Cross-Channel language ties

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Ever since the question of the origin of the Old English dialects was first raised, Bede's brief account of the Anglo-Saxons' tribal origins (*HE* I. 15) appears to have been a stumbling block as much as a help. Considering that scholars have been investigating the dialect origins for almost a century now, with a very limited set of data supplemented by varying degrees of insight and imagination, one may wonder whether the present body of facts warrants yet another approach. It seems, however, that not all possible sources of information have been tapped. The admittedly marginal material which I propose to examine here may perhaps serve to place the whole question in a somewhat different perspective from that which has been usual so far.

The basic alternative has been formulated often enough: the linguistic correspondences between England and the continent are due either to pre-invasion tribal connections (as suggested by Bede's account) or to post-invasion trade and other contacts. The third possibility, namely that they are due to pure coincidence, though regularly mentioned, seems to have had little appeal. Instead of a survey of the many attempts made so far to solve the problem, a brief discussion of three articles may serve as a starting point. Differing as they do in their approach and conclusions, they suffice to define our present predicament.

William H. Bennett traces the voicing of the initial consonants [f s þ], typical of the southern dialects, back to the continent.[1] Finding the situation in early Middle English absolutely parallel to that in Middle Franconian, he suggests only two explanations: either this parallelism must be put down to a remarkable coincidence (which Bennett does not seem to favour) or else it must be ascribed to a period of inter-tribal contact between the Low Franconians and the later inhabitants of Kent, the Juto-Frisians. Bennett traces the Jutes or Juto-Frisians – the exact meaning of these terms is not always clear – through a series of successive habitats: (i) Jutland; (ii) the Frisian islands and the coastal areas behind them; (iii) the Lower Rhine; and (iv) Kent. In the same way the Saxons are mapped (i) between the Elbe and the Baltic coast; (ii) in the vicinity of present-day Niedersachsen; (iii) on the *Litus Saxonicum*; and (iv) in Wessex. It must have been in the region of the

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[1] 'The Southern English Development of Germanic Initial [f s þ]', *Language* 31 (1955), 367–71.

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Lower Rhine that the Jutes and the Saxons came into contact with the Low Franconians, and to these contacts Bennett suggests that the presence of voiced initial spirants in both Low Franconian and southern English could be ascribed; in which case 'the speech of the first Germanic settlers in southern England already possessed the initial voiced spirants [v z ð]'[1] although these found no adequate expression in Old English spelling. The idea of later contacts being responsible for the voicing does not appeal to him:

The possibility that the common voicing may have arisen from later cross-Channel relations between southern England and the lower Rhenish area seems extremely remote. Even with the facilities of present-day travel and communication, the Channel and the Straits of Dover are still effective barriers against the ingress of linguistic influences. Furthermore, there is no reason for supposing that only the southern part of England was involved in relations with the lower Rhenish district: yet the English voicing of initial [f s þ] is confined to southern and south-western counties.[2]

Bennett's prerequisite, then, for linguistic influence is close geographical contact: 'Unlike the Angles, the Jutes migrated southward along the North Sea coast as far as the lower Rhine, and the Saxons continued even farther south to the *Litus Saxonicum*.'[3] The historical basis for these assumptions is provided by Bede, *Beowulf* and the 'lower Rhenish cultural traits' that the Juto-Frisians brought to Kent. What strikes one most when examining Bennett's map is the wide gap between positions S² ('Saxons in Nieder-sachsen'), and S³ ('Saxons on the *Litus Saxonicum*', which is identified with 'numerous colonies near Bayeux on the northern coast of France'). Bennett leaves out of consideration the whole stretch of coast that is closest to England, and whatever linguistic evidence it might provide. Nor, of course, is there any but circumstantial evidence to support his view: the earliest recorded instances of voicing of initial spirants on either side of the Straits of Dover are half a millennium (or more) later than the date suggested by Bennett.

Whilst calling in question the very existence of continental Jutes, David DeCamp is prepared to assign a central position to the Frisians in the development of the Old English dialects.[4] With Jerrold he holds that 'the Jutish race and civilization, as described by Bede and as we know it from the graves of the late fifth and sixth centuries, was made in Kent',[5] a view which entails the outright rejection of the hypothesis of a continental origin of the Old English dialects. Taking his inspiration from dialect geography,

[1] *Ibid*. p. 371.   [2] *Ibid*. p. 371, n. 9.   [3] *Ibid*. p. 370.
[4] David DeCamp, 'The Genesis of the Old English Dialects. A New Hypothesis', *Language* 34 (1958), 232–44.
[5] *Ibid*. p. 238. This bold assertion will have to be revised in the light of J. N. L. Myres's Raleigh Lecture on History 1970 ('The Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes', *Proc. of the Brit. Acad.* 56 (1971), 145–74).

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DeCamp believes that a number of linguistic changes, which can account for the basic features of English dialect distribution, result from post-invasion linguistic diffusion. A series of five phonological innovations would have followed the economic and cultural mainstream (on which see below) and reached Kent between the sixth century and the eighth.[1] Their penetration into England was proportionate to and, indeed, conditioned by, the rise and decline of Kentish ascendancy. First, in the sixth century or the early seventh, *æ* (< WGmc *ā*) was raised to *ē* in Frisia, whence the change was adopted in Kent and spread over all of England, except the south-west (*dǣd*: *dēd*). Not long afterwards, the *i*-umlaut was carried from Frisia to Kent, spreading throughout England probably during the first half of the seventh century. In the south-west the resulting *æ* (< *ā* < *ai*, as in *dǣl*) coincided with the older *æ* (from WGmc *ā*), but elsewhere the two were phonemically distinct (*dǣl*, but *dēd*). The third innovation, the raising of short *æ* to *e* (*wæter* > *weter*), is also traced to Frisia: it was carried to Kent in the late seventh century and hence spread northward, but owing to diminished Kentish prestige did not penetrate north of the Wash; moreover the diffusion must have been very slow. The fourth innovation, the lowering and un-rounding of *y̆* (< *ŭ*) to *ĕ*, penetrated no further than East Anglia, whilst the fifth and last, the raising of *æ* (< *ā* < *ai*) to *ē* (*dǣl* > *dēl*), which DeCamp dates to the seventh century or early eighth, did not spread much beyond Kent itself. This linguistic hypothesis is placed against an economic and cultural background which, however, lacks precision, as does the linguistic background.[2] Due stress is laid on the ascendancy of Kent under Æthelberht (560–616), but the Franks enter DeCamp's picture almost as often as the Frisians, no distinction being made, for example, between those on the Lower Rhine invoked also by Bennett, and Æthelberht's father-in-law, Chari-bert I (561–7), whose capital was Paris. It is none too clear either what area or areas DeCamp means by 'Frisia'. More important still, he offers no evi-dence for the dating of the Frisian innovations. To some of these points we shall have to return later on. The second phase of DeCamp's hypothesis, the diffusion of linguistic features characteristic of the Saxon south-west into areas formerly under Kentish hegemony, need not delay us here. In DeCamp's view, this is an internal English development, without impulses from outside.

    Essentially, DeCamp presents the somewhat extreme expression of a fairly general consensus, an expansion of views put forward by Chadwick and Stenton amongst others.[3] It is against this consensus that M. L. Samuels reacts with his thesis that 'the dialect distributions of periods much later

[1] DeCamp, 'Old English Dialects', p. 233.   [2] *Ibid.* pp. 238f.
[3] H. Munro Chadwick, *The Origin of the English Nation* (Cambridge, 1907), pp. 67–71; F. M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1947), p. 9.

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than the invasion must always be considered as potentially relevant to the invasion period'.[1] Samuels points out that 'phonetic change is determined largely by the suprasegmental features of juncture, stress, pitch and intonation, which are never recorded in early writings'; one must always take account of 'the possibility of wide allophonic variation'.[2] More specifically, he finds that the features which distinguish Anglian and West Saxon agree perfectly with the position of pre-Old English on the pre-invasion dialect map of the continent: 'Old English possessed some of the very pairs of variants that would be expected of its geographical position on the continent, notably both *eom* and *beo*, *hwæþer and hweþer*.'[3] There is no reason, in Samuels's view, for discounting the language of the Kentish settlers as 'something wholly transient'; 'the language of Kent may owe as much to its continental origins as to post-invasion contacts, and there is no evidence that compels us to prefer the latter to the former'.[4] He agrees with Bennett that the successive continental homes of the Jutes may well be reflected in linguistic features found in southern England.

The main body of Samuels's article is devoted to Middle Kentish features which can be traced back to Dutch or specifically to Flemish influence. Although his summing-up applies to a later period than to the one under consideration here, it may serve as a convenient conclusion to this preliminary survey:

In any consideration of cross-Channel influence on the language of Kent, Flanders in the Middle English period provides a better-substantiated source than Frisia in the Old English period. While, therefore, there is no reason to deny such Frisian influence, it may have been supplanted by that of Franconian earlier than has been hitherto supposed.[5]

Samuels's enlistment of diachronic linguistic mechanisms does not absolve us from looking for evidence earlier than the Middle English period: his own reference to the 'modern Dutch and Flemish dialect distributions of *reg*, *rek* "back" and *pet* "well"' (to which he might have added such isolated forms as [meːʒə] 'gnat', cf. OE *mycg*, and *ik weste* 'I wish', lit. 'I wished', cf. OE *ic wyscte*) points in that direction.[6] His conclusions, as far as the Middle English period is concerned, are convincing enough, but his treatment of the background suffers from the indefiniteness of such terms as 'Frisian' and 'Franconian' (as well as from a certain neglect of recent findings).

What we need in the first place is a sharper definition, or at any rate a more circumspect use, of the terms 'Frisian' and 'Franconian', both geographically and linguistically. Only a few points can be raised here in passing. As a language Frisian is documented only at a very late date. Even if the early evidence provided by place- and personal names is taken into account, Frisian remains an unwieldy entity, owing, partly at least, to the varying

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[1] 'Kent and the Low Countries', *Edinburgh Studies in English and Scots*, ed. A. J. Aitken, Angus McIntosh and Hermann Pálsson (London, 1972), pp. 3–19.
[2] *Ibid*. p. 4.   [3] *Ibid*. p. 6.   [4] *Ibid*. pp. 8 and 14.   [5] *Ibid*. p. 14.   [6] *Ibid*. p. 9.

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location and size of Frisia itself.[1] In Roman times the *Frisii* and the *Frisiavones* (if the latter may be identified with the *Frisii minores* and considered as a more or less distinct group) were located between the Ems (D Eems) and the Rhine. East of them were the Chauci, south-west the Cannenefates and the Sturii. Parts of their later territory in the Netherlands were inhabited by the *Marsaci* and the *Menapii*. In the eighth century and the ninth, when evidence again becomes available, *Fresia* or *pagus Fr(i)esensis* extends from the Weser in the east to a point near the south-western end of the frontier between Belgium and the Netherlands (*Sincval* = a navigable channel near the present village of Cadzand). It comprises the present provinces of Zeeland, North and South Holland, Utrecht, Friesland and Groningen, as well as the western part of Gelderland and probably also Drenthe. The Frisians must have subjected such other tribes as remained within their boundaries. In consequence their territory may have been linguistically less homogeneous than is usually assumed: a number of subject tribes retained their identity long enough for their names to survive in territorial divisions, e.g. Humsterland 786/7 (*Hugumarchi* inhabited by the *Hugas*).[2] On the other hand this seafaring and trading nation made its presence felt well beyond the boundaries of the kingdom (later duchy) and this presence may have had linguistic consequences. The question is, however, whether we can make any statement about the Frisian language in, say, the seventh century, that would not also apply to a vast 'North Sea Germanic' area reaching from the north of France to the north of Germany.[3] Some 'Frisian' features, as we shall see, are documented earlier in non-Frisian territory than in Frisia proper. It will also be prudent to bear in mind the possibility that language movements may have crossed the sea from north to south, not just from south to north, as is usually assumed. This need not entail tracing the origin of medieval Frisia back to an Anglo-Saxon invasion,[4] but it will prevent us from overlooking such place-name evidence as *Engelum* in the province of Friesland and *Englum* in Groningen, which both point to Anglian settlements.

A word remains to be said about the Franks, whose linguistic situation appears to be even more complicated than that of the Frisians. Whilst Frisian may be defined as the language characteristic of the *pagus Fresensis*, 'Franconian', or even a more restricted term such as 'Low Franconian' or 'West Franconian', lacks a useful correlate on the political map of the period. The situation may become clearer if the hypothesis proves acceptable that the

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[1] Recent surveys will be found in A. Russchen, *New Light on Dark-Age Frisia*, Fryske Akademy Nr 311 (Drachten, 1967), and Paolo Ramat, *Il Frisone. Introduzione allo Studio della Filologia Frisone* (Florence, 1967).

[2] M. Gysseling, 'De oudste Friese toponymie', *Philologica Frisica Anno 1969* (Grins, 1970), 41–51 (Humsterland: p. 46). I owe special thanks to Dr Gysseling for his valuable help on a number of points, bibliographical and other.

[3] Russchen, *Dark-Age Frisia*, p. 31. See also below, p. 13, n. 1.   [4] *Ibid.* pp. 23ff.

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Franconian dialects which show the second consonant shift to varying degrees are in fact franconized Alemannic.[1] From the Franconian place-name material in northern France, the Low Countries and north-west Germany an expert can extract an impressive amount of information on the chronology of the settlements,[2] but the link-up of the language data thus provided with the language used during the 'Middle' period will still present problems.

The area with which we are concerned here is marginal in more than one sense – geographically but also linguistically. It has attracted the attention of Anglo-Saxonists on account of a small fraction of its place-name material, no doubt an important fraction, but one which tends to obscure, rather than reveal, its total significance.[3] Research during the last two decades has done much to provide more reliable material and to shed fresh light on a number of old problems. As a look at the map of the area corresponding to the present Département du Pas-de-Calais and Département du Nord (fig. 1) shows, there is good toponymic evidence for assuming that an old frontier runs through this area from Étaples to a point north of Lille (on the map this frontier appears as a zone rather than as a line). It is defined to the south by a string of names in -*court*: Ramecourt (Verton, 12 kms S of Étaples),[4] Blaucourt (Estrée), Ecquemicourt, Wambercourt, Azincourt, Tramecourt, Ambricourt, Gricourt (Bours), Grandcourt (Houdain), Haillicourt, Vaudricourt, Manchicourt (Essars) and Gondecourt (10 kms SW of Lille). Further south numerous other -*court* names confirm this impression: Erembeaucourt, Guinecourt, Héricourt, Framecourt, Séricourt, Herlincourt, Ramecourt, Bermicourt, Sautricourt, Hernicourt, Orlencourt, Tachincourt, Magnicourt etc. Parallel to the most northerly -*court* names we find a string of names in -*hem* and especially in -*inghem*: Fromessent (3 kms NE of Étaples; 1207 *Fremehesem*), Tubersent (864 *Thorbodessem*, *Thorbodeshem*), Bréxent (*1115 *Brekelesent*, *1170 *Brechelessem*),[5] Ixent (838 *Anineshem*, *Aineshem*), Beussent,

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[1] Hans Kuhn, 'Das Rheinland in den germanischen Wanderungen', *Siedlung, Sprache und Bevölke-rungsstruktur im Frankenreich*, ed. Franz Petri (Darmstadt, 1973), pp. 447–83.

[2] Maurits Gysseling, 'Die fränkischen Siedlungsnamen', *ibid.* pp. 229–55.

[3] How far this area has been neglected may be seen from the recent (and otherwise very well documented) study of place-names in south-east England by John McN. Dodgson ('Place-Names from *hām*, Distinguished from *hamm* Names, in Relation to the Settlement of Kent, Surrey and Sussex', *ASE* 2 (1973), 1–50). Dodgson refers only to 'place-names from OHG -*heim* and those from OHG -*ing*' (on the authority of A. Bach's *Deutsche Namenkunde*), not to the -*hem*, -*inghem* and -*hamm* names just across the Straits of Dover.

[4] For the place-name material, see Dr M. Gysseling's toponymic dictionary, which registers all names recorded until 1225, *Toponymisch Woordenboek van België, Nederland, Luxemburg, Noord-Frankrijk en West-Duitsland (voor 1226)*, Bouwstoffen en Studiën voor de Geschiedenis en de Lexicografie van het Nederlands VI, 1 and 2 (1960). The name between brackets is that of the 'commune' on whose territory the preceding name is found.

[5] Forms whose date is preceded by an asterisk will be found in Auguste de Loisne, *Dictionnaire Topographique du Département du Pas-de-Calais Comprenant les Noms de Lieu Anciens et Modernes* (Paris, 1907). This work is not always reliable; see below, p. 11, n. 1.
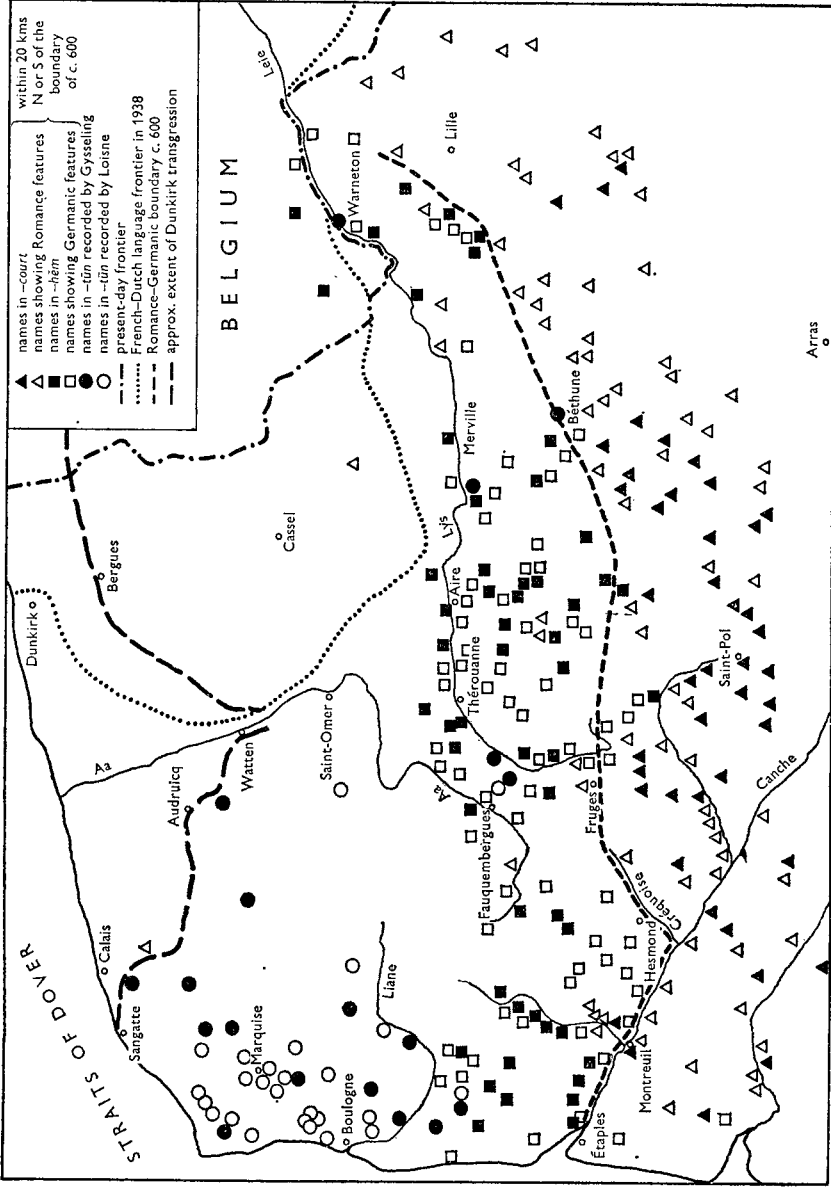
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FIG. 1   Place-names in north-east France (based mainly on M. Gysseling's map in *Naamkunde* 2)

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Maninghem (1206 *Maningehem*), Radinghem (s. xii ex. *Radingehen, Radin-chehem*), Matringhem (1120 *Matrinkehem*, 1129 *Matringehem*), Mazinghem (Anvin; 1119 *Masinghem*; cf. *id.* near Aire, 1136 *Masingehem*), Blaringhem (Pernes-en-Artois; 1069 *Blaringehem*, ± 1092 *Bladringehem*), Floringhem (1145 *Floringuehem*), Quenhem or Epiquenhem (Calonne-Ricouart; *1307 *Phikene-hem*, *1323 *Piquenehem*), Lozinghem (1147 *Losengehen*), Oblinghem (1147 *Amblingehem*), Radinghem-en-Weppes (1163 *Radigneham*, 1177/91[1] *Radinge-hem*), Erquinghem-le-Sec (1124 *Erchingehem*), Capinghem (1124 *Campingem*, 1144 *Campingehem*), Verlinghem (1066 *Euerlingahem*) and Frélinghien (1066 *Fredlenchehem*, 1080/85 *Ferlingehem*). These last two places are situated respectively six and twelve kms north-west of Lille. For practical reasons I consider here only the area west of the Belgian frontier, which forms the fourth side of our quadrilateral.

To judge by the surviving place-names, the area north of the -(*ing*)*hem* line must at one time have been almost solidly Germanic. First, there are the numerous names in *-hem* and especially *-inghem* (going back to **-haim* and **-ingahaim*), which are by far the largest group. The long list of those in *-inghem* is headed by Assinghem (1139 *Hessingehem*), Audinghem (1221 *Odingheham*), Autinghem (1164 *Hantinguehem*), Bainghen (1121 *Bainghem*), Balinghen (1109 *Baulingkehem*), Barbinghem (844/64 *Bermingahem*), Bayeng-hem-lès-Eperleques (1129 *Bainghem*), Bayenghem-lès-Seninghem (844/64 *Beinga villa*, 877 *Beingahem*), Bazinghen (1156 *Busingehen*, 1164 *Basinguehem*), Bazinghien (1136 *Bazimgehem*, 1212 *Basinghem*) etc. Among those in *-hem* are Audrehem (844/64 *Aldomhem*, with orig. dat. *aldum*), Dohem (1123 *Dalhem*), Étrehem (1193 *Strathem*), Norrent (1207 *Norhem*), Westrehem etc. The variety of other place-name elements is just as significant: **-baki-* (Fourdebecques, 1164 *Furkadebeca*; Honnebecque, 1174 *Hunesbecca*; Rebec-ques, 1084/92 *Resbecca*; etc.; cf. OE *bece, bæce*); **-berga* (Audembert, 1180 *Hundesberch*; Brunenbert, 1190 *Brunesberc*; Colembert, 1121 *Colesberg*; Fauquembergues, 961 *Falcoberg*, 1065 *Falcanberga*; Inglebert, 1129 *Ingelberga*; etc.; cf. OE *beorg, berg*); **-brōka-* (Le Breucq, 1164 *de Bruco*, 1210 *de Broco*; D Broksele = F Broxeele,[2] 1072 *Brocselo*; etc.; cf. OE *brōc*, with the meaning 'watermeadow, marshy land' surviving in Kent and Sussex dial.); **-gatwōn-* (Enguinegatte, 1140 *Inchenegata*, 1170 *Inkenegata*, on the road from Thérouanne to Enquin-les-Mines, etc.; cf. OE *geat* (and ON *gata*?); **-hamma-* (not always easy to distinguish from *-hem*;[3] Cohem, 1072 *Colshem*, 1194/96 *Coham*;

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[1] In punctuating dates I distinguish between, e.g., 671/722 = 'in a document dated sometime between 671 and 722' and 671–722 = 'the period from 671 to 722'.

[2] Where two forms of a name (or two names of a place) are given, they are distinguished by the addition of D (Dutch) and F (French).

[3] Gysseling, *Toponymisch Woordenboek*, distinguishes between *-hem* and *-hamm* names on the basis of topographical considerations. See now also Dodgson, 'Place-Names from *hām*'.

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Contehem, 1157 *Condeham*; Gonnehem, 1142 *Goneham*; Pitgam, 1115 *Tide-cham*; etc.; cf. OE *hamm*); **-hulta-* (Bécourt, 1170 *Becolt*; Bouquehault, 1164 *Bocolt*; Arquingout, s. xii *Erchingehot, Herchingehout*; etc.; cf. OE *holt*); **-laidu-* (D Nieuwerleet = F Nieurlet, 1127 *ad Niuuerledam*; cf. OE *lǣd, lād*; also *lǣt(e)*?); **-stadla-* (Darnetal, s. xii *Darnestal*; cf. OE *stall, steall*); **-widu-* (Colwède, 1164 *Colewide*; cf. OE *widu, wudu*); etc.

There is also a fair sprinkling of names derived by means of the suffix *-ingas*: Affringues, Autingues, Bonningues, Haffringue (1225 *Hafrenges, Hafrengues*) etc. Finally, the place-names surviving from the Gallo-Roman period show typically Germanic sound developments (though some will be given Romance forms in the course of the subsequent romanization of the region).[1] Thus the names in *-iacum/-iacas* retain intervocalic *k*, e.g. Coyecques (844/64 *in Coiaco*), Crecques (1119 *Kerseca*), Embry (826 *in Em-briaco*, 838 *Embreka*, but 1156 *Embri*), Herly (s. x ex. *uillam Herlecham*, but 1162 *Herli*) and Menty (877 *Menteca*).

There can be little doubt, then, that the line Étaples–Frélinghien marks an old linguistic frontier, going back to the migration age: it was probably well established by about 600. The traces of Germanic which we find south of it, for example the personal names combined with *-court*, *-ville* or *-villers*, or such names as Roussent (11 kms S of Montreuil, ± 868 *Hrosam*, 1169/73 *Rossem*, cf. E Horsham) are easily compatible with the Franks' domination over that area established in the late fifth and early sixth centuries. In this vast bilingual area the language of the new settlers was to disappear at an early date (though not without leaving many traces of its presence in the form of loan words). The almost homogeneous Germanic area north of the linguistic frontier could be expected to offer more resistance to the influence of French. Yet as early as the ninth century that influence manifests itself in place-names. A case in point is the name of the village Hesmond on the Créquoise. In 826 its name appears as *Hethenesberg*, in 838 as *Hethenasmont*, in 856 again as *Hethenasberg*, after which only forms in *-mont* or *-munt* are found.[2] The details of this romanization are difficult to ascertain, nor need they concern us here. But the fact that Calais was still an essentially Flemish town at the end of the thirteenth century (see below) is not without importance for an evaluation of the possibilities of linguistic contacts across the Straits of Dover.

From the late ninth century, when the county of Flanders took shape, to the late twelfth, when a large tract of territory fell into the hands of the French king, the Canche marked the extreme south-west frontier of the

[1] M. Gysseling, *Toponymisch Woordenboek* II, 1130; Gysseling, 'De verfransing van Noord-Frank-rijk', *Naamkunde* 4 (1972), 53–70 (esp. 54).
[2] Gysseling, *Toponymisch Woordenboek* I, 490, *s.v.* Hesmond; Gysseling, 'De verfransing', p. 57.

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domains of the Count of Flanders, which also comprised the counties of Ternois (Saint-Pol) and Artois (Arras). Near the estuary of the Canche was the port of Quentawic (Bede's reference to Theodore of Tarsus having rested there in 669 before crossing the sea is one of the first references to the place). During the Dunkirk transgression (fourth century to eighth),[1] which seems to have caused the eclipse of Gesoriacum-Boulogne, Quentawic gradually took the place of the latter as the main port of north-eastern Gaul for traffic to and from England, serving as the headquarters of the customs administration and sheltering one of the principal mints of the kingdom of the Franks (several mintmasters of Quentawic bear English names).[2] The name Quentawic itself points to Germanic name-giving, both by the presence of *e* for *a* in the name of the river Canche (*Quantia*, but *Cuent* in the *Vita S. Bonifatii*) and by the element -*wīk*. After its mysterious decline in the tenth century it was succeeded by Étaples (first mentioned 1026 *Stapulas*, by which time, however, the northern shores were regaining importance).

The Germanic area outlined above was not uniform, even if we leave out of consideration the south-east, with Lille as its focal point, where French must have been in a stronger position from the beginning. The Dunkirk transgression had created a shallow bay which penetrated deeply into the land between Sangatte ('Sand gate') and Dunkirk. This bay, called Aa Bay after the River Aa, separated what remained of the old coastal strip from the inland areas, reaching as far inland as Watten, whence an arm extended to Saint-Omer. After the transgression period this area was reclaimed, but for obvious reasons its place-names are of little importance in the present context, though Audruicq (1164 *Alderwic*), F Craywick = D Kraaiwijk (1139 *Craierwic*) and others still attest the presence of the bay. The area south-east of the inundations as far as the Belgian frontier differs from the rest of the region under consideration by the appearance of a large number of names in *-*sali*, D *ze(e)le*, *sele*: Bissezeele, Bollezeele, Broxeele, Herzeele, Lederzeele, Ochtezeele, Oudezeele, Strazeele, Winnezeele and Zermezeele.[3] These names connect the area with more easterly regions (cf. Voormezele, Dadizele, Moorsele etc. in Flanders). As to the area west and south of the Aa Bay, apart from its impressive array of early Germanic names, it presents a type of place-name that has been only alluded to so far, the names in -*tūn* (now

[1] Abel Briquet, *Le Littoral du Nord de la France et son Evolution Morphologique* (Paris, 1930).
[2] Jan Dhondt, 'Les Problèmes de Quentovic', *Studi in Onore di Amintore Fanfani* (Milan, 1962) I, 183–248 (p. 213: 'la vocation anglaise de Quentovic'). On the names *Dutta*, *Ela* etc., see M. Gysseling, 'De vroegste geschiedenis van het Nederlands: een naamkundige benadering', *Naamkunde* 2 (1970), 157–80 (esp. 178).
[3] There is a small group of *-*sali* names south and east of Cap Gris-Nez: Audresselles, *1150 *Odersele*, *1208 *Odressele*; and the hamlets Floringuezelle, Framzelle, Goningzelle, Haringuezelle and Waringuezelle, which belong to Audinghem. Otherwise names of this type seem to be very rare south-west of the Aa Bay: Hingueselle (Quelmes), Fauquezelle (Clerques).