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The colonisation of England by Germanic tribes on the basis of place-names*

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After the Romans had left the Province of Britannia, Germanic tribes were able to conquer and settle the land. In accordance with the literary sources, Schleswig-Holstein and Jutland are often considered the origin of these Germanic tribes. However, place names have rarely been used to determine the movements of the tribes. By identifying transferred place-names that were carried over by the emigrants, this chapter tries to locate the continental origins of the Germanic settlers. It argues that the Germanic tribes who invaded England during the fifth century did not come directly from Schleswig and Denmark across the North Sea, but rather from parts of Northern Germany, the Netherlands and Flanders, across the Channel.

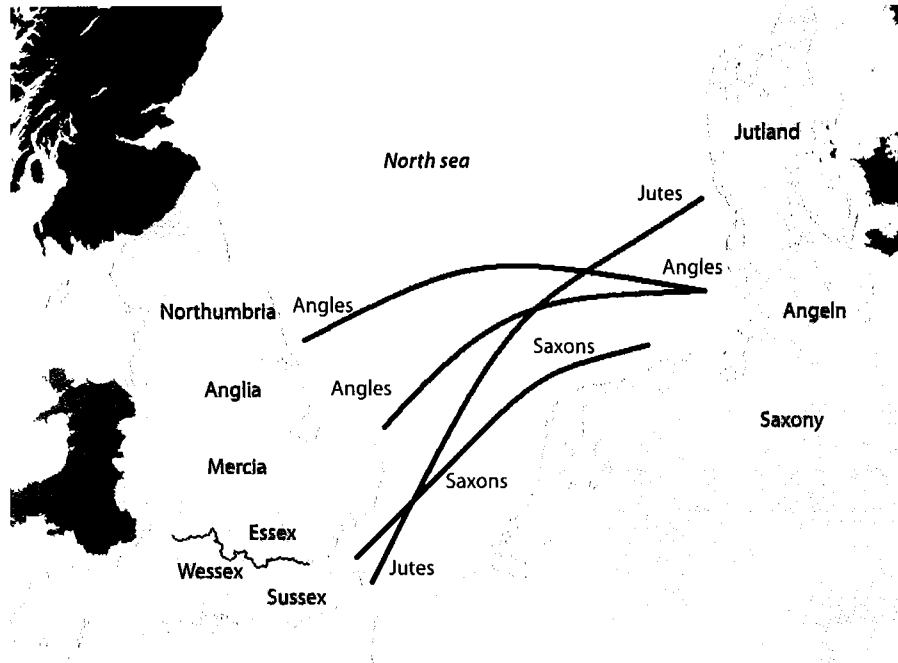
1. Introduction

A common historical starting point for the investigation of the early Germanic settlers of England is the wide-spread and popular view based on the traditions of the Venerable Bede and his *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*.¹ Here, Bede gives the famous year of AD 449 for the arrival of the early Germanic settlers in England. According to Bede, these early settlers came from three powerful tribes: the Saxons, the Angles, and the Jutes (Book I, Chapters 14–16). He further provides detailed information as to their continental homelands and their settlement in England. This suggests that the early settlers originated from the Jutland peninsula, i.e. the area of modern Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark. Since “this is the only definite and comprehensive statement regarding the origin of the invaders which has come down to us” (Chadwick 1924: 51), it is natural that such a precise statement about an otherwise very obscure age

* This chapter was translated and prepared for publication by Susan Hilsberg.

1. Edited by Colgrave & Mynors (1969).

should be easily accepted by scholars. Thus, this view has been widely acknowledged and it has also found its expression in several illustrations, such as that shown in Map 1.



Map 1. Traditional view of the Saxon emigration (based on Hickey 2005)

However, one of the main objections to Bede's account is its simplicity and clear-cut tribal distinction, which does not reflect the complexity of these early settlement movements (Piroth 1979:1; Collingwood & Myres 1963:347). Furthermore, the fact that Bede was writing nearly two centuries after the age of conquest also strongly implies "that he [Bede] was inevitably influenced by the political geography of his own day" (Collingwood & Myres 1963:328), which had already become more structured compared to the early settlement days. This notion is supported by Chadwick's (1924:52) remark concerning this account: "Bede's statement as to the origin of the various nations in Britain are so definite that we should certainly expect to get evidence for the same classification elsewhere. Such evidence, however, is not easy to find." Therefore, the aim of the present paper is to locate the continental origins of the Germanic settlers of England with the help of place-names.

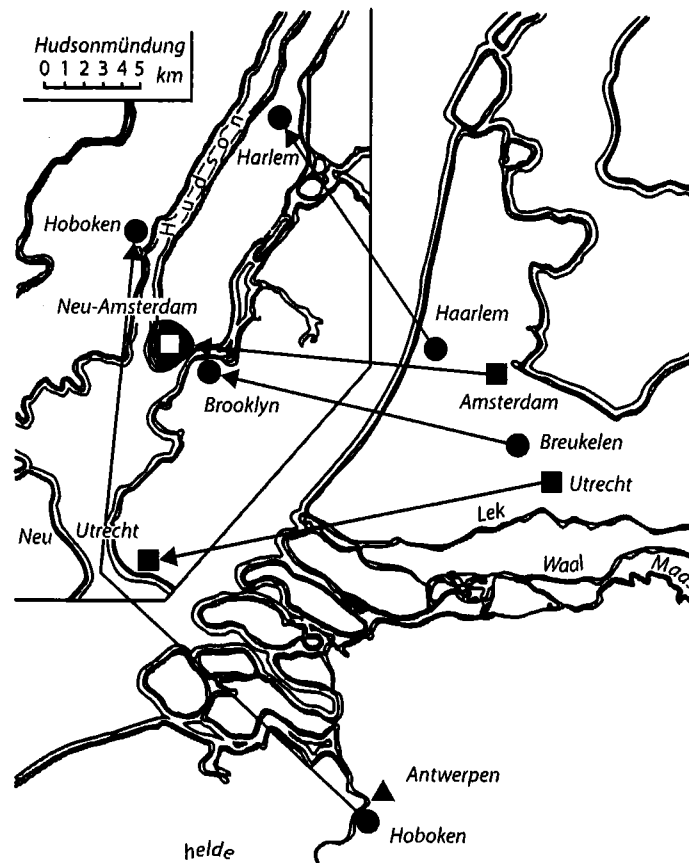
Is it possible to trace back migration movements by using place-names? More than 300 years ago the philosopher Leibniz (1765:242) advanced the following view:

Et je dis en passant que les noms de rivieres, estant ordinairement venus de la plux mieux le vieux langage et les anciens habitans, c'est pourquoy ils meriteroient une recherche particulaire.

"And I say in passing that river names are usually the best sources of old language and peoples, and they therefore merit especial study."

Together with river names, ancient place-names are among the oldest monuments of peoples and show the origin of their relations and the migration of the peoples.

Can place-names unveil migration routes? This question can clearly be answered with 'yes' if one has a look at the example of the Dutch emigration to America shown in Map 2.



Map 2. Dutch place-names and their equivalences in America (Bathe 1954/1955: 96)

From this map it can be seen that tracing back settlement movements using place-names represents a valid method. The present paper is based on the fact that

immigrants take their language, and also their habits of naming places, with them. With the help of transferred place-names on the Continent and in England, it will be possible to demonstrate the origins of the early settlers of England. Hence, the place-name scholar may be able to trace back the migration of the Anglo-Saxons and Jutes to England.

Some place-names of the very old strata rather agree between the Continent and England than between Scandinavia and England. However, the astonishing fact about the existing work relating to this topic is that the results are utterly unsatisfying. Laur (1964:296), in a seminal article concerning this topic, drew the conclusion that there are only a few names that can be considered to have been taken over from the Continent to Britannia by the Anglo-Saxons. Nonetheless, he still assumed that Schleswig-Holstein is the most important starting point for the migration to England, which also supports Bede's view (see Map 1).

Are such maps in accordance with the distribution of place-names? Hey (2008:262) in his recent work states the following:

By the end of the 8th century Anglo-Saxon colonists controlled all of the area south of the Forth and as far west as Wales and Cornwall [...] The colonists were Germanic peoples from separate parts of north-west Europe [...]

Hey (2008:262) also notes that “[p]lace-names shed much light on Anglo-Saxon settlement, but the evidence has been reinterpreted to match the archaeological discoveries and old views have been discarded”.

However, one might ask whether the significance of place-name studies for the study of ancient migrations has really been appreciated. Not much research concerning the connection between the Continent and England has been carried out by British researchers. Although there have been intensive investigations on single place-name elements, and sometimes even a link to their Germanic origin, all of this research is restricted to England (e.g. Jacobsson 1997). This is even more surprising bearing in mind the amount of research that has been carried out on Scandinavian elements in English place-names. The Danish researcher Fellows-Jensen is a leading investigator in this field of study (Fellows-Jensen 1972, 1978, 1985). She compares Scandinavian and English place-names in order to trace back their original connection. However, her investigations have tended to relate to younger strata of place-names and are thus not relevant for the early settlement of England.

The main advantages of place-names as historical material are their persistence, consistency, and antiquity. They “remain stable for centuries, sometimes millenia” (Clark 1992:485). Furthermore, since it is generally known that the English language belongs to the West Germanic language family (with strong influences of Celtic, Latin, North Germanic and French), the roots are to be

found in the continental areas settled by West Germanic peoples. Moreover, in a recent investigation on early place-names of southern Scandinavia and England, Fellows-Jensen (1995:72) came to the following result:

In conclusion it must be admitted that the migration-period place-names in England and southern Scandinavia would not seem to provide much evidence for close contact between these two regions at that period. The specifically southern Scandinavian element *lev* is absent from England and name-types characteristic of England [...] are not evidenced in southern Scandinavia.

Investigations into a continental connection of this type have only recently been revived (cf. Udolph 2006a). However, already in 1898, pioneering work on the continental connection with England was carried out by the German philologist Jellinghaus. In two important investigations (Jellinghaus 1898, 1902) he compared place-name elements of the Low German language area (mainly Westphalia, Lower Saxony and parts of Saxony-Anhalt) with the ones found in England. He discovered numerous parallels between the two areas. Although his approach has been approved by later historians and place-name scholars, Schwarz (1943–1952:229) states that this valuable work only found few successors. Yet, most investigations based on a comparison of place-names, both early and recent, yield the same result: the origins of the Anglo-Saxon settlers of England are definitely not restricted to Schleswig-Holstein and Jutland, as suggested by the historical authorities, but seem to include parts of Lower Saxony, Westphalia, Belgium, Flanders and northern France.

The present work will try to locate the continental origins of the Germanic settlers. This is done by a comparison of the distribution of place-names on the Continent and in England. It is suggested here that such a comparison allows us to draw conclusions about the origin of the West Germanic settlers.

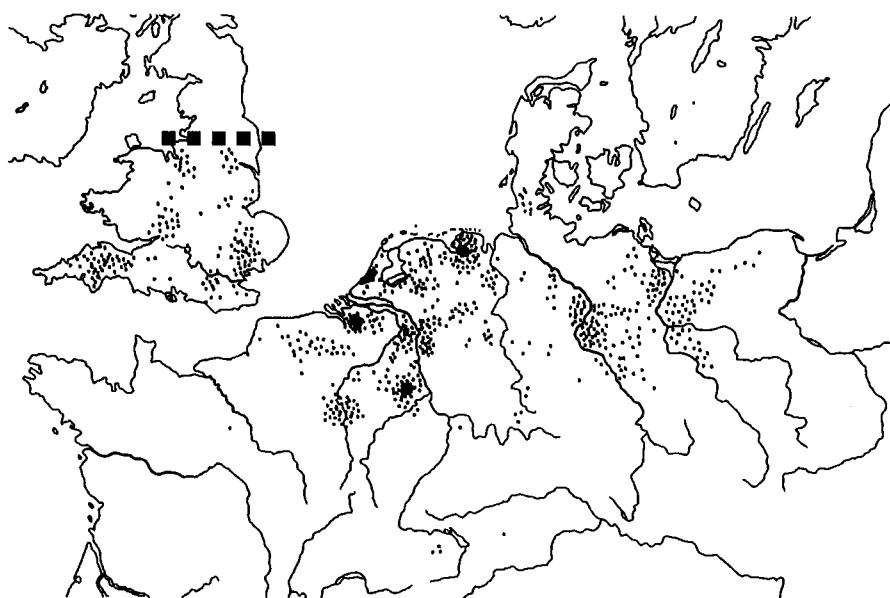
2. Germanic **fani/-ja* “bog, moor”

An old term for “bog, moor” but also for “low lying grassland”, the Germanic element **fani/-ja* appears in Gothic *fani* “mud”; in most cases, the variant **fanja* is used in place-names.

There are hundreds of *Fenn*-names in Western Europe (see Map 3). In Germany there are, for instance, *Ackerfenne*, *Fanhusen*, *Fehn*, *Fehnhusen*, as well as *Venusberg* in Bonn, further *Venusbruch* and *Venushügel* near Wernigerode and *Vienenburg*, 1306 *Datum Vineburch*. Furthermore, morphologically older types appear as *Finne* in Thuringia, 1106 *in silva Vin* etc.; *Viningi* and *Viningeburg* near Lüneburg; there are also forms with *-r-* derivation in *Fiener Bruch* near Genthin,

1178 in *palustri silva, que Vinre dicitur*; *Vinnen* (Hümming), about 1000 *Vinnum*, *Finum*; and with *-str-* suffix: *Vinster* (Oberlahnkreis), 893 (copy 1222) *Veneter*, *Wenestre*, *Uenestre*, 1312 (and more frequently) *Vinstern*.

In several cases, equivalent examples can be found in the Netherlands, Belgium and Northern France: *Bakkeveen*; *Berkven*; *Diepenveen*, among them *apa-*names like *Vennep*, about 960 *Vannapan*, *Vennapen*, and *Venepe*, 1138–53 *Uenepe*, 1144 *Venepe*; compare *Venlo*.



Map 3. Germanic **fanja* in place and field-names (Udolph 1994: 315)

The number of examples is equally numerous in England: *Blackfen*, *Broadfans*, *Bulphan*, *Coven*, *Fambridge*, *Fan*, *Fanns*, *Fann's*, *Fen*, *Fenn*, *Fennes*, *Fulfen*, *Gladfen*, *Orsett Fen*, *Redfern's*, *Stringcock Fen*, *Vange* and *Fencote*; place-names of the type *Fenton*, 1086 *Fentone* etc. occur frequently, cf. Udolph (1994: 300–317).

The map reflects a strong presence of this element in north-west Germany, at the Lower Rhine, in Flanders and in England. On the other hand, Schleswig-Holstein and Jutland are not much involved. The map thus seems suggest that the early West Germanic settlers might have come to England via the channel rather than directly across the North Sea.

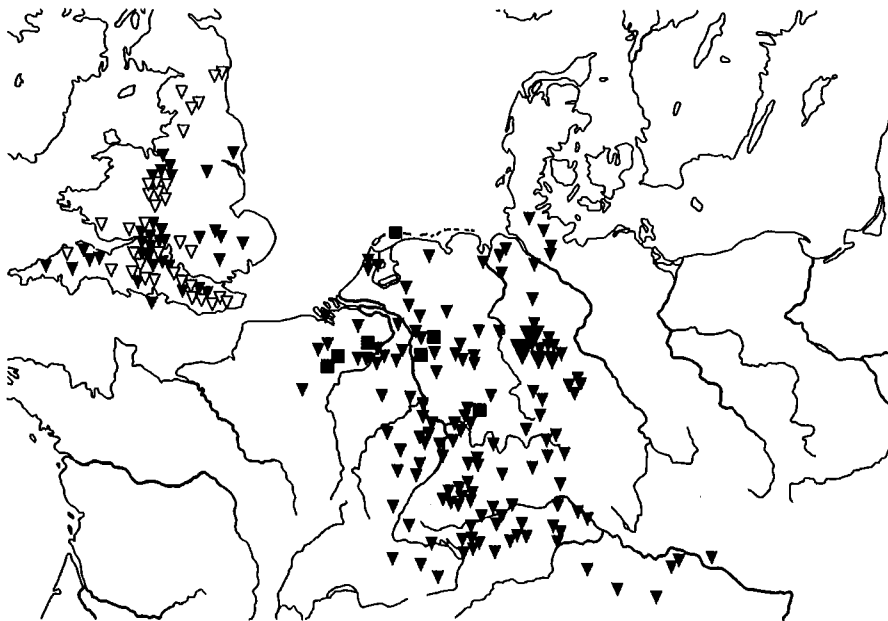
3. Old High German *horo* “mud, mush, dirt, soil”

A sparsely noted but well-attested word in German, Dutch and English appears as Old High German *horo* “mud, mush, dirt, soil”, Middle High German *hor*, *hore*

“marshy ground, dirty soil, excrement, dirt, mud”, Old Saxon *horu* “mud, dirt”, Old Frisian *hore* “mud, excrement”, Middle Dutch *hore, hor* “lutum; Modder”; Old English *horh, horu* “filth, dirty”.

German place-names such as *Haarbach, Haarhausen, Harmke, Horbach, Harbrücken, Harburg* near Hamburg, *Horb, Horburg, Horchheim, Hordorf* contain this word. Place-names including this word can also be found in the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and France: *Althorn* near Saargemünd, 783 *Horone; Hoerenkreek* (Zeeland); *Hoorebeke* near Oudenaarde, East Flanders, 1090 *Horenbecca; Hoorsik* in Gelderland and several others.

The occurrence of the word in English place-names is also very common: *Harborne; Harlick; Harmers; Harpole*, 1086 *Horpol; Harwood Gate; Harton*, 1249 *Horton; Hawley; Hollowmoor; Holyport*, 1220 *Horipord; Horbling*, 1086 *Horbelinge; Horbury*, 1086 *Horberie; Horcott, -field, -wood; Le Horemède; Horemestall; Horeput; Horfield*, 1086 *Horefelle; Horham*, ca. 950 *Horham; Horish (Wood); Horley*, 1374 *Horlawegrene; Great, Little Hormead*, 1086 *Horemède*, 1243–64 *Hormède*, with field-names *Horpits* und *Horpyt; Horralake; Horrel; Horsell*, old *Horsele, Horisell*, Old English *horgesella; Horwell; Horwood*, 1086 *Horewode; Warpoole; Wharley; Worley's Fm.* There are many compounds with *-ton* in *Horton*, 1086 *Hortune; 1086 Hortona; 946 (copy 13th century) hore tun-inge*. On Map 4, they are marked by special symbols (▽, ▼) (cf also Udolph 1994:318–330).

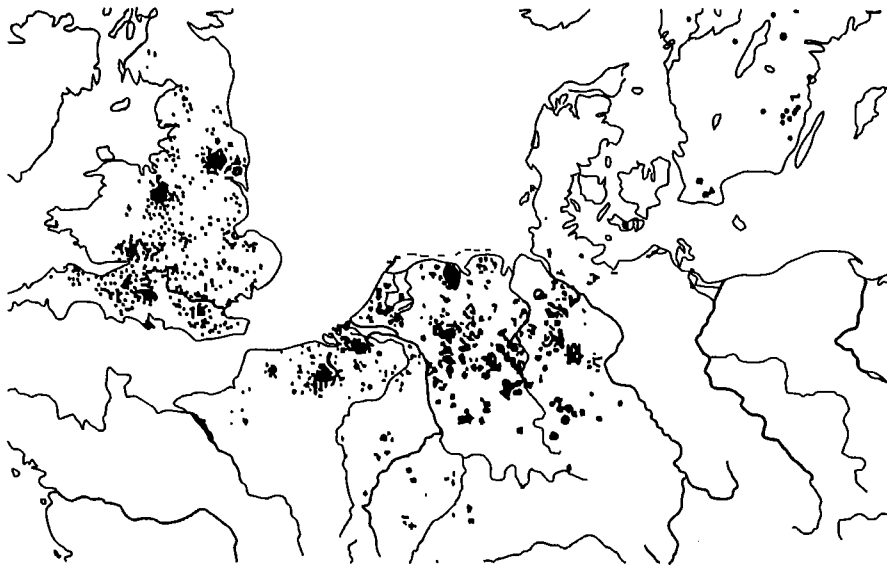


Map 4. *hor- in place-names on the Continent and in England (Udolph 1994:328)

The map suggests that the main connection between the Continent and England proceeds from the Lower Rhine via the South of the Netherlands and Belgium across the channel.

4. Germanic *-mar-* “moor”

An old Germanic word, latent in place-names with equivalents and relatives in other Indo-Germanic languages is *-mar-*. It is cognate with Latin *mare*, Slavic *more* (*Pomorze/Pommern*) and also attested in Celtic place names such as *Aremorica* (cf. Udolph 1994:330–377). There is an ablaut to German *Meer* < **mari* and German *Moor* < **mōra*. In Germany it can be found in numerous North and Middle German place-names: *Behlmer, Bettmar, Bleckmar, Bothmer, Dilmar, Dittmern, Eschmar, Flettmar, Friemar, Geismar, Gelmer, Gittmer, Görmar, Hadamar, Heumar, Hörstmar, Horsmar, Horstmar, Homar, Hukesmere, Komar, Leitmar, Lohmar, Ostmare, Palmar, Rethmar, Rettmer, Riethmar, Ringmar* (compare the English place-name *Ringmer*, with the older variant *Hringamara*), *Rottmar, Schötmar, Schöttmer, Vellmar, Villmar, Versmar, Voßmar, Wechmar, Weidmar, Weimar, Weitmar, Wethmar, Wichmar, Widmare, Wiedemar, Wismar, Wißmar, Witmar, Wittmar*.



Map 5. **mar-* and **mar-sk-* in place- and field-names on the Continent and in England (Udolph 1994:375)

To the West of Germany, we find the element in *Aalsmeer, Alkmaar, Alsmear, Berdemare, Bommeer, Dossemer, Echmari, Gaastmeer* (1132 *Gersmere*), *Hetmere, Hoemare, Hotmeer, Purmer, Schermer, Spilmeri, Wormer* and *Zonnemaire*, 1190 *Suthmera*.

The place-name element is likewise common in England: *Badlesmere, Blakemere, Boldmere, Bradmore, Bulmer, Colemere, Cuckmere, Dodimere, Falmer, Grasmere, Holmer, Homer, Keymer, Marton, Minsmere, Ringmer, Rugmere, Sledmere, Stanmer*.

The distribution of the element shows that there are two large territories connected with each other across the channel: northern Germany, the Netherlands and Flanders on the one side and England on the other. The territory of Schleswig-Holstein is, again, irrelevant.

5. German *Riede* “mud, mush, dirt, soil”

The German water-term *Riede*, which is relatively frequent in the area along the North Sea, has often been examined in terms of its distribution and etymology. Its Low German equivalent is *ride, rīde, rien* “natural watercourse, small river, rivulet in the mudflat”; the Middle Low German term is *rīde, rīe, rīge* (*ride, rije, rige*) “brook, small river, rift”. In Old Saxon it is *ritha, rithe* “watercourse, small river”; Frisian *riede* “canal, small river in the mudflat”, *ryt, ryd(e)* “brede greppel”, North Frisian *rīde, riet*; Old Frisian *reed* “small river” and *rīth* “brook”; Dutch *rijt* “water-loop”, Middle Dutch *rijt*, Old Low Franconian *rīth* “brook”.

Very early the word was encountered in English: it is found in Old English *rīð, rīðe, rīðig* “small river”, *rīðe* “brook, drawn-out narrow lowland, old streambed”, English *rithe, ride* “small river, originated by rain, small stream”, *rigatt* “a small channel from a stream made by rain” (cf. Udolph 1994: 377–394).

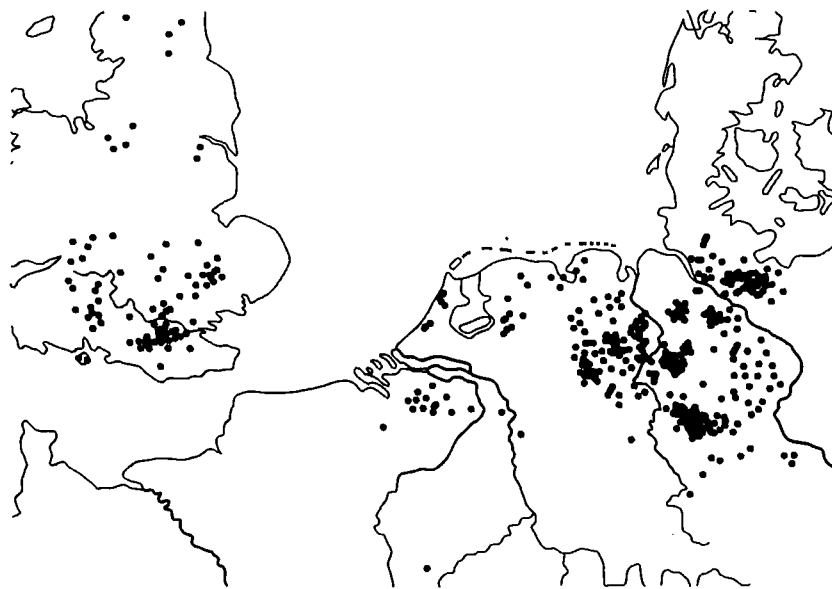
In Germany, numerous examples of place-names with this element can be found. Some of them belong to younger strata and are thus not very significant for the present investigation, which focuses on the older strata: *Achelriede, Aschriehe, Bargeriede, Bassriede, Bickenriede, Bleckriede, Bollriede, Borgriede, Botterriede, Brandriehe, Bruchriede, Brunriehe, Diekriede, Eilenriede, Ellerige, Jachelriede, Janrieden, Middel Rie (Middels Rie), Exeriede, Feldriede, Feldriede, Flehmanns Rieh, Flämischen Rüe, Weeckenlands Rüe, Flissenriede, Fluthriede, Fohlenrien, Fuhlenrüe, Fuldenriede, Fuhle Riede, Die Große Riede, Grotrüh, Haferriede, Hauenriede, Holtride* and many more.

Examples that belong to an older stratum are: 726 (copy about 1222) *Araride* (near Cologne), *Brüchter* near Ebeleben, 876 *Borahtride*, 1290 *Bruchtirde*, also *Burichtride*, *Borantride*; Corveyer evidence from about 826–876 *Hrithem* (with inorganic *h*-).

In the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and North France, the following examples have been detected: *Bruggenrijt*, *Dieprijt*, *het Dikke Riet*, *Munnikenzijlster*, *Ekkersrijt*, *Houtrijt*, *Jutjesriet*, *Peelrijt*, *Pieperij*, *Riet*, *Rijt*, *Segerijd* and others; some of these are, however, young formations.

England shows numerous examples containing this element. Some represent very early coinages, such as *Abberd*; *Beverley Brook*, 693 (copy 11th century) *beferið*; *Blackrith*; 972 (copy 1050) *Bordriðig*; *Chaureth*, 1086 *Cauride*; *Childrey*; *Coldrey*, 973/74 (copy 12th century) *(to) colriðe*; *Coleready*; *Cropredy*; *Cottered*, 1086 *Chodrei*; 1228 *Ealdimererithi*; *Eelrith*, 680 *ad Aelrith*; *Efferiddy*; *Erith*; *Fingrith*; 693 river- and stream-names *Fugelriðie*; *Fulready*; *Fulrith*; *Gooserye*; *Hendred*, 984 *Henna rið*; 774 *Hweolriðig*; *Landrith*; *Shottery*, 699–709 (Map 11th century) *Scottarið* and many more.

The distribution on the map (see Map 6) shows that these place-names occur especially in Northern Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and England. Thus, it may also suggest that the settlers immigrated to England via the channel.



Map 6. *Riede, ride, rith, riet, rið* in geographic names (Udolph 1994: 393)

6. German *Hude* “timber yard, staple market located at a watery place, ferry point”

An old word that particularly connects Northern Germany and England is German *Hude*. A German native speaker recognises this element only in connection with place-names such as *Buxtehude*, *Fischerhude*, *Harvestehude* and the *Steinhuder Meer* (Sea). The meaning of this word is unknown to today’s speakers. *Hude* occurs in Northern Germany especially in place-names which are closely located to water. In Middle Low German it is attested as *hūde* “timber yard, staple market located at a watery place, ferry point”. It is also unknown in Modern English, but attested in Old English: *hyð* “place where the ship enters, a low bank, a small harbour” (cf. Udolph 1994: 460–473).

The distribution of the place-names with this element is very interesting. In Germany, the following examples have been found: *Altenhude*; *Aschenhude*; *Billerhude*; *Dockenhuden*, 1184 *Dockenhuth*; *Dodenhuden*; 1346 *Eckhude*; *Fischerhude*, 1124 *Widagheshude*; *Flemhude*; *Frauenhude*; *Grönhude*; *Hamhude*; *Harwestehude*; *Heemhude*; *Huden* near Meppen, 1037 *-huthun* in the evidence *Hlareshuthun*; *Hodenhagen*, 1168 (copy 18th century) *de Hode* (and more frequently); *Hude* (frequent), also with umlaut *Hüde*; *Huden*, about 920 *Huthun*; *Hudau*; *Hudemühlen*; *Kayhude*; *Neddernhude*, *Obernhude*; *Pahlhude*; *Ritterhude*; *Stapelhude*, 1258 in *loco qui dicitur Stapelhuth*; *Steinhude* at *Steinhuder Meer* (Sea), 2nd half of 14th century *To der Stenhude*; *Tesperhude*; *Winterhude*.

The element is also observable in place-names in the Netherlands: *Coude Hide* in Seeland; *Coxyde*, 1270 *de Coxhyde*; *Coxyde* (*Koksijde*); *Hude*, 1405 *Hude*; *Hude driesch*; *Huderstrate*; 1359 *le Hyde*, near Dünkirchen; *Nieuwe Yde* near Nieuwpoort/Oostduinkerke, 1277 *Nova Hida*; *Raversijde*, 1401 *Wilravens hyde*; *Lombartsijde*, 1408 *Lombaerds yde*; *Yde*, 1331 in *die Hide*.

The place-names in England are old and, thus, important: *Aldreth*, 1169–72 *Alreheð(a)*, *-huða*; *Bablock Hythe*; *Bleadney*, 712 (copy 14th century) *ad portam quae dicitur Bledenithe*; *Bolney*, 1086 *Bollehede*; *Bulverhythe*; *Chelsea*, 785 *Cealchyp*, *Celchyð*, 801 *Caelichyth*; 1275 *Chollesheth*; *Clayhithe*, 1268 *Clayheth*; *Covehithe*; *Creeksea*, 1086 *Criccheseia*; *Downham Hythe*, 1251 *Dunham hythe*; *Earith*, 1244 *Herheth*; *Erith*, 695 *Earhyð*; *Fishhythe*; *Frecinghyte*; *Glanty*, 675 (copy 13th century) *Glenthupe*; *Greenhithe*; *Heath* (several examples); *Hidden*, 984 (copy about 1240) (*innan*) *Hydene*; *Hithe Bridge*; *Hive*, 959 (copy about 1200) *Hyðe*; *Hive*, 1306 *atte heth*; *Horsith*, 1249 *Horsyth(e)*; *Hyde*, 1333 *atte Hithe*; *Horseway*, 1238 *Hors(e) hythe*; *Hullasey*, 1086 *Hunlafesed*; *Huyton*, 1086 *Hitune*; *Hythe* (Surrey), 675 (copy 13th century) *huþe*; *Hythe* (Cambridge), 1221 *Hethelod*; *Hythe* (Kent), 1052 (*on*) *Hyþe*; *Hythe* (Hampshire), 1248 (*la*) *Huthe*; *Knaith*, 1086 *Cheneide*, < *cnēohȳþ*;

Lakenheath, about 945 æt *Lacingahið*; *Lambeth*, 1041 *Lambhyð*; *Maidenhead*, 1202 *Maideheg*; *Prattshide*, about 1250 *Pratteshithe*; *Rackheath*, 1086 *Racheitha*; *Rotherhithe*, about 1105 *Rederheia*; *Sawtry*, 974 *Saltreiam*; *Small Hythe*, 13th century *Smalide*; *Stepney*, about 1000 *Stybbanhype*; *Swavesey* about 1080 *Suauesheda*; *Welshithe*, allegedly 675 *Weales hūðe*.



Map 7. German *hude*, English *hyð* in place-names (Udolph 1994:472)

More than a century ago, Jellinghaus (1898:290) suggested that the *-hude*-names testify to the origin of the Southern English tribe from the German lowlands.

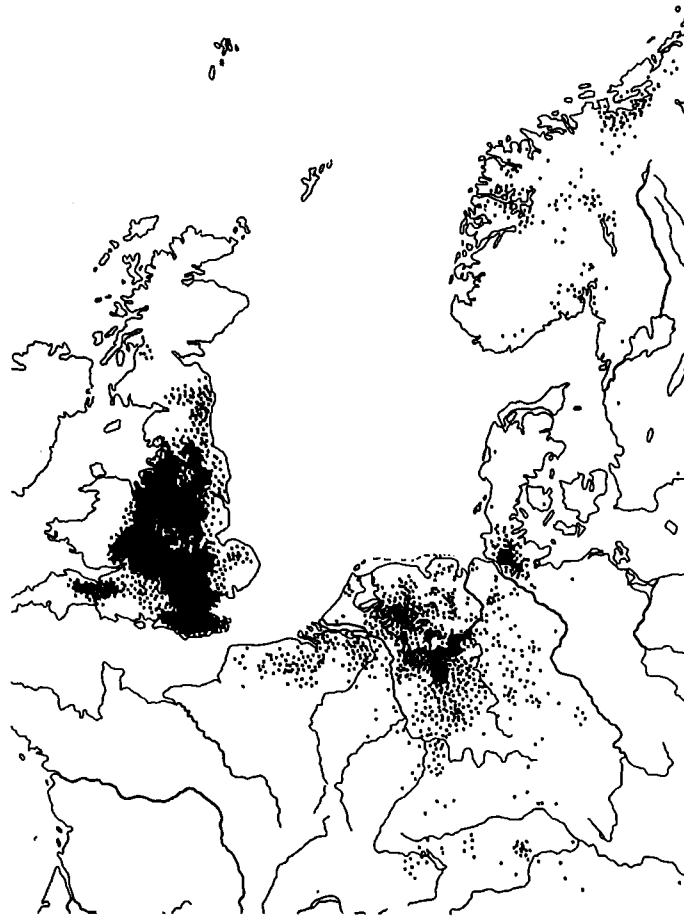
The distribution of the names on Map 7 gives conclusive evidence that the early settlers of England did not come from Schleswig-Holstein or Jutland. Yet, the place-names in Flanders should be considered in detail, because they seem to connect the German and English place-names.

7. Germanic **lauha*- “wood”

Germanic **lauha*- is generally accepted to be the oldest term for “wood” which can be found within the Germanic languages (Ramge 1987). In Germany, it occurs in place-names as *-loh*, in the Netherlands and Flanders as *-lo(o)*, in England mainly as *-ley*, Old English *-lēah*. Apart from the element *-ton*, it is the most frequent place-name element in England (cf. Udolph 1994:513–573).

The vast number of place-names that exemplify this element includes the following: *Gütersloh*, *Dorla*, *Hangelo*, *Iserlohn*, *Lindloh*, *Oldesloe*, *Pullach*, *Ramelsloh*,

Wiesloch in Germany, *Almelo*, *Eecloo*, *Hasselo*, *Hengelo*, *Mechelen*, *Tongerloo*, *Venlo* in the Netherlands and *Alveley*, *Emley*, *Aspley* in England.



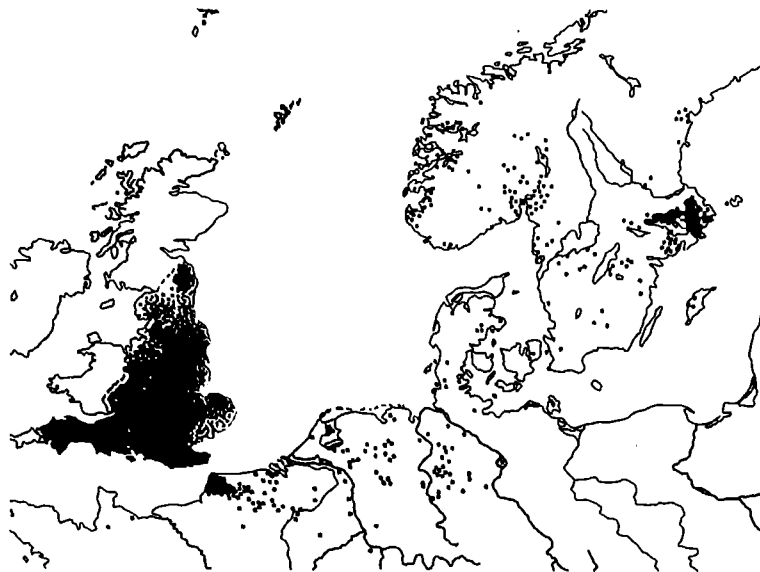
Map 8. Germanic **lauha* in place- and field-names (Udolph 1994:568)

The distribution of the names (see Map 8) produces a by now familiar picture. It may be noted that Germanic **lauha-* became a highly productive place-name element in England. However, this should not lead to the assumption that the starting point of the element's spreading was in England. The distribution shows us that a secondary productivity may distort the impression which we get from a distribution map and may lead to false assumptions. Although the element is far more frequent in England than on the Continent, this does not necessarily mean that its origin is to be found there. As the starting point for the immigrating settlers was the Continent, the point of origin is likely to consist of those areas in which *-lo(o)*, *-loh* occurs, that is, Northwest Germany, Belgium and Flanders.

8. Germanic *tūn- “fence”

Even more frequent than *-ley* in England is the place-name element *-ton* < Germanic *tūn-, also attested in Old English *tūn*, Old High German *zūn*, German *Zaun*, Low German *tun* “fence”, Old Frisian *tūn* “fence, manor”, Dutch *tuin* “garden”, Old Saxon *tūn* “fence”, Old Norse *tún* “fence”, “fenced piece of land”, “village”, further developed in the Nordic and English language into “fenced place”, compare English *town* (cf. Udolph 1994: 609–764).

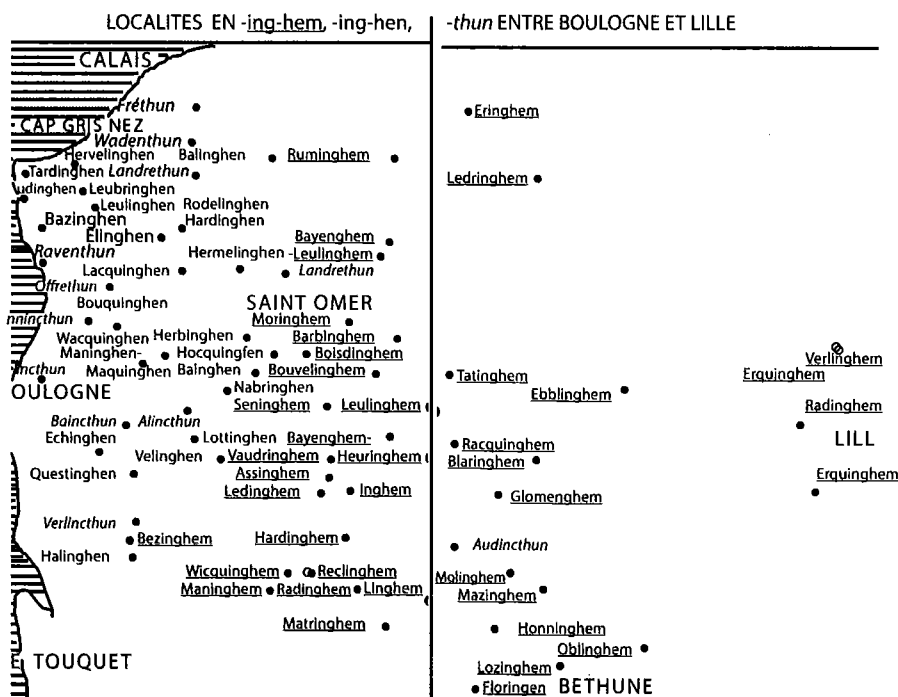
One eighth of the English place-names are composed with this element, making up tens of thousands of names, such as *Newton*, *Norton*, *Weston*, *Eaton*, *Horton*, *Hampton*, *Remington*. It is also known in Scandinavia: *Altuna*, *Dingtuna*, *Fröstuna*, *Hovtun*, *Nicktuna*, *Sigtuna*. There are only a few instances in Germany: *Anderten* near Hannover, about 990 *Ondertunun*; *Anten* near Bersenbrück, about 890 *Northanhetun*; *Barnten* near Hildesheim, 1149 *Barint-hune*; *Bovenden* near Göttingen, 949 *Bobentun*; *Dörnten* near Goslar, 1053 *Dorn-zuni*; *Flechtheimerhof* next to Brakel near Höxter, about 930 *Flechtunum*; *Giften*, place-name close to Hildesheim, 1203 *de Gifthenen*; *Ilten* near Sehnde, 1227 *de Yltenem*; *Lochtum* in the district of Goslar, *Annales Lamberti Loctuna*, 1129 *de Lochtenem*; *Nörten* North to Göttingen, 1055 (copy 16th century) *Northun*, *Northunum*; *Thiinen/Toennen* near Soest; *Unterrieden* near Witzenhausen, Trad. Corb. *Ungrotun*, *Ungroten* (marginal note), *Traditiones Fuldenses Vngerod*, *villa Ungerodet*.



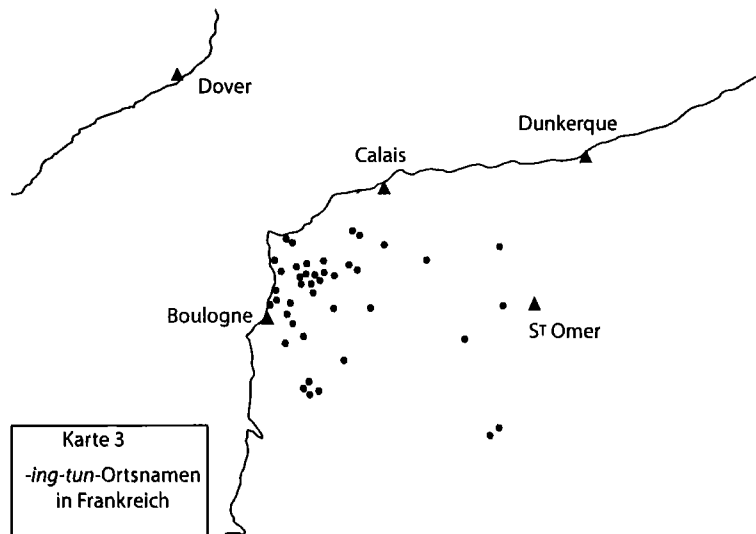
Map 9. Germanic *tūn- in place- and field-names (Udolph 1994: 699)

The map (see Map 9) clearly shows the frequency of this element in England. In comparison, the frequency of occurrence of this element is negligible in Germany and Scandinavia. However, there is an important complement. Especially in Germany, there are place-name types in *-ing-* which also carry another extension. These include coinages with *-inghusen/-inghausen*, such as *Recklinghausen*, *-ingdorp/-ingdorf*, such as *Gugging*, 11th century *Gukkingin*, *-ingerode*, such as *Wernigerode* and *-ingheim*, such as *Tinallinge*, 11th century *Ingaldington*, also attested in England, cf. *Birmingham*. However, the corresponding formations with *-ing-ton* only exist in England and are very frequent there; examples include *Barrington*, *Bollington* etc. They have also been transferred to America, cf. *Arlington* and several other examples. On the Continent, this specific type can only be found in one single area, that is, Northern France, with such examples as *Albinthun*, *Alenthun*, *Alincthun*, *Audenthun*, *Audincthun*, *Baincthun*, *Colincthun*, *Dirlingtun*, *Florincthun* etc.

It was suggested long ago that this development goes back to the settlers coming back from the island to the Continent via the channel (Ehmer 1937). Two maps illustrating this movement were drawn independently, yet at the same time, by a French linguist (Martinet 1996: 6–7; see Map 10) and a German onomastician (Udolph 1999a: 440; see Map 11)



Map 10. Place-names with *-ing-hem/-hen* and *-ing-t(h)un* in North France (Martinet 1996: 6–7)



Map 11. Place-names with *-ing-t(h)un* in North France (Udolph 1999a: 440)

The important point here is that the Channel has been a geographical route of migration in both directions. It is beyond question that contact and/or migration movements took place via the channel. In the present case, the question concerns settlers emigrating from England to the Continent. However, the distribution of the place-name elements strongly suggests that the Germanic settlers used the same route for settling England.

9. German *horst* “bushes, undergrowth”

More than 70 years ago, a dissertation was written in Göttingen concerning a place-name element whose distribution is relevant to the origin of the early settlers of England. This dissertation, by Denker (1924), investigates place-names containing the element *-horst*, which in most cases has the English equivalent *-hurst*.

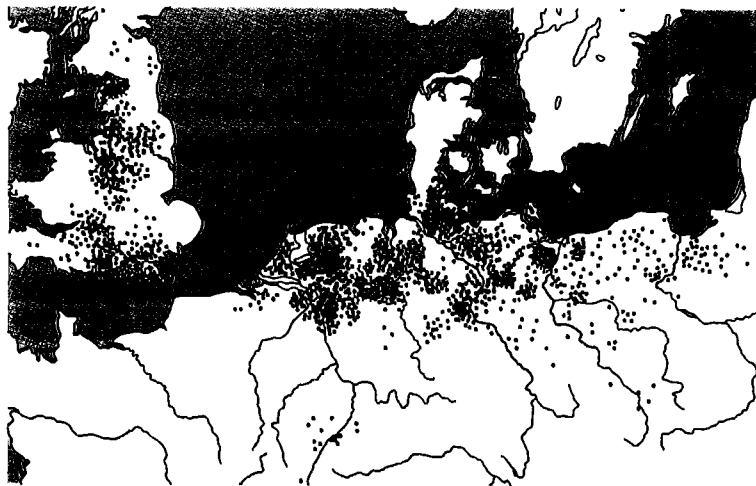
Jellinghaus stated that the element *Horst* is an exclusively Saxon–Dutch place-name. It means “old wood”. Whereas the south of England features numerous place-names with *hurst*, these place-names are absent from the area north of Suffolk. The element *horst* is unknown to Danes and Frisians. This might suggest that the Germanic invaders of the northern parts of England came from the Friesland area including Holstein, while the settlers of southern England seem to be more strongly connected to the area of the Saxons.

The word appears as German *horst*, Middle High German *hurst* or *hürste*, Old High German *hurst*, Old Saxon *hurst* “bushes, undergrowth”, Middle Low German, Middle Low Dutch *hurst*, *horst*, Dutch *horst*, Old English *hyrst*. English *hurst* specifically means “copse, bushes, shrubbery, brushwood”, also “overgrown small ridge in marsh and moor”, or younger “bird’s nest”.

The word occurs in hundreds of place names, for instance in Germany we come across *Ahrenhorster Ort*, 1233 *Arnhorst*, 1249 *Arnhorst* etc.; *Honhorst* near Hellern, 1160 *Hoinhorst*, from about 1200 onwards *Honhorst*; *Horst* (frequent); *Rumpeshorst*, place-name near Wimmer; *Wallenhorst* near Osnabrück, 851 *Wallonhurst*, 1160 *Walnhurst*. It is also well attested in the Netherlands: *Aalhorst*, in Overijssel; *Aelshorst*, 1457 mentioned in Dalftsien; *de Apenhorst* near Dingsperlo; *Bakhorst*; *Beerhorst* in Laren (Gelderland); *Binkhorst* near Losser (Overijssel), 1st half of 11th century. *Binkhorst* etc.

In England, there are also numerous place-names containing this element, such as *Bayhurst* in Middlesex, 13th century. *Baynhurste*; *Boleness*, place-name in Cambridgeshire, 1438 *Bolnehyrst field*; *Chippinghurst* in Oxford; *Fingest*, place-name in Buckinghamshire, 1163 *Tingehurst*, 1233 *Tingeherst*, 1426 *Tingeherst*; *Gayhurst*, 1086 *Gateherst*, and many more.

Map 12 is based on the supplemented material collected by Denker (1924).



Map 12. Place-names with *-horst* and *-hurst* (Udolph 1994:791)

The distribution of the place-names speaks for itself. The connection between Western Lower Saxony, the Netherlands, Belgium and Flanders on the one side and England on the other can hardly be doubted. Schleswig-Holstein, Jutland and Denmark are insignificant.

10. The generic *-set*

The county names *Somerset* and *Dorset* in England are well-known. It is worthwhile to look into the etymology and the history of the generic *-set*. Here, there also seems to be an unequivocal connection between this area and Northern Germany.

The generic belongs to the so-called *in-pago*-names which contain as a second element forms like *-seton*, *-seti*, *-cetae*, *-saten*, *-sazon*, *-sazi*, *-saza*, *-sacia* etc. They are ascribed to Germanic **sētjōn*, m. “a person sitting, living somewhere”, “inhabitant”, a nomen agentis with a *n*-stem (of Germanic **sīt* “sit”) which is attested in formations as *-sāz[z]o* in Old High German, *-sāze* in Middle High German, as *-sētio* in Old Saxon, as *-sāta* in Old English, *-seti* in Old Norse (Polenz 1961: 191). In some cases, it is not easy to distinguish these forms from other compounds with similar elements, such as Middle Dutch *sate* (*sāt*) “settlement, construction site, fenced site”, Old High German *sāza*, *gisāzi*, Middle High German *saze*, *sez* “place, settlement”.

Polenz (1961:192) suggests that, apart from the weak **-sētjanez*, there was also a strong variant **-sēt[j]ōz*. It is not unreasonable to assume that two types of word-formation processes coexisted. Consequently, this whole group can be subsumed under **-sētjanez/-sēt[j]ōz*.

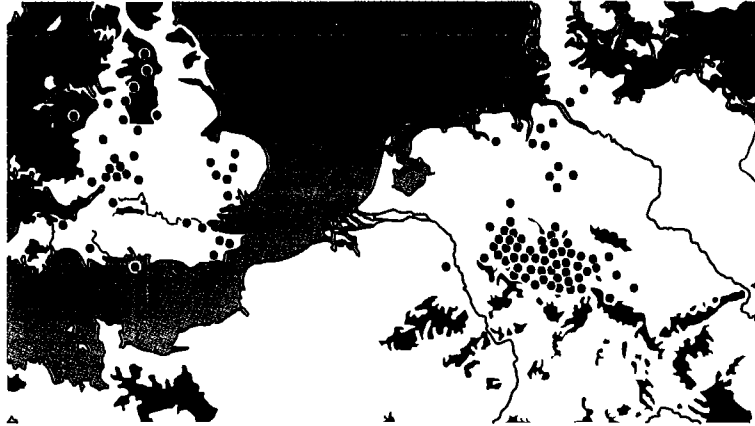
Jellinghaus (1898:314) pointed out the frequent occurrence of this element type in Western Lower Saxony and the striking concordance with English equivalents. A listing of the corresponding place-names confirms this view (cf. Udolph 2000). In Northern Germany, we find *Beckstedt* to the south of Wildeshausen, 1291 *von Bekeseten*; *Bekesete* to the east of Münster, 1250 *Bekesete*; *Bekisettihuson*, (deserted) near Lüdinghausen, 10th century *Bekisettihuson*, to Lower German *bēk(e)* “brook”; *Bersten* near Wellendorf, 1182 *de Berseten*; *Bexte* to the south-east of Münster, about 1050 *Bikieseton*; *Bexten* near Salzbergen, also *Vorbexten*, 1050 *Bekesete*; *Bexten* near Bad Salzflen, Vita Meinwerzi *Bikesethon*; *Bexten*, today Schlingort (district of Osnabrück), 1402 *Bexsten*, *Bekesten* etc.; *Brosterhaus*, (deserted) near Selm, 1240–50 *Brocsatherhusen*; *Broxten*, frequently near Osnabrück and Melle, about 1050 *Brocsethon*, including Low German *brök* “bog, march, mud”; *Bulsten* to the north-east of Melle, 12th century *Bulseton*; *Felsen* to the north of Osterkappeln, 1090 *in Velzetten*; *Felsen* to the south of Herzlake, 1280 *Velseten*; *Firihsazi*, name of a district between the estuaries of Weser and Elbe, 9th century *Firihsazi*; *Fleeste* to the south of Bremerhaven, 1105 *Flietsete*, to North German *fleet*; *Föhrste* near Alfeld (Leine), 8th/9th century (copy 12th century) *Woresete*, 990 *Foresazi*; *Förste* near Hildesheim, (beginning of 12th century) *in Vorsete*; *Geestenseth* to the east of Bremerhaven, 1123 *Gestensethe*; *Hardensetten* near Iburg, 12th century

Horseten; *Harsten* near Wellingholzhausen (district of Osnabrück), 12th century *Horseten*; *Hollensett* near Warendorf, 1050 (Freckenhorster Heberolle) *Holon-*, *Hollenseton*; *Holstein*, Adam v. Bremen *Holcetae*, *Holsati*, *Holtzati*), Saxo Grammaticus: in *Holsatiam*, *Holsatiis*, Annalista Saxo: *Holcete*, Old Saxon root **Holtsētion*, **Holtsāton* “an inhabitant of the forest”; *Holsten* to the north of Hoya, about 1230 *Holcethen*; *Holsten* near Ankum (district of Osnabrück), (end of 12th century) (copy 16th century) *Holzeten*; *Holsten(-Mündrup)* to the south-east of Osnabrück, a. 1182 *Holtsaten*, *Holtseten*; *Holsterhausen*, urban district of Essen, middle of 12th century *Holtseterhusen*; *Hopsten* near Ibbenbüren, 1265 *Frethericus de Hopseten*; *Horst* near Nottuln, 10th century *Hornseti*; *Laxen* near Gimble, 10th century *Lahsetiun*, *lauk-* “leek” + *satiun*; *Laxten* to the east of Lingen; *Leste* near Anreppen, 1031 (copy 12th century) (*Vita Meinwerici*) *Lessete*; *Loxten* near Ankum, (end of 12th century) (copy 16th century) *Locseten*; *Loxten* near Halle/Westfalen, 1182 *Locseten*; *Loxten*, also *Westloxten*, (deserted) near Everswinkel (to the east of Münster), about 1050 *Lacseten*; *Merstem-gau* to the west of Hannover, (after 814) *Marstheim*, 826–876 (copy 15th century) in *pago Marstem*, < **Mersēton*; *Middelseten*, (deserted) near Harsewinkel, 1196 *Middelseten*; *Molenseten*, old name (deserted) of Sandfort (district of Osnabrück), 1147 *Mulensete(n)*; *Moorhusen* near Itzehoe, 1247 *de Morsatenhusen*; *Morschenich* to the west of Cologne, 1158 *Morsaz*; *Oberholsten* near Melle, about 1240 *Holtzetten*; *Ouseten*, 1358 and 1402 mentioned close to Dissen; *Reste*, (deserted) near Schwalenberg, 1031 in *Refsete*; *Senst* near Coswig, 1228 *Sinsatin*; *Uelsen* to the west of Lingen, 1177 *de Uelseten*; *Varenssetten* near Bad Iburg, 12th century *Vernseti*; *Velsen* near Warendorf, 1050 *Veltseten*; *Vorste*, (deserted) near Hameln, 1245 in *Vorsete*; *Waldsati*, in 9th century mentioned district at the Wümme to the north-east of Bremen; *Waltsazi*, (deserted) near Ohrdruff (Thuringia), 11th century *Walsazi*, *Waltsazi*; *Westerbeverstedt*, 860 (copy 11th/12th century) *Westristanbeverigiseti*; *Wext* to the south-west of Rheine, 1280 *Wecseten*; 998 mentioned area *Uuigsezi*, to the north-east of Sömmerda; *Winkelsett* to the east of Wildeshausen, about 1370 *Wynkelsede*; *Winkelsetten* near Laer, 1175 *Winkelsete*; *Winkelshütten* near Halle/Westf., 1240 *Winkelseten*; *Woltzetten* near Emden, 10th/11th century *Uualtsation*; *Wursten*, 12th/13th century *Wurthsati*, *Wursatia*.

In the Netherlands, Belgium and France we only find a few traces: *Hoenzadriel* near Driel (Gelderland), 772 (copy 12th century) in *uilla Hunsetti*; *Kerkavezaat* near Zoelen (Gelderland), 850 (copy 11th century) in *Auansati*; *Wibernessate*, mentioned in 1165 (copy 15th century), unknown near Kuinder (Overijssel); *Wezet*, French *Visé*, to the north of Lüttich, (877–79) in *vico Viosato*, 1036 (copy 14th century) *Viusatium* etc., 1096 *Wegsaze*, 1149 *Uigesetensis*, 1176 *Wegesatzen*.

England has got some important names. According to Smith (1956:94) Old English *sāte* (*sāetan* nom.pl., *sāetna* gen.pl., *sietum* dat.pl.) “settlers, dwellers” exists as a toponym in place-names. It is compounded with older place-, river- and stream-names (*Arosāetan*, *Dorset*, *Estursete*, *Tempsiter*), with single appellatives (*Dunsāetan* “dwellers of the mountains”) or it forms elliptic types of older place-names (*Sumersetum*, *Wilsāetan*, *Fepsetnatun*). The following names can be added here: *Arosāetna* (Warwick), 7th century *Arosāetna land* (< river names *Arrow*, “settlers at the river *Arrow*”); *Beansetum* (Worcester) (“the inhabitants of *Beanhall*”); *Bilston* (Stafford), 985 *on Bilsatena gemæro*, 996 *Bilsetnatun*; *Bradsetena gemære* (Worcester); *Burstwick* (Stafford), perhaps *burgsāeta*-; *Cilternsāetna* (Oxford), 7th century *Cilternsāetna land*; *Cregsetna haga*, mentioned near *Bexley*, Kent, < Old English **Crāge-sāetan* “settlers along the *Cray*”; *Dorset*, about 894 *Thornsāetna*, 955 (to) *Dorsāeton*, 978 (on) *Dorsāetum* etc., either to *Dorn*, older form of *Dorchester* or elliptical formation of Old English, *Dornwara-ceaster* “*Dorchester*”; *Dunsāetan* (Hereford); *Elmsett* (Suffolk), ca. 995 *Ylmesāeton*; *Estursete*, 1086 mentioned (Kent), “dwellers on the river *Stour*”; *Forncett* (Norfolk), 1086 *Fornesseta*, 1199 *Fornesset*, “*Forne’s* (Ge)set” or **Forn-sāetan*; *Grantchester* (Cambridge), 1086 *Grenteseta*, *Granteseta*, “the dwellers on the *Granta* (river)”; *Guist* (Norfolk), 11th century *Gæysæte*, 1086 *Ge geseta*, -sete, < **Gāg-sāetan*?; *Halceter* in *Montgomeryshire* (Wales), 1249 *Halchseten*; *Hessett* (Suffolk), 1086 *Hete-*, *Eteseta*, ca. 1180 *Hegessete*; *Histon* (Cambridge), 1086 *Histonona*, later *Histone*, < **Hāpsāeta-tūn-*; *Inkset* (Worcester), old of *Incsetena gemære*; *Loxley* (Warwick), 985 *on Loscetenena gemære*, = *Loxten*, *Locseten*, *Lochseten* in *Northern Germany*; *Maund*, old name of a district in *Hereford*, 811 *on Magonsetum*, 872 *in Magansetum*; *Meresete*, 1086 mentioned district at the border of *Wales*; *Ombersley* (Worcester), mentioned in 817 in the form: *on Ombersetenena gemære*; *Peak* (Derby), 7th century *Pecsāetna land* “inhabitant of *Peac* or *Peacland*”, < Old English *pēak* “hill”, *Phepson* (Worcester), 956 *Fepsetnatun*; *Poston* (Hereford), 1086 *Poscetenetune*, root **Putsāetnatūn*; *Ruminingseta*, 697 mentioned name of a tribe near *Romney* (Kent); *Somerset*, 845 *mid Sumorsāetan*, 878 *Sumursāetna*; *Stursett*, 1086 *Estursæte*, district in Kent, “dwellers on the river *Stour*”; *Tempsiter*, 1086 *Temsete*, district at the river *Teme* in *Salop*; *Tomsetan* in *Warwickshire* at the river *Tame*; *Wentsāetan* in *Wales*, “resident of the district of *Gwent*”; *Wihtsāetan*, end of 9th century *Cantware and Wihtsāetan* “resident of the *Isle of Wight*”; *Wilsāetan* (*Wiltshire*), 800 *mid Wilsāetum*, “dwellers on the river *Wylye*”; *Wrekin*, mountain near *Shrewsbury*, old *Wrocene* etc., occurs in the name of the settlers, as well, 7th century *Wocensāetna land*, 855 *in Wreocensetun*, 863 *Wrocensāetna*.

The distribution suggests very strongly (see Map 13) that there was a connection between the Germanic place-names on the Continent and the place-names in England.



Map 13. Place-names with *-sētjanez/-sēt[j]ōz (Udolph 2000: 87)

The distribution of the place-names corresponds to the other maps of Germanic place-names from the North Sea area and thus demonstrates that, concerning toponyms, England is not connected to Schleswig-Holstein in the first instance but rather to Western Lower Saxony, to Westphalia, the Southern Netherlands and Flanders.

11. Suffix *-ithi*

It is well-known that a great shift in noun-formation took place within the Germanic language history. While compounding has become the most common means of noun formation in the modern languages, as in German *Hand-tuch*, *Auto-reifen*, *Haus-wand*, English *main door*, *foot path*, *winter tyre*, Danish *hoved dør*, *skov vej*, *bildæk*, in the Early Germanic period new words were mainly formed by derivation, with the use of suffixes: **gab-lo-*, German *Gabel* “fork”, **ham-ijpa-* German *Hemd* “shirt”. Hence, suffix formations are essential when looking for ancient Germanic place-names. This may be illustrated with the example of the suffix *-ithi*.

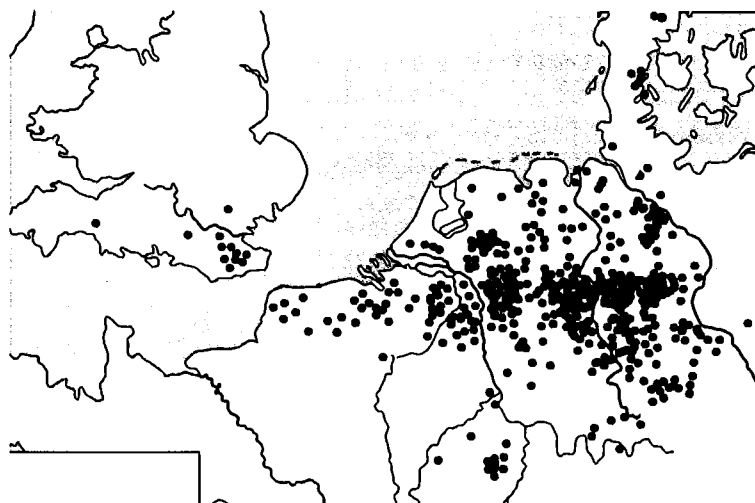
This suffix is no longer productive and it is known to us from the older Germanic languages only by a few words: Gothic *avithi* “flock of sheep”, Old English *gesylhþe* “saddle oxen”, Old English *winterfylleþ* “October”, Old High German *winithi* “grassland”, *juhhide* “harnessed team” etc. cf. Casimir (2003, 438–446), Möller (1992), Udolph (1991; 1994: 258–288).

Whereas it can hardly be identified as an appellative – a fact suggesting a relatively old age – it is a very common element in North and Middle German place-names. Approximately 200 names are still found, including some very famous examples such as: *Birgte*, 1088 *Bergithi*; *Bleckede* at the Elbe; *Bünde*, 853 (imitation) *Buginithi*; *Dingden* near Bocholt, 1163 *Tingethe*, to Old High German.

thing, ding “people’s assembly”; *Döhren*, urban district of Hannover, about 990 *Thurnithi*; *Essen*, 9th century *Astnide*; *Geesthacht*, 1216 in *Hachede*; *Gimbte*, 1088 *Gimmethe*; *Grohnde*, (1237–47) in *Gronde*; *Helle* near Wiedenbrück, end of 12th century *Helethe*; *Huckarde*, urban district of Dortmund, 947 *Hucrithi*; *Hüsedde*, 12th century *Husithi*; *Lengede*, 1151 *Lencethe*; *Mengede*, urban district of Dortmund, 10th century *Megnithi*, *Mengide*; *Meschede*, 913 *Meschede*, 1015–25 *Meschethi*; *Sarstedt*, (1046–1056) *Scersteti*, *Scerstete*, 1196 *Scardethe*; *Sehnde*, 1147 *Senethe*; *Sömmerda*, 876 *Sumiridi* item *Sumiridi*.

West Germanic settlers emigrating to England from the fifth century onwards took this element with them and produced some more place-names on the island before the suffix became unproductive and vanished. Examples include: in Kent *The Brent*, *Brent Lane*, late 14th century *Bremthe*; deserted place-name 13th century *Bremthe*; deserted place-name 1286 *Bremthe*; 4. *Brent Cottages*, 1359 *Brencche*; 1206 *La Brenithe* (for *Bremthe*?); Further *Frant*, 956,961 (*æt*) *Fyrnþan*, 1177 *Fernet*, 1296 *Fernthe*, 1332 *Frenthe*; *Rowfant*, 1574 *Rowfraunte* in Sussex; *Feltham* (Somerset), 882 *Fælet-*, *Fylethamm*; deserted place-name *Helthe* in Kent, 1242–43 *Helcthe*, *Helgthe*, 1252–54 *de Holgthe*, 1254 *de Heilkthe*, 1270 *de Helgthe*; deserted place-name *Horsyth* in Dorset, 13th century *horside*, 1249, 1256 *Horsyth(e)*, 1256 *Horseth*, 1327,1331,1463 *Horsith(e)*, 1331,1338 *Horsyth(e)*; *Tilt*, place-name in Kent and Surrey, 1328 *la Tilthe*, *Tiltwood* in Sussex, 1327 *ate Tilthe*, also *Backtilt Wood*, 1254 *de Beketilthe*, 1278 *de Beketilthe* etc. as well as *Baretilt*, 1285 *Bertilth*, 1313 *de Bertilthe* in Kent.

The distribution (see Map 14) shows that the suffix was still productive when West Germanic tribes came to England. The suffix had been used for appellative



Map 14. Place-names with the suffix *-ithi* (Udolph 1994:272)

place-name formation before it became unproductive and eventually disappeared from the Anglo-Saxon language stock. The distribution of these place-names on the Continent provide another strong suggestion about the origins of these West Germanic settlers: the place names with *-ithi* mark the old settlement areas precisely.

12. *Magdeburg*

Place-names often contain elements and words which have disappeared from the language stock a long time ago. It is often the case that single elements can no longer be reliably identified in place-names. Thus, it happens that they are mistaken for other, better known elements or words. A good example of this phenomenon is the place-name *Magdeburg*.

Until a few years ago, it was assumed that this place-name contains the element underlying German *Magd*, *Mädchen* "maid, servant", Old Low German *magad*, Old High German *magad*, Gothic *magaps*. The name's meaning would then be understood as "site of heathen female beings". Because of the early evidence for the place-name, 805 *ad Magadoburg*, 10th century *Magadaburg*, *Magathaburg*, *Magedeburg*, this explanation has been easily accepted. However, the place-name is not restricted to Northern and Middle Germany, as may be seen in the following examples: *Edeberg*, hill near Plön, 1221 (copy 1286) *Megedeberge*; *Mägdesprung*, place-name, also mountain name, near Harzgerode; 8th/9th century *circa fontem, qui dicitur Magedobrunno*; *Maghed Ek*, assumed near Suderburg to the south-west of Uelzen, 1339 *maghed ek*; *Magetheide*, part of the Luneburg Heath, 1060 (copy beginning 14th century) *in Magetheida*; *Magetheide* in the district of Winsen/Luhe, also near Dannenberg and Lüdinghausen; *Medebek*, tributary to Trave near Lübeck, 1426 (copy 18th century) *in Meghedebeke*; *Megdebruch*, 1669 mentioned field-name for a marshland between Steinhorst and Grebshorn; *Megedeberg*, hill near Sendenhorst, mentioned in 1311 *Megedeberg*; *up (under) dem Megedeberge*, field-name mentioned in the 15th and 16th century in Göttingen-Herberhausen; *Megedefelde*, deserted place-name near Bennigsen (district of Hannover), 1149 *Magedevelde*; *Megedehove*, fenced site near Othfresen, district of Goslar, 1288 *Megedehove*; *Megedekot*, small settlement near Rulle (district of Osnabrück), 1277 (1276) *Megedekot*; *Megederode*, deserted name of unknown location, district of Göttingen), 1224 (copy) *in Megidiroth* (Var. *Megideroth*); *Meghedehop*, high ground near Dötzum (district of Hildesheim), 1462-1478 *Meghedehop*; *Megetefeld* near Vlotho, 1576 *upm Megedevelde*; *Meinefeld*, place-name near Stadthagen, 1207-1224 *in Magethevelde*.

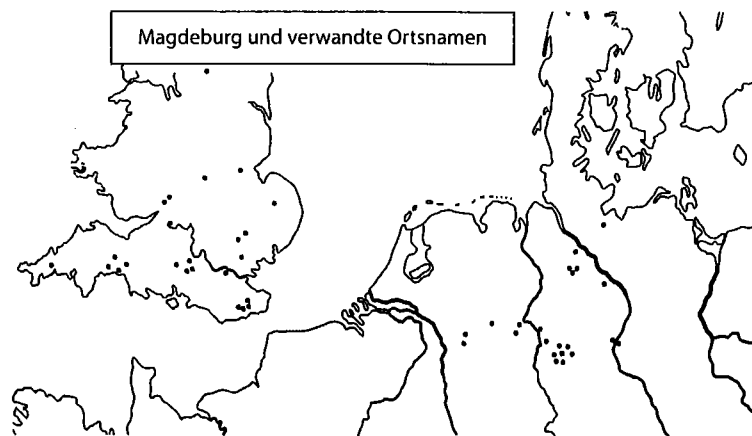
However, what does *magad-*, *meged-* actually refer to? If one assumes that the element means "maid" or "virgin", it would suggest that the place-names consisting

of this element mean something like “virgin mountain, virgin oak, virgin heath, maid marsh, maid field, or maid heath”. Yet, concerning place-names and their meaningfulness these conclusions would not be very plausible.

First of all, it may be useful to have a closer look at the English evidence. Here, place-names are also found with such an element, which has been interpreted and associated with English *maiden* (most of the material has been taken from Ekwall (1960), Smith (1956) and Watts (2004)). Occasionally, the Old English term for “camomile”, *mageþe*, *mægeþe*, *mægþe*, has been suggested instead (cf. Tiefenbach 1989). These attempts at an explanation of the English place-names appear somewhat awkward. Examples of the place-names include: *Madley*, to the south of Birmingham, with the generic *lēah*; *Maidebury* in Cambridge, generic *burh*; *Maiden Down* in Devon, generic *dūn*; *Maiden Castle* near Brough (Westmorland), about 1540 etc. *Mayden Castel(l)*, “refers to a rectangular Roman fort [...] near the Roman road over Stainmore [...] The name [...] means “maidens” fortification [...], occurs several times and usually refers to prehistoric earthworks and fortifications” (Smith 1956:71); *Maiden Castle* in Cumberland and Dorset; *Castle Hill* in York (West Riding), former *Maidanecastell*; *Maiden Castle* in Edinburgh, former also *Castrum Puellarum*; *Maiden Way*, name of a Roman road near Alston (Cumberland), about 1179 *Mayden-gathe* etc.; *Maidens Bridge* in Middlesex; *Maidenburgh* in Essex; *Maidencombe* in Dorset, generic *cumb*; *Maidencourt* in Berkshire, generic *cot* (compare the German place-name *Megede-kot* above); *Maidenford* in Dorset, generic *ford*; *Maidenhead* in Berkshire, 1202 *Maideheg*, 1241 *Maydehuth*, *Maydeheth*, 1248 *Maydehuth*, generic *hýð* (cf. above with Map 10), according to Ekwall (1960:311) “the maidens’ landing-place”, (notice the further development *Maide-hýth* > *Maiden-head*); *Maidenwell* in Cornwall and Lincolnshire, 1086 *Welle*, 1212 *Maidenwell*, “the maidens’ spring” (Ekwall 1960:311). According to Smith (1967:71) *mægðe* “camomile” is found in *Maidford* (Wiltshire; generic *ford*), “but difficult to distinguish from *mægð*”; *wella* “spring, brook” is assumed as generic in *Maidwell* (Norfolk), “perhaps in allusion to ‘fertility’ springs” (Smith 1956:32) and in *Maidwell* (Northamptonshire) as well, 1086 *Medewelle*, 1198 *Maidewell*, “the maidens’ spring or stream” (Ekwall 1960:311); *Maidford* in Northamptonshire, 1086 *Merdeford*, 1167 *Maideneford*, 1200 *Meideford*; *Maidstone*, 10th century *Mæidesstana*, *Mægþan stan*, 1086 *Meddestane*, 11th century *Maegdestane*, according to Ekwall (1960:311): “Probably ‘the maidens’ stone’. One Old English form seems to suggest the word *mægþe* as the first element, but ‘mayweed stone’ gives no good meaning. Probably the original form was *mægþa-stān*, which came to be misunderstood”; *Mayburgh*, 1671 *Maburgh*, place-name near Askham (Westmorland), refers to an old amphitheatre (Smith 1967:206).

Old English “camomile” is also found in *Mayfield* in Sussex, about 1200, 1248 *Magefeud*, 1279 *Megthefeud*, but according to Smith (1956: 32) it is also difficult to distinguish from *mægð*. One should further compare *Maybridge* in Worcestershire; *Mayford* (Surrey), 1212 *Maiford*, 1230 *Maynford*, 1236 *Mayford*, according to Ekwall (1960: 311) “This may be ‘maidens’ ford’ (OE *mægþ*) or ‘ford where mayweed grew’ (Old English *mægþ(e)*”); finally two more examples should be mentioned *Maytham* (Kent), about 1185 *Maihaim*, 1242 *Meyhamme*, 1314 *Matham*, “*hamm* overgrown with *mægþe* or mayweed” (Ekwall 1960: 311); *Medbury* in Bedfordshire.

Map 15 shows that the place-names have a similar distribution to the ones discussed earlier.



Map 15. **magad-*, **megeð-* in German and English place-names (Udolph 1999b: 263)

It may be noted that the English and German place-names consisting of an element *megeð-*, *magad-* have not yet been convincingly explained. Until now, the word has been explained as a noun. However, if we assume that the word is not a noun but an adjective, it resembles in its structure very much the Germanic word for “naked”, German *nackt*, Old High German *na(c)kot*, *na(c)chet*, Gothic *naqabþs*, Old Norse *nokviðr*, Old English *nacod*, *næcad*, Old Frisian *nakad*, *naked* < Germanic **nakʷad-* (< IE **nóǵʰot-*). Unfortunately, no Germanic adjective **magad-* (“great”) has been written down. However, this is not an unusual case in onomastics, since several elements of older place-names are difficult to be traced back. The point is that with an adjective “great” it becomes possible to explain about 60–70 place-names on the Continent and in England with a more sensible and logical meaning than “camomile” or “maiden”.

From that point one has to ask the following questions about the place-names consisting of such an element: "What kind of castle?", "What kind of field?", "What kind of street?", "What kind of ford?" etc. The answer might possibly be: "big" or "great", hence, "a great castle" or "a great street" (Roman roads!), "a big heath" (Luneburg Heath!) etc. An etymological connection is found in the Germanic language branch of Gothic, Old English *magan*, German *mögen*, Old Icelandic *magn*, *meg(i)n*, Old English *mægen* "power, essential thing", Gothic *mahts*, German *Macht* "power". Thus, especially in connection with a castle it would make more sense to name it according to its impressiveness or powerfulness and not with a meaning "maiden" or "camomile".²

Magdeburg and the English place-names of *Maidebury*, *Maiden Down*, *Maiden Castle* suggest once again that there is a connection between the ancient names in Germany and England. The combined evidence of all the place-names considered cannot be a coincidence, but is rather the result of the early settlement history.

13. Summary

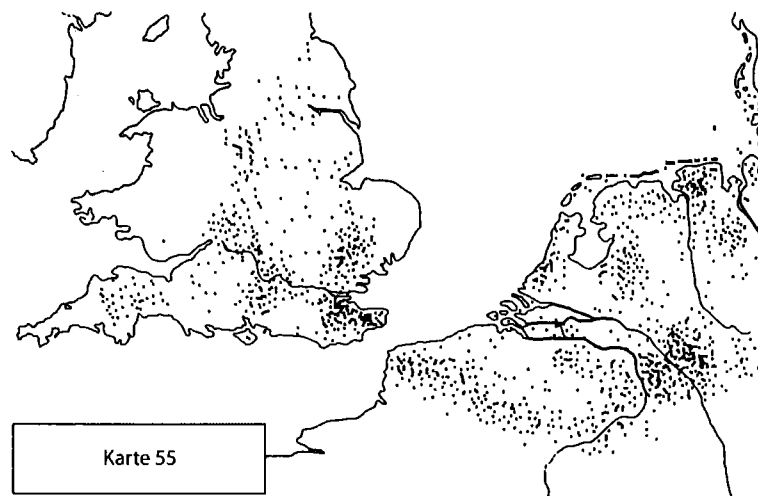
Thirty years ago, Laur (1964:295f.) uttered the hope that a thorough investigation of all English place-names and a consultation of the Lower Saxon and Dutch coastal regions might shed more light on the topic of the origins of the settlers. At the same time, the Schleswig-Holstein expert remains sceptical and predicts that such an investigation will not produce many more parallels between the continental coastal regions and England. Based on his assumption that he had already investigated the main territories of the early Germanic settlers of England (namely the tribe of the Angles in the former area of the duchy of Schleswig) and his negative results for Schleswig-Holstein, he misleadingly concludes that even if further reliable examples of name transfer were found, they would be unlikely to change the picture. Laur (1964:296) concluded that only a few names may be considered as being transferred from the Continent to Britannia by the Anglo-Saxons.

This paper has, it is hoped, managed to demonstrate that this negative result is only valid for Schleswig-Holstein. It does not apply at all to other areas of the Continent, *viz.* Lower Saxony, Westphalia, Southern Netherlands and Flanders. The research has focussed on the wrong region, and there has been too much reliance on literary sources, in particular Bede Venerabilis. Arnold (1875:2-3) pointed out more than 100 years ago: "Place-names of every country are a very

2. For more details on this topic cf. Udolph 1999b, 2004, 2006b.

important element for the reconstruction of history". According to him, they are "the most important and most reliable sources for historical geography – even more reliable than the inconsistent traditions of later writers".

The results from the onomastic material differ greatly from the generally accepted view, as shown in Hickey's map (2005) (see Map 1). The old Germanic settlement areas and settlement movements are to be understood not as a brisk conquest, but rather as a slow settlement process; in contrast, Huns, Avars and other conquerors hardly left any place-names. Map 16 presents, in conclusion, my own mapping of these areas and movements, as they have emerged from the discussion. This mapping demonstrates where the West Germanic settlers of England came from and where they crossed over to England. Denmark, Jutland, and Schleswig-Holstein are irrelevant.



Map 16. The background of the settlers of England, based on the place-name evidence (Udolph 1994:775)

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