THE ANGLO-SAXON SETTLEMENT ROUND LONDON AND GLIMPSES OF ANGLO-SAXON LIFE IN AND NEAR IT.

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It is not my intention in this paper to touch on the origin of London. We have evidence that a city existed on this site in Roman time, and that this neighbourhood had its inhabitants at a much more remote period, the period of the Bronze Age, and also that of the earlier Neolithic or New Stone Age.

I purpose to draw your attention to the time of the Anglo-Saxon settlement and occupation of the country round London, that is the arrival here of those whom we may call our own forefathers, those tribes and races of the great Teutonic stock from whom we English people are descended.

The city they found here was one of considerable importance and size. The Roman remains which have been found in London attest this. It was a city protected by defensive walls, containing temples, elegant houses, and many of the characteristic structures of a Roman city, having good streets and well-made roads connecting it with distant parts of Britain.

Let me enumerate these roads :—

From the south-east came the road from Dover and Canterbury, along the line more or less of the Old Kent Road.

From the south came the road from Pevensey through Sussex and Surrey, passing through or near Croydon, and through Streatham.

From the south-west came the road from Regnum, where Chichester now is, passing through Dorking.

From the west came the road from the City of Silchester, crossing the Thames at or near Staines, and reaching London across Hounslow Heath, by Hyde Park Corner.

From the north-west came the Watling Street, connecting Roman London with the City of Uriconium, near Shrewsbury, via Dunstable and Stony Stratford.

From the north came the Ermin Street, the great north road connecting the City with Stamford, Lincoln, and York.

From the north-east came the road from Colchester, and which also connected London with other parts of the Eastern counties.

These main Roman roads to and from London certainly existed at the time of the coming of the Saxons. The lines of some of these old roads are the lines of existing highways. You can walk along them to-day ; as, for example, along the Old North road, that grand old highway well seen in Cambridgeshire, and feel that you are traversing the same road the Romans followed in the journeys to and from London. These roads our forefathers found here

The Romans made them and our Anglo-Saxon forefathers made use of them. In addition to these great highways there must have been others connected with

them, branch roads or tracks, used at least in summer, or when the ground was sufficiently hard.

London, even in Saxon time, was relatively a great commercial port. By looking at the map we can see how imports arrived, and how exports were sent out. The River Thames then, as now, was the channel for all, or nearly all external communication with London. For internal communication westward the Thames was also a channel of traffic, how far we cannot say with certainty, but during the later Anglo-Saxon period as far as Oxford, and perhaps as far as the present limit of its navigation at Lechlade.

For nearly all its other internal communications in Anglo-Saxon time, London depended on the great highways the Romans had made. Well, as these roads were made, with all the skill of the Roman engineers, they could not last for ever. Our Saxon forefathers no doubt in places wore them through to the undisturbed strata beneath, and here and there roughly repaired them, and this wearing out and rough repair went on through the succeeding centuries, down to the time when the macadamised roads rivalled in construction those of the Roman period.

There are several points in reference to the highways leading to London in Anglo-Saxon time I desire to draw your attention.

1. The lines of these roads still exist in some of our modern highways, and are consequently among our most ancient antiquities.

2. The commercial growth of London from the time of the Romans, through the Anglo-Saxon period and down to the period of the improved road-making in the eighteenth century—and the era of canal-making was largely due, as far as internal

communication was concerned, to the use of these old Roman roads.

3. You may see on close examination of large scale maps at the present time some evidence of the great traffic from the provinces to London along these ancient highways.

This evidence arises from the following considerations: The Romans, as is well known, made their roads in straight lines as far as was practicable, in order to make them as short as possible. By examining a large scale map you will see that those existing highways which follow for the most part the old Roman lines, diverge a little here and there from the original straight lines. By examining these localities, it will also be seen that there is in all cases a reason for this, such as the softer nature of the strata or other geological conditions, which caused the roads at those places to wear out quicker, and that when they did wear out, those who had to repair them found it easier to make detours on harder ground rather than to expend greater labour in overcoming these natural conditions, and so maintaining the original straight line of the Roman highways.

Many of these deflections in the lines of the Roman roads certainly date from the Saxon period, and we may consequently see in some at least of these deviations of these highways leading to London, an evidence of the traffic during the centuries which followed the departure of the Romans from our Island, that is an evidence of the early internal trade and traffic to and from London.

Another consideration concerning these Saxon alterations in the Roman roads leading to London is that in some cases these main roads were diverted here

and there so as to pass through places of increasing importance in Saxon time, and so afford a connection between them and London.

In addition to these Roman roads leading to London in Saxon time there were other tracks known as here-paths, some of them probably even older than the Roman period. Two such roads from west to east exist in Hampshire. One of these, mentioned by the name "lunden hærpath," north of Winchester, occurs in a Saxon charter A.D. 909.* This old way still exists as a green road, and an inn on it is still known as Lunway's Inn.

The name of the county of Middlesex has an *ancient significance differing from similar names which* have come down to us from the Anglo-Saxon period. The name Essex is a modern form of the Est Seaxe or East Saxons, and Sussex similarly of the Suth Seaxe or South Saxons. The name of the Kingdom of Wessex is in like manner derived from West Seaxe or the West Saxons. There was a kingdom of the West Saxons, another of the South Saxons, and another of the East Saxons. There never was a Kingdom of the Middle Saxons, as people distinct from the other Saxon States. There was only a province of the Middel Seaxe, a name used to denote those Anglo-Saxon people who lived in the country between that of the East Saxons and that of the West Saxons. Here I may remark that the name Saxons was not one the original settlers generally used, but one given them by other people.

So far from London having grown into importance during the Anglo-Saxon period as the chief town of Middlesex, that county appears to have been

* Cartularium Saxonicum II, 304.

delimitated mainly as an appendage to London. "London and the land which owed obedience thereto" is mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle of the year 912. That land must have been Middlesex, or at least a considerable part of it.

Again, a little later on, in the time of King Æthelstan, we find among his laws relating to London, one concerning the obligation for pursuing on horseback, thieves fleeing from this city. The law directs "that no search be abandoned either to the north of the march or to the south." These marches of London must have been well-known boundaries, and may well have been the marches or boundaries of Middlesex and Surrey, over which counties the citizens of London actually had recognised hunting rights from a time beyond the recorded memory of man.

I know of no period in English history when Middlesex had no connection with the privileges of London. The charter of Henry I, by which the fee farm of Middlesex was granted to the citizens confirmed their ancient privileges, among which was that of hunting throughout Middlesex.

Middlesex appears therefore to have had an origin as an administrative area, different from that of every other English county, an origin well shown by the name of this Society. The hunting right of the citizens in Middlesex, which was an ancient privilege even in Norman time, extended as far as Staines on the west, the gate of Enfield Park and Waltham Cross on the north, and Stratford Bridge on the east.* These are the limits of the county. The delimitation of Middlesex is consequently evidence of the growth and importance of London during the Anglo-Saxon period.

* Hundred Rolls II, 419.

The country round London in Anglo-Saxon time was very different, not only from what it is now, but from what it was in the latter part of the middle ages. Forests, marshes, fens, and heaths abounded. On the north was the great forest of Middlesex, through which the Watling Street conducted travellers to the north-west. Middlesex beyond the suburbs of the old city was almost an unbroken forest towards the north.

On the east and north-east was the greater forest of Essex, the bounds of which in later centuries extended from Bow Bridge, Old Ford and the River Lea on the west, to Manningtree and Chelmesford on the east. This great woodland area was so extensive that its parts, centuries later, were known as forests, such as the forest of Chelmersford, forest of Berkentre, forest of Aungre, forest of Waltham, and forest of Kingswood on the east, while another part was known as the forest of Hatfield.*

On the south of the Thames there was much woodland between the river and the Surrey Chalk Downs, while to the south-east a great woodland tract covered a large extent of north-west Kent. The forest names which still survive, such as Malden, Morden, Norwood, Forest Hill, Chislehurst, Woodside, Sydenham and others, point even at the present day to the great extent of woodland which must have existed.

Norwood, especially, was of great extent. As late as the time of the Domesday Survey, a great wood more than seven miles round, which was an appendage to the manor of Battersea, existed at Penge.

The Domesday accounts of the manors in Middlesex are of special interest in reference to the connection

* Fisher, W. R. "The Forest of Essex," pp. 35–6.

of London and the country near it. Although we know when the city acquired the farm of Middlesex, and first appointed its sheriff, there is no record which tells us when the connection between London and Middlesex in regard to administrative purposes and other matters first began. The district round the great city even in Roman time must have been a necessity to it. Middlesex is a well-defined area, having the Thames on the south, the Lea on the east, the Colne or its brooks on the west, and a range of hilly ground on the north.

A large forest area near it must have been a necessity as long as London had been a populous city. Otherwise how could it have been adequately supplied with fuel ? Coal did not come into use until at least three centuries after the Norman conquest, or at least seven or eight centuries after the Anglo-Saxon settlement round London. Wood, charcoal, and peat were the only forms of fuel.

We learn from Domesday Book that the forest land in Middlesex was chiefly covered with oak and beech. We discover this from the entries under many of the manors of the extensive pannage for swine which existed in the woods near to them. The only English trees which afford food for swine, are the oak and beech, whose seeds fall in the autumn.

On the great manor of Harrow there was pannage in the extensive forest land round it for 2,000 hogs, at Hayes for 400, at Hendon for 1,000, Isleworth 500, Harmondsworth 500, Tottenham 500, Willesden 500, Kingsbury 1,000, Edmonton 2,000, Enfield 2,000, Harefield 1,200, Rislepe 1,500, Greenford 300, Westminster 150, Fulham 1,000, Hampstead 100, Tothill 100, and so on.

These are remarkable figures, and by comparison with similar figures for other counties distant from London, and others nearer to it, their significance becomes increased ; for example, in Hampshire, one of our ancient forest counties, the greatest number of swine for which the woods of any manor afforded pannage was 300 at Eling near the New Forest, and the next 100 at Andover, also bordering on forestland. On the other hand, when we consider the manors in Essex, East Berkshire, South Buckinghamshire, all nearer to London, we find evidence of a far greater extent of woodland by the much greater number of swine mentioned in the Domesday record. The total number recorded in Domesday Book for Middlesex alone is upwards of 17,000.

In these remarkable entries I think we may see how Anglo-Saxon London was to a great extent supplied with fuel. This fuel was no doubt brought in both by road and by the river from the forest areas.

Wood must have been extensively used for building and other trade purposes. The Anglo-Saxon wood market was, I believe, situated at the east of Wood Street, and the turners and the makers of wooden cups and dishes had their quarters on the west of the same street at the back of St. Martin's Collegiate Church, where the General Post Office is now situated.

The forests around the city may, therefore, be regarded as having been a necessity to Anglo-Saxon London. In an age when pit coal for fuel was not used a great woodland track near at hand was a necessity to any great city. The forests supplied not only fuel for household purposes, but also fuel in the form of charcoal for its handicrafts and arts. The

smiths and metal workers of all kinds required charcoal for their arts, and the charcoal burners in the forests were the men who supplied this want, and found a ready market for their commodity in London. Such old place names as Coleham in Middlesex and Collier's Wood in Surrey, which still survive, point to sites of the ancient industry of charcoal burning. Another Middlesex place name, Collington, occurs in an Anglo-Saxon Charter, and the name Coleman Street, which still survives in the city, appears to have derived its name from that part of London in which the ancient charcoal burners congregated or sold their wares. On the south of the Thames the forest area known as Norwood or the north wood of Croydon, was the scene of extensive charcoal burning certainly as late as Queen Elizabeth's time. In the sixteenth century Croydon was chiefly inhabited by smiths and colliers, and the smoky woods between it and Streatham were often lurid at night with their operations. I know of no more picturesque night scene in a forest, than that of charcoal burners engaged in their work, which requires constant care to prevent the slowly burning masses of wood from bursting out into jets of flame through the turf with which the burning heaps are covered. This industry is not yet quite extinct in England. I have visited charcoal burners' huts and seen them at work at night in the New Forest, where the few which remain still have, or had a few years ago, wood rights for their industry. The market of the charcoal burners in Middlesex and Surrey even for many centuries after the Saxon period must have been in London.

Anglo-Saxon London also had adjoining it on several sides an extensive fen of which we are still

reminded by the names Finsbury, Fenchurch, and Moorfield. This fen extended, more or less, round the city from the east, to the Fleet ditch on the west. "Lunden fenn" is mentioned in a Saxon charter dated A.D. 951. The western entrance to the city from Holborn crossed the fen by a stockaded way, called the Old Stoke in this charter.*

Near the city also were extensive marshes which modern excavations have shown contained thick beds of peat. That peat was dug for fuel by the poorer inhabitants of the country near London in Saxon time, is more than probable from the well-known use of peat by similar people elsewhere.

There were also close to London extensive heaths, over which the people living on the manors had turbary rights, or the privilege of cutting up the fibrous turf for fuel, as the commoners of the New Forest have at the present time. These fens, marshes, and heaths supplied, especially when wood became dear, part of the fuel required by the poorer inhabitants of the city.

The Romans finally left London about A.D. 430, and although the settlement of Kent took place before the end of that century, we have no records until the coming of Augustine, and no contemporary history until the time of Bede, who died about A.D. 730, or three centuries after the Roman withdrawal.

This early Anglo-Saxon age is the darkest period of our history. That period which followed until the time of the Norman Conquest has left us but scanty accounts, and yet the early Anglo-Saxon period saw the beginning of the English race, and that period

* Cartularium Saxonicum III, 692-3.

must always be a time of great interest to ourselves, and the whole Anglo-Saxon world.

I am not one of those who believe that the Anglo-Saxon race came with all its characteristics already formed from the Continent. The tribes which subsequently formed that race came, as we know, from the Continent. They brought with them their dialects, their customs, their mythology, and other characteristics, but their language was made here. No one can point to a single example of Anglo-Saxon speech which was not formed and written on English soil, and London, the largest city of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, the greatest seat of Anglo-Saxon commerce, which received merchants and traders of all the countries from which the Anglo-Saxon settlers had come, must have exercised a great influence in the blending of their dialects and the formation of the Anglo-Saxon tongue.

The Anglo-Saxon language abounded in synonyms, for example, it contained twelve words all denoting man and twelve for woman. Many common objects had synonymous names. Such a circumstance points to a blending of dialects in the formation of a language in which many synonymous words survived. The irregular verbs which have come down to us from the Anglo-Saxon parent language, also point to the same conclusion, and especially the substantive verb to be. In the inflections of this verb some philologists recognise parts of five verbs,* others not less than three,† be, am, art and is are examples, and have come to us from at least three sources.

In the formation of their language from the dialects

* Turner, S. Royal Society of Literature. Vol. I, and History of the Anglo-Saxons. † Latham, R. G. Handbook of the English Language.

of the various races settled in England, the Anglo-Saxons borrowed root words and dropped endings, and appropriated syntactical combinations without the inflections.

Such a commingling of words in the formation of Anglo-Saxon speech could only have arisen from the intercourse of people of different races and dialects, and as we have evidence, even as far back as Saxon time, that London was the great commercial centre, London must have had a great influence in the blending and formation of the language of that period. The Anglo-Saxon word "burhspræc" for the town speech, the more refined tongue as distinct from the country dialects, appears to me also to point to this conclusion.

In the blending of the dialects of the confederacy of races who settled in England into the common language, London must indeed have played a greater part than has been commonly recognised. Although the monasteries were the only schools of learning, and the places from which the earliest examples of the Anglo-Saxon written speech were issued, London was, above all other ports and cities, the place where men speaking the various languages and dialects met. The common language must have been formed from its practical use by the people, before it could have been reduced to writing in the monasteries. The monks could not have made it, for it comprises words relating to and descriptive of all phases of human life, and of man's intercourse with man.

Here in London, certainly, came Frisian traders from the coasts of the North Sea, people of the same race as the numerous Frisian settlers in England. We read of Frisian merchants in London as early as A.D. 679,

and in a charter granted by Æthelbald, king of Mercia, in A.D. 743 or 745, we read of the remission on two ships of the early dues or customs levied in "Lundentunes hythe."

We read of the Frisian ships and sailors that formed part of the Navy of King Alfred. Here to London must also have come merchants from the Baltic, from the island of Gotland. During the later period of the Roman Empire and the Anglo-Saxon period, the island of Gotland was the chief emporium of northern Europe. Many thousands of coins of the later emperors and of our Anglo-Saxon kings have been found there, a conclusive proof of the extensive trade of the northern Goths and of their connection with England. The vast ruins of the great city of Wisby in this isle of Gotland are even at the present day one of the archæological wonders of Europe.

Traders from Norway and Sweden also came here. More than 20,000 Anglo-Saxon coins have been found in Sweden and the isle of Gotland, a number not surpassed by those discovered in England itself. Most of these coins, it is true, are of Ethelred's time, when, we know, that the Danes and Norsemen were bought off by large payments, but upwards of 5,000 are coins of other kings, ranging in date from the beginning to the end of the 10th century. In Norway English coins of the 8th century have been found, their dates being from the time of Cænwulf, king of Mercia, A.D. 796-810, to that of Cnut.

The Scandinavian connection with Anglo-Saxon England was not entirely for plunder. When war did not prevail we know that trade went on. Othere, the Norseman, and Wulfstan, who were patronised by

King Alfred, describe their voyages and the trade they carried on. Othere tells us of the merchandise he brought to England from his home in the north of Norway, the skins of the marten, reindeer, otter, and bear, the eiderdown and whalebone, and the ropes made of whale and sealskins, which the Fins brought to the Northmen as tribute. Wulfstan tells us of his voyages in the Baltic, of its rivers, and the strange customs of the Eastland tribes, where, he says, "there are many burhs, and in each is a king, and the richest men drink mare's milk, and the poor and slaves drink mead."

Such men as Othere and Wulfstan were among the traders to Anglo-Saxon London, and the Scandinavian influence on the language arising from this commercial intercourse must have been considerable, apart from that which arose from the later Danish settlements. Of that commercial intercourse there must have existed in London, and perhaps exists even now here and there beneath the streets, other relics, such as I have found in another ancient port, viz., large pebbles and other fragments of Norwegian granite, that came as ballast in ancient ships, freighted with a bulky but light cargo. Such stones may be looked for among the débris beneath streets and sites of old houses near the river.

Closely connected in interest with Anglo-Saxon London are the chief trade routes at that time, and the commodities which came along them from Asia. The merchant in Ælfric's dialogues is described as bringing in his own ship skins, silk, gems, gold, cloths, pigments, wine, olives, ivory, brass, bronze, tin, silver, glass, and other articles. Sometimes, he says, "I suffer shipwreck with the loss of all my things,

scarcely escaping myself." In this list the skins first-named, certainly for the most part, came from the north. Constantinople, however, in the time of the Saxons, was the great emporium of the Levant, and no doubt ships came to England from the Mediterranean Sea, but there was another ancient trade route from the east across Russia to the Baltic, and products of Eastern countries could reach England through the Gotland merchants. I have mentioned the thousands of Anglo-Saxon coins found in the isle of Gotland. The Greek, Roman and early Byzantine coins* found there are also very numerous, and Arabic and other Eastern coins have also been discovered. More than twenty thousand coins, struck at Bokhara, Samarcand, Bagdad, and Kufa† have been found in that island; and although some of these may have come by way of Spain, such a vast number of coins lost or forgotten, shows how great the Eastern trade of Gotland, by which silks and other Eastern products probably reached London, must have been. These Goths must indeed have been great traders, and the Frisians, who probably had overland commerce with the Mediterranean, were no less active.

The Frisians and Goths are the earliest traders to Anglo-Saxon London whom we can trace, and they were of the same stock as the people who settled in Kent. In Ethelred's laws relating to trade in Saxon London, the Frisians are called Flandrenses, and the other traders mentioned are the men of the Emperor, the men of Rouen, and those of Normandy and France.

An interesting circumstance connected with the early trade of Saxon London was the system of keeping accounts. Whatever may have been the means of

* du Chaillu, P. The Viking Age, II, 218. † *Ibid*, II, 219.

reckoning used by the foreign merchants who traded to this port, that which was in use in the dealings between the traders in London and the country people of England itself must have been a system understood by the people, and the oldest form of keeping accounts of which any knowledge has come down to us is that of tallies.

Tallies were made of two similar strips of wood on which similar notches or marks were cut, one of the strips being kept by the payer and the other by the receiver. Whenever a mark was made or cut on one strip it was also made on the other while the strips were together, and these strips were called tallies, because of their exact correspondence.

The tally system of reckoning still survives in Kent during the season of hop-picking, and is actually used at the present time between some of the poorer inhabitants of London who annually migrate to Kent, and the foremen of the hop fields.

Of all the remarkable survivals in England from the Anglo-Saxon period, that of wooden tallies as a system of reckoning has been the most astonishing. Until the year 1824, *i.e.*, within living memory, the accounts of the Exchequer arising from the ancient Crown demesne lands were kept at Westminster by means of wooden tallies.

These old tallies had a record office of their own, at or near the old Houses of Parliament, and the stock of them was immense. In 1843 it was resolved to get rid of these survivals of the Anglo-Saxon system of reckoning, but instead of selling them for firewood, it was unfortunately resolved to burn them at Westminster, and it was that burning and the final passing away of the relics of the old official system of tally

reckoning, which caused the greater conflagration, by which the old Houses of Parliament were destroyed.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle contains a statement which proves that the wealth of London during the later Saxon period was in comparison with that of the whole of England, much the same in proportion as it has been in later centuries. The passage is that referring to the amount of tribute paid to Cnut on his conquest of the Kingdom, and is as follows, under the year 1018 :—"In this year the tribute was paid all over the Angle race that was in all two and seventy thousand pounds, exclusive of what the townsmen of London paid, which was ten and a half thousand pounds."

Another circumstance which points to the wealth of London in the Saxon period at a still earlier time is afforded by the Laws of King Æthelstan relating to the city. These laws are largely concerning with special regulations for the capture and punishment of thieves, and with the privileges of the citizens in chasing these rogues. It is clear that the opportunities for thieves would be far greater in London, filled with rich merchandise of all kinds, than in other parts of the country.

London, in Anglo-Saxon time, was a commercial prize, which came under the dominion of all of the most powerful Saxon kingdoms in succession, and in sheer vicissitudes of its history no other city resembles it.

We read of it first as a city controlled by the kingdom of Kent in the time of King Ethelbert. Whether it was or was not part of the kingdom of the East Saxons at this time is uncertain, but in any case Ethelbert was the overlord of the East Saxons. We have no evidence that the neighbourhood of London was

originally settled by people of the same race or races as the people of Essex. On the other hand, there is considerable evidence pointing to this settlement having been made by people of the same races as the people of Kent, *i.e.*, by Frisians and Goths, who later on were commonly called by the name of Jutes.

We first read of London in A.D. 457, in which year the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells us that the great battle of Crayford in Kent was fought, and the British fugitives from Kent took refuge within the walls of London, the old London walls, of which a small part may still be seen. There are no records as to what happened in London after the great defeat of the Britons at Crayford until the year 604, when we are told that Augustine hallowed Mellitus the first bishop of London, and sent him to preach baptism to the East Saxons, but we are told that it was Ethelbert, the King of Kent, who gave Mellitus his bishop's see in London. Bede tells us also that Ethelbert built the first church of St. Paul, and in his charter to St. Paul's, William the Conqueror specially mentions that it was of Ethelbert's foundation.

The dominion of Ethelbert in the beginning of the 7th century extended from Kent to the Humber, but with him the Kentish empire or overlordship passed away. He died in 616, and the next overlord of a considerable part of England was Edwin, the King of Northumbria, who after Ethelbert's death, married his daughter Ethelburga. The overlordship of the East Saxons, in whose kingdom London was situated, thus passed to Northumbria. We may, however, conclude that the kings of the East Saxons, so long as they remained faithful to their overlord, were not disturbed by the Northumbrian kings, whose sources

of power were so far away. In the year 654, however, when Oswy was king of Northumbria, it does not appear that the East Saxon king had full power in London. Oswy was a zealous Christian, while the Essex kings had relapsed to paganism. Oswy converted Sigebert, the king of the East Saxons, to Christianity, and we read in 654 of the consecration at Lindisfarne of Cedd, as bishop of London. This revival of Christianity in London was due to Northumbrian influence, and the appointment of the bishop was clearly a Northumbrian appointment, the prelate being consecrated in that famous seat of northern ecclesiastical influence on Holy Island.

It is most improbable that the original Teutonic people who conquered London could have been any other than those of the Kentish race. These Goths and Frisians no doubt followed up their great victory of Crayford, and London later on became their prize. It was not until the year 491, according to the historical statements, that the second Saxon kingdom, that of Sussex, was founded. Whatever local settlements there may have been on the Essex Coast, there was certainly no kingdom of Essex until long after the date of the battle of Crayford, and when it does appear, Essex comes before us as a subordinate kingdom to that of Kent. History, therefore, points to Kent, as the Anglo-Saxon state which first controlled London.

Let me now show you what other evidence there is pointing to the same conclusion. As far as I know, this evidence has never yet been brought before any archæological society, and it is appropriate that it should now come before the London and Middlesex Society.

One of the peculiarities of the Old Kentish dialect is the early use of the word ken for kin, in which peculiarity it agrees with old Frisian.

In one of a series of papers on "Ancient Kentish Colonies," published in "The Antiquary" during 1899, I traced the migration of colonies of Kentish people as shown by Kentish place names and other evidence, up the Thames from Kent to the border of Gloucestershire. Of all the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, Kent had the least "hinterland" for the occupation of its increasing population, and the Thames was its natural channel for migration.

We find Kent place names near London mentioned in our oldest national records, such as the Saxon Charters and Domesday Book. In Middlesex we find Kensington, Kenton near Harrow, Kenton (now called Kempton) and others. In Surrey we find Kennington, Kenley, Kents Town and others; and also some derived from Goths, Geats, or Jutes, such as Gætenesheale, the earliest name under which Vauxhall is mentioned, which occurs in a Saxon Charter A.D. 957.*

Some of these places, such as Kenton and Kentish Town, bear the full Kent name. These names are all ancient. All that has been changed a little has been the spelling, by the use of a k for c, the Anglo-Saxon having no k until a late period, the name for Kent being Cent in the Saxon documents, and Chent or Chenth in Domesday Book.

Kentish Town is a name of remarkable significance. This place not only bears the Kentish name, but possessed an unmistakable Kentish custom.

I am aware that some antiquaries have derived the

* Cartularium Saxonicum, III, 189.

name of Kentish Town, also called Cantelows, from a family named Cantelow. There is, however, much stronger evidence that the family derived its name from the place. The word low in our earliest records is frequently written lai or lau, and sometimes denotes law. Cantelow is thus equivalent to Kent law, and we find in Kentish Town the ancient Kentish law or custom actually prevailed down to modern time.

Even at the present day the common law in regard to inheritance of real estate in cases of intestacy, is different in Kent to what it is in the rest of England. By the Common Law of England, the eldest son succeeds to the real property. In Kent, primogeniture is replaced by the custom of partible inheritance, commonly called Gavelkind, under which all the sons share equally, and the youngest has the right to have the homestead.

In Kentish Town the same custom prevailed down almost to within living memory. The survival of such a remarkable custom side by side with the Kentish name itself, appears to me to point unmistakably to the settlement of Kentish people at Kentish Town.

That the northern and eastern suburbs of London were settled in a similar way by Goths, and Frisians or people of the Kentish race, is rendered very probable by the survival of this Kentish custom of partible inheritance on a series of manors which bounded Anglo-Saxon London on the east and north.

The custom of partible inheritance among the sons was the custom of the manors of Stepney, Mile End, Hackney, Canonbury or Canbury, Newington Barrow or Highbury, Hornsey, and Islington, and this custom survived until almost our own time.*

* Robinson on Gavelkind. Edited by C. J. Elton.

I can see no other satisfactory explanation of such a remarkable parallelism between the custom of these manors and the common custom of Kent, except a settlement in the early Anglo-Saxon period of Kentish people, or people of the same race on the land bounding the suburbs of Saxon London on the north and east, particularly when we take into account the dominion of the kings of Kent, especially of Ethelbert over London and the district near it at the beginning of the 7th century.

Some of our writers on Early Law have stated that the custom of dividing the lands was the common law of the country before the Norman conquest, but they give no proof of this. The statement has been copied from one to another for centuries, but like many other writers, these later copyists have copied the statements without verification.

There is one historical circumstance of great interest of the time of Henry II connected with this subject, and as it concerns the settlement of the country near London, I will mention it.

The Norman kings desired to see the uniform system of primogeniture established in order to increase the efficiency of their feudal power.

Glanville, who wrote in the time of Henry II, tells us that partible inheritance was only recognised by the Law Courts in his time, in those places where it could be proved that the lands always were divided. Consequently, as the custom was allowed to continue on the manors to the north and east of London, it must have been proved to have been an immemorial custom of these manors to the satisfaction of the law in the 12th century. This custom always has been the common law of Kent, and these manors near

London with a Kentish custom, had only to prove their Kentish origin, and the proof could not have been questioned. I have no doubt that this custom at Kentish Town and the other manors north of London was so proved.

It has always appeared to me that, as this custom was allowed to survive in so few manors comparatively throughout England, the statements of our legal writers, who have so carefully copied from each other, cannot be accepted without proof.

I consider the survival of these customs in the manors north and east of London, to be of great value as evidence as to whence the earliest settlers on these manors came, *i.e.*, from Kent.

There is also evidence of other kinds pointing in the same direction, *i.e.*, the evidence on the south side of the river, and that of the early archiepiscopal lands.

The evidence of the settlement of Kentish people, or people with customs akin to those of Kent near London on the south side of the Thames is important.

Junior right or the custom of inheritance by the youngest son instead of the eldest as in common law, prevailed from time immemorial unto within living memory, on the manors of Streatham, Croydon, Peckham Rye, Kennington, Walworth, Vauxhall, Wandsworth, Battersea, Lambeth, Barnes, Shene or Richmond, and Petersham. The same custom also prevailed at Edmonton, Fulham, Tottenham, Ealing, Acton, Isleworth, and Earls Court, on the north of the Thames.*

We are thus confronted with this remarkable fact, that London was surrounded by manors which all

* Robinson on Gavelkind. Edited by C. J. Elton; and Corner on *Borough English.*

possessed from the most remote antiquity, customs of inheritance that differed from primogeniture, the common law of the country, and which agreed with the Kentish custom, or a custom nearly akin to it.

These ancient customs, together with the old Kentish place names, the historical and other evidence, establish the great probability of an original Kentish settlement.

In addition there is the evidence afforded by the ancient lands of the Archbishops of Canterbury in Middlesex.

These lands were the extensive demesnes of Harrow and Hayes, places which remained in the diocese of Canterbury, although geographically in that of London, for many centuries. This circumstance alone points to the probability of their original grant being as early, or earlier, than the existence of the diocese of London.

In studying the origin of manors, villages, and towns, we find that a change of name often occurs, the village or town name supplanting that of the original manorial name. For example, the settlement at Hayes was known as Gedding in the 7th century, a name which still survives in that of Yeading in Hayes parish, and Gedding is a Jutish name. Ceadwalla granted Gedding and Wudeton to Archbishop Theodore in A.D. 687,* and as he, a West Saxon king, had succeeded a Mercian king as the overlord, this was probably a confirmatory grant. We have seen that Harrow was one of the most wooded manors in Middlesex. It was 45 miles in circuit.

The grants of lands to bishops and monasteries by the early Anglo-Saxon kings were colonization grants.

* Cartularium Saxonicum, I, 104.

All that they had in their power to give was the land, certain services from the people settled on the land, or who might become settled on it, and the fines and forfeitures arising from the administration of the law. Kent, of all the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, had the least room for the expansion of its people. As they increased in number they were necessarily obliged to migrate out of what is now Kent. What can have been more likely than that some of the surplus population on the archbishop's lands in Kent should have been allowed to settle on his lands in Middlesex, to the advantage of both the settlers and the archbishop? At any rate, it is very significant that close to Harrow, we find an ancient place named Kenton. The archbishops must have possessed Harrow and Gedding or Hayes from a very early date, for about the beginning of the eighth century Harrow was taken from them by Cœnwulf, king of Mercia, for his own enrichment, and after his death passed to his daughter, the abbess of South Minster, who later on, in 825, had to return it to the archbishopric as agreed to at the Council of Cloveshoe.*

In the year 1002 Archbishop Ælfric in his will † remitted to his tenants in Middlesexon and Suthrion the payments in kind due to him from them. As we have no records of the archbishops of Canterbury possessing land at any early period in Middlesex except the manors of Harrow and Hayes, the possessions referred to in 1002 must have been at these places.

An important change in the tenure of the archiepiscopal lands was made in the time of King John, when the archbishop was empowered by the king to

* Cartularium Saxonicum, I, 528-533.

† Chron. Mon. de Abingdon, I, 416-417.

convert his gavelkind lands into knights' fees.* The old gavelkind custom, with its incidental custom of partible inheritance, thus gave way to primogeniture, and apparently this was the case with the Middlesex lands at Harrow and Hayes, as well as elsewhere. As far back as history carries us, we find the archbishops of Canterbury holding these great estates in Middlesex. It is not unlikely that they first acquired them through the grant of Ethelberht, king of Kent, who founded the bishopric of London and endowed it and the early church of St. Paul. He could not have done this if he had not possessed authority over Middlesex. These circumstances point to the early settlement of Middlesex having been at least, in part, of Kentish origin.

Again, in the laws of Wihtræd, king of Kent, about A.D. 685, there is a statement which also leads to this conclusion. Law in Anglo-Saxon time was to a great extent administered locally, and in many instances what are now customs of manors are survivals of early local laws.

Kentish people when they migrated, carried with them some at least of their own laws and customs, and the laws of king Wihtræd refer to the Kentish man's heritage, his wergild, and the mund of his family ; also the very significant words are used, "be he over the march, wherever he may be." The marches of Kent were its boundaries, and such a clause can only refer to customs of the Kentish man, whether he was within or beyond the boundaries of Kent.

The order in which London was connected with the various Anglo-Saxon kingdoms thus appears

* Lambarde. Perambulation of Kent.

to have been, Kent, Essex under Kent, Essex under Northumbria, Mercia, Wessex, Mercia, and finally Wessex.

After the Northumbrian supremacy, London came for the first time under the kings of Mercia. The earliest of these Mercian sovereigns whose authority was acknowledged in and near London was Wulferė, whose dominion lasted until about 675, and who granted or confirmed various charters concerning land in Middlesex, Surrey and Kent. After his death, Ceadwalla, king of Wessex, exercised during the latter part of his reign dominion as an overlord of districts near London. His son, Ine, king of Wessex, was certainly the overlord of London. He became king in 688, when Ceadwalla resigned the crown and went to Rome. In his dooms, Ine mentions Eorcenwald as "my bishop." As Eorcenwald was bishop of London, the reference to him as his bishop points to his supremacy in London. Later on we find London again part of Mercia under king Offa, and after his time it passed finally to Egbert and the kingdom of Wessex. All the Anglo-Saxon kings who exercised the greatest power in England during the period of the so-called Heptarchy, exercised more or less authority over London.

As a trading centre, London appears to have been resorted to by people of all the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. For example, in the laws of Hlothere and Eadric, kings of Kent between 673 and 686, we read: "If any Kentish man buy a chattel in Lunden-wic, let him have two or three true men to witness, or the kings wic reeve," from which it appears that witnesses to commercial dealings in London were necessary in the 7th century.

The Ceap gild of London is mentioned in the laws of Æthelstan.

The names Cheapside and Eastcheap are street names which have of course been derived from the Anglo-Saxon céap, a bargain, or sale, whence also we derived the old name chapman.

A picturesque side of Anglo-Saxon life in London must have been that connected with the departure and return of the chapmen or travelling merchants.

The chapmen were persons of considerable importance, being either associated in Guilds of their own or members of trade guilds. They took their servants with them on the journeys. Chapmen are mentioned in the Laws of Ina about the end of the seventh century.

In king Alfred's time a trader travelling with many people was obliged to announce himself to the king's gerefa at the folk gemôt, at the same time to state the number of persons with him, and engage to present them to justice in case of need. This is found in the 34th law of king Alfred's code. Buying their goods in the commercial centres, they travelled through the country with their conveyances, horses, and men, to sell their commodities. The travelling pedlars of various kind who may be seen at the present day are the commercial representatives of the ancient chapmen, but as a class they have much come down from their former commercial position.

We know the chapmen travelled along the old Roman roads, for on or near some of these roads we find their name, such as Chapmansford, still remaining among the place names of the country. Anybody now can open a shop in any town or village he pleases. It was not so in Anglo-Saxon time, or for

centuries later. No shop could be opened for the sale of goods anywhere unless the place had a market by prescriptive right or immemorial custom, or had a market charter.

We know the chapmen travelled in the summer, and we may conclude that their return to Anglo-Saxon London and their commercial dealings in the city were chiefly in the winter. In this they are followed by their modern pedlar representatives, some of whose vans you may see, with others that frequent country fairs, wintering in rows at Battersea and other parts of London.

One of the most important antiquities of City administration which still survives in London is that of the Wardmôte Courts.

That these courts have been modified in the course of centuries is certain. That they arose in Anglo-Saxon time in a primitive form there can be little doubt—first, because their name, "Wardmôte," is a purely Saxon name. If these courts had originated under the Plantagenet kings, say in the thirteenth century, when we first read of them, they would certainly have been called by another name, for the Anglo-Saxon language was not in use in the chief cities in the thirteenth century. Secondly, I believe they are of Saxon origin, because of their similarity to the Hundred Courts of the counties, which are undoubtedly of that period, and to the Courts Leet throughout the country. The Alderman of every Ward had an ancient right to hold Leets in his Ward.

A special Anglo-Saxon area of administration which has come down to us in the name Portsoken, was that of the Saxon knights' guild close to Aldgate, an area within London but under its own local court and

administration. The name Knighten Guild still survives in that of Nightingale Lane.

Time forbids that I should in this paper touch at any length on the Danish settlements close to the City in the later Saxon period. Of that just outside Bishopsgate, known as Bishopsgate Without, we have historical evidence.* St. Clement Danes, also west of Fleet Street, indicates another outlying Danish locality.

We can picture to ourselves with sufficient accuracy some phases of religious life in London during the later centuries of the Saxon period.

First among its churches was the earliest cathedral of St. Paul, a collegiate church, with the religious community attached to it. This was the church founded by Ethelbert, king of Kent. Behind its high altar stood the shrine of St. Erkenwald, the bishop of London, a zealous missionary bishop who did much for the conversion of the heathens of his diocese. He is recorded as having preached much to the people living in the wild forests round London, the woodmen, the charcoal burners, and others. He also founded the abbey of Chertsey and the nunnery of Barking. His shrine was certainly regarded with great reverence, and was, there can be no doubt, visited by pilgrims. The shrine of St. Erkenwald was to St. Paul's what St. Swithin's shrine was to Winchester, and St. Cuthbert's to Durham.

During the Anglo-Saxon period the bones of a revered saint, particularly a wonder-working saint, were the most prized relics any great church could possess, and the saintly remains of bishop Erkenwald were pre-eminently the relics at St. Paul's.

* Hundred Rolls, Vol. II.

We cannot understand this without fully realising how great a part pilgrimages played in the religious life of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers. They made pilgrimages to holy places and sacred shrines, and also very largely and principally for curative purposes to holy wells.

The pilgrimages in later centuries to archbishop Becket's shrine at Canterbury, was not a new phase of religious life developed after his murder, but a continuation of that which had come down as an ancient religious custom, to the people of the 12th and succeeding centuries from their Anglo-Saxon forefathers, directed merely into a new channel. To the Anglo-Saxon people of London at the end of the 7th and succeeding centuries, bishop Erkenwald's life and remains, appealed perhaps as strongly as archbishop Becket's did to the people of the 12th century. Erkenwald's shrine at St. Paul's was the most famous shrine in Anglo-Saxon London.

Of holy wells in or near the city, we can clearly trace two. The reverence paid to springs and fountains (for the Anglo-Saxon word "well" signifies a spring), is far older than the time of the introduction of Christianity into England. The worship of water sources can be traced to the most remote antiquity, and the reverence of holy wells during the Anglo-Saxon and succeeding ages, was but a pagan custom continued under Christian dedications and Christian sanction.

The old name Holywell Street (now High Street) Shoreditch, reminds us of a holy well which gave its name to a Benedictine nunnery called Holy Well there. Holywell Street, Strand, reminds us in a similar way of a holy well west of the city.

Many of the ancient holy wells were frequented by people with skin diseases or suffering from complaints of the eyes. This arose in many cases from their chalybeate water—known, but not understood. I have found sesquioxide of iron a common ingredient in reputed holy wells now frequented by people for the purpose of washing mangey dogs, so greatly has the character of many of these former holy wells fallen from their former reputation.

As sacred wells are of pre-historic antiquity, I do not think it at all likely these holy wells of London had their sanctity conferred upon them in the middle ages. They were of ancient repute even in those ages.

Another phase of Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical life was that of sanctuary. Every church was a temporary sanctuary, where even those guilty of slaying others could find temporary refuge, and on abjuring the realm could save their lives.

The collegiate Church of St. Martin, however, whose foundation goes back beyond the range of history, but which tradition ascribes to Wihtræd, king of Kent about A.D. 700, a tradition which its dedication to St. Martin strengthens, was a permanent sanctuary—where, under the law of the church, criminals fleeing to her for protection, and subject to certain conditions, were permanently safe.

The walls of St. Martin certainly must have contained a more remarkable body of inhabitants than any other place in Anglo-Saxon London. St. Martin was within the city, but not of it, and similarly St. Paul's had a jurisdiction of its own quite apart from that of the city. In his charter to St. Paul's, William the Conqueror speaks of it as "juxta civitatem London."

Another trace of religious life in Anglo-Saxon

London which has come down to us is that supplied by the dedication of churches to the English or other Saints held in great reverence at that time, and which are almost certain to have been contemporary or nearly contemporary dedications.

Among these are—

St. Ethelburga, an Anglo-Saxon princess, sister of bishop Erkenwald and abbess of Barking. She lived about the end of the 7th century.

St. Werburg, daughter of Wulphere, king of Mercia, and descended also from the Kentish kings, a founder of nunneries and an abbess of high sanctity, who died about the end of the 7th century.

St. Botolph, an East Anglian saint, who died in A.D. 655.

St. Osyth, *a Mercian princess, who was beheaded by the* Danes.

St. Dunstan, a native of Wessex, and successively bishop of London and archbishop of Canterbury.

St. Edmund, king of East Anglia, and martyred by the Danes in 870.

St. Swithun, bishop of Winchester after London had come under the dominion of Wessex.

St. Alphege, or Ælfheah, martyred by the Danes under Sweyn, whose body was originally buried in St. Paul's.

The veneration of these saints, all of Anglo-Saxon fame, and others such as St. Helen, whose discovery of the wood of the cross was a reality to the people of Anglo-Saxon London, was so great that the traces of that veneration have survived to our own time.

These names and others such as Erkenwald, to whose memory shrines or altars were dedicated, attest the reverence of the people of Anglo-Saxon London for saintly personages of all the English kingdoms, under the rule of which they successively passed or were connected in commercial intercourse.

The Saxon chronicle gives us an interesting picture of the removal of St. Ælfheah's body to Canterbury in the year 1023. It says: "In this year King Cnut

within London in St. Paul's monastery, gave full leave to Archbishop Æthelnoth and Bishop Bryhtwine, and to all God's servants who were with them, that they might take up from the burial place, St. Ælfheah. And they did so on the 6th Ides of June. And the renowned king and the archbishop, and suffragan bishops, and earls, and very many men in orders, and also laymen, conveyed in a ship his holy body over the Thames to Southwark, and there delivered the holy body to the archbishop and his companions, and they with an honourable band and winsome joy conveyed him to Rochester," and so on to Canterbury.

At this time, apparently, London Bridge had not been rebuilt.

In conclusion, I may say there are two early customs in which London resembled Kent, and which were probably derived from it. In Kent every man was personally free. As far back as our legal records extend, if a man could show that he was born in Kent, he could not be called on for personal services to the lord of the manor on which he resided. It was a good plea in law that he was of Kentish birth. One of our poets has written of Kent :—

"Among the English shires be thou surnamed the free."

The name "Franklins of Kent" has found a place in our literature.

Similarly, in London every man was personally free who was born in the city or who had resided in it for a year and a day. London was called the "Free Chamber of the King of England."

The Norman Conqueror acknowledged that the burgesses in London were all law worthy, or personally free. There were no bondmen within her walls.

In her Anglo-Saxon customs, London bore a still

more remarkable resemblance to Kent. In Kent, as I have mentioned, partible inheritance among sons was a custom so highly prized, that it has survived, contrary to the common law, until our own time.

The same custom prevailed, not only on the manors near London, as I have mentioned, but survived until some time after the Conquest in the city of London itself. We learn this important fact from William the Conqueror's charter to the city, which was written in Anglo-Saxon for the general information of the people. The significance of this survival has, I think, been overlooked.

The modern English of this charter runs as follows :—

"William the king greets William the bishop and Godfrey the portreeve, and all the burgesses within London, French and English. And I grant you that I will that ye be all of your law worthy, that ye were in the days of king Edward. And I will that every child be his father's heir after his father's day. And I will not suffer that any man do you wrong. And God you keep."

As every child was to be *his* father's heir (not his or her father's) we have here a proof that the custom referred to was the old Kentish custom of partible inheritance among sons.

We arrive, therefore, at this conclusion—that this ancient law, the survival of ancient customs, the oldest historical references to London, and the circumstances connected with its Anglo-Saxon trade, all agree in pointing to Frisians and Goths, and especially those of Kent, the first of English kingdoms, as the original settlers in London, the greatest of English cities.