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The structure of the market for wool in early medieval Lincolnshire[1]

By ROSAMOND FAITH*

Peasant producers are now recognized as having played an important part in the late medieval economy: this can also be said of peasant producers in eastern England before the Conquest. In the wake of the Viking invasions Scandinavian settlers from the second half of the ninth century entered a region that was already commercially active. Independent farmers raised sheep, possibly a newly introduced breed, on the Lincolnshire Wolds and marketed their wool. A network of Anglo-Scandinavian shippers and traders, members of a merchant elite, controlled important places on river routes. That Lincolnshire was an area of light manorialization and many sokemen had an invigorating effect on its economy. Peasant producers had comparative freedom and by controlling markets and extracting cash from the inhabitants of their sokes Anglo-Norman lords profited from an economy that had been invigorated by Scandinavian enterprise.

The importance to the English economy of the production and export of wool has long been recognized and the history of the wool trade during the later medieval ages has received the detailed attention of many English scholars. Pre-Conquest England has received less attention, yet the subject of early medieval wool production and marketing in this period has a contribution to make to several current debates about the early medieval economy.[2] Small-scale wool producers in particular can be seen to have played an important role in supplying the market.

The vibrancy of the economy of late Anglo-Saxon England has conventionally been attributed to the role of the 'state' in reducing and controlling transaction costs, with emphasis laid on the active kingship of the tenth century. The provision of a national currency whose value, in terms of its silver content, was minutely regulated and linked to the Frankish currency facilitated cross-Channel exchange.[3] The integration of markets into the hundredal system of local administration and the public obligations to maintain the bridge, and possibly the road, network can also be seen as economic benefits conferred by strong government.[4] It has been the contribution of archaeology to lengthen this perspective and middle Saxon England too is now seen as having had a lively economy. Two major developments

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[1] I am grateful to members of the Medieval Social and Economic History seminar at Oxford, and in particular Pamela Nightingale; to Elina Screen and her colleagues at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; to Mandy De Bellin for drawing the maps; and to two anonymous referees for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this article. A grant from the Scouloudi Foundation supported the research.

[2] Maddicott, 'Prosperity and power', pp. 54–8; Darby, *Domesday England*, p. 225; Sawyer, 'Review'; idem, 'Wealth of England'; Lloyd, *English wool trade*, pp. 1–2.

[3] Jones, 'Devaluation'.

[4] Hutcheson, 'Origins'; Campbell, 'Was it infancy in England?', pp. 182–4. The power of Kentish and West Saxon kings to tax imports has been seen as drawing on a Roman inheritance; Middleton, 'Early medieval port customs'.

Figure 1. *Lincolnshire and the Wolds*

were of great significance. The first was the introduction from the late seventh century of a silver coinage minted in large amounts and of low enough value to enable commercial rather than political or ritual transactions to take place.[5] The second was the deliberate and planned establishment of coastal trading places active between the seventh and ninth centuries, the *emporia*, as places where overseas trade could be regulated and taxed. Archaeological work on these sites has established that they handled a considerable export trade.[6] In this respect, however, early medieval Lincolnshire, as a quasi-independent part of Mercia, may have followed a rather different path (see figure 1). Lindsey, the Old English name of the kingdom that covered most of the modern county, was the one east coast kingdom without a *wic*, the term by which the *emporia* were known. The kings of Lindsey in the age of the *emporia*, although very little is known about them, do not appear to have had the autonomy to establish one, and Mercian rulers probably saw London as the key port over which to gain control.[7] It would be Lincoln that became Lincolnshire's principal port and that not until after the age of *emporia*. The nature of the trading community of Lincoln and its links with the hinterland are discussed in section III.

[5] Spufford, *Money and its use*, pp. 7–32.
[6] Hill and Cowie, eds., *Wics*.
[7] Eagles, 'Lindsey', pp. 211–12.

It is in the context of discussions of the *emporia* that the topic of supplying the market has recently been raised.[8] Kings and minsters have long been seen as a major source of the goods traded and the role of minsters as importers and exporters as well as consumers has been illustrated by recent work.[9] With itinerant royal courts they were the principal recipients of *feorm*, supplies of foodstuffs levied from the peasant farmers of the countryside. Yet *feorm* may not have absorbed more than a small proportion of peasant surplus: some may have gone to market. Hamerow has argued that the peasant farmers of the surrounding countryside were among the suppliers of produce to support the inhabitants of the *wics*.[10] In later medieval England it was they who supplied the bulk of agrarian surplus to the domestic market, Masschaele going so far as to find the peasantry 'the paramount creators of wealth and marketable surpluses in the economy', with the gentry, rather than the great lords, lay or ecclesiastical, in second place. As to wool: 'peasants undertook roughly two-thirds of the country's wool production'.[11] One of the purposes of the present article is to raise the possibility that wool from peasant farms was already supplying the wool trade in pre-Conquest Lincolnshire.

Lincolnshire then already had a long history of exchange with north-eastern Europe. A rich county stretching between two vital communications nodes, the Humber and the Wash, and the major rivers that connected them with middle England, it had prospered in the fourth century as a grain supplier to the Rhineland. Its hinterland was considerably urbanized, with Caistor, Horncastle, and five other small towns.[12] The Roman road network linked the *civitas* capital at Lincoln with the Humber waterway and the major north–east/south–west roads were intersected by a series of east–west routes leading from the coast, the Fen edge, and the Witham to Lincoln. Bulky waterborne traffic coming up the Witham could perhaps reach Lincoln by the Foss Dyke, although the Roman date often attributed to this waterway is by no means certain. Lindsey, to give it its contemporary name, continued to prosper in the early centuries of Anglian settlement and from the start had international contacts.[13] The most spectacular site from this point of view is Flixborough on the lower stretch of the Trent, which will be considered below, but in their way the less prestigious sites are even more significant. Archaeologists find cemeteries of the fifth to seventh century 'surprisingly common' and in them not poor stuff but fine metalwork.[14] Barton-on-Humber was part of a 'Humber Zone' economy, into which goods were imported from the Rhineland and the Low Countries, and possibly northern France. There may have been contacts with western Denmark as well, for Scandinavian-style goods are found in graves there.[15] A small group of 'healthy, hardworking' people living at Castledyke near Barton in the late fifth and early sixth century had a 'respectable, rather than

[8] Moreland, 'Significance of production', is an exception to the tendency of historians of the early medieval economy to concentrate on exchange rather than production.
[9] Blair, *Church*, pp. 259–63; Kelly, 'Trading privileges'.
[10] Hamerow, 'Agrarian production'.
[11] Masschaele, *Peasants, merchants, and markets*, pp. 47, 49, 53; Dyer, *Making a living*, 164–78.
[12] Leahy, 'Anglo-Saxon settlement'; Millet, *Romanization of Britain*, fig. 61, p. 143; tab. 6.5, p. 154.
[13] Leahy, 'Middle Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire', p. 149; idem, 'Anglo-Saxon settlement'.
[14] Leahy, 'Middle Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire', p. 140.
[15] Leahy, 'Early Saxon context', p. 12.

a rich, material culture, with . . . objects imported from elsewhere in Britain and from both northern and southern Europe'.[16] Openness to overseas contacts does not in this part of England appear to have been confined to elites.

After the introduction of a silver currency from the late seventh century, it becomes possible to look for indications of production for the market in the distribution of single finds of coins (hoards being a response to particular situations). The numismatic record shows a dramatic rise in the supply of a silver coinage from the beginning of the eighth century, which suggests a 'comparatively high level of economic integration in the Anglo-Saxon countryside'.[17] Trade between eastern England and the Low Countries was evidently important: Frisian coins were 'flooding into England' around 700, part of a general and sudden steep rise in the coin supply, but also indicative of lively commercial contacts.[18] 'Productive sites', where exceptional amounts of coins and metal objects from the Anglo-Saxon period have been found by metal detectorists, show these sites to have had a strong orientation to East Anglia, Lincolnshire, and East Yorkshire.[19] Even within the county the growth in the use of coin appears to have been an uneven development. 'Productive sites' cluster in the Wolds, a sign of a cash-using rural economy there. The strong association of finds with major lines of communication is an indication of trade over some distance, rather than of purely local markets. Some examples include both Barton Street and High Street, the north–south major Roman roads along the Wolds from Lincoln to the Humber, as well as more ancient ways such as the Jurassic Way.[20] One particular site in 'South Lincolnshire' (not identified further on account of the reluctance of some detectorists to reveal the exact location of their sites) is particularly significant. It follows the pattern of southern England as a whole in showing a dramatic rise in the number of coins between 700 and 750, followed by an equally dramatic collapse.[21] This collapse was part of a trend in which the general shortage of silver kept the volume of currency in England lower throughout the rest of the Anglo-Saxon period. Even though new sources of silver increased it in the tenth century, by 1180 it had still not reached its late seventh- and early eighth-century heights. However, while coins losses reflect monetary activity in which trade must have played an important part, their decline on rural 'productive sites' such as 'South Lincolnshire' does not necessarily indicate a decline in exchange. Blackburn suggests two possible explanations: trade may have moved elsewhere, to places which evolved into major towns, and it may have involved the use of credit.[22] Lincolnshire may illustrate both of these possibilities: the role of Lincoln as an important entrepôt and the importance of credit in the wool trade are discussed in section VI. That it was the Scandinavian element in Lincolnshire society that brought together the wool trade, credit, and the growth of Lincoln is a recurrent theme of this article.

[16] Drinkall and Foreman, eds., *Anglo-Saxon cemetery*, p. xxi.
[17] Hamerow, *Early medieval settlements*, p. 186.
[18] Blackburn, ' "Productive" sites', p. 34.
[19] Ibid., pp. 33–4; Ulmschneider, 'Settlement'.
[20] Ibid.; Leahy, 'Middle Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire', p. 149; idem, 'Anglo-Saxon settlement'.
[21] Blackburn, ' "Productive" sites', fig. 3.4, p. 29.
[22] Ibid., pp. 23, 26–35; Spufford, *Money and its use*, pp. 53–4.

I

A striking indicator of the liquidity of the Lincolnshire economy is the fact that 20 years after the Conquest it was possible for powerful Lincolnshire lords to extract large amounts of cash from the land they controlled. A seldom remarked eccentricity of the Lincolnshire folios of Domesday Book is the recording of sums that the lords of sokes could raise as *tailla*. This word, variously translated as 'exactions', or 'tallage', is something quite different from later medieval 'tallage' (*tallagium*). Although Domesday Book does record sums raised in other counties for which no explanation is given, sums recorded specifically as *tailla* are almost unique to Lincolnshire.[23] Lincolnshire Domesday records *tailla* separately from *valet* or value of a manor, the amount for which it could be leased and which reflects roughly the value of its assets, both human and material. *Tailla* was very profitable: in the South Riding of Lindsey amounting to 78 per cent of the total values. It is recorded in round sums, ranging from a mark (13s. 4d.) to £70, and there is some indication that it was raised from a number of separate vills which were reckoned as belonging to the district, containing many townships, known as a soke. Earl Hugh could raise £100 this way from the sokes of which Harold had been lord before the Conquest. Of this £70 came from the 29 vills that made up the soke of Greetham, which includes the Lymn valley and the neighbouring area of the southern Wolds whose economy is examined below.[24]

The word *tailla* looks very much as if it were a direct translation of the French *taille,* a levy raised by lords which eventually became the basis of the land tax in France. If it was not a new introduction, which is a possibility, it may have been the word the clerks chose for cash sums already raised by lords of sokes before the Conquest.[25] It is hard for modern historians, as it must have been for French clerks, to understand exactly how the lord of a soke may have benefited financially from his position. The dues that sokemen owed are generally thought to have been connected with their obligation to attend the soke court, but these sums look much more than could have been raised from court fines alone. Later in this article we encounter some Lincolnshire lords who had rights of *tol 7 teám* as well as soke rights. These enabled them to profit from the market transactions of the people in their sokes, which could well have been a very profitable privilege. One reason that *tailla* was levied more systematically in Lincolnshire may have been that there were so many sokemen there—more than in any other county, and sokemen were people from whom it was difficult to extract any significant income from rent in kind or labour.[26] *Tailla* may have compensated the lords of Lincolnshire manors for the fact that they could not expect much either from leasing those manors for rent or from the proceeds of demesne farming: the county does not rank highly when Domesday values are calculated per man, per acre, or per team.[27] Perhaps what was more profitable in late eleventh-century Lincolnshire was tapping the cash

[23] There are a few examples in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire, also in Circuit 6; Darby, *Domesday England*, p. 216.

[24] Morgan and Thorn, eds., *Domesday Book*, 13.1. For a lucid description of Danelaw sokes, see Hadley, *Northern Danelaw*, pp. 108–31.

[25] Hart, *Danelaw*, pp. 188–93.

[26] Darby, *Domesday England*, app. 3, pp. 338–45; Roffe, 'Introduction', p. 20.

[27] Darby, *Domesday England*, pp. 226–31.

incomes of the rural population. The relationship between the sums raised in *tailla* and peasant production for the market is investigated in section VI.

As well as profiting indirectly from peasant production through the exaction of *tailla* some lords of sokes were directly involved in the market. Some markets were at the centres of sokes whose lords may have controlled the trade that went on there.[28] Leahy has speculated that a soke centre at a crossing of two major routes at Barnetby-le-Wold may have been a market or fair site in the early and middle Saxon periods. Among the member townships of the soke was land at the Humber crossing at Barton-on-Humber.[29] Again, the *tailla* figures point up the amount of cash in the local economy and suggest a relationship between this, the freer conditions under which sokemen lived, and the market. In 1086 Earl Hugh could raise £10 from the people of the Barnetby soke as well as £14 from the large number of people, 60 of them sokemen, in the manor itself. Perhaps the livelihoods of some of these men were based on trades connected with marketing and shipping. The new market which Ivo Taillebosc set up at Old Bolingbroke would have enabled him to control and profit from local trade, and from people in the attached 17 townships of the attached soke he could raise £80 in *tailla*. His soke centre on the coast at Tetney would also have been valuable because of its 13 salt-houses, and its *tailla* of £20 was equivalent to the value of the manor itself.[30] A hoard of 132 coins of the mid-to-late tenth century has been found there: evidence that capital could be accumulated.[31] Ivo could also get a considerable sum from Belchford on a major crossroads and another soke centre, and £30 from Spalding, with six fisheries and salt-houses and again a market.[32]

As to how the people of the Lincolnshire Wolds, such as the inhabitants of the soke of Greetham, raised the sums that they paid to their lords for *tailla* in cash, one possible explanation is that they were raising sheep and selling wool, the foundation of the Wolds economy throughout the later middle ages when Lincolnshire wool was famous for its quality. This suggestion derives from the following examination, necessarily limited to a small area, of the rural economy of the peasant farmers of the Wolds. In raising sheep they were in no way unusual. Sheep were everywhere before the Conquest. They could survive on all kinds of marsh and rough pasture and their manure could make poor arable land viable for agriculture. Sheep were seldom raised for meat but were a mainstay of the peasant domestic economy nonetheless. Cheese, one of the staples of the peasant diet, came from their milk and homespun woollens were the principal textiles used for clothing.[33] Sawyer deduced the importance of sheep in the pre-Conquest economy from the fact that Domesday Book shows that the downland hundreds of Berkshire, the Chiltern Hills, and the Cotswolds—all sheep-producing areas later in the middle ages—were 'unprosperous in terms of men and ploughs' yet had higher

[28] Hutcheson, 'Origins'.
[29] Leahy, 'Middle Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire'.
[30] Morgan and Thorn, eds., *Domesday Book*, 13.17; 14.66; 14.2–4.
[31] EMC.
[32] Morgan and Thorn, eds., *Domesday Book*, 14.46, 97.
[33] Banham, *Food and drink*, pp. 53–4. The importance of sheep's milk and cheese appears from the shepherd's contribution to Ælfric's 'Colloquy', where cows' milk is not mentioned; Garmonsway, *Ælfric's Colloquy*, p. 22. This describes practice on a great estate. That peasants ate sheep cheese is inferred from the structure of flocks: as wethers provided the wool ewes would have been redundant (apart from as producers of offspring) unless valued when lactating, but there seems to be no evidence that ewe lambs were culled.

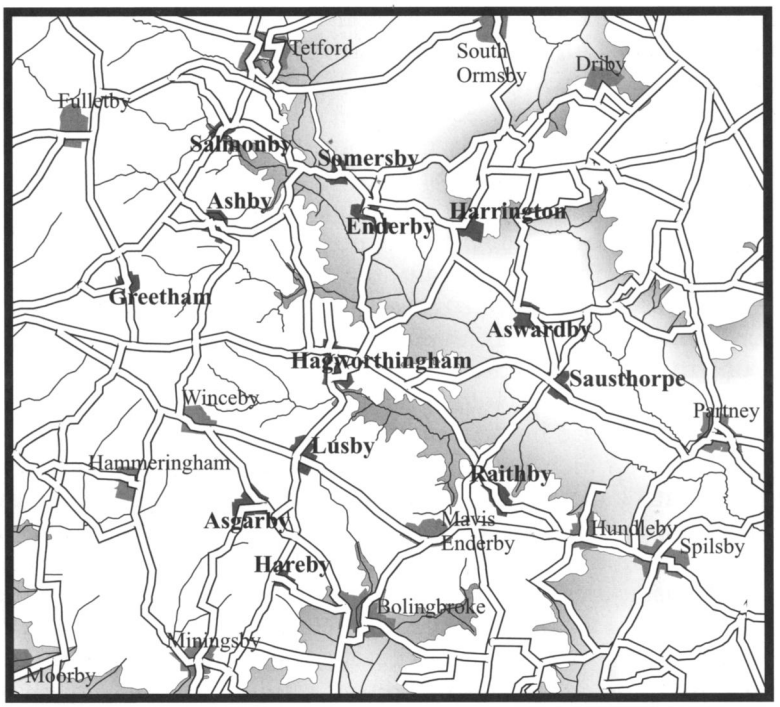

Figure 2. *The Lymn valley*

values per ploughteam than their counties as a whole.[34] The same discrepancy between the prosperity of an area and its poor arable resources proves to be a valuable guide to a small local economy in the Lincolnshire Wolds: that of the upper reaches of the little river Lymn and its surrounding area.

II

The Lymn rises about a mile north-east of Belchford and, fed by becks running down small valleys between the knobbly hills, twists and turns its way south to run through the Fens to the Wash (by which point it has become the River Steeping) (see figure 2). The area has a long history of settlement. The Roman town at Horncastle was a hub in a road system that connected the coastal ports and the salt works of the Wash to Lincoln and thence via High Steet to Caistor and the Humber crossings. In the Roman period this had been an area of scattered hill farms with a strong pastoral element, serviced by a minor road system which connected the area to Horncastle and its main road and water network.[35] For the period of Anglian settlement there is very little archaeological work to draw on, save for a pre-seventh-century burial in the parish of Asgarby and an excavated Anglo-Saxon

[34] Sawyer, 'Wealth of England', p. 162; idem, 'Review'; Darby, *Domesday geography*, p. 54. Darby despaired of making any such calculation of Domesday values for different areas of Lincolnshire, because values in that county were not given for the individual holdings which made up the great sokes that were such an important feature of the organization of lordship there.

[35] Owen, 'Romans and roads'; Jones, 'Romano-British settlements'.

farmstead site at Salmonby. Topography and soil quality are important factors here. The villages with Old English names—Hagworthingham, Harrington, and Greetham—are about two to three kilometres apart on the more easily worked Spilsby sandstone, all but one south-facing. (Greetham, now on Boulder Clay, had probably migrated from an earlier site, presumably on the river, where *griot*, gravel, had given it its name.) Their names derive from landscape features or from the group with which they were associated, with –ham and –ton as their prevalent suffixes.[36] Travelling down the valley and following up the tributaries of the Lymn onto the slopes of the Wolds we meet a very different kind of place-name, most made up from a Danish personal name in the genitive with the suffix -by or -thorp. These are the *bys* of Salmund at Salmonby, Eindriði at Enderby, Sumerlii at Somersby, Aski and Stafn at Ashby and Stainsby, Aswarth and Lutr at Aswardby and Lusby, Sauð's thorp at Sausthorpe, and the *bys* of Radi and Hari at Raithby and Hareby. A place-name ending in -by did not necessarily have a Scandinavian personal name as its prefix, but the term itself is thought to be a Scandinavian newcomer in English place-name elements. If Scandinavian place-names mean that a substantial population of people in the locality were speaking a Scandinavian language when these names became current, as has been very persuasively argued, one would have heard a lot of Old Danish spoken in this region. Whether these place-names were the result of land settlements immediately following the invasions or of a long drawn out process of piecemeal acquisition remains unsolved, but the most recent survey concludes that 'the majority of *by*-names were coined before the 11th century'.[37]

The political and military circumstances in which so many Scandinavians acquired land in the Wolds are beyond the scope of this study, but their place in the rural economy is more readily approached. In his important analysis of Wolds landcapes and farming systems, Fox showed that wide-ranging patterns of land use, in which valley communities had access to pasture at some distance from their main areas of settlement and cultivation, gave way to more local and arable-focused systems. The Wolds themselves came to be used not by seasonal visitors and their animals but by immigrants who were willing to take on and farm what was seen as less promising land. Fox was primarily concerned with the Northamptonshire Wolds, and both there and on the Lincolnshire Wolds these incomers were Scandinavians, predominantly Danes, who settled there after the Viking conquests of the mid-ninth century and whose presence is so strongly marked by Scandinavian place-names.[38]

Places with the element -by were socially distinct, as far as this can be determined from the way their populations were recorded in Domesday Book. In the area under consideration here, the *bys* were more likely to contain sokemen than were the villages with Old English suffixes. A person recorded as a sokeman (*socmannus, sochemannus*) is likely to have been more independent, in the sense of being less incorporated into the tenancy system of a manor, than was a person

[36] Everson, 'Building and settlement site', p. 66.

[37] Abrams and Parsons, 'Place-names', pp. 402–4, at 404. Abrams and Parsons consider places whose names end in *–by* were relatively low in status. Jones, Parsons, and Cullen, in 'Thorps', challenge this conclusion. All place-name interpretations are from Ekwall, *English place-names*, unless otherwise stated.

[38] Fox, 'People of the Wolds'; Cameron, ed., *Place-name evidence*; Fellows-Jensen, *Scandinavian settlement names*; Jones, 'Early territorial organisation'.

recorded as a *villanus*.[39] In all the *bys* in our area over half the population are recorded as sokemen. By contrast at Greetham, the manorialized centre of Greetham soke, of 55 heads of families only one was a sokeman, 48 were *villani*, and 8 were bordars (dependant smallholders).[40] We cannot attribute the numbers of sokemen in any hard and fast way to the Scandinavians: the institution of soke had come into existence before they arrived and their farms were not the only places where sokemen can be found. But the looser lordship of the soke seems to have been more adaptable than the manor to accommodating immigrants: new people could be put under the authority of the lord of the soke, perhaps often a Scandinavian of some status.

If Scandinavian settlers came into an area like the Lymn valley where farms and settlements had long been established, perhaps four centuries before by Anglian and before them by Romano-British farmers, questions arise about what land the newcomers could have acquired and the terms by which they acquired it. As place-name specialists have taken increasing account of local geographical factors, the first of these questions has begun to be answered, with a fair measure of agreement. Relationships between different groups may be revealed by settlement hierarchy. Fox proposed that Scandinavian settlers took second-best land, and second-best sites, in areas which the absence of English names suggests were seen as less desirable in the early stages of Anglo-Saxon settlement. Everson also detects a settlement hierarchy in the Lymn valley in the fact that places with English names had the 'better' sites. (Both Fox and Everson think that in general the immigrants founded new places rather than taking over old ones and renaming them. Names of the hybrid 'Grimston' type, which gave a Scandinavian personal name to an existing place with the English suffix –ton, are rare here.) The scant archaeological record supports this: while occasionally a Scandinavian name appears where the archaeology tells of previous English occupation nearby, the overall pattern is of discontinuity between the settlement sites of Angles and Scandinavians.[41]

However, it is not necessarily the case that the land that the Scandinavians took over was 'inferior' or 'marginal'. It is a common misconception of historians to judge an area primarily in terms of the quality of the soil from the point of view of arable farming. Such a criterion is appropriate when the main use of the land is for raising crops, but upland is very suitable for raising sheep. Moreover the poorer the land and the worse the climate, such as that of the high, dry, and exposed Wolds, the more suitable their wool, which grew coarse and long under such conditions, for weaving into rough cloth. This may have been a factor in the Roman settlement pattern. The Roman state had been an avid consumer of animal products and the Lymn valley and its surrounding hills supported farms whose economy, judging by their networks of small fields and paddocks, was geared towards pastoralism.[42] The longwool sheep had been a Roman introduction, providing wool suitable for textile production as well as large, slowly maturing mutton carcasses.[43] In the area where

[39] Stenton, 'Manorial structure', pp. 18–20, 49.
[40] Morgan and Thorn, eds., *Domesday*, 2.28; 3.53; 13.39–40; 28.36–7; 13.1.
[41] Fox, 'People of the Wolds', pp. 92–4; Everson, 'Building and settlement site'.
[42] We do not yet understand how to interpret the function of their small fields and paddocks, but it is uncontroversial that sheep manure was an essential fertilizer if they were cultivated.
[43] Henson, *British sheep breeds*, p. 21.

Assert established his farm, Aswardby, there had been a considerable Roman village. Roman and Scandinavian settlement are in much the same relationship at Enderby. There had been three Romano-British farms where later there were the *bys* of Aski and Stafn, now Ashby and Stainsby.[44] After these Roman farms went out of use their land seems not to have been the kind that the Anglian settlers favoured. So it is possible that the Scandinavian immigrants came into a territory in which the land favoured by Romano-British farmers was lying empty and they simply took it on because it was available. However, it is equally possible that Romanized hill farmers and Scandinavian incomers (both of whom after all were in eastern England as a result, though not necessarily an immediate result, of military conquest, not a circumstance which would have disposed settlers to accept the second-best land) had a similar eye for land.

There would certainly have been a new kind of consumer during and after the Viking age. Scandinavians had their own taste in woollen textiles and brought some with them from their homelands, while English cloth was prized in Norway.[45] Several animal studies suggest that they introduced a new type of sheep more suitable for producing the wool needed to make them.[46] Unlike the coloured native breeds, its wool could take dyes. The Lincoln longwool famous in the later middle ages for its fine and long wool is the only English breed that has no genetic input from known native or 'primitive' breeds, so cannot have evolved from them.[47] If it was not a descendant of Roman sheep it may have been a Viking introduction. The archaeological evidence is necessarily fragmentary but such as it is has been collected and analysed by Ryder, who considered that it was sufficient to suggest that a distinctive type of sheep is archaeologically associated with areas of Scandinavian settlement. At the level of Danish occupation at Pavement, York, 'three true hairy fleeces . . . hairier than Saxon wools . . . compare with Norse textiles from Scotland' and at Petergate 'hair-faced, horned sheep which later emerged in north and east England in such breeds as the Swaledale . . . was influenced by the Danes' and has affinities with the old Danish breed.[48] From the tenth- to eleventh-century occupation levels excavated at Lincoln a distinctive black-faced sheep can be detected from their horn cores, of a type from which the Norfolk Horn and other horned black-faced sheep were descended. The Lincoln longwool, like these, was a horned sheep.[49] (Intriguingly, some Scandinavian names in Lincolnshire place-names are sheep-related: the Sauth in Sausthorpe means 'sheep' and is a common by-name in Old Norse, and the several Somerbys, although they could have derived from a personal name meaning 'summer warrior', may equally come from 'summer slopes'.[50]) That livestock husbandry was a way of making a living particularly favoured by the farmers of the upland *bys* is a possibility that can be explored in a handful of Wold farms in 1086.

[44] Jones, 'Romano-British settlements', pp. 69–72.
[45] Carus-Wilson, 'Woollen industry', p. 366.
[46] Crowfoot, 'Anglo-Saxon textiles'; Bender Jørgensen, *North European textiles*, pp. 140–1.
[47] Personal communication from Mary Castell, to whom I am grateful for much information about early breeds, on the basis of the recently published genetic codes of British sheep breeds, produced during the scrapie epidemic.
[48] Ryder, *Sheep and man*, pp. 191–2.
[49] O'Connor, *Animal bones from Flaxengate*, pp. 29–30.
[50] Fox, 'People of the Wolds', p. 86.

III

Lincolnshire was a rich county, as the *tailla* figures show, but its wealth did not come from arable farming. As recorded in Domesday Book, it had a very low ratio of ploughteams to area and had an average of 2.2 oxen per recorded person.[51] This is particularly true of the Wolds where, although some vills reached higher figures, the number of plough teams per square mile over most of the area was between one and two-and-a-half. Even within these low numbers the provision was very uneven: in the Lymn valley two small farms at Hagworthingham each had a single ox at work, while the 25 families at Enderby with Markby had even fewer if we are to believe the record: only two teams between them.[52] One ox, even paired with another, is probably more likely to have been pulling a plough that was more like an ard than one with a deep-cutting share and mould board, and a light plough would have been better adapted to the steeper slopes. Yet poor ploughteam provision, as Sawyer noted, is not necessarily an indicator of poverty. Quite apart from the amount raised in *tailla*, one of the striking things about the economy of this little region is the large number of people it was able to support. To take a small example, in Worlaby and Oxcomb, Wulfric's *by* (a reminder that not all *bys* were named after Scandinavians) and the 'ox combe' which lie in a little range of high wolds cut by steep stubby combes, some of the inhabitants may have been making a living primarily from livestock. The situation is favourable: in 1086 there were 80 acres of riverside meadow which would be a more than adequate supply of winter feed for cattle, while the sides of the combes and the land on the upper wold would have provided a large area for grazing or (perhaps shifting) cultivation. In 1086 there were 22 families living in the area, all but one of them headed by sokemen. There were only three teams (in Domesday's reckoning generally this would amount to 24 oxen but Lincolnshire teams were often much smaller) between them, or about an ox per family.[53] This was clearly not a population whose mainstay was arable farming. Both geographically and in terms of its economy it looks like an area of classic pastoral hill-farming based on scattered upland farms or hamlets.[54]

If the base of the economy of the Wold farmers was in livestock and they had surplus animal products—hides, sheep, milk, cheese, fleeces, yarn, and homespun—to sell, they would not have had much difficulty in getting them to market. Remote although it may seem, this area was well served by the communications network laid down by the Romans, which remained in use, in many places to the present day.[55] It is more than usually important to take account of the Roman road system in this county because, in contrast to many parts of England where the major roads are likely to have been built principally for military, industrial, and administrative priorities of the Roman state and proved very little use to the needs of the rural societies that succeeded it, the Roman roads of Lincolnshire look useful to a rural economy geared to trade. Animals on the hoof

[51] Darby, *Domesday England*, fig. 43, p. 132; idem, *Domesday geography*, fig. 8, p. 49.
[52] Morgan and Thorn, eds., *Domesday Book*, 24.43, 44; 4.66.
[53] Excluding the archbishop of York's team; ibid., 2.28; 3.54.
[54] Jones et al., 'Thorps', p. 8, suggest dispersed independent farm as a translation of *by* and that the primary role of those living within the *bys* was perhaps livestock farming.
[55] Owen, 'Romans and roads'.

Figure 3. *The rivers Humber, Trent, and Witham*

could have been driven along the Roman road to Horncastle crossing the Lymn to the south at Tetford or north to Louth via Farforth, the ford for pigs or sheep. Buskhow Street, now Bluestone Heath Road, another Roman road on a south-east–north-west ridgeway leading from Louth to an important junction, possibly a market place, at Ulceby Cross is within easy reach.

Bearing in mind Blackburn's suggestion that after the middle of the ninth century trade, or the kind of trade that involved coins, shifted location from informal country markets, it is worth looking at possible new developments in trading patterns.[56] One possibility is that more goods were now going by boat—the means of transport best suited to bulk goods like wool and hides. Domesday records a 'new market' at Bolingbroke and a market at Partney on the routes to the Wash.[57] The major rivers had always been an important part of the infrastructure of Lincolnshire (see figure 3). The Humber, the main route for international trade, gave access to the river systems entering central England and the Roman road network had brought traffic along the wolds to the Humber ferries and thence to Northumbria, the North Sea coast, and abroad. The Foss Dyke linking the Witham to the Trent, which made it possible to move bulk goods such as salt by water from the Wash, was prone to silting up, but it may have been cleared early in the eleventh century and that would have freed up transport between Torksey and Lincoln.[58] The importance of the Humber in a trading economy is exemplified at Flixborough, on the east bank of the lower Trent, near its entry into the Humber. Although its present name contains a Scandinavian name, Flik, the excavated site nearby reveals episodes of occupation from the Roman period through to the mid-

[56] Blackburn, ' "Productive" sites', pp. 31–4.
[57] Blair, ed., *Waterways*, introduction.
[58] Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire*, p. 197.

fourteenth century. It is a place that had been involved in the market for a long time. From the late seventh century there are indications of an elite presence among a wider population of farmers and craftsmen. Trade goods from the Rhineland and the Low Countries were coming in, and were presumably landed at the forerunner of Flixborough Stather, its landing-stage. The presence of Frisian coins suggests that this trade was in the hands of professional merchants and it is possible that they were dealing in woollen cloth produced on the site. Flixborough supplies evidence of the production of woollen textiles, some of which may have been marketed. From the late eighth century there was a shift towards raising sheep for wool and textile production, some of it very high quality cloth, and this increased significantly in bulk and quality in the early-to-mid-ninth century, with a surplus possibly exchanged for imported goods. The excavators suggest that there was a significant change in the late ninth and early tenth centuries. The inhabitants were then no poorer, in that they still ate plenty of meat, but the absence of newly minted coins shows that they were no longer players in a wide market system and that their horizons may have become restricted to regional exchange with Torksey and Lincoln. The cloth they produced was for everyday use on the site itself.[59] Their weavers may also have lost ground to a new weaving technology, favoured and encouraged by a new group of producers and consumers.

IV

Viking raids from 865, followed by permanent settlement, brought new players into an already lively market economy. In 872 a Viking army wintered at Torksey, the first major place on the Trent north of where the Witham joins it. With their shallow draught boats which could take loads of up to 39 tons, the Vikings were at home on the Trent, which was shallow enough to be fordable in places, and Torksey could have been well known to them already as a point of trade.[60] They must at any rate have been firmly in control of it after 872, when it was the base from which they marched or sailed to take Nottingham. Torksey prospered as a point of trade. Many coins have been found there, dating between the ninth and the eleventh centuries, and more than 50 are fragments of Arabic coins showing its connections with long-range Scandinavian traders.[61] It was privileged by the authorities in ways that were intended to encourage enterprise: Torksey burgesses paid no toll and by the eleventh century had the right to dispose freely of their property and to move without the permission of the port-reeve.[62] Danish settlers set off a revival of urban life at Lincoln, bringing the stimulus of an entirely new category of consumers with new tastes and plenty of money. The sudden rise in coin finds in Lincoln from the 870s has been attributed to the Scandinavian development of the town.[63] A new coinage began to be struck from the 880s and new technologies were introduced. There were now many working households who were in the market for food. The fast wheel produced pottery of a new type. Viking settlers had their own tastes in

[59] Loveluck and Atkinson, *Early medieval settlement remains*; Walton Rogers, 'Importance'.
[60] Bill, 'Ships and seamanship'.
[61] Hall, 'Anglo-Scandinavian urban development'; Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire*, pp. 196–7.
[62] Morgan and Thorn, eds., *Domesday Book*, T1.
[63] Blackburn, ' "Productive" sites', p. 33 and fig. 3.7, p. 34.

material goods, such as textiles and the pottery styles whose manufacture flourished at Torksey, Stamford, and Lincoln.[64] Around 1000 a new and much more efficient loom worked by a treadle was replacing the type used by the homespun weaver in England. This represented a much larger investment of capital than the simple warp-weighted loom used in domestic production and made weaving a full-time job rather than simply a part of domestic economy. It is also very probable that weaving was now more likely to have been done by men, and done in towns.[65] There was a weavers' gild in Lincoln by the 1130s, but although there is archaeological evidence for spinning there, none has appeared for weaving before the twelfth century, by which time this type of loom must certainly have been in use. That may be because of the location of sites available for excavation, and it would not be surprising to find that the two processes were separated.[66]

The destination of Lincolnshire wool cannot be established with any certainty. The bone evidence from excavations at Flaxengate shows that while the inhabitants were undoubtedly eating a lot of mutton—it has been calculated that its people would have eaten the mutton from some 5,000 sheep—these were sheep raised, and possibly intentionally bred, to produce wool.[67] The cloth industry at Lincoln could itself have absorbed a large proportion of the wool clip from the Wolds and finished cloth could have been shipped from places like the *wealcera* 'hythe' at Walkerith which gets its (Scandinavianized) name from the Old English word for fuller, a 'walker'. (There are two other 'fullers' hythes' further up the Trent.) Whether its ultimate destination was inland England or further afield is hard to say, although anecdotal evidence shows that English cloth was valued in the northern lands.[68]

The coins found at Lincoln show contacts with the rest of England, Scandinavia, and western Europe.[69] It had evidently become an entrepôt in an international trading system. If English wool was being exported, one likely destination would have been Frisia, the heartland of the woollen cloth industry. Frisian woollens depended on imported raw material, for the wool of Frisian sheep was of poor quality, and good cloth demanded wool from more than one source: 'no region can produce all the different grades of wool required for different types of cloth, and the opportunity to buy additional wool is vital'.[70] Evidence for specialized cloth production of a kind that would justify importing wool begins to appear in the Low Countries from the eighth century both in centres and in villages.[71] It is possible that some of the raw materials had come from England. Frisians were among the most active international traders of the fifth to eighth centuries and built up longstanding links with eastern England, some of them having taken part in the migrations and left their mark on place-names.[72] They established a colony at York and possibly also one at Hamwic. Frisian coins were 'flooding' into England

[64] Symonds, *Landscape and social practice*, shows the extent of the inland trade from Lincoln and Stamford.
[65] Walton, 'Textile production', pp. 328–9.
[66] Carus-Wilson, 'Woollen industry', p. 370; Vince, 'Lincoln in the Viking age', p. 171.
[67] Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire*, pp. 192–3; O'Connor, *Animal bones from Flaxengate*, pp. 24, 47–8. Raising sheep primarily for wool can be detected from the age and gender balance in favour of mature wethers.
[68] Carus-Wilson, 'Woollen industry', p. 366.
[69] Hall, 'Anglo-Saxon urban development', p. 150.
[70] Bender Jørgensen, *North European textiles*, pp. 137, 149.
[71] Hamerow, *Early medieval settlements*, pp. 33–4, 183–4.
[72] Smith, *English place-name elements*, vol. I, pp. 187–8.

around 700, part of a general and sudden steep rise in the coin supply.[73] Frisians were certainly trading in slaves and they possibly brought some of the English countryside's many quern stones down the Rhine and across the North Sea, but above all they were dealers in wool and cloth. Much of this cloth was made in Frisia itself but some may well have been English, as the cloaks ordered by Charlemagne from Offa were.[74] However, although the later history of the close links between English wool and Low Country textiles would suggest it, there is frustratingly little direct evidence, and none before the twelfth century, of suppliers from England. Whether Scandinavians in their turn participated in this well-established trading network and in particular whether they were involved in the wool trade across the North Sea is harder to establish. We are on firmer ground when looking at the evidence for the importance of Anglo-Scandinavians in the commercial world of England.

One way to profit from trade is to have access to and control of points on the major routes. The Trent has been used as a major routeway over a very long period. Burringham has an Old English name and is on a major east–west road so may well have been an Anglian crossing-place. But a striking number of places directly related to the river have Scandinavian names. A boat working upstream from the Humber would pass the 'Gerulf's *thorp*' at Garthorpe; the stather, the Old Danish name for a landing place or hythe, at Burton Stather; 'Flik's *būrh*' at Flixborough with its stather; 'Kaeti's *by*' at Keadby; the Old Norse 'Gunn's *ness*' or headland at Gunness; 'Al(l)'s thorp' at Althorpe; the Danish-named *vath* or ford at Susworth; a Scandinavianized 'East tun' at Owston; another 'Gunn's thorp'; a Scandinavianized 'stock hythe' at Stockwith; and the '*wealcere*'s hythe' at Walkerith. These last two places were at a strategic location, whose importance has recently been established by Cole: they were located where a new cut, Bykers Dyke, had been made by 1086 to link the Trent to a route to the Ouse which would bypass the 'dangerous tides and shifting sandbanks of the Humber'.[75] Continuing upriver and passing another hythe at Knaith, to 'Turoc's island' at Torksey, travellers could join the Foss Dyke for the last stage of the journey to Lincoln. There are Scandinavian names along the Dyke—'Ketil's thorp' at Ketilthorpe, and the Scandinavianized Skellingthorpe. Up the Witham beyond Lincoln is another Anglian place with a Scandinavianized name, Fiskerton, originally (in Old English) *fisceretun*, 'fishers' *tun*'. There seem to be no hythes or stathers on the Witham, nor any more Scandinavian place-names directly on the river. This may be to do with the difference between the Witham and the lower Trent (see figure 4). The Witham was a much smaller river which ran through the Fen. If boatmen needed a landing place, the sloping bank of a small creek like *Hrafen's fleot*, Ravensfleet, which runs into the Trent, would have sufficed. By contrast the Trent itself was a broad strong river, known as 'the Trespasser' from its liability to flood before modern dredging confined it between its banks. Loading and unloading vessels would have needed a strong structure to tie up to and a dry surface to unload onto, if not a formal quay or hard. Hythes and stathers seem to have been private property, and someone who owned a hythe would have controlled, or at least profited from, the landings

[73] Blackburn, ' "Productive" sites', pp. 29, 34.
[74] Lebecq, *Marchands et navigateurs*.
[75] Cole, 'Place-name evidence for water transport', p. 65.

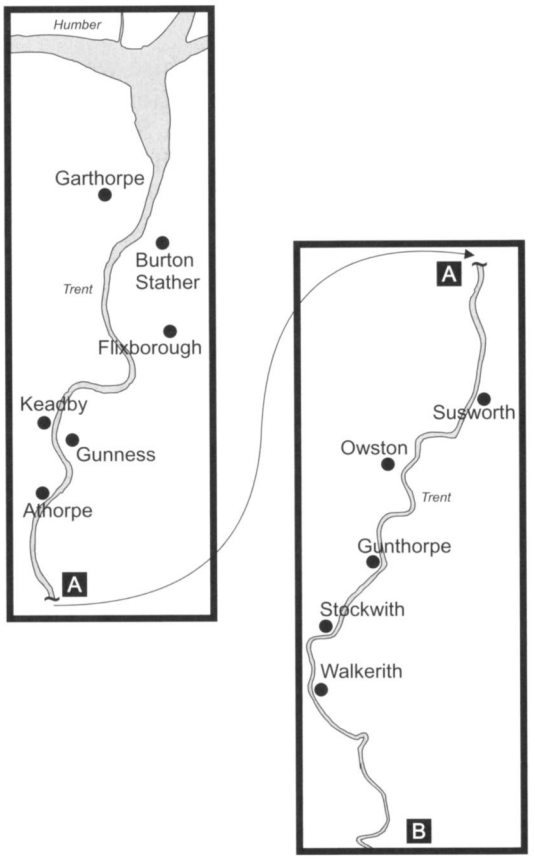

Figure 4. *Trent: lower reaches*

and departures there. Some, like Walkerith and Stockwith, were on poor sites, valuable only for their proximity to river routes.[76] They may well have functioned solely as transhipment posts where goods from the hinterland were loaded onto boats for shipping down the river to the Humber, and thence either into Northumbria via York, down the coast to London, or possibly abroad.

That there were plenty of boats available for this kind of trip appears from the Domesday entry for Torksey, where the burgesses were obliged to conduct visiting officers of the king as far as York, the sheriff being obliged to supply provisions for them and the boats' crews.[77] From the mid-tenth century the Witham is not considered to have been navigable above Lincoln. Only after the Foss Dyke was redug at the end of the century did it have access to the Trent. Before that Torksey was the main Trent port and toll-place.[78] Whoever controlled both Torksey and Hardwick, as Queen Edith had done before the Conquest, controlled both ends of the Foss Dyke and could profit from this monopoly position.

[76] Ibid.
[77] Morgan and Thorn, eds., *Domesday Book*, T1.
[78] Vince, 'Lincoln in the Viking age', pp. 172–4.

V

Just how 'Scandinavian' the people of Lincolnshire were at any one time is not a straightforward question. An indigenous population who spoke a heavily Scandinavianized English and who gave their children Scandinavian names could well account for Scandinavian place-names along the Trent and Witham. Nor is it suggested that the Danes had a monopoly of the river trade: the Trent stathers and hythes with Danish names had not necessarily been established by Danes and could well have been at various times in the hands of English or Anglo-Scandinavians. Scandinavian or Scandinavianized names of places are a result of the prevailing language current among the people who named or re-named them, but we seldom know when that process took place. That there were Danes in Lincolnshire at all was a result of various phases of conquest, invasion, and settlement, beginning with the process by which in 877, as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* baldly puts it, 'they shared out the land' of Mercia, of which Lincolnshire was then part.[79] Unrecorded settlement followed such that maps of the density of Scandinavian place-names in England, however interpreted, show Lincolnshire heavily sown with them. More than a century later, invasion and conquest led by Swein and rule under Cnut from 1016 to 1035 brought shifts in power at the level of a dominant hierarchy rather than new settlement. The penetration into Old English place-names of Old Danish and Old Norse names, words, pronunciations, and spellings was thus part of the general experience of Scandinavian-settled England from the late ninth century on. Inter-marriage must have been important and family trees show that the name-pool included names from both languages.[80]

Recent work that rightly emphasizes the importance of social context has meant that ethnicity now tends to be seen as a matter of social negotiation and cultural choice.[81] However, that does not mean that there were no situations in which the common language and values of people who shared, or whose ancestors had shared, origin and language may have been important. One such situation was commerce. A Scandinavian trader whose livelihood depended on trustworthy contacts, some overseas, may well have had a very different attitude to ethnicity from a Scandinavian landlord wishing to establish himself among the English country gentry. If a sense of identity, including ethnic identity, can be deduced from the practices surrounding burial, then Stocker's work is relevant here.[82] He has identified groups of stone memorial crosses in Hiberno-Norse style dating from the tenth century at Marton near Torksey and near the beach site at Brayford Pool in the Lincoln suburb of St Mary Wigford. He thinks they were 'monuments of elite traders' marking the graves of self-consciously Anglo-Scandinavian groups of merchants. Smaller but similar clusters occur elsewhere in the county. One is at Stow St Mary. These marked prestigious burials at a prestigious church at a prestigious place. Stow was a minster refounded in the mid-eleventh century with an endowment from Earl Leofric of Mercia and his wife Godgifu. North-west of Lincoln near the Roman road leading to the Trent crossing at Littleborough, Stow appears in Domesday Book as the centre of a small local estate, a wapentake, and

[79] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, pp. 74–5.
[80] The evidence is critically reviewed by Hadley, *Vikings in England*, pp. 118–20.
[81] For example, Hadley and Richards, eds., *Cultures in contact*.
[82] Stocker, 'Monuments and merchants'.

a soke, and was the site of a market by the eleventh century.[83] The memorial stones at Stow are too early in date to reflect Stow's refounded status as a minster, so its traditional role as meeting place and very early church may be more relevant. Although the place-names are largely English, Scandinavian personal names figure largely among the landowners of the neighbourhood in 1086. None has any very impressive landholding: this was an area of low-lying, flat land with abundant meadow and little arable, cattle rather than sheep country.[84] Marton was a member of this wapentake and had jurisdictional ties with other members. It is likely that the kind of people who were buried at Marton and at Stow came from an Anglo-Scandinavian elite, but not an elite whose major local source of income was the land.[85] The four similar monuments at Bicker may also be evidence of an Anglo-Scandinavian elite which 'chose to distinguish itself in its burial customs from the surrounding population', and here too trade rather than land was likely to have been the source of their wealth. Bicker was a wealthy place and a soke centre, and in the tenth century was an important haven on the Wash and an area of salt production.[86]

The presence of such an elite, whose income was from trade rather than agriculture, may also be indicated by dedications of churches to St Clement. Drowned on a voyage and with an anchor for his emblem, St Clement was particularly revered by travellers by sea, merchants, and traders (he is the patron saint of Trinity House). His cult was popular in Denmark and may have been established in England by Danes converted to Christianity. Among the Lincolnshire churches dedicated to him are those at Fiskerton on the Trent, Grainthorpe, Sutton-in-the-Marsh, Saltfleetby, and Skegness, all on the (then) coast, all places where the source of income was likely to have been transport, commerce, or manufacture rather than land. These were not necessarily newly built churches, but their dedication to St Clement must have been influenced by local people, or local landlords, to whom he seemed the most appropriate protector.[87]

It was necessary for a trader at any level to be sure of a stable and trusted currency as a medium of exchange, or an agreed system of direct exchange. Coins were struck at Lincoln soon after 880 and about 10 per cent of all English coins in the late tenth and eleventh century were struck there.[88] The extent to which Scandinavians were active in trade within, and with, England might be expected to be reflected in finds of English coins in their homelands and the regions in which they operated, but although many thousands have been found their interpretation is complicated, even by the standards of numismatics, and there seem to be several obstacles to any such simple interpretation. Coins brought in by trade can be

[83] Robertson, *Charters*, CXV.

[84] Darby, *Domesday geography*, pp. 91–2.

[85] Gunnhvatr and Godric—whose land had been forfeited by 1086—held Gate Burton which had a small amount of sokeland in Marton; Morgan and Thorn, eds., *Domesday Book* 12.1, 2; CW 10.

[86] Stocker, 'Monuments and merchants', pp. 179–91 (quotation p. 191); Robertson, *Charters*, CXV, pp. 212–16; Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire*, pp. 246–52. Bicker Haven in Hart, *Danelaw*, pp. 181, 529.

[87] Crawford, 'Cult of St Clement'. The argument that dedications to St Clement were particularly associated with military garrisons will explain some in defensive or urban positions, such as St Clement Danes in London and the church at the west gate of Oxford, but not those in coastal or rural and sometimes remote locations (see below for those at Ruckland and Worlaby). The 43 St Clement dedications in England include churches at Toxteth, Lancashire ('Toki's *stoth*', landing-place'), Harwich, and Hastings; Arnold-Forster, *Church dedications*, vol. III, p. 349.

[88] Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire*, pp. 102, 108.

'masked' by coins brought in as geld or tribute. Coins which came into the Carolingian and later the German Empire were largely reminted, and profits made in England could have been spent in England. Nevertheless a 'small but discernible' trade between England and Scandinavia, in which York and Lincoln were well represented, was evidently operating through most of the tenth century. Some individual trading ventures can be detected in groups of coins, suggesting merchants who traded at several ports.[89] Two recently discovered hoards of Scandinavian coins in Frisia are interpreted as 'a reflection of normal economic activity', but what that economic activity was remains elusive. Another authority believes that 'in Scandinavia and Frisia coins were almost exclusively associated with long-distance trade'.[90]

VI

As well as a reliable coinage, commerce needed a trusted system of dispute settlement and a means of ensuring the legitimacy and security of transactions that might well have no permanent written record. These were needs common to all traders and the provision of a standing group of men to act as witnesses of all sales and purchases appears both in the laws that were issued for the Danelaw and in those for the rest of England. Yet there are some institutions connected with trade that look specifically Scandinavian. The *festermen* who appear in transactions in the Danelaw at Peterborough Abbey as sureties for land transactions do not have an English equivalent, or at least not one that appears in surviving charters, which record witnesses to a transaction with no suggestion that they were personally responsible for its legality or for ensuring that it was carried out.[91] The standing body of leading thegns who had the responsibility of bringing accusations in the Danelaw, the antecedent to the jury of presentment, formed an 'upper bench of doomsmen' in Stenton's view.[92] A similar well-established and possibly hereditary Anglo-Scandinavian elite with some kind of public rights and authority appears in Domesday Book, which records that Lincoln had 12 'lawmen, that is having sac and soc', six of whom have Scandinavian names. Several of the 'lawmen' of Lincoln were also moneyers, but as their names are common ones, it has not been possible to identify them.[93] 'Lawmen' are rare in English sources, but where they are found it is nearly always in a Scandinavian context, occurring in the Domesday entries for Cambridge, Stamford, Chester, York, and Lincoln. Maitland interpreted them as a group specific to the boroughs, holding office, sometimes hereditarily, as 'doomsmen' or judges of the law, and Hart considers that the 24 'judges' (*iudices*) before whom the parties appeared in the Cambridge court were their exact equivalent.[94] Courts found in some towns with the Scandinavian name of husting ('House-meeting or court') have been seen as specifically 'for the settlement of trading

[89] Blackburn and Jonsson, 'Anglo-Scandinavian', p. 157.

[90] Coupland, 'Between the devil and the deep blue sea', p. 245; Hamerow, *Early medieval settlements*, p. 186, n. 15.

[91] *Festermen* also appear in the Law of Northumbrian Priests, associated with York; Liebermann, *Gesetze*, vol. I, p. 380.

[92] Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 498–505, at p. 503.

[93] Morgan and Thorn, eds., *Domesday Book*, C; Vince, 'Coinage and urban development'.

[94] Maitland, *Domesday Book and beyond*, p. 254; Loyn, *Governance*, p. 151; Hart, *Danelaw*, p. 6, n. 14.

matters and disputes arising from trade'.[95] Whatever the lawmen's exact role, they are a sign of an urban economy evolved enough to give rise to enough litigation to need a permanent body of experts.

The lawmen were members of an urban elite which was part of a society where a great deal of money could be made, not by any means all of which came directly from the ownership of land. Thirty-five people, many but not all of them major landholders, and more than half of whom have Scandinavian names, are listed in Domesday Book as those 'who had sac and soke and toll and team in Lincolnshire'.[96] The exact meaning of this phrase is obscure, but rights of sac and soke derived from lordship of a soke and rights to the dues, primarily jurisdictional, from its sokemen, while the Old English phrase *tol 7 teám* indicated the right to supervise the process of authenticating a purchase. These privileges gave lords of sokes access to income which did not derive directly from land or rent but from jurisdictional rights and from commercial transactions on their lands.[97] The sums raised as *tailla* from members of a soke, which are such an unusual feature of Lincolnshire Domesday, could well have included market profits of this kind.[98] It is even possible that profiting from commercial transactions was becoming detached from landowning altogether, for only a few of the people 'who had toll and team in Lincolnshire' were lords of important sokes and some had no rural property in the county at all. The overwhelmingly Scandinavian names of this last group, who were based in Lincoln and Torksey, bring to mind Stocker's self-consciously Scandinavian commercial elite.[99]

VII

A trader needed a secure source of supply and a producer a continuing market for his goods. Personal contacts were particularly important in the medieval market for wool, as it relied on credit and contractual obligations to an extent unusual in the rural economy. A model of the later medieval wool trade was brilliantly outlined by Power, and much subsequent work has followed in her footsteps.[100] Power was concerned primarily with the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, when the wool trade was at its height, but her analysis of the links between merchants and the small producers of the countryside provides a model which can be tested for the pre-Conquest period. Power paid particular attention to Lincolnshire, pointing out that the wool of the long-wooled sheep of the Wolds was considered the best in England. She showed that the clothmaking and wool-producing areas of Europe

[95] This interpretation is challenged by Nightingale, 'Origin'. Eleventh-century Oxford had a Danish community and medieval Oxford had a husting court.

[96] The rights of toll and teám are sometimes, as in the Phillimore edition of Lincolnshire Domesday Book, rather misleadingly translated as 'market rights'. 'Toll' in the sense of a market tax should translate *theloneum* in the text, while 'toll and teám' should translate *tol 7 tiam* (thus spelt in the Lincolnshire folios); Pollock and Maitland, *History of English law*, vol. I, p. 59.

[97] Goebel, *Felony and misdemeanor*, p. 370.

[98] See above, introductory section.

[99] Stocker, 'Monuments and merchants'; Hadley, *Northern Danelaw*, pp. 171–2. The following had land only in Lincoln and/or Torksey or no Lincolnshire land at all: Toki son of Auti, Fiacc, Rothulf son of Skjaldvor, Godric son of Thorfrith, Aki son of Siward and Vigleikr his brother, Leofwine son of Alwine, Atsurr son of Svala, Auti son of Atsurr, Thorir son of Roaldr, Toli son of Alsige, Atsurr son of Burg, Wulfweard White, and Sveinn son of Svafi; Morgan and Thorn, eds., *Domesday Book*, C, T

[100] Power, *Wool trade*.

were interdependent. The Low Countries, with poor wool but suitable resources for fulling and dyeing, became part of an integrated trading system with England with its better wool. Power also showed the differences between the ways in which small and large wool producers were involved with the market. In advance of shearing a grower would contract to sell his entire clip to an agent or merchant who would advance him part of the price, the rest to be paid on delivery. The wool from the large demesnes was sold by wholesale contract to dealers, who might be themselves shipping it, or who had contracts with a shipper. There were also agents working for landlords who would collect the wool from the tenants of an entire estate. 'Up-country dealers' from major centres such as Lincoln, Grantham, and Louth were in competition with the monastic agents.

The pre-Conquest situation was very different in this respect. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the major abbeys would be major flockmasters. Yet they had suffered severely from the Viking conquests. Even Peterborough Abbey, which still had some estates on the best grazing land in the county, was not yet raising sheep on them.[101] Major lay flockmasters are another possibility. In the later medieval English economy, mercantile and urban wealth was entwined with landowning, and that may well already have been the case before the Conquest.[102] Domesday does not give figures for livestock except those of one major landowner: Gilbert of Ghent, of whom it is noted, unusually, that he had a flock of sheep. His lands had exceptional amounts of pasture and meadow but his income came not only from livestock but from a huge range of other assets. Gilbert's Lincolnshire fortune was based on that of his Danish antecessor Ulf Fenisc, 'lawman' and member of the Lincoln elite, who had probably settled in England not long before the Conquest. As well as his vast landed estate Gilbert had maritime assets: saltworks, markets, and fisheries, and profitable Humber ferries at Barton-on-Humber and South Ferriby which gave him the opportunity to take tolls on 'bread, fish, hides and many other things for which nothing was ever given in the time'. He had two houses in Lincoln and probably took over the rights of toll and teám, sac and soke, which his antecessor Ulf Fenisc had had.[103] He was a flockmaster in his own right and his family acted as agents for St Peter's, Ghent, in the heartland of the Flemish cloth industry.[104] Flemish merchants were buying wool from Dover in the early twelfth century. St Peter's had land at three Kentish Thames-side sites, possibly trading places, from 964 and claimed (by a spurious charter but the tradition may be respectable) to own a London plot in 1044.[105] Gilbert owned three houses in Lincoln and a church there is dedicated to St Bavo, the patron saint of Ghent, which might indicate 'fairly close links between Ghent and Lincoln'.[106]

The small producers who as 'the most significant body of producers in the country' cumulatively supplied the bulk of wool were the third element in the later medieval wool market.[107] They sometimes took their own wool to fairs and

[101] Morgan and Thorn, eds., *Domesday Book*, 24.21; King, *Peterborough Abbey*, p. 154.

[102] Campbell, 'Was it infancy in England?', p. 191, draws attention to the fact that Hereward the Wake had a godfather of this name 'who lived at York and sounds like a merchant'. For his Danish Fyn rather than Fen origins, see Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire*, p. 132.

[103] Morgan and Thorn, eds., *Domesday Book*, 24.1–105; CS 1; Hart, *Danelaw*, pp. 267–79.

[104] Sherman, 'Continental origins'.

[105] Grierson, 'England and Flanders'.

[106] Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire*, p. 185.

[107] Masschaele, *Peasants, merchants, and markets*, p. 53.

markets, but they often had to deal with an agent because 'the small man could not produce in sufficient quantities to make it worthwhile for an export firm to deal with him, and he could not deliver his wool at a distant port'. The agent, the 'woolman' or 'brogger', was 'the inevitable product of a society of peasants and small craftsmen'.[108] Whether there were the equivalents of broggers in Lincolnshire before the Conquest can only be surmised—the term itself is late medieval. Regular trade will have depended on standard weights and measures and there is very early evidence for these. Since the eighth century English kings had taken an interest in the production of wool and woollen textiles. Ine had ruled on the date at which sheep should be sheared, as well as on their price. Offa famously corresponded with Charlemagne about the quality of the woollen cloaks sent from England to the Frankish court. In the tenth century Edgar ruled that a wey of wool should be sold at a set price of no less than 120d. : selling at less than this was a punishable offence. Two weys went to a sack, which was thus worth £1. In the later middle ages a wey of wool weighed 14 stones of 12-and-a-half, sometimes of 13, pounds, so a wey of 175 pounds seems to have been the minimum quantity in which dealing went on. Edgar's law continues: 'There should be one standard of weights such as are in use in London and Winchester'. We do not know whether these were small scales for weighing coin and silver, such as are found in the archaeological record, or whether they included standard weights for wool, such as a standard stone.[109] There do not seem to be any wool scales in the archaeological record, but there was an Old English term for them, *wulwæga*. The text known as *Gerefa*, a series of instructions to the 'judicious reeve', lists *wæipundern*, 'wey-pounds', possibly 'pound weights' or perhaps some kind of scales, after shears and tongs and just before its list of essential weaving equipment.[110] Æthelred's London code deals with the import and export end of the market: it refers to a regular toll on cloth and to traders from the Empire dealing in cloth.[111]

The existence of legally enforcible minimum weights and quantities for wool sent to market makes possible a very rough calculation of the amount of wool that a Wolds farm might have produced. This allows a speculation—and it cannot be more than that—about whether this was sufficient to suggest that it would have been more likely to have been taken to market by the farmer himself, or collected by the equivalent of a brogger. A wey of 175 pounds is the weight of the fleeces of between 87 and 116 sheep, on the assumption that a fleece would weigh between 1.5 and 2 pounds.[112] Dyer considers that in the later middle ages, when two-thirds of marketed wool came from peasant flocks, these averaged only about 20 head even in a pastoral region, and from flocks of this size it would have taken the surplus wool from about six farms to make up a wey. Pre-Conquest peasant flocks in Lincolnshire may have been considerably larger than this, particularly in view of

[108] Power, *Wool trade*, p. 47–8.
[109] Ine 44.1; 55, 69, in Attenborough, *Laws*, pp. 50–1, 58–9; III Edgar 8.1, 2, 3, in Robertson, *Laws*, pp. 28–9.
[110] *Gerefa*, line 14, in Liebermann, *Gesetze*, vol. I, p. 455; Poole, 'Textile inventory'.
[111] IV Aethelred 2.3, 10, in Attenborough, *Laws*, pp. 71–2. The *lanam* of *c.* 2.9 of this code should possibly read *lardum* or *lardam*—salt pork, not wool; Lloyd, *English wool trade*, p. 4. The arguments for dating this code to Cnut's reign are discussed by Lawson, *Cnut*, pp. 204–6.
[112] Connor, *Weights and measures*, pp. 130–2. The calculations here have been made on the basis of Trow-Smith, *British livestock husbandry*, pp. 166–8, whose figures come from thirteenth- and fourteenth-century manorial accounts.

the sums raised from *tailla*.[113] The £70 that Earl Hugh could raise from the soke of Greetham, if it had been paid by the sokemen alone, would have raised 34.14d. from each.[114] A (highly hypothetical) Wolds farmer who raised money to pay his *tailla* entirely from selling wool would have had to sell at least between 16 and 30 fleeces to raise this sum. It seems more likely that he would have sold his surplus to an agent who would assemble the collected fleeces to make up weys for market.

Later medieval practice, in which the agent advanced cash to the farmer in advance of collecting the wool, was a system that demanded arrangements that lasted over time and a considerable amount of trust. The agent needed to be sure that the producer would come up with the goods, and the producer that the broker would take all that he had for sale. The availability of cash, thought to have been a factor in the Flemings' major role in the later medieval market for wool, could have worked in favour of Scandinavian traders in this earlier period too.[115]

If the existence of broggers can be no more than a likely possibility, their ethnic identity may fairly be thought to be even more conjectural. However, if such a person was collecting wool from the *bys* in the little region discussed earlier, he would have found himself in a little society with a distinctively Anglo-Scandinavian element. The church at Worlaby, where as we have seen a surprisingly large number of families were supported by a largely pastoral economy, was dedicated to St Clement. By 1066, the small landowners in its congregation, as far as can be judged by their names, were a racially mixed group: Ælfric at Worlaby; Eadric, Godric, and Aleifr at Maidenwell. But higher up the social scale there was a significant Scandinavian presence, and hints that at least part of the trade of the wider area was in Scandinavian hands. The route to Louth took the traveller via Farforth, the 'crossing place', the centre of a small soke which belonged to Lambakarl, a significant (and surely Scandinavian) landowner.[116] The Norwegian king St Olaf (whose cult cannot have begun before his death in 1030) was the patron saint of Ruckland, also on the route to Louth. St Clement was patron saint of parishes near the North Sea coast at Grainthorpe, Saltfleetby, and Skegness, all three likely places to have found traders. So if Scandinavians were involved at this stage of the market, buying the clip of the longwool sheep from the up-country farmers of the very Scandinavianized Wolds, they could have moved the wool for transhipment along routes where by the eleventh century Scandinavian traders were well established.

VII

It has only been possible to suggest rather than establish some of the elements in the chain that linked the farm to the market in pre-Conquest Lincolnshire. The evidence that Scandinavians played a significant part in the production and marketing of wool may also be thought too slight to bear much weight. Cumulatively, however, a case can be made. Scandinavians may have introduced a new breed of

[113] Masschaele, *Peasants, merchants, and markets*, pp. 47, 49, 53; Dyer, *Making a living*, pp. 164–5.

[114] At 120d. a wey, a pound of wool would have been worth 0.68d., and a fleece of top quality and weight worth 1.3d., but these were prices set for the wholesale end of the market and the primary producers are unlikely to have been able to charge them.

[115] I owe this notion to a conversation with Pamela Nightingale.

[116] Morgan and Thorn, eds., *Domesday Book*, 2.28; 13.33; 13.31.

sheep especially suitable for wool production, and conditions on the upland farms favoured this. On farms that were new settlements and that had a new type of Scandinavian name, *by*, the Wolds supported a multitude of small producers whose economy rested primarily on cattle and sheep rather than on arable farming. Many were sokemen whose freedom from the constraints that bound the manorial tenant gave them a certain independence, although they were also unprotected from economic risk and were liable to pay the cash levy known as *tailla*. The fact that they were able to meet this demand suggests that they were in some way producing for the market.

While in many other circumstances Scandinavians quickly and deliberately became assimilated into English society, in commerce, where credit and trust were particularly important, they may have consciously retained their sense of ethnic identity. Scandinavians were important in a trading pattern that used river transport linked to overseas routes. Goods brought overland were loaded at transhipment points along the Trent, many of them owned or established by Danes or Norse, or at least by men with Scandinavian names, to travel upriver to the midlands, or down river to the Humber and thence to Northumbria and down the coast to London and Kent, or overseas. At Lincoln, whose rise as an important commercial and industrial centre originated in the period of Scandinavian settlement, a self-consciously Anglo-Scandinavian merchant class evolved which owed much of its wealth to trade or to controlling inland markets. The wide connections of the Viking world enabled Scandinavian traders to take a share in the commercial role that Frisians had played earlier.

At every stage of the market there were profits to be made. By 1086 large incomes could be made from estates that included Humber ferries or Trent hythes, and from imposing new tolls on coastal shipping. The price paid to the local producer would thus have had to allow for the costs of the participants in a long chain of transactions. That the primary wool producers of the Lincolnshire countryside—and the Wolds above all—were nevertheless able to meet their new Norman lords' demands for cash can be seen as a tribute to their market involvement. While the higher reaches of the system were in the hands of the powerful, the petty commodity producers may already have begun to play the important part in supplying the market that their later medieval counterparts were to fill.

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