



<http://kentarchaeology.org.uk/research/archaeologia-cantiana/>

Kent Archaeological Society is a registered charity number 223382

© 2017 Kent Archaeological Society

RESEARCHES AND DISCOVERIES IN KENT

ARCHÆOLOGICAL NOTES FROM MAIDSTONE MUSEUM

ASH-NEXT-SANDWICH

In Maidstone Museum are three similar copper tokens found on the site of the ruined Overland Chapel, near Overland Farm (Hasted's *Kent*, ix, 195).

Description:

Obverse. Crest of Harvey (Kent) in relief. Two bear's paws erased and erect support a crescent (Fairbairn's *Book of Crests*, fourth edition, 1905, i, 263 and pl. 39, no. 6). On the token the paws are completely hairy not ermines and the crescent is plain with no signs of erminois.

Reverse. The letters I and H with an eight-pointed star between them. All in relief.

Diameter. 2.3 cm. No milling. Flat edge.

The token fits in well with the early eighteenth-century series of manorial tokens. A search into the ramifications of the East Kent family of Harvey singles out one member who might be the issuer of the token, namely John Harvey of Danecourt. He married, in 1695, Margaret, only child of Gideon Maud, rector of Hothfield. According to Berry, he was buried at Eythorne. His monument is on the north wall of the north aisle of Eythorne church. It bears the following inscription under a shield bearing the arms of Harvey impaling Maud:

In Memory of

JOHN HARVEY *Esqr*:

late of *Dane Court*

in the Parish of *TILMANSTONE*

who died Dec^r: y^e 3^d : 1759:

aged 63 years.

AYLESFORD

A leaden papal bull of Pope John XXIII (1410-15) was found by Miss Christine Pearce in the garden of 56 Orchard Avenue, Aylesford, on 11th September, 1969. It is similar to the example in the *British Museum Catalogue of Seals*, vi, 290, no. 21919.

MAIDSTONE

A hone, probably of Norman date, was found by Simon Mills on 18th January, 1970, just north of the late medieval timber-framed house of Half Yoke, near East Farleigh railway station (Fig. 1B). It was sent to the Institute of Geological Sciences for examination and, through the kind offices of Mrs. Jean F. Hodgson, was identified as a fine-grained chlorite muscovite quartz schist, i.e. a schist hone of type 1A(1) of Ellis's classification (S. E. Ellis, 'The Petrography and Provenance of Anglo-Saxon and Medieval English Honestones', *Bull. Brit. Mus. Nat. Hist. (Miner.)*, ii (1969), no. 3), and deriving probably from southern Norway or Sweden.

For a short discussion on the archaeological and geological significance of similar hones, see *Arch. Cant.*, lxxviii (1954), 157-8.

MAIDSTONE

The eighth centenary commemoration of St. Thomas Becket's death has resulted in several enquiries concerning early representations of the Archbishop. A search amongst the Museum's seal impressions revealed that it possesses an original wax seal *ad causas* of Archbishop Simon Islip which has been cut from a document dated 1354. The centre shows Becket's Martyrdom with the Trinity above and the kneeling Islip below. The inscription is SEPE: THOME: MERITIS: CAUSAS: SYMONIS: REGE: MITIS (Birch, *British Museum Catalogue of Seals*, i, no. 1224; Tancred Borenius, *St. Thomas Becket in Art*, 74-5).

NORTHFLEET

Amongst the Golding family documents recently presented to the Museum is a year's lease dated 1753 between William Levett of Northfleet, gunflint maker, and John Golding of Rochester, gentleman. Levett's seal on the deed bears the (?) Bugge crest of a Moor's head in profile issuing from a ducal coronet. The deed was formerly in the possession of our late member, Dr. F. W. Cock, who stressed in a letter to the late Arthur Golding (formerly K.A.S. Hon. Librarian) the rarity of references to Kent gunflint manufacturers.

HAWKHURST

In a strawberry field at Little Orchard near the Moor, Mr. H. S. Hodges on 1st February, 1968, found a pinecone-mascle silver penny of Henry VI of the Calais mint.

HIGHAM

A silver short-cross penny was reputedly found in a garden at Higham early in 1970. This was given to the writer by Mr. T. H.

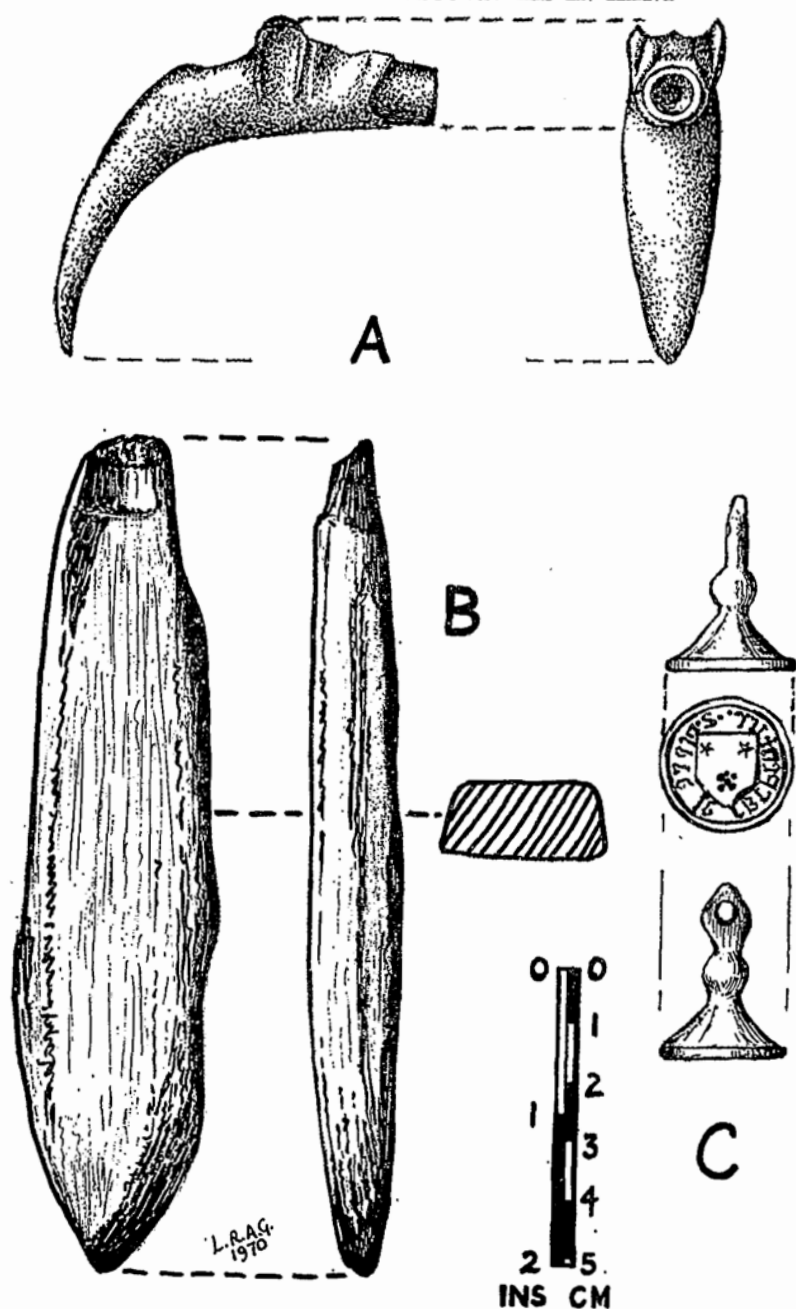


FIG. 1. A. Medieval Ewer Spout from Hollingbourne; B. Hone from Half Yoke, Maidstone; C. Medieval Seal from West Kingsdown.

RESEARCHES AND DISCOVERIES IN KENT

Donovan of the Kent Numismatic Society and was identified by Mr. John Brand as an example of class Vbi (*circa* 1205/6), moneyer WILLELM, London mint **LW** (ligulate V N).

HOLLINGBOURNE

In January, 1970, Daniel Willinck showed Mr. David Kelly and myself a piece of Roman box-tile which had recently surfaced in a field at a distance of approximately 350 yards to the south-west of his home at Oast House, Broad Street. The find place was near bench-mark 282.2 shown on O.S. 6-in. Kent Sheet 43 N.W. Slightly to the north of this spot there have been crop-marks in the field.

HOLLINGBOURNE

In January, 1970, our member Mr. V. J. Newbury found the spout of a medieval bronze ewer (Fig. 1A) in the field which lies north-east of the King's Head Inn but on the opposite side of the Pilgrims' Way, Upper Street. The present writer has previously contributed a note on such ewer spouts and their probable date in *Arch. Cant.*, lxx (1956), 270-3.

WEST KINGSDOWN

On 15th May, 1970, our member Mr. R. M. Walsh brought into Maidstone Museum a late-medieval seal which had recently been found at West Kingsdown (N.G.R. TQ 578614) (Fig. 1C). It is of bronze with a six-sided stem. The inscription in fourteenth-fifteenth-century lettering, although worn and slightly obliterated by the shield, appears to read:

S' pirre le carpentyr

The S for sigillum is reversed.

L. R. A. GROVE

BETHERSDEN

A Late Mesolithic 'Thames Pick' of dark brown cherty flint, $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. long, was found some years ago by Mr. H. Crosswell-Jones while ploughing on his farm at Snoadhill. The exact find-spot is not known, but was north of Snoadhill Farm. Approx. N.G.R. TQ 937420.

A *dupondius* of Domitian (R.I.C. 349) was brought to the museum for identification by the owner, Mr. P. W. Jestico. He dug it up in the garden of 1 Beacon Cottages, on the main Ashford road between 1933-6. Approx. N.G.R. TQ 931399.

CRANBROOK

A scatter of Mesolithic flints was found in August, 1969, at Golford (N.G.R. TQ 797364) by Mr. F. C. Harmer. It included a blade core, four scrapers and worked and unworked flakes.

RESEARCHES AND DISCOVERIES IN KENT

LEYSDOWN

The hoard of 500 Roman imperial *sestertii* found in 1968¹ has been purchased by the Museum with the aid of a grant from the fund administered by the Victoria and Albert Museum. Museum Acc. No. 97.1969.

SOUTHBOROUGH

A broken mould used for the manufacture of lead tokens was sent to the museum for identification by Mrs. M. E. Davies, Local Secretary for Tunbridge Wells. It was found early in 1970 by Miss Denise Funnell, south-east of the junction of the Broomhill and Speldhurst roads (N.G.R. TQ 573416).

The mould (Fig. 2, a) is of a dull, reddish brown sandstone, $3\frac{3}{16}$ in.

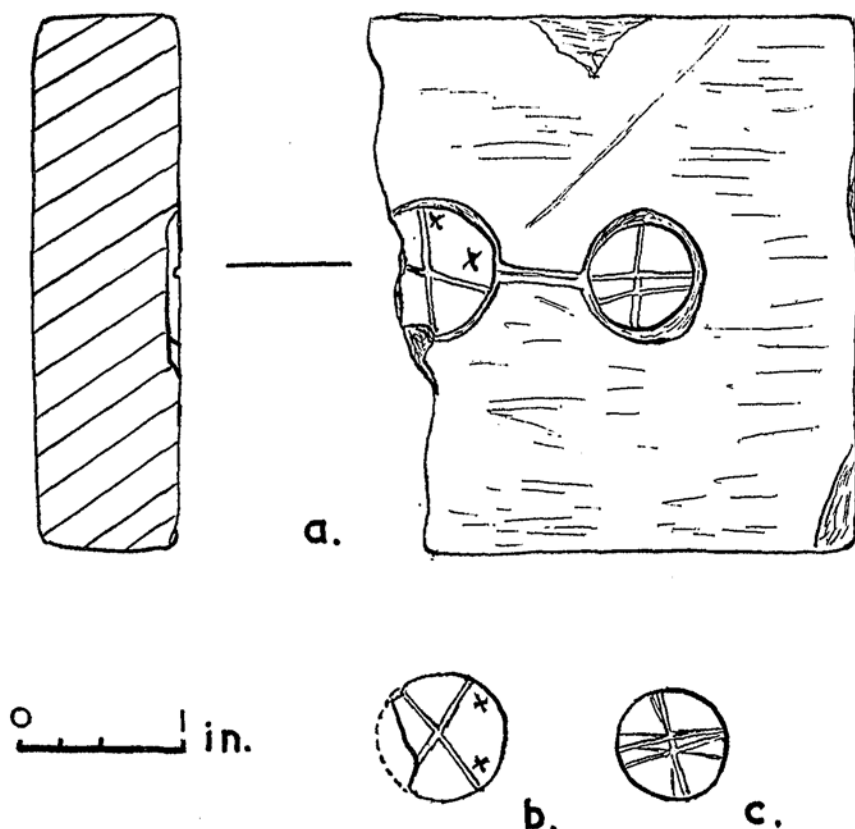


FIG. 2. Southborough Token Mould and Casts.

Arch. Cant., lxxxiv (1969), 260.

wide, $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. long (broken) and $\frac{7}{8}$ in. thick. Mrs. Jean F. Hodgson of the Institute of Geological Sciences reported upon it as follows:

'The specimen is a hard, compact, fine-grained, non-calcareous sandstone which shows strong bedding laminations. It resembles the harder sandstone rock beds in the Tunbridge Wells Sand and Wadhurst Clay; both formations crop out in Kent. Although one cannot be absolutely certain about the identification of sandstones by inspection I feel fairly sure that it is a local sandstone.'

The designs sunk into the surface are fairly circular, $\frac{3}{4}$ in. and $\frac{5}{8}$ in. in diameter and about $\frac{1}{8}$ in. deep. The larger of the designs shows a cross, with two small crosses in one quarter, the smaller an irregular pattern of criss-cross lines, more easily visible on the cast (Fig. 2, c) than on the mould itself. There is a shallow runnel between the two sunken circles, which, it may be assumed, continued to the missing end of the mould, forming a funnel between the two halves to take the molten lead.

These lead tokens have not until recently been reported from dated archaeological contexts and have been assigned to periods ranging from the medieval, based on similarities to coins,² to the eighteenth century. However, during the demolition of the old Almshouses, North Cray Road, Bexley, of the second half of the eighteenth century,³ four lead tokens were found beneath the stone slabs by a fireplace,⁴ one bearing a cross with a pellet in each quarter and having a plain reverse, another having an obverse design of crossed lines. The fourteenth-century hall-house on the opposite side of the road,⁵ also produced two lead tokens, one having the design of crossed lines and bearing on its reverse the date 1767.⁶

In March, 1970, a lead token with a cross with central and quarterly pellets and plain reverse was brought to the Museum. It came from the garden of an eighteenth-century cottage at Boughton Aluph. A larger lead token with a simple cross design and plain reverse was also found at Westerham.

A complete sandstone mould, very similar to the one from Southborough, was found in 1969 at Brinsworth, near Sheffield.⁷ It was for three tokens, two of them having a cross design. A chalk mould from Wiltshire⁸ also has three designs, two of them crosses with central and quarterly pellets and one with crossed lines.

² *Spink's Numismatic Circular*, November, 1967, lxxv, 296.

³ Information kindly supplied by Mr. P. J. Tester, F.S.A.

⁴ *S.N.C.*, February, 1970, lxxviii, 48-9.

⁵ *Arch. Cant.*, lxxxiii (1968), 254.

⁶ *S.N.C.*, February, 1970, lxxviii, 49.

⁷ *S.N.C.*, September, 1970, lxxviii, 336.

⁸ *S.N.C.*, April, 1969, lxxvii, 132.

RESEARCHES AND DISCOVERIES IN KENT

It would appear, then, that the Southborough mould should be dated to the eighteenth century. The tokens made from it are presumably to be regarded as crude farm tokens.

D. B. KELLY

ARCHÆOLOGICAL NOTES FROM ORPINGTON MUSEUM

CRAY VALLEY

A collection of flint artifacts from the Cray Valley and parts of the Darent Valley has been presented to the museum by Mr. A. G. Fordyce. The collection was made by the late Mr. Ernest Ferrers Holloway who was a chemist at Rushey Green, Lewisham, in the 1930s and includes assemblages ranging from the Palæolithic period to the Bronze Age. A number of Acheulian hand-axes and flakes from Horwood's Gravel Pit at Green Street Green (N.G.R. TQ 458628) are important as there is also a collection of Pleistocene mammal remains from the same area in the museum.

PETT'S WOOD

A polished Neolithic flint axe has been found at 7 Beaumont Road, Pett's Wood (N.G.R. TQ 44956682) by Mr. Caswall. Both faces are well polished with only a few flake scars visible; there is a triangular sharpening facet at the working edge on both faces. Length: 14 cm. Width: 5.5 cm. at the working edge and 1.2 cm. at the butt end.

ST. PAUL'S CRAY, ORPINGTON

A semi-polished Neolithic flint axe has been found in the grounds of 19 Ravensbury Road, St. Paul's Cray, and has been loaned to the museum by Mr. D. Hughesdon. There is a small corticated area on one face, suggesting that it was made from a large pebble. Length: 11.5 cm. Width at the working edge: 6 cm., 2.3 cm. at the butt end, maximum thickness: 3.1 cm.

ORPINGTON

Mesolithic artifacts have been found in the grounds of the Priory at Orpington (N.G.R. TQ 46667) and include, at the time of writing, an obliquely blunted microlith, several scrapers, blade cores, waste flakes and part of one possible bone point. Calcined tools and pebbles suggest that there may be a habitation site in the vicinity. The proximity of the River Cray would have made this an ideal habitat. The site is being kept under observation and it is hoped that further investigation will be possible.

ORPINGTON.

Scrapers and other artifacts of Mesolithic and Neolithic aspect have been found in Goddington Park (N.G.R. TQ 478650). The most interesting find is a small Mesolithic pick. Length: 9 cm. Maximum width: 3.5 cm.

ST. PAUL'S CRAY

During March, 1970, workmen engaged on rebuilding the church of St. Paulinus discovered two vaults under the altar. The museum staff were asked to assist in the investigations. The one vault contained four coffins, two adults and two babies, those of the Kingsman family. Thomas Kingsman, a rector of St. Paulinus, died in 1752. His wife, Arabella, was buried on 18th April, 1751, and Arabella and Francis, daughter and son, were buried on 27th May, 1751. The Rev. D. Sherriff, vicar of the parish, searched the records and found that Arabella was baptised on 11th April and Francis on 2nd May, so both died soon after birth. Thomas Kingsman was interested in the education of the poor children of the parish and made provision for this in his will.

Mrs. Kingsman's coffin is encased in lead, but not those of the other members of the family. It can be assumed that she died primarily as a result of child-birth, although there may have been other contributory factors. The brickwork of the vault is Victorian, and it therefore seems conclusive that the coffins were found during a previous rebuilding phase of the church and that they were then placed in the vault made at the time to receive them. Some limb bones and vertebrae were found lying loose in the vault.

The second vault, on the right-hand side of the altar, also contained four coffins, belonging to Edward Sison of Woolwich, who died, aged 72, and was buried on 12th December, 1817; his wife, Sophia, who was buried on 31st October, 1810; Robert Neave, a captain of the Royal Navy, also from Woolwich, who was buried on 11th February, 1815, and his wife, Amelia, buried July, 1835. The brickwork of this vault appears to be original and the burials undisturbed. The vault is 8 ft. long by 7 ft. 6 in. wide and 6 ft. 6 in. high. The coffins are lead-lined, with the lids covered in leather. On the right-hand wall of the vault is chalked 'E.C. 1815'; there is also writing on the left-hand wall, but it is indecipherable. There are plaques in the chancel in memory of these four people.

In the floor near the altar a sepulchral slab was found with the initials M.A.W. and a coronet engraved on it. The Rev. Sherriff found that this burial was that of May Anne Best, Baroness Wynford, who lived at Leeson's House, St. Paul's Cray, and was buried on 12th March, 1840, aged 71.

RESEARCHES AND DISCOVERIES IN KENT

In clearing away the rubble inside and round the first-mentioned vault, a quantity of late-medieval brown and green lead-glazed tiles was found. Some of the brown tiles were decorated with an applied cream-coloured motif. It is not known from which part of the church they originally came, although it is possible that the original Kingsman vault may have been lined with them. Tiles of this type can be dated to the eighteenth century.

The first church of St. Paulinus was built during the thirteenth century. Part of a limestone plinth dating from this period has been found in the area near the present altar. It has an ornamental scroll motif in high relief.

SUSANN PALMER

BASE OF A SHALE VESSEL FROM FORDCROFT, ORPINGTON

Among the considerable quantity of Romano-British objects found in the area of the Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Orpington, as described in *Arch. Cant.*, lxxxiii (1968), 125-50, and lxxxiv (1969), 39-77, was a

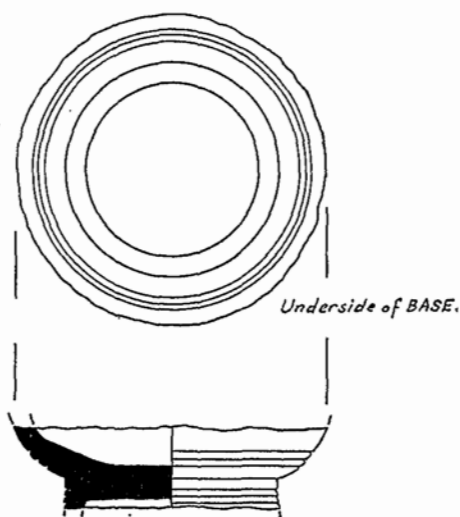


FIG. 3. Base of Shale Vessel from Orpington ($\frac{1}{2}$).
(Drawn by A. C. Hart.)

broken base which was regarded on discovery as nothing more than part of a commonplace pottery vessel. On sorting the washed coarse-ware sherds some time later, it was observed that this particular object had dried so that the surface was covered with cracks and fissures, quite unlike pottery. It is in fact shale, fashioned by turning into the base

of a small bowl the full height and diameter of which cannot now be accurately determined.

Shale was worked extensively in Dorset during Roman times, and bracelets, plaques and vessels of this material are commonly found on Romano-British sites far from the natural source. The recording of such objects is always of interest as establishing evidence of internal trade and industrial specialization.

The Orpington vessel possessed a footstand, as on certain forms of samian ware, and it has a number of shallow grooves or incised lines on the exterior. There is no reason to believe it had any connection with the Anglo-Saxon graves, and it is simply part of the scattered material indicative of Romano-British occupation found all over the area.

P. J. TESTER

COZENDON WOOD, NORTHFLEET

Cozendon Wood is situated on the southern boundary of the parish of Northfleet and contains approximately 22 acres of rough woodland. The soil is light with chalk outcropping on the western boundary. Half a mile to the north of the wood is Ifield Court and about one-third of a mile away to the south-west is Nurstead Court. In 1899, George Payne visited both Cozendon and Nurstead to inspect some reputed earthworks within these respective woods. He reported that each wood contained earthworks and a circular mound, the one in Cozendon Wood being 'very fine and symmetrical'. Apart from this single nineteenth-century reference there appears to be no other archaeological record about the earthworks. The Ordnance Survey maps and plans of the areas concerned show nothing but conventional woodland. The spelling of the name Cozendon, is comparatively modern, as most of the old records show. A visit by the writer early in 1970 to Nurstead and Cozendon woods confirmed the existence of extensive earthworks in both places. Those in Nurstead, although interesting, were far too confused with the semi-modern Park boundary, Victorian carriageways and modern roadworks to be considered worthy of publication, but the complex of banks and ditches in Cozendon Wood is of great archaeological interest and worth recording in detail. It appears to be the remains of a deserted medieval village and is almost certainly the Manor of Cossington bought in the fifteenth century by Edward IV, together with the manors of Ifield and Welles. The whereabouts of Ifield and Welles are known, but the knowledge of the site of Cossington has long been forgotten. Hasted mentions the 'hamlets of Ifield, Wells and Cossington' in his description of Ifield Court. Documentary evidence regarding the community of Cossington is somewhat scanty but it

would seem that the land originally belonged to the estates of the Ifield family and in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century a member of the Cossington family of Cossington in Aylesford acquired the property and gave it the name which has survived to this day. There is a record of one John, son of William de Cosington who obtained '1 mess., and 1 carucate of land, with appurts., in Northflete and Nutstede' in 1312, but whether it refers to this particular piece of land is not known. By 1365, it was certainly a well-established and thriving community known as Little Cossington and held by Sir Stephen Cossington, who also held the manors of Cossington in Aylesford and Boxley, often called Great Cossington to distinguish it from Little Cossington in Northfleet. After an initial perambulation of the wood and a thorough inspection of the earthworks an instrumental survey was made of the entire bank and ditch system situated in the northern part of the wood. Our member, Mr. M. Drake, gave his valuable time and assistance with the work. During the survey many sherds of pottery were found which indicate a medieval date for the site.

The plan shows the elaborate layout of the earthworks with an enclosed area, which probably contained the living quarters, towards the southern end. A prominent feature is the circular earth mound which still stands 5 ft. 3 in. above the ground level. The summit has several small trees growing from it on its western perimeter and, in the centre, there is a slight depression which may represent some past and crude attempt at excavation. Although its striking size and shape first suggest the appearance of a barrow, it is more probably the remains of a post-mill mound. The crumbling sides reveal traces of flint consolidation within its structure. Its form is not unlike a medieval post-mill mound which has recently been excavated at Fairseat, near Meopham. The square-shaped mound marked A on the plan is heavily banked with flints and obviously represents the remains of a building of quite sturdy construction. Pieces of hassock, often found in association with rag-stone were picked up in this vicinity. The hollows marked B and C may also represent the positions of other structures, although without excavation this can only be a tentative suggestion. Fragmentary plain roofing-tiles, bearing early type wooden peg-holes were found embedded in the surface soil near area B and many more were recovered from the nearby mound marked D. The deep crater E may be a filled-in well though the possibility of it being a collapsed chalkwell cannot be excluded. As shown on the plan, there are three old chalk-pits within the area surveyed, but all of them have been dug outside the earthwork enclosure. Further to the south of the wood there are several more large and overgrown chalk pits which were considered to be of nineteenth-century making and not worth the labour of surveying. An open, three-chambered chalkwell was noted in the field near to the edge of the wood

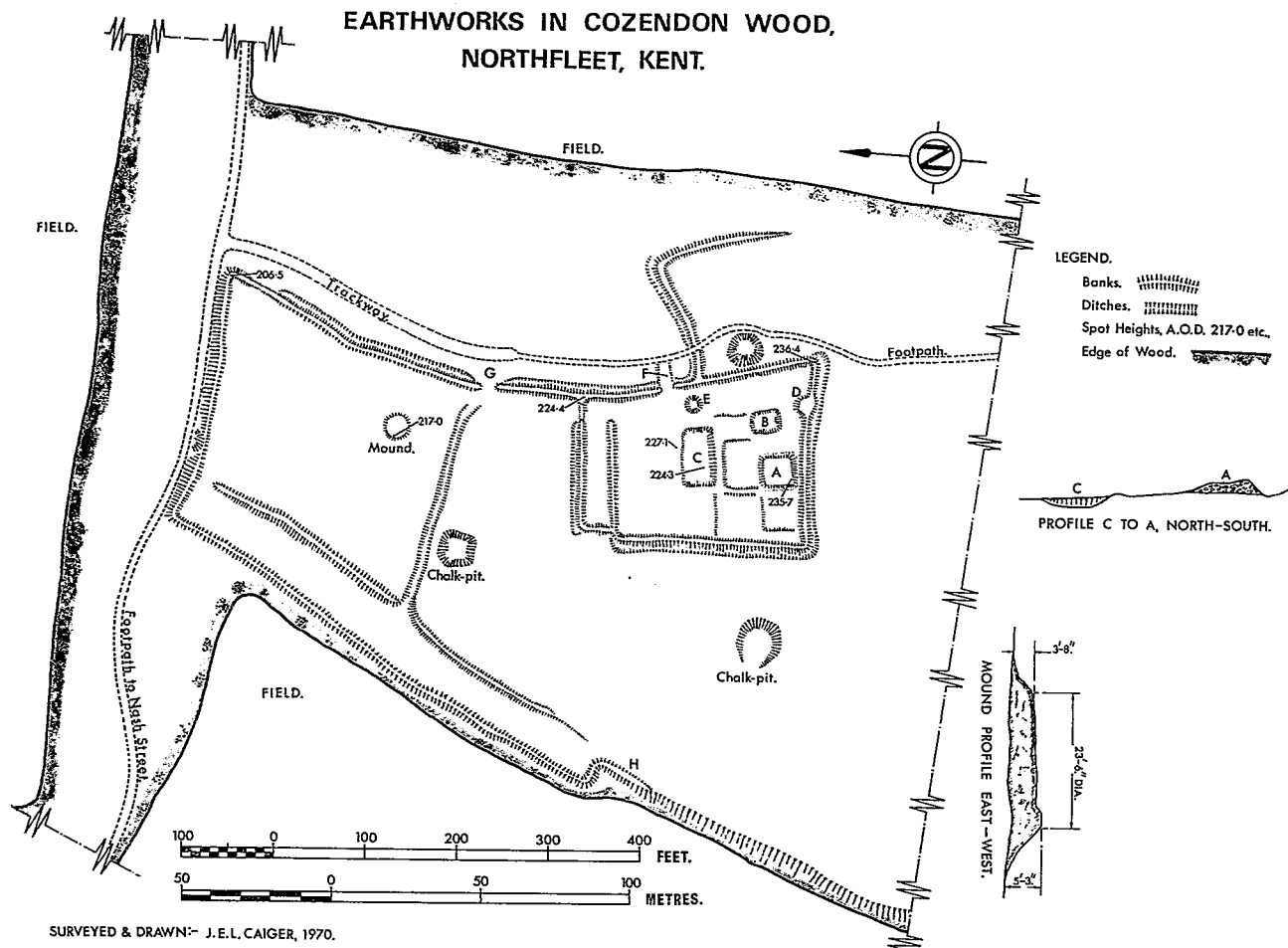


FIG. 4.

on its south-east extremity. A close examination of the outer earthwork revealed a causeway, F, across the ditch into the enclosed living quarters area. The break in the bank and ditch at G leads towards a hollow track which gives access to a long and narrow enclosure at the western edge of the wood and into the enclosed area containing the circular mound. The vestigial remains of a bank and ditch to the east of the footpath suggest that it was originally part of an associated field system. The outer earthwork H continues southward around the wood and its filled-in ditch can clearly be seen in both sides of a chalk quarry sited on the edge of the field. It fades out near the boundary bank which surrounds Nurstead Court Park. Apart from the overgrown chalk-pits noted earlier there appears to be nothing of especial note in this area of the wood. An archaeological excavation of the site is planned for 1971.

J. E. L. CAIGER

NORMAN ABAOUS AT SEAL CHURCH

During re-flooring operations in the nave of St. Peter and St. Paul's Church, Seal, in the autumn of 1969, my attention was drawn to two blocks of Hassock stone found lying together loose in surface-rubble beneath pew floor-boarding. They are partly dressed in rectangular form, roughly similar in size, and appear to emanate from the same scheme of medieval building on the site. There are signs that, after removal from their original positions, both served a lengthy term as floor-paving. One block is quite plain, but the other, on account of its datable character, is of some intrinsic interest and has implications which throw new light on the church's architectural history.

This block, 7 in. thick, has a simple chamfer along the lower edge of two adjacent sides $11\frac{1}{2}$ in. and 10 in. in length respectively. The vertical side-faces above the chamfering are covered with decoration carved in low relief consisting of a $5\frac{1}{2}$ -in. square containing a saltire, with a pellet occupying the centre of each triangular space between the arms. This design appears twice side-by-side on each face, viz. four times in all.

The decoration is unmistakably Norman. Parallels of the *motif*, either identical (as at Eynsford, Kent, and St. Peter, Northampton) or variant, are not difficult to find and all those known to me are in late-twelfth-century work. Having regard also to signs of longitudinal chiselling on the dressed surfaces, the block is dated c. 1180-90. Its form and material leave little room for doubt that it was an abacus stone of a stylistically-Norman arch inside the church and the accompanying sketch illustrates it in its conjectured original setting, omitting the further ornamentation with which the arch was probably enriched. The size of the block indicates that the arch was larger than that of a doorway and may well have been the chancel arch.

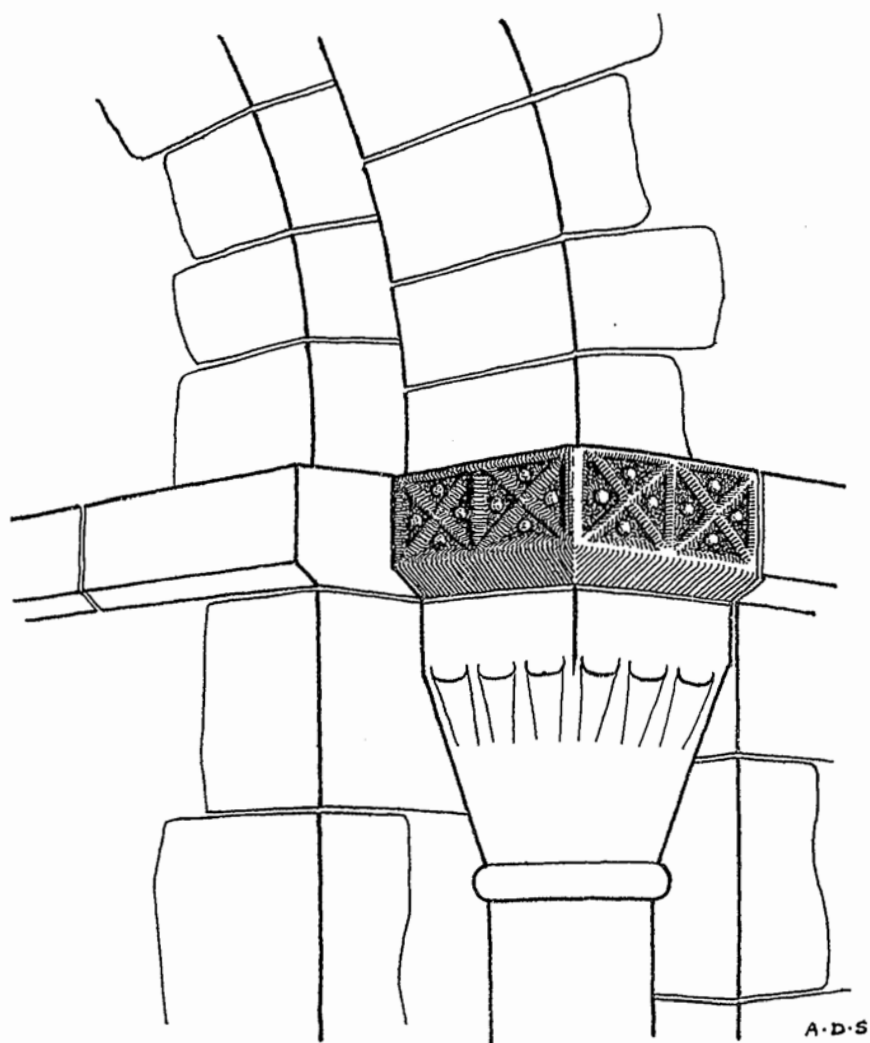


FIG. 5. Seal Church: Norman Abacus (shaded) in its conjectured original Position.

RESEARCHES AND DISCOVERIES IN KENT

Since no part of the existing church is recognizable as pre-thirteenth-century, the abacus antedates its earliest masonry by a comfortable margin and certain conclusions as to the former building can be drawn from the discovery.

In the *Textus Roffensis* list of churches the entry of 'Sela' is a marginal one, but Gordon Ward, M.D., F.S.A., adduced convincing evidence (*Arch. Cant.*, xliv (1932), 43-44) that it was made at the same date as the list itself, that is to say, when the manuscript was copied in c. 1115 from an earlier list generally accepted as being of pre-Conquest churches. There is an element of doubt whether this manner of entry signifies that Seal did not appear in the Saxon list, or that it did and was initially omitted by accident from the later copy, but in either case it is evident that a church already existed by c. 1115. Because of the uncertainty whether this was a Norman or earlier building, it has hitherto been thought possible that a Saxon structure, perhaps of timber, sufficed until the extensive or complete rebuilding in the thirteenth century. The abacus now establishes that the church was of stone at least as early as c. 1180-90 and that operations of some importance were carried out at that time.

The only surviving thirteenth-century work confidently acceptable as being *in situ* is the Early English nave south arcade. The north and south walls of the nave are not sufficiently thick to suggest that the arcades now piercing them were cut through Norman walling, so that the evidence points to at least the nave, with a south aisle, having been erected anew in the thirteenth century. If the operations of c. 1180-90, so short a time before, involved the same parts of the church, the thirteenth-century rebuilding may have been necessitated by some such catastrophe as a fire.

Both blocks are on view in the church; a detailed report on them has been lodged in the Otford and District Historical Society's records and at Sevenoaks Public Library.

I am indebted to the Institute of Geological Sciences, London, for identifying the type of stone, and to the Rev. S. G. Crookshank, Vicar of Seal, for his ready co-operation.

A. D. STOYEL

PALÆOLITHIC IMPLEMENTS FROM THE WANSUNT PIT, DARTFORD HEATH

This extensive but long-disused gravel-working on the north side of Dartford Heath, overlooking Crayford, is famous for the discovery in the early part of the present century of Acheulian implements contained in loam filling a channel or covering a terrace cut in the '100-ft.' gravels of the Thames. Part of the north side of the pit still shows a clean upper section, with 6 ft. of brown loam resting on gravel at about 106 ft.

above O.D.,⁹ and from the weathering face of the loam local collectors still occasionally obtain hand-axes. These are mostly cordate forms with a continuous edge round the butt, and in some instances they possess the well-known 'twisted' profile. Owing to the fact that the base of the gravel is at present obscured, it is not possible to ascertain the level of the bench on which the terrace deposits rest.¹⁰

Recent observations on this site strengthen my opinion, expressed twenty years ago, that the loam in the Wansunt Pit is of the same age and origin as that capping the gravel in the Bowman's Lodge Pit slightly to the east (*Arch. Cant.*, lxiii (1950), 122-34). The *facies* of the associated industries are certainly very similar, though Bowman's Lodge appears to include more examples of the small Clactonian-type chopper-cores.

Mr. John Wymer in his recent work, *Lower Palaeolithic Archaeology in Britain* (1968), places the loam over the '100-ft.' gravels at Wansunt, Bowman's Lodge, Pearson's Pit (Dartford Heath), the Globe Pit (Greenhithe), Barnfield and Rickson's Pits (Swanscombe) in the same climatic phase of the Lower Thames sequence, namely, the first temperate interval in the Gipping (Riss) Glaciation. This differs only slightly from my own view in 1950 when I suggested that the Bowman's Lodge loam belongs to the final stage of the Mindel-Riss (Great or Hoxnian) Interglacial. Mr. Wymer's view, however, takes account of thin wedges of apparent solifluxion material observed in the sands of the Swanscombe Upper Middle Gravel. As this Middle Gravel is of accepted Hoxnian Interglacial age, the contained solifluxion traces are interpreted as marking the onset of the Gipping Glaciation. The stratigraphically higher Upper Loam at Swanscombe and the comparable '100-ft.' loams on the sites mentioned to the west are therefore believed by Wymer to have been formed in the temperate interval between the first and second phases of the Gipping Glaciation.

A criticism of this dating is that it leaves the slight geological evidence of near-glacial conditions at the top of the Swanscombe Upper Middle Gravel, which is not confirmed elsewhere (on Wymer's own admission), as insufficient indication of the first stage of a major glacial episode, presumably with consequent low sea-level and fluvial erosion. Although it is agreed that the industries associated with the loam covering or channelling the '100-ft.' terrace deposits at the sites mentioned between Wansunt and Swanscombe are contemporary and of Late Middle Acheulian type, some of us are not convinced that

⁹ N.G.R. TQ 51597391. I am grateful for the help of Mr. John Caiger in measuring this level.

¹⁰ According to Chandler and Leach the bench-level is between 90 and 100 ft. A.O.D. See *Proc. Geol. Assoc.*, xxiii (1912), 102-11. Other references to these deposits occur in xx (1908), 122-6, and xxiv (1913), 337-44; also *Archæologia*, lxxv (1914), 187-212.

present evidence, either archaeological or geological, calls for their dating beyond the end of the Hoxnian Interglacial.¹¹

P. J. TESTER

EXCAVATIONS AT OLDBURY IN KENT: THE PALÆOLITHIC OCCUPATION

The picturesque rock overhangs on the east side of Oldbury Hill near Ightham have been known for centuries, but the possibility that they were rock shelters, occupied in Stone Age times like those of south-west France, was first suggested by Benjamin Harrison. His investigations at Oldbury, carried out in 1890 for the British Association, were not published at great length and some uncertainty surrounded the exact position of the principal excavation.¹² However, the stone tools found showed every sign of being Palæolithic and were compared with the cave Mousterian.

In 1965, I conducted some further investigations, recently published in the *Bulletin of the Institute of Archaeology*.¹³ This short note aims to summarize the principal results.

The 1965 investigations were of two kinds. The first involved a series of test holes below the best-known rock outcrops on the east side of the hill. It had seemed likely that these might be the main area of interest, but this was not the case. Altogether ten holes were dug down to natural Cretaceous levels (the Lower Greensand). No Palæolithic tools were found in these, though some had a considerable layer of shattered rock fragments of probable Palæolithic age. Over this rocky layer was a sandy deposit with an intense podsol formation—white leached material on top and hardpan below. A few flints of probably Mesolithic or later age came from this deposit. No trace of a Palæolithic cave occupation layer was found in the area, even though the stone capping of the hill must have formed rock shelters widely wherever erosion of the underlying sand had left it overhanging.

Most of our excavations were concentrated in the area we designated site N (N.G.R. TQ 58565653) away from the east edge of Oldbury Hill at the end of a spur on which stands Oldbury Hatch. Here, beside a kitchen garden and an artificially raised lawn, a series of ten-metre square cuttings were excavated. They revealed stone tools and waste flakes and, in some places, a layer of stones clearly derived from the

¹¹ D. M. Collins seems to subscribe to this theory in his review of Wymer's book in *Arch. Journ.*, cxxvi (1969), 280-1, although he makes a nice distinction by calling the latest phase of the Hoxnian Interglacial 'proto-Gipping'.

¹² Harrison, B., Note in the Report of the British Assoc., Cardiff (1890), 357. Harrison, Sir E., *Harrison of Ightham* (O.U.P., 1928).

Harrison, Sir E., 'Oldbury Hill, Ightham', *Arch. Cant.*, xlv (1933), 142.

¹³ Collins, Desmond and Collins, Ann, 'Excavations at Oldbury in Kent: cultural evidence for last glacial occupation in Britain', Univ. of London Inst. of Archaeol. Bulletin No. 8 for 1969 (1970), 151-76.

stony capping of the Lower Greensand, which seems to have once been continuous along the spur to Oldbury Hatch and beyond.

The finds were not significantly different in typology or condition from those made by Harrison, which are mostly in the British and Maidstone Museums. The most characteristic tool type is the cordiform hand-axe and related bifacial forms, of which we found two typical examples and Harrison and others found over thirty. A further tool type which was much rarer was the backed knife of 'Audi' type. These two types point unequivocally to the culture of assemblage type found by Peyrony at le Moustier in south-west France, and named in 1930 the Mousterian of Acheulian Tradition.

The hand-axe sample from this culture is regularly dominated by cordiform hand-axes with rounded sides. Lanceolate or more pointed hand-axes are rare. The hand-axes are relatively shorter than hand-axes from the earlier Acheulian. A more detailed analysis of the typology of the hand-axes and other tools from Oldbury and related sites is included in the report.

Finally questions of chronology and distribution are considered in detail. The Mousterian of Acheulian Tradition is found mainly in western France, Belgium and Britain (where Oldbury is the richest site), doubtfully extending into Spain, Italy and north-western Germany. Since the report was prepared, it has been found in two sites in Holland called Hogersmilde and Hijken. The distribution is thus Western European or more specifically the Atlantic or oceanic zone. The dating of Oldbury is difficult, but there are grounds for constructing a developmental sequence within the Mousterian of Acheulian Tradition assemblages, ending about 35000 B.C. and beginning according to different interpretations about 75000 B.C. or about 40000 B.C. Oldbury falls near the middle of this development and according to the interpretation preferred in the report would date from about 55-60000 B.C. at the end of the Brorup interstadial.

DESMOND COLLINS

AN ANGLO-SAXON SPEARHEAD FROM BEXLEY

An iron spearhead found under Bexley High Street in the early part of the present century is figured herewith (Fig. 6), and the following notes are intended to summarize what is known about the circumstances of its discovery and its archæological significance. At present it is stored in Dartford Museum¹⁴ where records show that it was presented by a Mr. Knipe who is remembered locally as having owned a tailor's shop in Bexley High Street. In A. H. A. Hogg's account of the

¹⁴ I am grateful to the Curator, Mr. S. Atkin, A.L.A., for permission to publish.

Earthworks in Joyden's Wood, in *Arch. Cant.*, liv (1941), 26, it is briefly noted as 'Iron Spearhead, found in the peaty mud of the River Cray, High Street, Old Bexley (Dartford Museum)'. Other information comes from the *Proceedings of the Geological Association*, xxxi, 145, where in an account of an excursion of the Dartford Field Club in March, 1920, under the direction of S. Priest, F.G.S., it is stated that at Bexley 'the Director gave details of the peat bed revealed by trench sections in 1912. Resting on Cray gravel, and overlain by marsh clay, its thickness was 14 to 18 in. at the railway bridge, thinning out entirely at Bourne Road. It yielded bones of living species (including boar tusks) and an iron spearhead (Saxon). Evidence of vivianite was afforded by a bluish white coloration on the bones, intensifying to blue on exposure and drying.' From this information the National Grid Reference of the discovery may be calculated as approximately TQ 49587358 (O.S. 6-in. Kent Sheet VIII. N.E.).

Our member, Dr. M. J. Swanton, has studied this object in the course of his national survey of Anglo-Saxon spearheads, and he has kindly made his observations available to me for the purpose of this record. He states that typologically it belongs probably to the ninth or tenth century. The split socket is an insular feature, surviving from pagan times, and excludes the possibility of its being of Viking or Frankish origin. On either side of the central line of the blade, X-ray examination reveals an inlaid strip of pattern welding—a

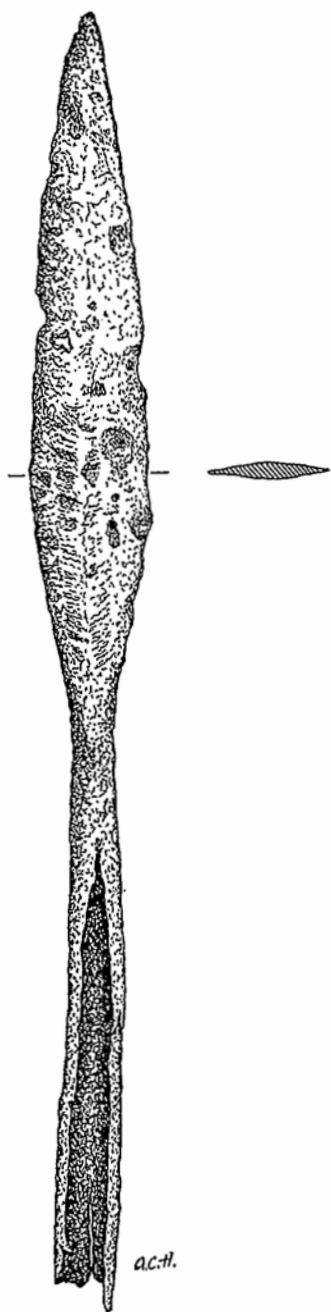


FIG. 6. Anglo-Saxon Spearhead from Bexley.
Length 44.3 cm.

(Drawn by A. C. Hart.)

rare feature which occurs on less than fifty other specimens in the whole country.

The geological context of the find suggests that the River Cray was capable at that period of flooding well beyond its present banks and depositing material over part of the site on which Bexley village now stands. Possibly the spear was lost by someone fording the flooded stream while following the old Cray valley route of which Bexley High Street forms a part.

P. J. TESTER