to the rope-work) possibly depicting hair. The adjoining panel is incomplete and cannot be interpreted but it is thought that two animals would have been depicted on the four panels of the mount. The workmanship of this design (and the brooch as a whole) is especially high. Each element and panel seems to have an applied gilt (or gold) surface, which has decayed to a mid-brown yellow colour. The brooch is a mid-green brown colour with a much corroded and abraded patina.

From the style of the decoration Dr Kevin Leahy has suggested that it is a piece of ninth century Insular (Irish) metalwork which was probably brought to Shropshire under the aegis of the Vikings.

Regional Importance.



Catalogue no.5

Object: Ansate Brooch

Location: Telford

Context: metal detector (found 2010)

Material: Copper

Size: length: 52.5mm height: 14.66mm width: 20.04mm thickness: 5014mm Weight: 20.5g

Date: 700 – 900

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WAW-EF0D50

The brooch consists of two sub-square terminals, joined together by a slightly domed rectangular central bow. The bow has a broad recessed groove running its full length, with a ridge to either side. Each terminal has two similar broad grooves running transversely, each with a ridge at each side, so there is a single ridge at each end of the terminal and two parallel ridges in the centre. No traces of enamel or other inlay are present in any of the grooves.

The back of the brooch is undecorated. The remains of a coiled iron spring are present between a double pin bar lug on the back of the headplate, but the actual pin is lost. The catchplate is present on the foot; it has a central circular perforation and a hooked end.



Catalogue no.6

Object: Disc Brooch

Location: South Shropshire

Context: metal detector

Material: lead alloy

Size: length: 28.9mm width: 21.2mm thickness: 3.4mm Weight: 8.35g

Date: 800 – 1000

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-3AC4C6

It is debated whether this is part of a brooch or possibly a post medieval lead token. If the artefact is a brooch it would have originally been circular, however it is now more oval or sub-rectangular in plan and is slightly domed in profile.

The front face is decorated with a cast design based around a central boss formed by a raised pellet, which is enclosed by a series of concentric circles formed from cast low relief curvi-linear ribs. From the outer concentric circle a series of vertical and horizontal ribs extend. It is probable that these extend around the outer edge of the brooch. The reverse face of the brooch is plain and undecorated. There is no evidence of either a hinge fitting or catchplate associated with a brooch although these may have been lost through abrasion.



Catalogue no.7

Object: Disc Brooch

Location: Shrewsbury

Context: metal detector

Material: lead alloy (pewter?)

Size: length: 38.9mm width: 31.1mm thickness: 2.4mm Weight: 14.14g

Date: 800 – 1000

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-C34EB7

The brooch would have originally been circular, however it is now more oval or sub-rectangular in plan. It is slightly domed in profile and is convex in cross section. The front face is decorated with a cast design based around a vertical cross which is enclosed within a circle. The arms of the cross are formed from vertical and horizontal cast ribs and the enclosing circle is formed from a similar curvi-linear rib. At the centre of the cross, is a large raised dome like pellet to either side of which are further decorative elements. These consist of a single smaller dome like pellet enclosed by a circlet of smaller circular pellets in a flower like pattern. In the triangular areas created by the cross and containing circlet are further decorations consisting of single raised annulets. Outside the contained design are a series of concentric circles. The inner of the concentric circles is undecorated whilst the outer one is decorated with a series of vertical radiating lentoid ribs. The outer most of the ribs is much larger and forms an enclosing raised rim / edge. The reverse face of the brooch is plain. On the upper edge are two vertical raised lugs (each 8.2mm x 2.5mm x 2.8mm) which have been pierced. Through this piercing an axis bar would have passed to hold a hinged or possibly sprung pin. On the lower edge of the reverse is a single vertical raised lug (9.8mm x 3.2mm x 1.9mm), which has been much abraded. This would have originally been rolled over to form a catch plate and pin rest for the pin. Neither the axis bar, pin or spring survive.



Catalogue no.8

Object: Brooch

Location: Tong, Bridgnorth

Context: metal detector

Material: copper

Size: length: 34mm width: 23mm thickness: 7mm Weight: 6.86g

Date: 850 – 1000

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-F8C502

This brooch is in the form of a dog or hound whose head is turning round over the back of its body to grip its tail in its open mouth. Although the brooch is in a worn condition, the ribbon or scrolled and ridged linear decoration curls around the outside edge of the hind leg with an irregularly sub-rectangular recessed area in the centre of this feature where there appears to be the remains of black or dark enamel. The main torso of the animal has two strips of rectangular recessed areas where there are also remains of dark enamel, with a wavy scratched line appearing on one of the enamelled strips, but this has probably been recently done. At the front of the body, one of the front legs seems to be tucked into the body and the neck of the animal curves backwards as the head bends back over the body. One small ear and the large curved mouth with curled upper lip holding the tail is clearly visible. Additionally, there is a small rounded protrusion underneath the bottom jaw. There is also some enamelled remains in two adjacent and recessed rectangular sections on the neck, as well as a recessed area above the front leg, where there is no enamel remaining. The back is plain, undecorated and relatively flat, apart from a hollow and arched probable suspension loop or catch plate where a pin or fitting may have been secured to keep the artefact in place.



DRESS FASTNERS

Catalogue no.9

Object: Dress accessory or strap fitting

Location: Pontesbury SJ 4108

Context: metal detector

Material: copper alloy

Size: length: 21.4mm width: 23.8mm thickness: 1.9mm Weight: 4.01g

Date: 500 - 1050

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-260152

The fitting is irregular in plan, bowed in profile and D shaped in cross section. The edges of the fitting are bevelled. The shape of the fitting in plan is broadly sub triangular with the apex of the triangle tapering and then expanding into a semi-circular projection. The upper part of the fitting curves back to form a sub-rectangular U shaped hook. The front face of the fitting is decorated with a series of punched decorations. The only clear and complete element is an irregular ring and dot style motif. This is formed from a central annulet (hollow ring) within a punched broken circle / ring. It seems that this ring is made up of 5 curvi-linear parts. The reverse of the fitting is undecorated and plain.



Catalogue no.10

Object: Dress accessory or strap fitting

Location: Westbury SJ 3406

Context: metal detector

Material: copper alloy

Size: length: 29.3mm width: 25.2mm thickness: 2.1mm Weight: 6.08g

Date: 500 - 1050

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-6E0600

The fitting is irregular in plan, bowed in profile and D shaped in cross section. The edges of the fitting are beveled. The shape of the fitting in plan is broadly sub triangular with the apex of the triangle tapering and then expanding into a semi-circular projection. The upper part of the fitting curves back to form a sub-rectangular U shaped hook. The front face of the fitting is decorated with a series of evenly spaced deeply punched ring and dot decorations. Each of these ring and dots is formed from a central annulet (hollow ring) within a punched ring. There are ten ring and dot motifs on the fitting; five along the top edge, two on each side and one at the apex of the triangle. The reverse of the fitting is undecorated and plain.

The fitting is also asymmetrical in plan this may be partially caused by abrasion but it probably also reflects its use.



HOOKED TAGS

Catalogue no.11

Object: Dress hook

Location: Prees

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 24.13mm width: 14.4mm thickness: 6.45mm Weight: 1.1g

Date: 500 – 1050

Style: Class G, Type 1

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: LVPL-D7F7E1

The object is made from a one-piece copper alloy sheet. The upper face is decorated with three small drilled-holes each of which is within an annulet. At the top of the object two drilled attachment holes are within an annulet. The outer frame of the object is decorated by dividing into two ornamental angular knops. The hook is rearward facing and contains a small incision resulting in a forked terminal. The rear of the object is undecorated. The upper face and hook have been filed.



Catalogue no.12

Object: Hooked tag

Location: Sheinton SJ 6103

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 18.02mm width: 12.88mm thickness: 0.62mm Weight: 0.3g

Date: 600 – 1100

Type: Read, Class A, Type 2

Current location: unknown

PAS Record ID: NARC-DCA2A7

A sub-circular tag with a thin hook, missing its tip. It is damaged and missing a section which may have had one or two attachment holes. There is a piercing in the centre around which are four concentric circles in low relief, probably cast.



Catalogue no.13

Object: Hooked tag

Location: Worfield SO 7394

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 20.58mm width: 15.06mm thickness: 2.1mm Weight: 1.2g

Date: 700 – 1000

Current location: unknown

PAS Record ID: WMID-AFE646

An incomplete copper alloy hooked tag. Approximately 95% of the brooch is present, with the hook being incomplete. The plate is triangular (shield) shaped, with ring and dot decoration. The ring and dot decoration is centred around the two circular attachment holes. The holes have an internal diameter of 1.7 mm.



Catalogue no.14

Object: Hooked Tag

Location: Prees

Context: metal detector

Material: Silver

Size: length: 21.45mm width: 17.3mm thickness: 1.27mm Weight: 2.5g

Date: 800 - 900

Current location: Submitted for consideration as Treasure

PAS Record ID: LVPL-A65F43

Hooked tag with a drop-shaped plate, with rounded projections at the upper corners, each perforated with a circular sewing hole. The plate has an elegant concave taper towards the base to meet a small but complete backwards-bending hook. The panel of engraved ornament is set inside an undecorated frame and consists of a single Trewhiddle-style animal in flat counter-relief, whose head points towards the hook. The animal is seen in profile, with a head set on a long neck, with rounded brow, square snout with a nick on the underside of the nose, and a dot eye within a circular surround with a little tail extending backwards and downwards. The mouth is open and the lower jaw is also square-ended; the animal is biting at a rounded lobe at the end of one of the interlace tendrils.

The body is basically triangular, with a rounded belly; there is a shoulder emphasised by two curving grooves, from where a foreleg issues, ending in a two-toed foot. The rump is emphasised by a single curving groove, and a rear leg ends in a similar two-toed foot. The animal is enmeshed in interlace which originates from a tail of two strands; each strand then goes on to branch at least twice, and each strand ends in a rounded lobe. There are further detached dots which act as space-fillers. The grooves are all keyed to hold niello, none of which now survives. The reverse is undecorated.



Catalogue no.15

Object: Hooked tag

Location: Norbury CP

Context: metal detector

Material: Silver

Size: not recorded Weight: not recorded

Date: 1016 – 1035

Current location: Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, declared treasure

PAS Record ID: WMID-2DA711

The object is a silver hooked tag, commonly used as a dress fastening in the later Anglo-Saxon period. This particular example has been made by re-using a coin of the Short Cross type of Cnut (1016-35), issued in the latter part of the reign. The coin appears to have been struck in Derby, since the only letters visible are __NDE__, from ON DEORABY ('at Derby'). Another possibility would be that this represents the middle of LVNDENE for London, but what little is visible of the letter following the E appears to be curved, suggesting an O. The majority of the outer part of the coin, where the remainder of the inscription was located, has been broken off. Most if not all of this loss apparently occurred comparatively recently. The coin has been riveted to a hooked attachment with two rivets, and was pierced to allow the fastener to be sewn on to a garment. Only one hole survives, but it is likely that a further hole or holes were located in the missing outer section of the coin.



BUCKLES

Catalogue no.16

Object: Buckle

Location: Bromfield SO 4835 7764

Context: Found in the 1970s during rescue excavations of a Roman farmstead which was reused as an Anglo-Saxon inhumation cemetery.

Material: iron

Size: unknown

Date: Anglo-Saxon

Current location: Shrewsbury Museum

Accession no: A.00870

The only finds from the cemetery were two scramasax-type iron knives and fragments of an iron buckle. Stanford (1978:46) interpreted the site as a Christian cemetery, dating from the 7th - 10th centuries.



Catalogue no.17

Object: Buckle

Location: Oswestry

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 18.2mm width: 27.9mm thickness: 3.9mm Weight: 6.23

Date: 900 – 1100

Current location: unknown

PAS Record ID: HESH-892D22

A buckle with an integrally cast plate. The fragment consists of the plate and a small section of the rear of the frame. Broadly the fragment is sub rectangular in plan and profile. The frame of the buckle is heavily worn and the two breaks are much abraded. The plate is pierced by three holes, two at the end of the plate and one centrally at the centre nearest the frame. This central hole (diameter 3mm) is likely to have held a sheet metal pin for the buckle. The other two holes are filled with iron rivets and would have aided the attachment of the plate to a leather strap. The front face of the plate is also decorated with an incised chip carved design. This design consists of a series of interlaced loops which delimit and respect the holes. The overall design is not clear however it is possible it might represent two C shaped interlocking scrolls. The reverse of the plate is plain and undecorated. It is possible that a rectangular iron rove was present on the reverse face as corrosion is limited to a distinct area and not associated with the central pin hole.



Catalogue no.18

Object: Buckle Plate

Location: Telford

Context: metal detector

Material: copper alloy

Size: length: 71.9mm width: 44.6mm thickness: 2.1mm Weight: 27.09

Date: 1000 – 1200

Current location: unknown

PAS Record ID: HESH-8C9F76

The plate is broadly sub-rectangular in plan and is decorated with cast open-work. Along one short edge is the fixing point for the plate to attach to the buckle frame. This fixing is formed by two edges of the plate being rolled back upon themselves to form an irregular tubular hinge, one of which has broken off. At the centre of this junction is a rectangular recess in the plate; the purpose of this is to hold the pin of the buckle. The plate was attached to the leather belt by a series of iron rivets; these are pierced through the corners of the plate and also through the central bar.

The overall pattern consists of three bars which descend from a top plate and connect with the base. The design consists mostly of irregular contractions and expansions in width. It has been suggested that the design is similar to that of the contorted beasties seen on contemporary metalwork. The design of the central bar is similar to some tree-like motifs seen on stirrup strap mounts. The junction between the hinge and openwork is also decorated with three incised vertical grooves. The reverse is plain and undecorated.



PENDANTS

Catalogue no.19

Object: Pendant

Location: Oswestry

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 46.3mm width: 27.6mm thickness: 4.3mm Weight: 22.89g

Date: 700 – 1050

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-4844A4

The pendant has been formed from a larger decorative panel which may have originally been used as a die for creating gold foil mounts. This die has subsequently been trimmed, further decorated, and pierced to form a pendant. It is sub-triangular in plan and sub-rectangular in cross section.

The design on the front face of the pendant is likely to be that of a bird or bird's head, formed from a series of deeply incised curvi-linear lines. The design of the body, based around an inverted irregular V, is relatively crude and the incised lines have a clear relatively shallow V shaped profile which changes along their length. The head is located around a pierced hole positioned on the outer edge of the pendant in such a way that it does not greatly affect the design on the opposite face. The beak is shown by a single incised line which divides into two parts. Above this division is a single circular incised dot, which presumably represents an eye.

The design on the reverse of the pendant is very different from that on the front face. It is applied with much more skill and may originally have been cast and then augmented by incised (chip?) carving. The central design is shown in relief and consists of a walking figure (advancing from left to right) with its arm over the saddle / back of a horse. The figure (probably a man) is holding a pair of reins attached to a bridle around the muzzle of the horse. The figure has lost the upper part of its head due to the trimming of the pendant. The head and jaw of the figure are clearly elongated and the eye is depicted by an incised annulet. It seems likely that the figure is wearing a hood with a long tassel which is looped in a loose figure of eight knot or the hood may in fact be stylised hair. Depicted beneath the belly of the horse is the lower part of the figures (long) tunic with a pair of legs. The reins are depicted as two twisting curvi-linear ribs, one of which loops beneath the muzzle of the horse. Much of the detail of the horse has been lost through a combination of the pierced (and worn) suspension hole and subsequent trimming of the pendant. The eye of the horse is shown by an incised annulet; however the ears and muzzle are poorly defined. The body of the horse is relatively long and sinuous. The front legs are shown walking with the right leg

before the left. Both the rear legs are shown again the right before the left. The right leg is irregularly shaped whilst the left is rather stocky. The tail is short (possibly docked?).

It seems that this pendant was formed from a die for making pressblech foil appliqué. The edges of the pendant generally have a good patina present suggesting that all the trimming occurred prior to deposition. The stylised bird design was applied to the reverse, and as it is relatively crude and of different style of decoration to that on the front face, it is likely to come from either a different workshop or less skilled craftsman. The presence of the suspension loop (and the damage through wear) suggests the pendant was worn upright in the same plane as the bird design. This may imply that although the image on the die was important and curated it was not for public display. This theory may be reinforced if the image on the die is of one of the God's or a hero from one of the sagas. It is suggested that the symbolic importance of the die may also be significant; it would have been used to make prestige or highly prized goods linked to wealthy families within society. It is likely that as a pendant it may have fulfilled the role of a good luck charm or lucky touch-piece.



RINGS

Catalogue no.20

Object: Finger ring

Location: South Shropshire

Context: metal detector

Material: Gold (93%), Silver (6%), Copper (1%)

Size: width: 3.5mm thickness: 3.6mm diameter: 26mm Weight: 8.2g

Date: 410 – 750

Current location: submitted for consideration as Treasure

PAS Record ID: HESH-B61048

The ring consists of a plain, butt-jointed, circular band to the outer surface of which beaded filigree wires have been soldered right round in four diminishing tiers including a single beaded wire running round the apex, giving the ring a triangular section; diameter 26mm. It has not been possible to find a close parallel for the construction of the ring in the Roman period. The ring is probably datable to the Early Medieval period, while there is nothing in its construction to suggest a later date.

(B.M. Ager, Curator, Department of Prehistory & Europe, British Museum)

The finger-ring is entirely decorated with beaded wire, made by hand-rolling under a swage. Filigree is a conservative art and so a date and cultural context are still uncertain; it might be seventh century, but there is also a possibility that it could be late Roman. Beaded-wire 'carpeting' is used on some of the Staffordshire hoard pommels (parallel rows concealing the rivets at either end), giving good Anglo-Saxon parallels. No other Anglo-Saxon finger-ring seems to have multiple rows of beaded-wire filigree on the hoop. (Niamh Whitfield)



Catalogue no.21

Object: Finger ring

Location: Bitterley

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 18.5mm width: 16.2mm thickness: 2.4mm Weight: 1.21g

Date: 750 – 950

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-C47F31

The finger ring is cast in one piece, all that survives is the bezel and shoulder and hoop on one edge. The opposite shoulder is removed by an old break, whilst the break on the hoop seems more recent. The bezel is circular in plan, expanding at the surviving shoulder, and lentoid in section. It is decorated by a horizontal cast ridge or rib that divides the bezel in two. This ridge is further decorated by incised diagonal lines producing a rope, or twisted, pattern. Either side of the raised ridge are pierced and punched decoration. This decoration is the same above and below each panel and consists of three drilled oval holes that are encircled by a slight incised double ring (forming a classic ring and dot 18.5style decoration). These rings are then over-punched by a circlet of punched dots. The exterior edge of the bezel is also notched and a continuous band of punched dots respects the edge. Many of these punched dots overlap and the overall design is slightly irregular or 'messy'. The surviving shoulder is decorated with four cast transverse ridges. The hoop also seems to have incised circumferential lines / bands respecting the upper and lower edges of the exterior. The internal face of the ring is plain and undecorated. The hoop of the ring is very slight but elegantly flares at the shoulders into the bezel.

The discovery of a mid-to-late Saxon ring in Shropshire is of note, as material dating to the later part of the early medieval period is very unusual.



PINS

Catalogue no.22

Object: Pin

Location: Prees

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 23.79mm width: 6.34mm thickness: 6.25mm Weight: 2.1g

Date: 400 – 1066

Type: Hinton and Parsons, Type B, Bb2i.

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: LVPL-D7E3A4

The pinhead is polyhedral with ten faces each decorated with a punched ring-and-dot motif, and with a circular transverse collar below the head. The shaft is circular in cross-section and measures 0.072mm in diameter, terminating in a modern break. The top of the head is lozenge shaped and undecorated.



Catalogue no.23

Object: Pin

Location: North East Shropshire

Context: metal detector

Material: Silver

Size: height: 10.3mm width: 9.2mm Weight: 1.76g

Date: 600 – 700

Current location: Shropshire County Museum

PAS Record ID: HESH-12A843

Cuboid silver pin head with square settings inside a filigree border on its outer and upper faces. Only a short portion of the silver shank remains. Each setting is inlaid with a square glass slip and there are two separate slips and a foil fragment in a separate box. (Treasure report from Dr. Sonja Marzinzik, M.A., F.S.A)

Non-destructive X-ray fluorescence analysis of the surface of the mercury gilt pin head indicated a silver content of 43-47%, with copper and lead. Raman spectrometry identified the red settings as glass.

This find qualifies as Treasure under the Treasure Act of 1996. Acquired by Shropshire County Museum after being declared Treasure

This has been noted as an interesting find by the recorder.



Catalogue no.24

Object: Pin

Location: Knockin SJ3521

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 45.42mm width: 3.65mm thickness: 2.1mm Weight: 3.1g

Date: 600 – 750

Current location: unknown

PAS Record ID: CPAT-076382

A well-executed example of an Anglo-Saxon dress pin. A zoomorphic pinhead which may depict a frog above a circular collar. It has been worked after casting with small punch marks to give some texture to the surface.

The pin is now bent at right angles just below the collar and the lower point of the pin is missing. It also has a slightly swollen section to the pin shaft. The head of the pin is 14.5 mm in length, if straightened the total length of the pin would be around 61 mm. There is now less than 10% gold in the artefact.



Catalogue no.25

Object: Pinhead

Location: Prees SJ 5733

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 16.58mm diameter: 8.94mm Weight: 2.9g

Date: 700 – 900

Type: Hinton and Parsons, Type C, Ca2i.

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-1DCC87

The pinhead is bi-conical with a ring collar under the head, it is undecorated.



Catalogue no.26

Object: Pinhead

Location: Claverly SO 8095

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 16.63mm width: 6.97mm Weight: 1.6g

Date: 700 – 900

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-1BCE05

A head fragment from an early medieval ring. The head is faceted orthorhombic in design, with ring and dot decoration on all facets that are well enough preserved for it to be visible; the rest are badly worn. There is a double collar at the top of the shaft, although most of the shaft is missing.

County / local importance



Catalogue no.27

Object: Pin

Location: Worfield

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 42.6mm width: 34mm thickness: 1.7mm Weight: 7.8g

Date: 700 – 900

Current location: unknown

PAS Record ID: HESH-543615

The pin fragment consists of a highly decorated chip carved flat oval head, from which a pin shaft, now incomplete, extends. The head is broadly oval in plan with very worn and fragmentary broken edges; in profile the pinhead is relatively flat. From the lower edge of the head a small sub-rectangular stepped projection extends, forming the shoulders of the pin shank from which the pin shaft descends. This is broken close to the shoulder and has a broadly oval shaped cross section. The cross section of the shaft measures 3.8mm x 2.1mm.

The front face of the pin is ornately decorated with a well-executed but non-symmetrical design, based around a multi stranded vertical cross which extends into four interlocking C shaped scrolls. The only surviving terminal has a wedge shaped end which links to the scrolls. The four C shaped scrolls are positioned within the angles of the cross. At the centre of the cross is a lozenge shaped cell with a small recessed hole, possibly used to set the original design out. Enclosed by the C shaped scrolls are further chip carved sub-oval / faceted pellets, which are positioned between the arms of the cross and contained by a curvi-linear line. In a number of places the design has pierced through creating small irregular holes, probably caused by corrosion. The reverse is plain and undecorated.

A rare Shropshire find.



Catalogue no.28

Object: Styliform Pin

Location: Old St. Chads SJ 492 123

Context: Archaeological excavation 1890

Material: Bronze or copper alloy

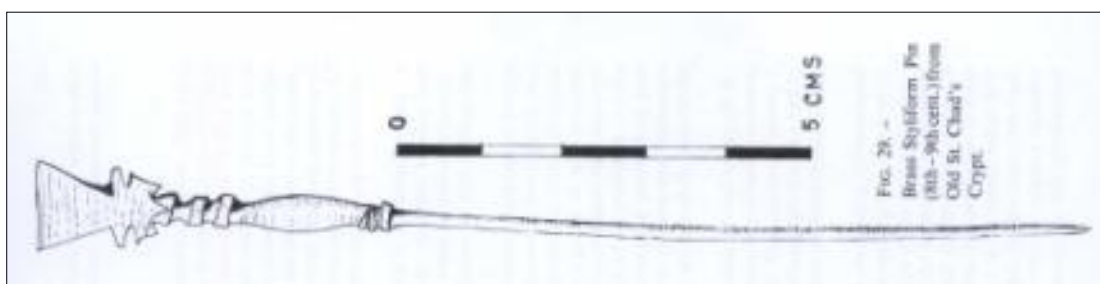
Size: length: approximately 120mm

Date: 700 - 900

Current location: Shrewsbury Museum

Accession no: 2013.00030

A bronze pin originally interpreted as a Roman stylus, reinterpreted by G.C. Dunning as an 8th -9th century pin used for parting and pinning the hair. The pin is remarkably similar to one found during excavations at the Saxon Monastery of Whitby, described as having a 'tapering head with cross-piece at base'. Peers and Radford (1943:64) believe the 'thinner stem and the absence of intermediate mouldings distinguish this type of pin from the stylus. Carver (1974:259) suggested it may have been used as a shroud pin or indeed as a stylus.



Bibliography: Chitty, L.F. 1952. 'Prehistoric and other finds in Shrewsbury', *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society* 54, 105-141.

Carver, M.O.H. 1973-74. 'Early Shrewsbury: An archaeological definition in 1975', *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society* 54, 225-263.

Peers, C. and Radford, C.A.R. 1943. 'The Saxon Monastery of Whitby', *Archaeologia* 89, 27-88.

BRACELET

Catalogue no.29

Object: Bracelet

Location: Worfield

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 56.1mm width: 15.9mm thickness: 11.2mm Weight: 19.83g

Date: 750 - 1100

Current location: unknown

PAS Record ID: HESH-A5C584

A fragment probably of a bracelet or armlet terminal in Anglo-Scandinavian zoomorphic design. The fragment is irregular in plan and profile expanding from a sub-triangular section. The internal edge has a very pronounced curve, whilst the outer edge is more angular. The break is relatively unabraded and may result from movement in the soil. Near the break the fragment is relatively narrow, expanding slightly in width and thickness along its length. At a point $\frac{3}{4}$ along the length the fragment narrows considerably; here much of the decoration is present, positioned on the two outer edges and consists of a series of both cast and chip-carved motifs forming what is best described as a beast's (possibly a cat or dog's) head. The cast elements are mostly geometric lozenges, forming the ears, eyes, nose and mouth which are embellished with incised or chip-carved lines. From this narrowing a small sub-triangular projection extends, tapering in thickness to a wide edge. In shape it forms what may be best described as a tongue which extends from the mouth of the beast behind. The tongue is not decorated and would form the terminal of the bracelet.



Personal Objects

KEYS (Locking)

Catalogue no.30

Object: Key

Location: North Shropshire

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 90mm width: 27mm thickness: 8mm Weight: 72.5g

Date: Saxon

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: CPAT-DAD880

A Saxon key, broken at the bit. The bow is in the shape of a bay leaf or perhaps a fish. The collar is rectangular in cross section and the stem is circular in cross section.



Catalogue no.31

Object: Slide Key

Location: Astley

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 47.1mm width: 17.2mm thickness: 3.3mm Weight: 5.49g

Date: 900 - 1100

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-D2D0A6

The key is irregular in plan and sub-rectangular in profile. It is cast in one piece and formed around a central D shaped shank with a sub-circular looped terminal, now incomplete. This looped terminal would have had a number of small knob like projections possibly three around the edge. The junction between the loop and shank is decorated with small shoulder like projections. Similar shoulders are present at the opposite end of the shank at the junction with the bit. The bit is broadly triangular in plan. Through the centre of the bit is a sub-rectangular cast hole. At the centre of the two long edges is a small sub-triangular notch cut into the bit. In line with the shank, on the lower edge of the bit, is a small sub-rectangular projection. This projection is broadly I shaped and uniform in thickness. The base of the projection is slightly rounded. The only other decoration present is a small cast raised horizontal ridge on the shank of the key above the junction with the bit.

The broken edge on the terminal of the key has a similar patina present to that on the rest of the key suggesting that the damage originally occurred in antiquity. The profile of the key is slightly warped and the 'I' shaped projection is slightly bent.



SPINDLE WHORL

Catalogue no.32

Object: Spindle Whorl

Location: Albrighton

Context: metal detector

Material: Lead

Size: length: 13.5mm diameter at base: 29.5mm diameter at top: 15mm Weight: 48.9g

Date: 410 - 1066

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-A1C5D3

This flat-based spindle whorl is conical in plan with a drilled central and cylindrical hole (diameter of hole: 9mm) running through the artefact from the top to the bottom. The artefact tapers upwards and inwards from a large base to a narrow and flat top.

The spindle whorl is decorated around the outside at approximately halfway between the top and bottom with nine crude circular indentations that appear to have been drilled and they continue deeply into the artefact. Additionally, there are multiple incised lines in between and around the indentations, mostly surrounding them in triangular or square outlines.



SUNDIAL

Catalogue no.33

Object: Sundial

Location: Holly Waste SO 64 75

Context: Ploughing 1816

Material: Sandstone

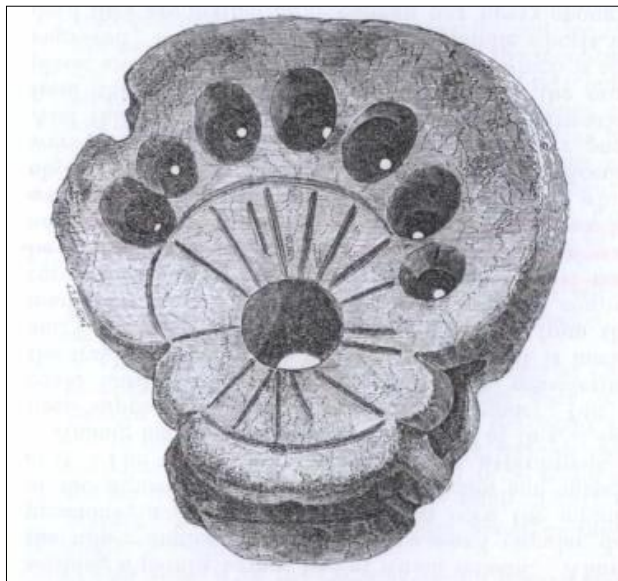
Size: length: 89mm width: 82mm thickness: 38mm Weight: unknown

Date: 10th C

Type: Pocket sundial

Current location: unknown

A sandstone object, shaped like a scallop with one side flat and one convex. There is a hole c.1cm in diameter in the centre of the object with an incised circle c.5.7cm in diameter around it, incised lines radiate out from the central hole towards the circumference of the circle. There are seven holes spaced evenly around the top half of the object. Originally interpreted as part of a 'barbaric necklace' (Anon. 1868:448), Du Noyer (1869:87) interpreted the object as a portable or pocket sundial comparable with Irish pillar sun-dials, dated to the 'early Christian age ... to the twelfth century', and used as a means of observing the canonical hours.



Bibliography: Anon. 1868. 'Uncertain Stone Implement', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 446-448.
Du Noyer, G.V. 1869. 'Uncertain Stone Implement Explained', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 87-88.

STYLUS

Catalogue no.34

Object: Stylus

Location: Whitchurch

Context: metal detector

Material: Lead

Size: length: 43.84mm width: 7.12mm thickness: 5.84mm Weight: 9.7g

Date: 800 – 1200

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: LVPL-2DE8D7

Tin plated lead stylus. It tapers towards one end where the tip, which is much thinner and has a slightly squared off end, has been folded over. The other end of the stylus has been broken but is smooth due to wear. There is cross hatching decoration on each side beginning half way down the object and terminating at the break.



STAFF

Catalogue no.35

Object: Staff terminal

Location: Hodnet SJ 6127

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 51.69mm width: 49.62mm thickness: 15.3mm Weight: 45.3g

Date: 1000 – 1200

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-201E34

The terminal is circular in form, rectangular in section, hollow and with a short integrally cast rectangular socket projecting from its base. It has openwork decoration on both sides consisting of six evenly spaced sub-oval perforations arranged around a central projecting knob. On both sides between and around these perforations are punched ring and dot motifs. When viewed under a microscope very faint traces of possible gilding survive on both faces. The socket has an oval aperture. The top of the terminal has four sub-oval perforations, whilst each side has a sub-rectangular perforation. There is also a sub-circular perforation on each side of the socket.

A number of very similar objects are recorded on the PAS database, most of which are almost identical in form to this example, but with somewhat differing decoration (see for example SF-03EDE7, LIN-D03FB1, BH-F48C72, NMS-F28FF6, BUC-69D596 and SOMDOR-AF3CC7). These objects were initially identified as sword pommels in the London Museum catalogue (LMMC: fig. 2 no. 2). More recently, however, they have been interpreted as terminals for ecclesiastical short staffs (Bailey, 1994: 171-175). Based upon comparison with other examples an 11th to 12th century date seems likely for the object.



Fixtures and Fittings

FURNITURE FITTING

Catalogue no.36

Object: Furniture fitting

Location: Market Drayton

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 26.8mm width: 18.7mm thickness: 4.7mm Weight: 4.05g

Date: 700 – 1200 (700 – 900)

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-616176

An incomplete fitting, probably deliberately trimmed as the majority of the design is complete. The fitting is broadly oval in plan, the front face is convex in profile, the reverse is concave and the cross-section is broadly C shaped. The design on the front is of a moustached and bearded face; executed with a great deal of skill, entirely formed through casting. The eye-brows, brows and nose are formed from a single curvi-linear line cast in high relief. Below the brows are two oval eyes formed from a single high-relief irregular curvi-linear line with a single round cast pellet for the pupil. Below the nose is an irregular oval depicting the mouth. Two long diagonal low relief cast lines expand from the nose to the edge of the plate, representing the moustache. In-filled between these are more diagonal lines depicting the beard.

The reverse of the plate is irregular in profile with a relatively flat edge forming a ledge which may have aided the attachment to a vessel. The reverse has a relatively crude scratched design formed from two vertical and two horizontal lines forming a cross (crucifix) over which two single diagonal lines form a second cross (saltire). These crosses are enclosed by a single curvi-linear incised line. This design seems similar to the Christian symbol of a Chi Rho, however, if this were the case it is very poorly achieved.



MOUNTS

Catalogue no.37

Object: Mount

Location: Prees

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 59.06mm width: 29.13mm thickness: 3.49mm Weight: 10.4g

Date: 700 – 1066

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: LVPL-C14513

A handle mount from a bucket, sub-lozenge shaped in plan and flat. The top of the lozenge extends into an oval which contains a circular rivet hole for an attachment. Below the lozenge are two incised worn zoomorphic heads. The opposite end flares outwards forming a sub-triangular plate with a rounded knob in each corner. This plate also contains a rivet hole. The points of the lozenge on either side of the object form circular knops in the centre of which is a rivet hole. The rivet holes are surrounded by two incised circles. All of the rivet holes are infilled with corrosion. The body of the object is decorated with openwork decoration in the centre of which is an openwork triquetra knot. The upper face is silvered. The lower face of the object is undecorated.



Catalogue no.38

Object: Mount

Location: Corve Dale

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 30.6mm width: 9.3mm thickness: 2.4mm Weight: 2.68g

Date: 800 – 1100

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-689F32

The fitting is mostly likely to be from an item of furniture such as a box or possibly from a piece of horse harness. The mount is sub rectangular in plan with two tapering long sides and a rounded pointed terminal; the other terminal is relatively wide. In cross section the mount is D shaped, with the front face being bevelled and domed. The reverse of the mount is relatively flat, with two small rivet holes positioned on the upper and lower edges. From one of these a small copper alloy rivet projects. It is possible that the rivets would have attached to either the furniture or a leather belt and secured the decorative mount.

The front face of the mount is decorated with a number of both cast and incised designs. The largest cast design is at the tapering terminal, consisting of a stylised zoomorphic animal head, probably of a horse or dog. The reverse is plain and undecorated.



Catalogue no.39

Object: Mount fragment

Location: Myddle

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 16.6mm width: 17.9mm thickness: 4mm Weight: 5.08g

Date: 900 – 1100

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-00EAF2

A possible Irish mount. The fragment is an irregular sub-rectangular shape in plan and is rectangular in cross section. Three original edges are extant; the fourth is an irregular abraded old break with similar patination to the rest of the artefact, suggesting damage pre-deposition. The two long edges are relatively straight and parallel to one another. The upper edge has a regular scalloped edge. The upper surface is decorated with a chip carved design comprising; a central sub-rectangular lozenge which is encircled with a heavy border. This is flanked by four chip carved C shaped scrolls.

The use of C shaped scrolls is common on Hiberno-Norse metalwork but it is impossible to attribute such a small fragment with any accuracy.

County / local importance



Catalogue no.40

Object: Mount

Location: Worfield

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 44mm width: 44mm thickness: 1.5mm Weight: 15g

Date: 850 – 1066

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-E0C914

This mount is sub-rectangular in plan and flat in section. At one end of the artefact, there is a broken and incomplete rivet hole with a diameter of 3.5mm. There is a very elaborate scrollwork design immediately below and around this rivet hole, which is comprised of multiple small, incised and punched marks. At approximate 7mm below this decoration, there are two rivet holes with a diameter of 4.5mm, which are situated 3mm above a straight decorative border across the width of the artefact. The border is decorated with a series of six geometric shapes in a row, which are in turn made of small multiple incised punches. These shapes are bordered at the top and bottom by a single line of small punches, which appear elsewhere on the artefact to form decoration. The back of the mount is undecorated and flat.



Pottery

VESSELS

Catalogue no.41

Object: Rim Sherd

Location: Wroxeter and Uppington SJ 6009

Context: chance find

Material: Ceramic

Size: length: 35mm width: 29mm thickness: 10mm Weight: 11.8g

Date: 700 - 850

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: LANCUM-62AD97

The sherd is probably mid Saxon but may be late Iron Age. There is external black burnishing and an external groove, halving the thickness of the rim, and a broken off rib or flange immediately below that. The body fabric is a red brown colour with a grey black reduced core, slightly hackly, with fine well sorted inclusions, it appears to have been tempered with sand. It may have been wheel thrown.



Catalogue no.42

Object: Pottery sherds

Location: The Central Hotel SJ 49264 12544

Context: Archaeological excavation

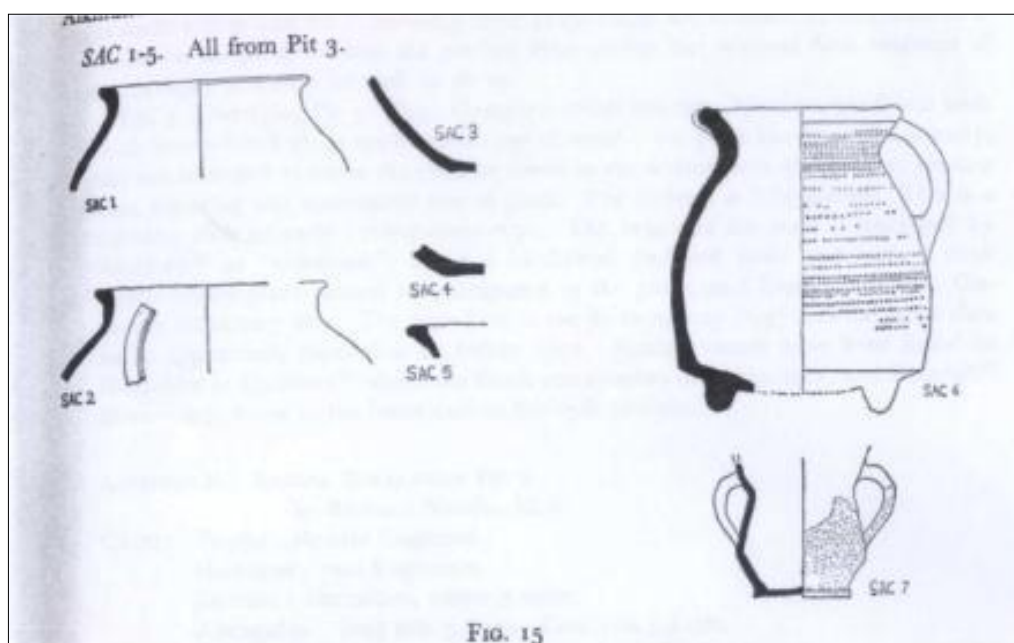
Material: Ceramic

Size: unknown

Date: 800 - 1499

Current location: Rowley's House Museum, Shrewsbury

Sherds of pottery were discovered from five different objects; 2 cooking pots, 2 bases of cooking pots and 1 rim of a bowl. The pottery is dated to the late Anglo-Saxon period by Toms (1969:40) due to its similarity with 'Chester Ware' which has been found in 10th century contexts in Chester, along the Welsh Marches and into the West Midlands.



Bibliography: Toms, G.S.G. 1969. 'St. Alkmunds Place - A Late Saxon and Medieval Site in Shrewsbury', *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society* 54, 32-42.

Catalogue no.43

Object: Body Sherd

Location: Newport

Context: agricultural or drainage work

Material: Earthen ware

Size: length: 53.7mm width: 40.1mm thickness: 4.5mm Weight: 12.27g

Date: 900 - 1100

Current location: unknown

PAS Record ID: HESH-68F9E4

The body sherd is likely to be from a large Stamford ware pottery vessel. The sherd is unglazed and un-sooted. The sherd is relatively large with no abraded edges, suggesting it has come from an undisturbed archaeological context. The fabric is a hard earthen ware which is mica rich, having abundant angular and sub-angular white quartz, and relatively sparse mid buff orange coloured inclusions. The fabric is a buff white colour, the outside surface is abraded. No decoration is present.



Catalogue no.44

Object: Body Sherd

Location: Wroxeter and Uppington SJ 6009

Context: Chance find

Material: Ceramic

Size: length: 37mm width: 33mm thickness: 5mm Weight: 7.9g

Date: 1000 – 1200

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: LANCUM-320C64

A body sherd of a wheel made vessel of gritty ware with a pale green glaze. Probably an experimental early slip or glaze.



Catalogue no.45

Object: Pottery

Location: Rigg's Hall, Shrewsbury SJ 49349 12811

Context: Archaeological excavation

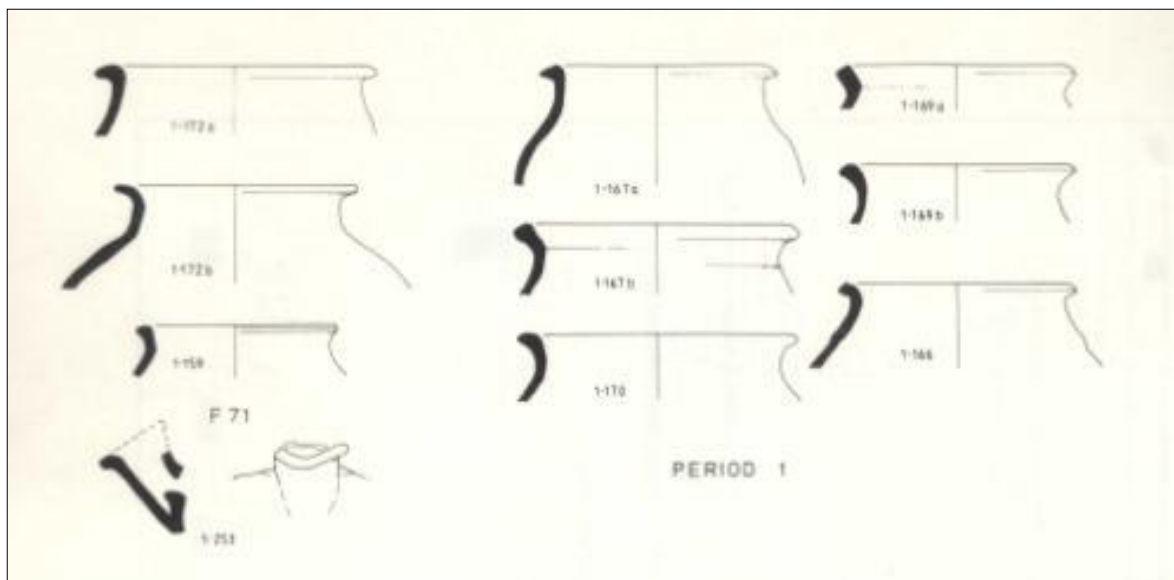
Material: Ceramic

Size: unknown

Date: Late Saxon

Current location: unknown

A number of fragments were discovered during archaeological excavations at Rigg's Hall, Shrewsbury within a context dated to the Late Saxon period.



Weapons

KNIVES

Catalogue no.46

Object: Knife

Location: Bromfield SO 4835 7764

Context: Rescue excavation

Material: Iron

Size: unknown

Date: Anglo-Saxon

Current location: Shrewsbury Museum

Accession no: A.00871

Found during rescue excavations in the 1970s of a Roman farmstead which was reused as Anglo-Saxon inhumation cemetery.

The only finds from the cemetery were two scramasax-type iron knives and fragments of an iron buckle. Stanford (1978:46) interpreted the site as a Christian cemetery, dating from the 7th - 10th centuries.



Catalogue no.47

Object: Knife Terminal

Location: Albrighton

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 27.5mm width: 8.5mm thickness: 13mm Weight: 10.8g

Date: 600 – 1066

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-A2CE88

A knife terminal with the remains of the iron blade. The terminal is in the form of a male human head wearing a slanted sub-triangular hat, which points forwards above the face and is slightly pinched to the sides at the front. The head is very narrow with two small and crude recesses for the eyes, a slightly protruding and ridged nose, a single incised line curved downwards at the sides represents the mouth, and what appears to be a forked beard, which terminates in a triangular point. To either side of the face, there are sub-triangular raised areas that may indicate the shoulders, giving the face and upper body a hunched appearance. To the back of the head there is a single protruding rib between the bottom of the hat and the shoulders. The base of the terminal appears flat and has the small remains of an iron blade protruding out from the centre (length of iron blade: 6.5mm; width of blade: 10.5mm; thickness of blade: 2.5mm). The blade has an uneven break immediately below the base of the knife handle.



Catalogue no.48

Object: Handle fitting

Location: Sheriffhales

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 31mm width: 20.7mm thickness: 15.4mm Weight: 11.2g

Date: 1000 – 1100

Current location: unknown

PAS Record ID: HESH-4B4686

The fitting is irregular in both plan and profile being broadly formed from an oval hoop, with sub-triangular projections (prongs) from one edge. The projections from the long sides of the hoop are much longer than those from the short edges. Movement in the soil is likely to have resulted in the compression of the two longer triangular extensions. The inner edge of the fitting has a relatively rough, unfinished surface. There are a number of sub-rectangular cell like recesses on the inner edge of the projections which may have aided the fitting of the artefact to the knife handle or sword grip.

The external face of the fitting has been decorated with an intricate relief design consisting of a series of geometric patterns which fill both the triangular projections and the hoop. The base of the hoop is decorated with a circumferential band of sub-rectangular panels, from this a series of curvilinear swirls and spirals extend into the projections. The entire area of decoration is bordered by deep carved lines which follow the edges of the fitting. The designs on each face differ slightly, probably due to the craftsman rather than design. The overall design could possibly be described as a zoomorphic head, with the crescentic swirls being eyes and the frond-like projections decorating a snout.



SPEARHEAD

Catalogue no.49

Object: Spearhead

Location: Titterstone Clee Hill Camp SO 5951 7797

Context: Quarrying, 1928

Material: Iron

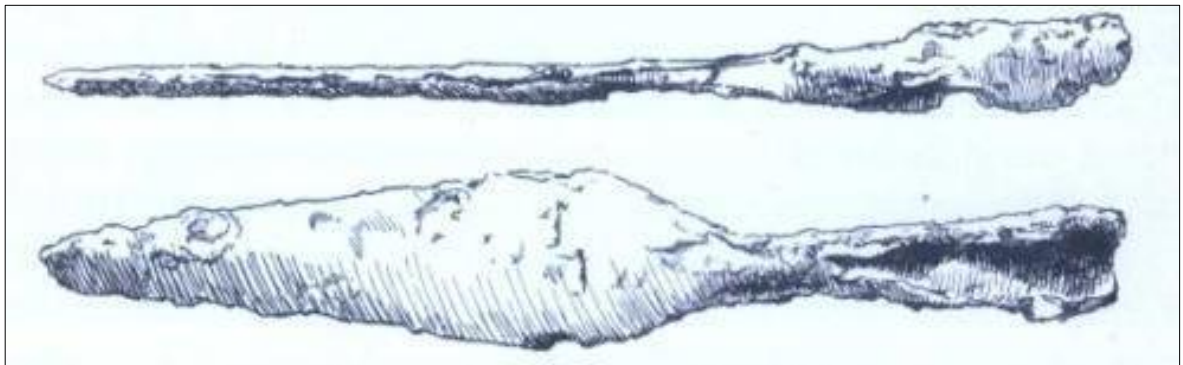
Size: length: 23.4mm

Date: 600 - 800

Current location: British Museum

Accession no: 1933,0508.1

An iron spear-head with a leaf-shape blade and split socket. Date confirmed by Dr. R.E.M. Wheeler as 7thC - 9thC but dated at the British Museum to 6thC - 7thC.



Bibliography: O'Neil, B.H. 1934. 'Excavations at Titterstone Clee Hill Camp, Shropshire, 1932', reprinted from *The Antiquaries Journal* XIV, 1-32.

http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=65846&partId=1&place=39391&object=20255&matcult=8832&page=1 (accessed 09 JAN 2014).

SCABBARD

Catalogue no.50

Object: Scabbard chape

Location: Claverley SO 8195

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 27mm width: 11.5mm thickness: 5.4mm Weight: 3.1g

Date: 1000 – 1100

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-7940D3

A possible openwork scabbard chape. The fragment consists of two irregular shaped pieces of copper alloy. A circular sectioned copper alloy rivet holds both pieces together at one end, located towards the edge of an offset semi circle. Beneath this is another offset semi circle. At the base of the second semi circle, a vertical rectangle is positioned.

It is probable that this fragment comes from an end protector for an 11th Century openwork scabbard chape.



Horse Equipment

HARNESS FITTINGS

Catalogue no.51

Object: Harness Fitting

Location: Oswestry

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: thickness: 2.55mm diameter: 27.57mm Weight: 18.4g

Date: 800 - 1100

Current location: unknown

PAS Record ID: LVPL-D9F581

A harness fitting, circular in plan and oval in section. The upper surface is decorated with a complex design representing a cross. Enamel is used to create the darker lines of decoration. The central decoration is in the shape of a square; four decorative lines radiate out from the corners of the square to the outer border. Four short lines radiate out from each side of the square, then split to the left and right of the main line and continue to the outer border of the object.

Three short projections link the upper surface to the circular ring at the back of the object. This creates the voids for the straps to fit through. The ring at the base of the object is broken creating a small gap, however the ring is also bent outwards and if straightened the gap would be bridged. The ring at the base is circular in plan and in section and is 27.57mm in diameter. The small tab is possibly the remains of one of the strap attachments. There are small lines incised down one edge of the tab.



Catalogue no.52

Object: Harness Pendant

Location: Claverley SO 8095

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 31.45mm width: 50.15mm thickness: 2.89mm Weight: 17.7g

Date: 1000 – 1200

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-19C852

A possible late early-medieval or early high medieval harness pendant. The object is incomplete but was apparently triangular or pentagonal in shape originally. The complete end terminates in three knobby projections, none of which seem to be broken. It tapers from 50.15 mm wide at this end to 38.7 mm wide at the broken end. It is decorated with 13 irregularly spaced and shaped perforations and there appears to have been a larger central perforation where the break is. The green/brown patina of the object is perhaps suggestive of an eleventh to twelfth century date, although this is not absolutely certain. An alternative suggestion from other finds liaison officers is that this may be part of a late medieval to post-medieval dagger or sword chape. This identification is also not certain as there appears to be no groove for slotting the blade of the weapon in, nor is there any obvious means of attachment.



Catalogue no.53

Object: Harness link buckle

Location: Bridgnorth

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 56.1mm width: 16.4mm thickness: 5mm Weight: 7.66g

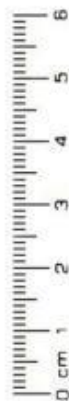
Date: 1000 – 1250

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-35BB80

Cast single looped buckle with copper alloy inlaid plate. This artefact was probably originally used as part of a horse harness link. The buckle frame is broadly an oval D shape in plan and cross section. The pin is missing but it is likely that it would have been formed from a sub-rectangular length of copper alloy. There is a small V shaped notch on the frame to enable the pin to lie flat. The frame is relatively small in size with stylised zoomorphic terminals. The axis bar is offset and has a circular cross section. The plate is sub-rectangular in both plan and cross section. The sheet has been attached to the buckle frame by folding it in half and securing it to a leather strap with three rivets. The remains of an organic (probably leather) material are contained between the plates. The rivet holes must be countersunk as the heads of the rivets do not protrude above the plate. A rectangular shaped hole has been cut from the plate at its junction with the frame to hold the missing pin.

The zoomorphic decoration is cast and each head consists of two oval shaped ears, eyes and two small pellets for the nose. The plate is also decorated with a cast geometric design which has been inlaid with neillo. The geometric design respects the rivet heads and consists of a series of interlocking – and T shapes. There is also some evidence for the plate being once silvered or tinned. Small areas of this decayed applied surface are evident on both faces of the plate.



Catalogue no.54

Object: Strap union

Location: Bridgnorth

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 67.5mm width: 21.2mm thickness: 9.4mm Weight: 17.57g

Date: 1000 – 1400

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-FE12E4

The strap fitting is irregular in plan and D shaped in cross section. It consists of a central raised circular boss with rounded knobs extending on two axis; to either side of the central boss, two D sectioned bars extend. These bars have lozenge-shaped terminals at the centres of which are sub-rectangular apertures/holes. The reverse of the artefact is plain. At the centre of the artefact, beneath the raised boss, is a sub-oval convex hollow.

A similar strap union from Waterhouses, Staffordshire has been recorded by the PAS (WMID-061CE4) this has been dated to the period 900-1100 AD.



STIRRUP TERMINALS

Catalogue no.55

Object: Stirrup terminal

Location: Newport

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy and Iron

Size: length: 32.4mm width: 11.6mm thickness: 15.5mm Weight: 17.78g

Date: 950 - 1150

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-8480A3

A large portion of the iron stirrup survives within the outer decorated copper alloy sheath. In plan the terminal is broadly sub-rectangular (cylindrical); the copper alloy sheath is presumably hollow enclosing the iron arm of the stirrup.

The upper face of the stirrup terminal has a moulded zoomorphic decoration. From what survives it is possible to suggest the terminal is decorated with a series of raised cast ridges and the terminal has a cast small rounded snub-like snout at the foot of the terminal. The only other decoration present is a series of deeply cast circumferential transverse bands positioned near the terminal of the mount. The stirrup terminal is a mid-green colour with a poorly preserved abraded and corroded patina. The iron remains of the stirrup are relatively well preserved although in areas iron corrosion encases the copper alloy terminal.

Williams suggests that this form of terminal is of Early-Medieval date and of Anglo-Scandinavian manufacture with influences from the Ringerike and Urnes styles. It is most likely to date from the 11th century AD, however a wider date range is given by the PAS.



Catalogue no.56

Object: Terminal

Location: Worfield

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 40.8mm width: 12.1mm thickness: 14.6mm Weight: 13.6g

Date: 1000 - 1100

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WAW-43A0F2

The zoomorphic terminal is roughly D-shaped in section with a hollow reverse where the stirrup arms would have slotted into the terminal. At the top of the terminal is a horizontal raised band, below this is a small perforation due to wear. The terminal depicts a beast's head with lozenge-form eyes and a long snout. Above the snout are two V shaped raised bands. The reverse is hollow, at the tip where the arms would have slotted in is a small projection (c.5.15mm in length). A pair of such stirrup terminals would have been attached to the bottom corners of a stirrup, where they would have served to hold together the horizontal and near vertical arms.

Regional Importance.



Catalogue no.57

Object: Terminal

Location: Worfield

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 45.5mm width: 14mm thickness: 12.5mm Weight: 28.3g

Date: 1000 - 1100

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-637852

The terminal has a semi-cylindrical and hollow casing (which the stirrup would have originally fitted into) with a narrowed but rounded snout at one end. At the opposing end, the semi-cylindrical terminal is marked by two parallel linear ridges running around the outside edge. The terminal's zoomorphic decoration below these ridges is evident although the artefact is worn and corroded. There are two slightly raised ears, which appear to slant backwards above two or three raised ridges, which possibly indicate other facial features. The zoomorphic art style appears to resemble a dog or similar animal. The hollow casing at the back of the artefact (length: 37mm; width: 11mm) is completely empty and terminates 10mm from the tip of the snout.



Catalogue no.58

Object: Terminal

Location: Unknown

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 44.45mm width: 27.25mm thickness: 11.01mm Weight: 27.2g

Date: 1050 – 1100

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-097191

The terminal is sub triangular in shape. The terminal has an incomplete and hollow U-shaped back face that terminates in old breaks. This contains traces of a white solder that would have enabled attachment to the iron arm of the stirrup. From the base of the terminal projects the stylised beast, which has a long neck that curves round to face back up the stirrup, creating a circular aperture. Two flattened and rounded crests run from the top of the beast's head towards the foot of the terminal and on both faces of the terminal above the central aperture are moulded oval shaped indentations representing the eyes.

Regional Importance.



STRAP MOUNTS

Catalogue no.59

Object: Strap Mount

Location: Telford and Wrekin

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 52.3mm width: 28.8mm thickness: 13.5mm Weight: 20.98g

Date: 1000 – 1100

Type: Williams' Class A, Type 10A.

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-0D6D94

The stirrup-strap mount is sub-triangular in plan with a convex front and a concave rear face. The edges of the mount are slightly bevelled. In profile the mount is sub-rectangular (D Shaped) and in cross section is arched (C shaped). At the apex of the mount is an oval projection/knop with a cast or pierced rivet hole. Through this hole is a small rivet with an oval head. On the reverse of the lower edge is a prominent integral cast sub-rectangular flange which projects at right angles from the surface of the mount forming a projecting lip. Above this flange through the upper face of the mount are two further cast rivet holes.

The front face of the mount is decorated with a series of cast raised curvi-linear ribs depicting a single zoomorphic beast in plan. The animal has a long head (located beneath rivet hole) with snout and long ears. The head is joined to a wide neck, which extends into a sub-rectangular body, formed from an interlocking woven pattern of curvi-linear ribs. These ribs extend into four legs and a tail. The legs are situated one at each corner of the design, the front two are extended and run parallel with the neck, and the two rear ones are tucked under the body. The tail is looped back upon itself and interwoven into the body of the beast; it terminates in a short point or arrow tip. The reverse of the mount is undecorated.



Catalogue no.60

Object: Strap Mount

Location: North Shropshire

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 45.5mm width: 31mm thickness: 7.9mm Weight: 26.26g

Date: 1000 – 1100

Type: Williams' Class A, Type 6.

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-2B3DC7

The strap mount is sub-triangular in plan with a slight convex front and a concave rear face. The edges of the mount are slightly bevelled. The body of the mount has relief decoration of a pair of sinuous snake-like beasts which are joined at the top of the mount by a single collar. The tails of the beasts are forked and terminate in lobes, forming the wide shoulders of the mount. The bodies of the beasts form the edges of the mount and the heads terminate at the base of the mount where they are cut through by two rivet holes.

In the centre of the mount is a multi-branched symmetrical tree-like shape, which grows from the base of the frame and runs up to the apex. Each of the lower rivet holes has a diameter of 2.5mm. The remains of both iron rivets are present. On the reverse of the lower edge below the two rivets is a prominent integral cast sub-triangular flange which projects at right angles from the surface of the mount, forming a projecting lip. Above this is a large amount of orange iron corrosion. The design on the apex is cast in the shape of an animal head, which is now badly abraded. It would originally have ended in a loop to allow attachment to the stirrup leathers. The damage to the mount occurred during its functional life, as there is evidence of a later repair, consisting of a single rivet hole cut through the left-hand shoulder of the mount. The iron rivets have corroded in the mount and areas of preserved mineralised organic fibres are present, possibly the remains of the leather stirrup-strap. The mount was clearly much better made than most examples of the type.



Catalogue no.61

Object: Strap Mount

Location: Whitchurch Rural

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 43.9mm width: 35.8mm thickness: 9.9mm Weight: 31.13g

Date: 1000 – 1100

Type: Williams' Class C, Group 2.

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-C6C5F6

This complete openwork mount with side plates has a design consisting of rounded spirals and interlace design with three arms or 'ribs' extending out at the upper part of the decoration. There are eleven openwork holes in total, including the apex loop at the top which is still present, but worn, presumably from use as well as corrosion. On the back of the mount, there are remains and corrosion of an iron fitting or strap with two intact rivets still in place at the lower fixing holes.



Catalogue no.62

Object: Strap Mount

Location: Upton Cressett SO 6690

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 38.7mm width: 29.2mm thickness: 6.8mm Weight: 14.6g

Date: 1000 – 1100

Type: Williams' Class B, Type 3, Group 8.

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-53B977

The stirrup-strap mount is sub-rectangular in plan with a convex front and a slight concave rear face. In profile the mount is sub-rectangular (D Shaped) and in cross section the mount is arched (C shaped).

The front face of the mount is decorated with a series of pierced and cast designs. The central decoration consists of a single sub-triangular raised boss. On this boss are a series of cast designs in the shape of a crude head, with sub-oval eyes, a triangular nose and mouth. On either side of this and attached to the face / boss are two semi-circular ribs, presumably ears, which have both been pierced by circular holes. The rest of the design is made up of pierced circular holes of varying sizes; one large central hole at the top with two smaller holes either side of it, below this is a row of four holes, under this row are the two pierced ears. Below the ears are two very small holes on the very edge of the mount. Under these are two more pierced holes either side of the mouth; finally at the base of the mount are two small holes. The upper edges of both of these holes are slightly counter sunk, suggesting the rivets (not present) would be flush with the surface of the mount. These small holes were likely to have attached the mount to the stirrup. The reverse of the stirrup mount is undecorated.



BRIDLE FITTINGS

Catalogue no:63

Object: Cheek piece

Location: Cleobury Mortimer SO 6775

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 53.07mm width: 23.08mm thickness: 8.47mm

Date: 1000 – 1100

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID4392

The central boss is a lozenge shape in plan with a knob at the upper and lower corner. An arm protrudes from the side corners which are semi-circular in cross section and terminate with a lozenge shape, with a large oval shaped hole. Both loops are incomplete, this does not appear to be recent damage. The surface of the item is slightly corroded.

No Image Available

STRAP ENDS

Catalogue no.64

Object: Strap End

Location: Baschurch SJ 4222

Context: metal detector

Material: Pewter

Size: unknown

Date: 410 - 1066

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: CPAT-B14AE7

An Anglo-Saxon strap end. Pewter with silver plates and rivets.

Item not photographed, weighed or measured.

No Image Available

Catalogue no.65

Object: Strap end

Location: Claverley SO 8095

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 31.8mm width: 9.7mm thickness: 4.2mm Weight: 7.3g

Date: 700 – 950

Class: Thomas, Class A, Type 1, Trehiddle Style

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-C0BB26

The strap end is damaged and worn, missing its attachment loops at the top and the edges are heavily abraded. The front is decorated with incised curvilinear decoration, and part of a possible beast is visible at the top. Although it is now worn and indecipherable, the strap end probably terminated in a moulded zoomorphic head. The reverse is plain and unadorned. It has a green to brown patina.



Catalogue no.66

Object: Strap end

Location: Worfield SO 7294

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 57.78mm width: 15.38mm thickness: 3.56mm Weight: 10.6g

Date: 800 – 1000

Type: Thomas Class A, Type 2 (patterned).

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-A58487

A cast zoomorphic strap end, sub oval in plan. The majority of the strap end is cast as a solid piece, with the exception of the widest part of the terminal which divides, in profile, forming a 'V' shape. The leather strap would have been attached to the strap end by two circular sectioned rivets. Both parts of the V shaped union are present. The front of the strap end is decorated, however due to corrosion the original decoration is hard to identify. The pointed terminal is decorated with an incomplete debased animal, dog or horses head. The reverse of the strap end is flat and probably undecorated.



Catalogue no.67

Object: Strap End

Location: Prees

Context: metal detector

Material: Silver

Size: length: 50.54mm width: 15.87mm thickness: 2.65mm Weight: 6.7g

Date: 800 - 900

Type: Thomas Class A, Type 1.

Current location: submitted for consideration as Treasure

PAS Record ID: LVPL-7EE655

A silver strap-end originally decorated in Trewhiddle style, but later re-worked to depict a human figure, perhaps imitating a 'Heiligenfibel' or 'Saint' brooch.

The original strap-end is extremely well made. It has a split attachment end shaped around two rivet holes, c. 0.8mm in diameter, with a tiny point in between. A fan- or pelta-shaped motif below this has a central drop-shaped field (whose pointed end echoes the point between the two rivet holes) and a sub-triangular field to either side which are deeply chip-carved to form inverted pyramids but do not appear to have any gilding. The long edges are smoothly curved and have undecorated borders around a central field of well-preserved niello inlay around a reserved pattern of symmetrical Trewhiddle-style plant interlace.

The design was at a later stage cut through to form fields with flat bases in the shape of a human figure. The fields all have a yellowish tinge, especially around the edges, but this is not gilding or gold solder (see Analysis, below). The recesses may originally have held glass or organic inlays rather than separate gold sheet inlays. The recessed fields appear to match the central drop-shaped field within the fan-shaped field, which may also therefore be a modification.

The uppermost cut-out field within the central panel is oval, with the lower end slightly narrower, and probably represents a human head. It has cut through and removed both silver and niello. Around the top of this recess is a reserved silver curve ending in a circle to either end; this is part of the original design, but may have been re-used to represent a nimbus. Below are a pair of slightly curving drop shapes, with the points uppermost, which probably represent sleeved arms. There is a little niello missing to one side of the head and the arm, probably incidental damage caused by the modification. The lowest field, cut through the interlace, is harder to interpret. It is roughly S-shaped, reminiscent of the head and rump of a backward-looking beast, but with no legs. It may be intended to represent the curved legs of a sitting or kneeling figure.

The animal-head terminal is beautifully made, with long sub-triangular ears ending in outward-turning scrolls and originally inlaid with niello, tiny fragments of which appear at

the edges of one of the ears; the rest appears to have been engraved away, similarly to the fields in the main panel. Between the ears is a drop-shaped silver boss, and below are domed eyes, one with an empty setting c. 1.1mm in diameter, the other set with a tiny surviving dark glass cabochon. The nose is short, ending in a widely spaced pair of nostrils which are similar empty settings, c. 1mm in diameter. The reverse is undecorated but scratched.

Analysis: Non-destructive X-ray fluorescence analysis of the surface indicated a silver content of 93-96%, copper content of 3-5%, and trace levels of lead and gold. There is no trace of the original inlay material in the empty cells and there is no evidence for solder; the edges were undercut to hold the inlay mechanically. The cells are c. 0.2 mm deep, considerably deeper than the channels cut in the silver for the niello. There is no keying at the bottom of the cells, unlike for the niello. Whatever material was in the cells seems to have been removed with little disruption to the undercut edges of the cell, suggesting it decayed during burial rather than being removed by physical intervention.

Discussion: The shapes of the recessed fields are reminiscent of the enamelled designs on 'Heiligenfibeln' or 'Saint' brooches, a predominantly German brooch type used in the late 8th or 9th centuries. As scientific analysis has identified the likely materials for the inlay to include glass, this parallel becomes increasingly pertinent, but the strap-end remains extremely unusual. It may never have been finished and why its design was so radically revised, apparently quite close in time to its manufacture, is a mystery.

As this object is made of more than 10% precious metal and is over 300 years old, it constitutes potential Treasure under the Treasure Act 1996.



Catalogue no.68

Object: Strap End

Location: Worfield

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 40mm width: 14.5mm thickness: 4mm Weight: 5.77g

Date: 800 - 900

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-DFCCD4

A complete cast copper alloy flat zoomorphic strap end. The front is highly decorated in Trewhiddle-style with an animal head in relief. The animal has large sub-rectangular ears, noticeable by an incised crescent decoration in each sub-rectangular area and a recessed section in between. The nose and eye ridges are deeply moulded with an elaborate V shaped decoration in relief between the eyes. Above the animal head terminal, the main rectangular and central section of the strap end is slightly bowed at the sides and is highly decorated with a singular and probable intertwining beast either side of a seven-armed wheel or circular flower decoration, surrounding by a raised oval border. At the opposing end to the animal head and just below the split attachment end there is part of another wheel/flower decoration. Most of this decoration is hidden by corrosion from the two partly remaining iron rivets that would have originally attached the strap end to a leather belt. The border to the left and right of the main rectangular area is regularly marked with small incised lines. The back of the strap end is plain and undecorated, with the iron rivets still visible. A small area of silvering indicates that the whole artefact was originally silvered.



Catalogue no.69

Object: Strap End

Location: Tong

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 31mm width: 11mm thickness: 1.5mm Weight: 2.4g

Date: 800 - 900

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-4CC935

An incomplete cast copper alloy flat zoomorphic strap end. This Trewhiddle-style strap end has an old break just below where the rivets and split end would have functioned as the attachment terminal. The front of the strap end is decorated with the characteristic animal head forming the opposing terminal. The tip of the animal head terminal is broken and all of the facial features of the beast are absent apart from large oval ears with half-circle indentations in each of them. Above the beasts ears and in the main central section of the strap end are two touching, billeted cords of a half-circle curving inwards to form a curved X border in the centre. To the left and right within the half-circular fields is a singular scrollwork design facing away from each other towards the edge of the artefact. The X shaped border dividing the four areas is incised with numerous small irregular hatched lines. The fields to the top and bottom of the hatched border are undecorated. There is a hatched incised line down the left side of the length of the strap end edge, and there is likely to have been one down the right side but the artefact is slightly worn in this area. The back of the strap end is undecorated.



Catalogue no.70

Object: Strap End

Location: Shrewsbury Context: metal detector

Material: Lead alloy

Size: length: 16.7mm width: 7.2mm thickness: 2.6mm Weight: 1.21g

Date: 800 – 1000

Type: Thomas Class A, Type II?

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-892F38

It is suggested that this very small fragment is from the central part of a strap-end. The fragment is broadly sub-rectangular in plan with two parallel long sides which taper slightly at one end. Both ends terminate in broken, unabraded edges. The cross section is sub-rectangular with the edges of the strap-end being slightly bevelled.

The surviving fragment is cast as a solid piece. The upper split terminal is lost. The decoration on the upper surface is formed from two vertical parallel lines of raised discs with central pellets, in the ring and dot style. These two lines of annulets are bordered by a double vertical cast line of pellets which respects both edges of the strap end and form a rope like pattern. At the lower edge of the fragment a different pattern emerges, however the detail of this has been lost due to the damage present. The reverse of the strap end is flat and undecorated.

Similar parallels can be seen in Thomas's paper on Late Anglo-Saxon and Viking Age strap-ends, specifically in his Class A type II. However the amount of wear present on this example is considerable and therefore the certainty of the Thomas classification is highly subjective.



Catalogue no.71

Object: Strap End

Location: Corve Dale

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 31.4mm width: 9.7mm thickness: 2.1mm Weight: 2.72g

Date: 800 - 1000

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-692923

An incomplete zoomorphic strap end, the majority of which was cast as a solid piece. The strap-end is sub-rectangular in plan with two parallel sides which taper to a blunt point. The profile is sub-rectangular and slightly bowed. The cross section is sub-rectangular. The edges of the strap-end are slightly bevelled.



Catalogue no.72

Object: Strap End

Location: Corve Dale

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy Size: length: 22.6mm width: 9.4mm thickness: 2.1mm Weight: 1.44g

Date: 800 – 1000

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-690413

The strap-end is sub-rectangular in plan with two parallel sides which tapers to a blunt point at one end and a broken edge at the other. The cross section is sub-rectangular and the profile is slightly bowed. The edges of the strap-end are slightly bevelled.

Only the lower section of the strap end survives. The largest decorative area is a sub-rectangular chip-carved panel with bowed edges; the inner design has been executed with much skill and care. The overall design in this area is probably that of a zoomorphic interlaced beast in the Trewiddle style. The chip carved areas have been filled with a silver coloured applied surface, possibly neillo. This has decayed and is only present in very small areas. Below the central panel is the second area of decoration, positioned close to the blunted terminal of the strap end. This consists of a series of chip carved linear and curvilinear lines, again probably filled with neillo. The overall design is that of a zoomorphic head, with details of wide eyes, a sub-rectangular nose and two nostrils. This design is cruder than that on the main body and probably represents either a horse or possibly a hounds head. The reverse of the strap end is flat and undecorated. A small section of silver coloured applied surface is present on the reverse, this is likely to be some form of white metal.



Catalogue no.73

Object: Strap end

Location: Whittingham

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 45.1mm width: 12.4mm thickness: 2.3mm Weight: 5.28g

Date: 800 – 1000

Class: Thomas Class A, Type 1

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-D0DF34

An incomplete cast zoomorphic strap end. The strap-end is sub-rectangular in plan with two parallel sides which taper at both ends to blunt points. The cross section is sub-rectangular and the profile is slightly bowed. The edges of the strap-end are slightly bevelled.

The upper most decorated zone, closest to the rivet holes, has been largely lost due to abrasion and other damage. The largest decorative area is a sub-rectangular chip-carved panel which has bowed edges and an inner design, executed with much skill and care. The design is of a zoomorphic interlaced beast in the Trehwiddle style. The upper head of the beast has an open mouth, possibly with a forked tongue. The body of the beast is decorated with small incised dots and carved linear lines. The chip carved areas have been filled with a silver coloured applied surface, possibly neillo. This has decayed and is only present in very small areas. Either side of the central panel are a series of small sub-triangular notches which form a serrated edge along both the long edges of the strap end. Below the central panel is the second area of decoration consisting of a series of chip carved linear and curvilinear lines, again probably filled with neillo. The overall design is that of a zoomorphic head, with details of wide eyes a sub-rectangular nose and two nostrils. The reverse of the strap end is flat and undecorated.



Catalogue no.74

Object: Strap End

Location: Stowe SO 3173

Context: metal detector

Material: Lead alloy

Size: length: 47.1mm width: 12.01mm thickness: 6.04mm Weight: 11.7g

Date: 800 – 1000

Style: Thomas, Class F (design originated in Ireland)

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-E814B2

The strap end is heavily abraded and a rivet hole is damaged. The strap end has a square split end with a tapering plate which is broadly triangular in plan. Both sides of the split end have a rivet hole in each corner (4 rivet holes altogether). There is a large perforation in the centre of the plate with an internal diameter of 3.92mm and another perforation, with an internal diameter of 2.05mm at the tip of the plate. The central perforation suggests that this may be a book strap end. The reverse of the strap end is flat. The face of the strap end has a small step defining the split end from the plate and some abraded moulded decoration at the tip.



Catalogue no.75

Object: Strap end

Location: Albrighton

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 22.3mm width: 23mm thickness: 2.9mm Weight: 5.17g

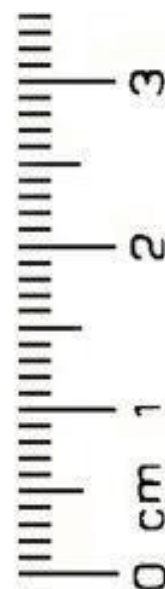
Date: 850 – 1100

Type: Thomas, Class E, Type 4.

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-B84126

A fragment of a cast strap end or strap fitting formed from a single sheet of cast copper alloy. Part of the upper surface has been chip-carved with an intricate, but incomplete, design. The strap end is sub-rectangular in both plan and cross section. The profile is stepped with a small rectangular tab / tongue being recessed on the upper surface. This tab is devoid of decoration and the upper edge is pierced by two small rivet holes (diameter 1.9mm). The external edges of the tab are bevelled or faceted on the upper face. The lower section of the strap end is extensively decorated - this design is contained within a raised rectangular border that respects the edges of the fitting. The design within consists of a series of curvi-linear and linear ribs and wedges all chip carved. The overall design has been identified by Dr Kevin Leahy as 'Viking Borre style' and is part of a pattern known as 'ring chain'. The reverse is plain and undecorated. The break is unworn but patinated suggesting that it was damaged in antiquity.



Catalogue no.76

Object: Strap End

Location: North Shropshire

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 41.8mm width: 17.6mm thickness: 2.2mm Weight: 6.5g

Date: 900 - 1100

Type: Thomas, Class E.

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: CPAT-9CCC47

A lancet, or tongue-shaped strap end, similar in style to the Type 1 (Winchester) and Type 2 (Anthropomorphic) styles, with openwork decoration comprising a symmetrical arrangement of circular holes. However, this example is not in sufficiently good condition to allow recognition of the detail of the decoration, if it ever had any. The surface is heavily corroded and the strap-end is broken at both the terminal and fixing ends.



Catalogue no.77

Object: Strap End

Location: Worfield SO 7395

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 34mm width: 8.4mm thickness: 4.91mm Weight: 2.3g

Date: 900 – 1200

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-B21B07

The artefact was originally constructed of two pieces: a solid upper plate, with projecting basal terminal; and an attached back plate, which is now missing. The upper plate has a horizontal top side; its long sides are straight and converge towards the bottom. A narrower neck projects vertically downwards from the base of the plate, its height increasing as it extends into a terminal in the form of a forward-facing zoomorphic head. This head is heavily stylised, its ears, eyes and muzzle depicted through a series of grooves and low ridges, with three lobes at its base indicating an open mouth with projecting tongue. A right-angled rim projects downwards on either side of the upper plate's underside; this, in conjunction with the missing back plate, would have created a shallow socket for the strap. At either end of this socket is a copper-alloy rivet, which would have held the strap in place.

The strap end is a mid to dark green colour, with an uneven surface patina. Abrasion, caused by movement whilst within the plough soil, has resulted in a loss of some of the original surface detail.



Catalogue no.78

Object: Strap End

Location: Oswestry Rural SJ 3025

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 21mm width: 17.55mm thickness: 1.53mm Weight: 18g

Date: 930 - 1050

Type: Winchester

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: CPAT-9658C4

This cast copper alloy object is most likely a fragment of a Winchester style strap end. Only the pointed tongue-shaped section remains with the attachment section missing. Strap ends, with this symmetrical openwork ornamentation are illustrated in Mainman & Rogers (2000, the Archaeology of York vol. 17) and are dated to AD 930-975. This piece is now heavily worn away and fragmented to one edge, some pale green patina remains.



SPURS

Catalogue no.79

Object: Spur

Location: Claverley SO 8095

Context: metal detector

Material: Copper alloy

Size: length: 138.4mm width: 72.4mm thickness: 22.83mm Weight: 99.8g

Date: 900 – 1000

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: WMID-FD7021

A complete cast copper alloy prick spur. Both arms of the spur are straight sided, with a D shaped section. Both terminals are complete and consist of a circular end, with two semi circular voids, with the straight edges facing each other. The goad or prick is located off centre between the two arms, and is angled downwards. It is 31 mm in length, is circular sectioned and gradually tapers to a flat blunt point, which has a diameter of 11.04 mm. The spur is a mid to dark green colour, with an uneven surface patina. Abrasion, caused by movement whilst within the plough soil, has resulted in a loss of some of the original surface detail.

A similar prick spur was found at Rhuddlan, Clwyd, Wales, from within a 10th Century grubenhaus (sunken floored building) fill. That example was iron, unlike this example which has been made from copper alloy, but the goad and the shape of the terminals are almost identical.



Economy

COINS

Catalogue no.81

Object: Sceatta

Location: Darliston

Context: metal detector

Material: Silver

Size: thickness: 1mm diameter: 12 mm Weight: 0.95g

Date: 675 – 750

Mint: unknown

Series: Series E (uncertain subtype)

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: LANCUM-AB9693

Sceatta, possibly dating to AD695-740 if it is a Continental issue from the Rhine area, especially Frisia. On the obverse side is a degraded bust, resembling a porcupine.

Obverse Description: degraded bust, resembling a porcupine

Obverse Legend: standard

Reverse Description: none

Reverse Legend: none



Catalogue no.82

Object: Sceatta

Location: Worfield, Bridgnorth

Context: metal detector

Material: Silver

Size: diameter: 11.86mm Weight: 1.18g

Date: 680 – 710

Mint: unknown

Series: Series E (Variety G3) (Type 4) (N 45)

Current location: unknown

PAS Record ID: HESH-110A69

On the obverse is a degraded bust resembling a porcupine facing right and on the reverse is a standard with pellet in annulet in the centre. The coin has been clipped.

Obverse Description: degraded bust resembling a porcupine facing right

Obverse Legend: none

Reverse Description: standard with pellet in annulet in the centre

Reverse Legend: possible blundered legend around standard



Catalogue no.83

Object: Coin, Sceatta

Location: Atcham

Context: metal detector

Material: Silver

Size: thickness: 1.6mm diameter: 12.4mm Weight: 1.12g

Date: 690 - 700

Mint: unknown

Series: Primary Series B

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-C595B2

A probable contemporary copy (forgery) of a silver sceatta of a Primary Series B, Bird Type: Bird and Cross design.

This has been noted as an interesting find by the recorder.

Obverse description: Diademed bust right

Obverse inscription: Illegible / blundered

Reverse description: Distorted bird above a cross with single annulets at either end of the arms of the cross.

Reverse inscription: Illegible / blundered



Catalogue no.84

Object: Coin

Location: Sheinton SJ 6104

Context: metal detector

Material: Silver

Size: diameter: 23.9mm Weight: 0.83g

Date: 786 - 809

Mint: unknown

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-18E881

Possibly an Islamic, Arabic or near eastern coin. Probably from the reign of Harum-al-Rashid (170-193 AH [786-809 AD]). The reverse possibly has the legend (Al-Fa dl). The occurrence of similar cut silver Arabic coins has been explained through contact with the Viking or Anglo-Scandinavian trade routes.

Obverse Description: badly corroded and decayed

Obverse Legend: none

Reverse Description: none

Reverse Legend: possibly (al-Fa) dl



Catalogue no.85

Object: Coin

Location: Wem

Context: metal detector

Material: not recorded

Size: not recorded

Date: 822 - 840

Mint: unknown

Series: Class III

Condition: not recorded

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: LVPL1786

A French Denier of Louis the Pious (814 – 840). On the obverse is the legend Christiana religio.

No Image Available

Catalogue no.86

Object: Coin hoard

Location: Castle Foregate, Shrewsbury SJ 495 131

Context: Found in 1936 by workmen during construction work

Material: not recorded

Size: not recorded

Date: 899 - 925

Mint: unknown

Series: unknown

Current location: Shrewsbury Museum

HER ID: 01467

Approximately 200 coins were discovered, in neat piles as though 'closely stacked on a level bottom'. Most of the coins were destroyed by the construction work. The six which survive are issues of Edward the Elder (899-925). Coins were being struck in Shrewsbury in the following reign but none of these are represented in the hoard leading to a suggested deposition date of c.920.

No Image Available

Catalogue no.87

Object: Penny

Location: Knockin, Oswestry SJ 3521

Context: metal detector

Material: Silver

Size: thickness : 0.68mm diameter : 20.62mm Weight : 1.5g

Date: 979 – 985

Mint: Lewes

Series: N 766 (First Hand) (Hild. B1)

Current location: unknown

PAS Record ID: CPAT-049EA1

An early medieval hammered silver penny of Aethelred II (The Unready - 978-1016). The obverse depicts a diademed bust right with the legend AEDELRAED REX ANGLO and the reverse depicts the Hand of Providence descending from clouds with A (alpha) and W (omega) to either side with the legend HEREBERHT and LAEV, possibly the name of the moneyer at Lewes.

Obverse Description: diademed bust facing right

Obverse Legend: AEDELRAED REX ANGLO

Reverse Description: the Hand of Providence descending from clouds

Reverse Legend: HEREBERHT – LAEV – A (Alfa) – W (Omega)



Catalogue no.88

Object: Penny

Location: Condoover

Context: metal detector

Material: Silver

Size: diameter : 20.3mm Weight : 1.44g

Date: 979 – 985

Mint: London

Series: N 766 (First Hand) (Hild. B1)

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-696AA7

Silver Penny of Aethelred II (the unready) struck by the moneyer Aelfwold. The obverse depicts a diademed crowned bust facing right and the legend ATHELRED REX ANGLOX, and the reverse depicts the Hand of Providence (style I) descending from clouds with A (alpha) and W (omega) to either side, with the legend ALFPOLD M-O LVND.

Obverse Description: diademed crowned bust facing right

Obverse Legend: AEDELRAED REX ANGLOX

Reverse Description: the Hand of Providence descending from clouds

Reverse Legend: ALFPOLD M – O LVND, A (Alfa) – W (Omega)



Catalogue no.89

Object: Penny

Location: Whitchurch

Context: metal detector

Material: Silver

Size: diameter : 19mm Weight : 0.83g

Date: 1000 – 1010

Mint : Dublin

Series : Unknown

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-E20370

Hiberno-Norse Long cross type penny of Sihtric Analafsson, struck by the moneyer Faeremin. The coin itself is broadly based on, or an imitation of Aethelred II type long cross penny. The obverse depicts a bust facing left with the legend SIHTRC RE + DYFLIN, and on the reverse Long cross divides the coin and inscription with single pellet at centre of the cross with the legend [FAE]REMIN O [DYFLI].

Obverse Description: bust facing left

Obverse Legend: SIHTRC RE + DYFLIN

Reverse Description: Long cross divides the coin with a single pellet at the centre

Reverse Legend: [FAE]REMIN O [DYFLI]



Catalogue no.90

Object: Penny

Location: Sheinton SJ 6103

Context: metal detector

Material: Silver

Size: thickness: 0.9mm diameter : 19.6mm Weight: 1.3g

Date: 1050 – 1053

Mint: Wallingford

Series: N 823 (Expanding cross, heavy)

Current location: unknown

PAS Record ID: NARC-B54AA3

Early medieval penny of Edward the Confessor. On the obverse is a diademed bust facing left in front of a sceptre with a terfoil head with the legend EDWERD REX and on the reverse is a short cross voided with expanding limbs joined at the base by two circles and the legend AEILP II ON [P]ALINGE.

Obverse Description: diademed bust facing left, in front of a sceptre with a trefoil head

Obverse Legend: EDWERD REX

Reverse Description: Short cross voided with expanding limbs joined at the base by two circles

Reverse Legend: AEILP II ON [P]ALINGE



CM

WEIGHT

Catalogue no.91

Object: Weight

Location: Whitchurch

Context: metal detector

Material: Lead or lead alloy

Size: diameter: 17.7mm thickness: 14.8mm Weight: 20.25g

Date: 750 - 1000

Current location: with finder

PAS Record ID: HESH-56AE46

Cast lead or lead alloy weight with an embedded metal (either copper alloy or silver) stud on the upper edge. The weight is globular, being broadly domed (bun shaped) in cross section and an irregular oval in plan. The sides of the weight have been slightly faceted and the base is flat. The stud is regular with a dark grey green coloured patina. The faceted sides possibly have incised designs although these have been much worn by movement in the soil. There is no evidence of punched marks or designs.

This example is most likely to date from the later phases of the early medieval period, and similar weights are often associated with Anglo-Scandinavian (Viking) trade. Although a direct parallel has not been found similar weights can be seen in Biggs and Withers Lead Weights, pages 18-20 specifically examples 17 and 23.



Bibliography: Biggs, N. and Withers, P. 2000. *Lead Weights: The David Rogers Collection*, Oxford.

Transport

CANOE

Catalogue no.92

Object: Dugout Canoe

Location: Knockin SJ 3345 2225

Context: Found prior to 1890 during construction work in Fish Pond meadow.

Material: Oak

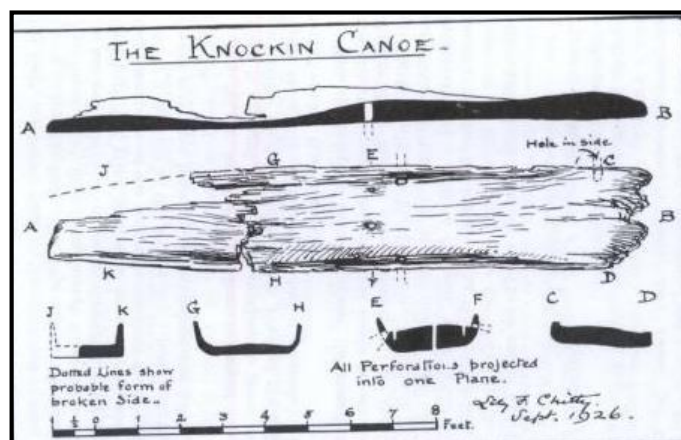
Size: length: 4.27m width: 0.76m depth: 0.23m

Date: 650 – 880

Current location: Shrewsbury Museum

HER ID: 01569

A dugout canoe made from a single piece of oak. The boat contains several holes in its base and sides which may have been used for various fittings but McGrail (1978:230) argues it cannot be ruled out that some of the holes may have been made post excavation. The wood has been radiocarbon dated to a 95% probability of 650 - 880 AD.



Appendix 2. Locations and evidence for Anglo-Saxon churches

Location, Church	Grid Reference	Architectural Evidence (Taylor and Taylor, 1965)	CMHTS	Domesday Book (Thorn and Thorn, 1986)	Sculpture (Bryant, 2012) Place-name (Gelling, 1990)
Albrighton	SJ 813041		Rural settlement next to church		
Aldon				A church, a priest	
Atcham, St Eata	SJ 541092	Period A	Church dating to pre 800		Grave marker, pos 11th C; Grave-cover, 10th/11th C
Barrow, St. Giles	SJ 657000	Period C			
Baschurch	SJ 220425		Church, possibly middle Saxon		Gelling suggests a church existed by the 9 th C due to the importance of the inclusion of 'church' in the name
Berrington				A church, a priest	
Bitterley				A church, a priest	
Bridgnorth, St Leonard	SO 716933				Fragment of probable string-course x3, 11th/early 12th C
Bromfield, St. Mary	SO 482768			12 canons. Holdings in Broughton, Astley, Mytton	Grave marker, 10th C
Broughton				A priest	
Burford	SO 584684			A church, 2 priests	
Chetton				A priest	
Chetwynd				A priest	
Chirbury				2 churches with a priest	

Church Stretton, St Laurence	SO 453937		One of the original foundations of the Deanery of Wenlock (Eyton, 1860)	A priest, 1 church	Small figure carving, possibly 11th C or earlier
Cleobury Mortimer	SO 674758		Domesday Book records a priest; suggested to be a minster	A priest	
Clun	SO 300808		Possible site of minster church		
Condover				A priest	
Diddlebury, St Peter	SO 508853	Period C3			Part of cross-shaft, 10th C; Part of cross-shaft, 11th/12th C; Grave-marker 11th C
Drayton				A priest	
Ellesmere	SJ 400348		Anglo-Saxon collegiate church (Eyton, 1860). Fragment of Anglo-Saxon cross found	2 priests	
Emstrey	SJ 526105				
Ercall				A priest	
Glazeley				A priest	
Ightfield				A priest	
Holdgate				A church, a priest	
Leighton				A priest	
Leintwardine				A church, a priest; held by Spirtes the priest from St Alkmund's. It was for the cannons' supplies before 1066	
Lilleshall				Godbold and priests hold it	

Lydbury			(Land of the Bishop of Hereford) 'manor's church with the priests'
Lydham	SO 335910		DB priest = pos church A priest
Market Drayton	SJ 675341		DB priest = pos church, at least by late AS period A priest
Maesbury			A church, a priest
Morville			3 priests
Much Wenlock, St Milburga's	SJ 625006	A2, C3	Abbey. Holdings in Much Wenlock; Ticklerton, Madeley, Little Wenlock, Shipton, Perkley, Bourton, Stoke, Deuxhill, Pickthorn, Sutton, Cleestanton
(Munslow) Aston			A priest
Overs Hundred			St. Remy's Church
Patton			A priest
Prees			(Land of Bishop of Chester) a priest
Rodington			A church, a priest
Rowton			A priest
Rushbury, St Peter	SO 513918	C	
Shawbury			A church, a priest
Shelton			(Land of Bishop of Chester) St Chads
Shifnal	SJ 749077		Croom (1988) says strong evidence for minster

Shrewsbury, St Mary	SJ 493126	Pre C1			Grave marker, Late 10th/11th C; Grave marker 10th C; Grave cover 10th C; Grave-cover 10th C
Shrewsbury, St. Alkmund	SJ 493126	Pre C1		Canons; Holdings in Shrewsbury Hundred, Lilleshall, Longdon, Uckington, Atcham, Albrightlee, Preston, Charlton, Preston, Dinthill	
Shrewsbury, St. Chad	SJ 493126	Pre C1		Holdings: (Little) Eton, Marton, Bicton, Yorton, Broughton, Rossall, Onslow	
Shrewsbury, St. Julian	SJ 493126	Pre C1			
Shrewsbury, St Juliana's				Canons; Holdings in Shrewsbury Hundred	
Shrewsbury, St Peter's				Monks; Holdings Eyton, Emstrey, Boreton	
Stanton (upon Hine Heath)				A church, a priest	
Stanton Lacy, St Peter	SO 495788	C		A church, 2 priests	Panel with cross in relief, 11th/12th C
Stoke (on Tern)				A church, a priest	
Stottesdon, St. Mary	SO 673828	C	Domesday: church	A church	Check T&T, Bryant says lintel prob 12th C
Stretton				A priest, a church	
Wellington	SJ 651116		VCH says possibly site of pagan temple	A priest	
Westbury, St Mary	SJ 355094			2 priests	Cross-shaft fragment, late 10th/early 11th C

Whitchurch	SJ 541415		Dedication of church to St Alkmund suggests Anglo-Saxon date	
Woolston				A priest
Wroxeter				4 priests, a church
Wroxeter, St Andrew	SJ 563082	Probably A	Church probably built by 9th C	Cross-shaft, early 9 th C; Panel from cross-shaft collar x2, early 9th C; Architectural fragment: carved panel, early 9 th C
Yorton				A priest

Appendix 3. Major Place-names of Shropshire

Name	Grid Ref	Type	Meaning
Acton			<i>Oak settlement or estate: places with special functions in the processing or distribution of oak timber</i>
Acton Burnell	SJ 534019	Ancient Parish	"
Acton Pigott	SJ 542027	DB Manor	"
Acton Reynald	SJ 535232	DB Manor	"
Acton Round	SO 634956	Ancient Parish	"
Acton Scott	SO 454893	Ancient Parish	"
Adderley	SJ 661395	Ancient Parish	<i>Meadow</i>
Alberbury	SJ 358144	Ancient Parish	<i>Manor-house of Aluburg</i>
Albright Hussey	SJ 502175	DB Manor	
Albrightlee	SJ 524162	DB Manor	<i>Woodland clearing adjacent to Albrighton</i>
Albrighton (near Shrewsbury)	SJ 496181	Civil Parish	<i>Eadbeorht's estate</i>
Albrighton (near Shifnal)	SJ 809044	Ancient Parish	<i>Aethelbeorht's estate</i>
Alcaston	SO 459870	DB Manor	<i>Almund's estate</i>
Aldon	SO 436795	DB Manor	<i>Hill with a spring</i>
Alkington	SJ 531392	DB Manor	<i>Settlement connected with Ealha</i>
Alverley	SO 759845	Ancient Parish	<i>Aelfgyo's clearing</i>
Ashford Bowdler	SO 519705	Ancient Parish	<i>Ash-tree ford</i>
Ashford Carbonel	SO 525701	Ancient Parish	
Astley	SJ 530188	Civil Parish	<i>East clearing in relation to Albrighton</i>
Astley Abbots	SO 709962	Ancient Parish	<i>East clearing in relation to Morville</i>
Aston			<i>East settlement or estate</i>

Aston (near Oswestry)	SJ 325271	DB Manor	East within the settlement centred on the castle of Oswestry
Aston (in Wellington Parish)	SJ 613097		First recorded <i>Eastun</i> 975 in a royal charter.
Aston (in Wem parish)	SJ 531287	DB Manor	East of Wem
Aston Botterell	SO 632841	Ancient Parish	Possibly named due to being East of the Great Clee Hill
Church Aston	SJ 743179	Civil Parish	Referred to in a charter of 963
Atcham	SJ 541092	Ancient Parish	<i>Land in a river-bend belonging to the followers of Eata</i> , precise meaning of name is 'open to controversy'
Badger	SO 768996	Ancient Parish	<i>Baecg's ridge-tip</i>
Barlow	SO 383840	DB Manor	<i>Barley clearing</i> , OE <i>bere-leah</i>
Baschurch	SJ 220425	Ancient Parish	<i>Bas(s)a's church</i> , OE <i>cirice</i> (church) is unusual in place-names
Baveney	SO 689795	DB Manor	<i>Babba's island</i>
Bayston	SJ 492082	DB Manor	<i>Beage's stone</i>
Bearstone	SJ 724397	DB Manor	<i>Baeghard's estate</i>
Beckbury	SJ 765015	Ancient Parish	<i>Becca's manor house</i>
Bedstone	SO 368757	Ancient Parish	<i>Bedgeat's estate</i>
Belswardyne Hall	SJ 603033	DB Manor	<i>Bedel's enclosed settlement</i>
Benthall (in Alberbury parish)	SJ 658026	DB Manor	<i>Bent-grass nook</i> : an area of shallow gullies and hollows
Berrington	SJ 529070	Ancient Parish	<i>Settlement associated with a fort</i> , from 'byrig' and 'tun'
Berwick Grove	SJ 540105	DB Manor	<i>Berewic</i> : <i>outlying grange, dependent farm</i>
Besford	SJ 551250	DB Manor	<i>Betti's ford</i>
Beslow	SJ 580087	DB Manor	<i>Betti's mound</i>
Betton (Abbots and Strange)	SJ 515079, 507093	DB Manor	<i>Beech tree farm or estate</i>
Betton in Hales	SJ 692370	DB Manor	<i>Beech-tree settlement</i>
Bicton	SJ 447150	Civil Parish	<i>Hill of the beaks</i>
Bishton (in Boningale parish)	SJ 804018	DB Manor	<i>Bishop's estate</i>
Bitterley	SO 563774	Ancient Parish	<i>Butter pasture</i>
Boreton	SJ 513077	DB Manor	<i>Fort settlement</i>
Bourton	SO 597963	DB Manor	<i>Fort settlement</i>
Bratton	SJ 637142	DB Manor	<i>Brook settlement</i>

Brockton			OE <i>broctun</i> , <i>brook settlement</i> , used in place-names for fairly substantial streams, where a settlement is likely to have had a good water-supply
Brockton (in Longford parish)	SJ 728168	DB Manor	By substantial tributary of the Strine Brook
Brockton (in Shipton parish)	SO 579938	DB Manor	By small tributary of the River Corve
Brockton (in Sutton Maddock parish)	SJ 721035	DB Manor	By Mad Brook
Bromfield	SO 482769	Ancient Parish	<i>Open land where broom grows. Feld</i> was most commonly used in ancient settlement-names to denote a contrast with adjacent woodland or higher ground
Broseley	SJ 673020	Ancient Parish	<i>Woodland clearing of the fort-guardian</i> . May be an OE personal name or could refer to the ownership of estates by officials in charge of a number of fortified sites
Broughton	SJ 497242	Ancient Parish	<i>Fort settlement</i>
Burford	SO 583680	Ancient Parish	<i>Fort ford</i>
Burwarton	SO 618850	Ancient Parish	<i>Burgward's estate</i> or estate belonging to a fort guardian
Cheswardine	SJ 720298	Ancient Parish	<i>Cheese-producing settlement</i>
Chirbury	SO 261985	Ancient Parish	<i>Church fort or manor</i>
Clun	SO 300806	Ancient Parish	Originally the name of the River Clun, a British name <i>Colauna</i>
Clunbury	SO 371807	Ancient Parish	<i>Fortified site on River Clun</i> , probably referring to a manor-house rather than to a major fortification
Cressage	SJ 593040	Civil Parish	<i>Christ's oak-tree</i>
Eaton			<i>River settlement or estate with an economic function</i>
Eaton Constantine	SJ 599064	Ancient Parish	
Eaton Mascott	SJ 538059	DB Manor	
Eaton-Under-Heywood	SO 500900	Ancient Parish	
Yeaton	SJ 433194	DB Manor	Also derived from Eaton
Emstrey	SJ 526105	DB Manor	<i>Minster-church on an island site</i> . Nothing is known of a church here, <i>island</i> probably refers to an area of raised ground on the flood-plain of the River Severn
Hodnet	SJ 614287	Ancient Parish	British name <i>pleasant valley</i>

Hordley	SJ 382308	Ancient Parish	Interpreted as <i>wood or clearing of hoards</i>
Kinlet	SO 719803	Ancient Parish	<i>Royal portion</i>
Knockin	SJ 334223	Ancient Parish	Associated with both the Welsh <i>cnycyn</i> 'little mound' and the OE <i>cnocc</i> 'hillock'
Longslow	SJ 655354	DB Manor	<i>Wlanc's tumulus</i>
Maesbrook	SJ 297216	DB Manor	Possibly a hybrid Welsh/English name
Menutton	SO 304775	DB Manor	A hybrid Welsh/English name from <i>mynydd</i> 'mountain' and <i>tun</i>
Middleton			May denote a settlement which performed a central function; a market-place for a group of communities, rather than a location equidistant from 2 others
Middleton (in Chirbury parish)	SO 297990	DB Manor	Half-way between two other settlements
Middleton (in Bitterley parish)	SO 540770	DB Manor	Not an obvious 'half-way' place
Middleton Scriven	SO 681876	Ancient Parish	Not an obvious 'half-way' place
Minsterley	SJ 374050	Civil Parish	<i>Wood or clearing belonging to a minster church</i>
Montford	SJ 419148	Ancient Parish	Possibly <i>ford where people gather</i>
Myndtown	SO 391896	Ancient Parish	Primitive Welsh <i>monith</i> , Welsh <i>mymydd</i> , referring to the Long Mynd
Neen Savage	SO 675774	Ancient Parish	Neen is a pre-English name and the ancient name of River Rea
Neen Sollars	SO 660723	Ancient Parish	"
Neenton	SO 638878	Ancient Parish	<i>Estate on the River Neen</i>
Oldbury	SO 710920	DB Manor	<i>Old fort</i>
Onslow	SJ 437129	DB Manor	Probably <i>Andraed's tumulus</i>
Oswestry	SJ 295295	Ancient Parish	Not recorded til c.1180, but is an OE name
Prees	SJ 557335	Ancient Parish	Probably from the Welsh <i>prys</i> , <i>copse grove</i>
Preston			<i>Estate of the priests</i>
Preston Brockhurst	SJ 539248	DB Manor	Not in ecclesiastical ownership at time of DB, presumably a pre-Conquest estate for the up-keep of priests
Preston Gubbals	SJ 493196	DB Manor	Held in 1086 by Godebold, a priest who was a tenant of St. Alkmund's church in Shrewsbury
Preston Montford	SJ 432142	DB Manor	At the time of DB, the manor belonged to St Alkmund's church, Shrewsbury

Preston Upon the Weald Moor	SJ 682153	Ancient Parish	Ecclesiastical ownership unknown
Purslow	SO 360810	DB Manor	<i>Pussa's tumulus</i>
Rodington	SJ 589145	Ancient Parish	Roden derives via primitive Welsh from the Romano-British <i>Rutunium</i> , probably meaning 'swift-flowing river'
Rushbury	SO 514919	Ancient Parish	From OE <i>risc</i> and <i>byrig</i> , the name would be appropriate for a prehistoric fort but no record of such a feature here
Ruyton of the Eleven Towns	SJ 395222	Ancient Parish	<i>Rye Farm</i>
Ryton	SJ 761029	Ancient Parish	<i>Rye farm</i>
Sheet	SO 532743	DB Manor	Prob OE <i>Sceat</i> , mainly a minor name and a southern English element
Shifnal	SJ 750076	Ancient Parish	Almost certainly <i>Scuffanhalsch</i> , a place listed in some forged documents as one of the original possessions of Peterborough Abbey
Shipley	SO 809959	DB Manor	<i>Sheep clearing or pasture</i>
Shipton	SO 562919	Ancient Parish	<i>Sheep clearing or pasture</i>
Shrewsbury		County Town	
Smethcott	SO 449994	Ancient Parish	<i>Cottages of the smiths</i>
Stanton			Likely to refer to stony soil
Stirchley	SJ 699067	Ancient Parish	Stirk clearing: OE meaning <i>young bullock or heifer pasture</i>
Stoke St Milborough	SO 567823	Ancient Parish	Belonged to the Priory of St Milborough at Much Wenlock
Stottesdun	SO 673829	Ancient Parish	Possibly <i>Horseman's hill</i>
Stow	SO 311737	Ancient Parish	First recorded c.1200 <i>Holy place</i> . The site of the church of St Michael is unsuitable in practical terms so it may have been chosen due to an ancient sacred association
Stretton (Church, All and Little)	SO 453936, 460953, 444915	Ancient Parish	OE <i>stroet-tun</i> 'settlement on a Roman road'. These sites are on the Roman road from Wroxeter to Leintwardine
Walcot	SO 264993	DB Manor	<i>Cottages of the Britons'</i>
Walltown	SO 692783	DB Manor	Possibly <i>waella</i> 'spring or wall' probable with reference to the ancient fort within which the farm has been built

Wattlesborough	SJ 355126	DB Manor	<i>Waece's fort</i> , probably referring to a prehistoric fortification but none is marked on maps
Welbatch	SJ 459088	DB Manor	<i>Wheel stream</i> , presumably referring to a mill-wheel
Much Wenlock	SO 623000	Ancient Parish	
Little Wenlock	SJ 647068	Ancient Parish	The name of Much Wenlock transferred to what was presumably a new settlement established by the religious house
Westbury	SJ 355095	Ancient Parish	A possible fortification at the junction of routes to Wales, this is possibly the <i>Waestbyrig</i> of ASC C s.a. 1053
Whittingslow	SO 432890	DB Manor	<i>Hwittuc's burial-mound</i>
Wigwig	SJ 608015	DB Manor	Probably <i>Wicga's dairy-farm</i>
Wistanstow	SO 431855	Ancient Parish	Probably <i>holy place of St Wigstan</i>
Wrockwardine	SJ 625120	Ancient Parish	Enclosed settlement by the Wrekin, a royal manor before 1066
Wroxeter	SJ 573083	Ancient Parish	Name of the Roman town
Wykey	SJ 391249	DB Manor	Late OE sense <i>dairy-farm</i>