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RESEARCHES AND DISCOVERIES IN KENT

RYARSH

Copper alloy seal matrix found in his garden by S. Davis (N.G.R. TQ 667602). This personal seal pendant probably originally belonged to a merchant or trader and the suggested date is thirteenth- or fourteenth-century. The protrusion at the top of the seal would have had a loop for its suspension. The central design is of a wheel of eight lines with a cross at the end of each and the inscription reads 'S. Ricardo Fil Walkelin'. The name Walkelin, also Wakelyn, Walkelyn and Walkelen was not uncommon in Kent, eleven examples being mentioned in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, of which the earliest and most distinguished is Bishop Walkelin of Rochester, who died in A.D. 1098.

The co-operation of Mr Davis who brought this find to our attention, and of Barbara Wood of the Museum of London, for her help with identification, are very much appreciated.

D. BACCHUS and A.C. HARRISON

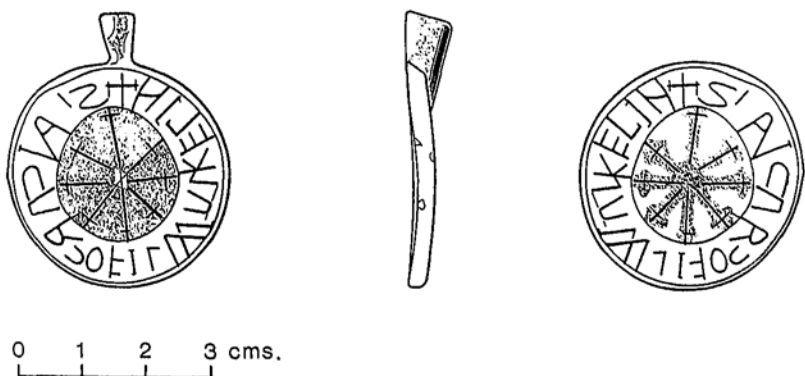


Fig. 1. Seal matrix from Ryarsh (right: wax impression) (Drawn by D. Bacchus)

AN ENCLOSURE ON WEST WICKHAM COMMON, BROMLEY,
GREATER LONDON

In February 1995, the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England carried out an earthwork survey of an enigmatic enclosure, formed by a number of separate segments of bank and ditch and extensively modified by later activity, which has been variously interpreted over the years as a 'causewayed enclosure', hill-fort and Elizabethan practice redoubt. The survey was undertaken as part of the R.C.H.M.E.'s current national project to record enclosure and industry in the Neolithic period. Though now within the Greater London Borough of Bromley, the site formerly lay in Kent and has been discussed frequently in previous editions of this journal.

The enclosure was recorded in 1879 by Flinders Petrie¹ and an overlying mound believed to be a barrow was trenched by the antiquarian George Clinch in the same year,² without producing any dating evidence. A.H.A. Hogg carried out the first detailed fieldwork on the site in the late 1930s, concluding that rather than a hill-fort or redoubt, it was probably a Neolithic causewayed enclosure.^{3,4} He later expressed more caution and added that the redoubt, thought from an allusion by Camden to have existed on the Common, might be a circular embankment which is demonstrably a modification of the enclosure bank.⁵ B.J. Philp accepted the documentary reference as evidence that the whole enclosure was of Elizabethan date.⁶

The survey by R.C.H.M.E. confirmed the basic form of the earthworks as they were portrayed by Hogg; however, the unusual form of the bank and ditch strongly suggests that the enclosure is an unfinished Iron Age hill-fort – a possibility which he (and Clinch before him) discussed but eventually rejected. The Neolithic possibility was rejected on the grounds that the earthwork is in fact utterly dis-similar from other causewayed enclosures; furthermore, the mound interpreted by both Clinch and Hogg

¹ W.M.F. Petrie, 'Notes on Kentish earthworks', *Arch. Cant.*, xiii (1880), 8.16.

² G. Clinch, 'Antiquarian jottings relating to Bromley, Hayes, Keston and West Wickham', *Arch. Cant.*, xviii (1889), 454.

³ A.H.A. Hogg and B.H. St. J. O'Neil, 'A causewayed enclosure in west Kent', *Antiquity*, xi (1937), 222–3.

⁴ A.H.A. Hogg, B.H. St. J. O'Neil and C.E. Stevens, 'Earthworks on Hayes and West Wickham Commons', *Arch. Cant.*, liv (1941), 28–34.

⁵ A.H.A. Hogg, 'The causewayed earthwork and the Elizabethan redoubt on West Wickham Common', *Arch. Cant.*, xcvi (1981), 71–8.

⁶ B.J. Philp, *Excavations in west Kent, 1960–1970*, K.A.R.U.

as a Bronze Age barrow, which appeared to offer clear stratigraphic evidence for a Neolithic date, has no trace of any surrounding ditch as suggested by Hogg and cannot be dated by its superficial appearance. Likewise, the enclosure has no parallel among military earthworks of the Elizabethan period and this possibility, too, seems highly unlikely. Documentary research by R.C.H.M.E. recorded cartographic evidence for a warren on the site, which may account for some of the modifications to the enclosure, but was unable to identify any convincing evidence for the elusive Elizabethan redoubt.

A full publication is intended, but the survey and report are available at the National Monuments Record Centre, Kemble Drive, Swindon SN2 2GZ (reference: TQ 36 NE 1) and the Kent Sites and Monuments Record.

ALASTAIR OSWALD

A MOATED SITE AT ROMSHED FARM, UNDERRIVER

Between July 1994 and February 1995, Otford and District Archaeological Group (O.D.A.G.), in conjunction with the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (R.C.H.M.E.), carried out an earthwork survey of a well-preserved moated site and its associated fish-ponds, lying on the boundary of Sevenoaks Weald and Tonbridge parishes, on Romshed Farm (N.G.R. TQ 552519). The survey was undertaken following a request from the County Council Archaeology Section, in advance of the cleaning and re-flooding of the moat (which is not scheduled) and was intended to inform subsequent investigations by O.D.A.G.

Considerable documentary research has been carried out into the history of the medieval manor of Romshed (notably by Dr Gordon Ward¹ and T.A. Hollobone²), suggesting that though the origins of the site are probably Saxon, the earliest reference to the name Romshedde dates to 1254–55, and that the moat itself is likely to have been built between 1279 and 1307. A conveyance of 1557 mentions ‘. . . one piece of land enclosed with a dry mote’, indicating that by that date the moat was no longer maintained and the medieval manor house, assuming it had stood there, had been demolished. An estate map of

¹ G. Ward, ‘A short history of Romschedde Manor’, unpublished typescript, n.d.

² T.A. Hollobone, ‘St Julian’s Farm or Romshed Farm’, unpublished typescript, 1989.

1655 adds considerably to the understanding of the development of the site, showing that activity had shifted entirely to the site of the present Romshed Farm. The present farm-house is largely of eighteenth-century date, but incorporates elements of a seventeenth-century structure (probably an outbuilding attached to the earlier post-medieval house). A fine sixteenth-century timber-framed barn also survives. Detailed study of the architecture has been undertaken by R. Harris of the Weald and Downland Museum,³ and only limited investigation was carried out by R.C.H.M.E.

The earthwork survey at 1:1000 scale was the first intensive fieldwork to be carried out on the site. The moat is square and relatively small, enclosing an area of 0.11 ha. The associated fish-ponds comprise two extant large sub-rectangular ponds and one three-sided moat enclosing a rectangular 'tank', both now dry, which were apparently all added to the moat in a single phase tentatively dated to the mid-fourteenth century on documentary evidence. The survey suggested that earthworks preserved in pasture in an adjacent field, alleged to be a fourth ploughed-down fishpond,⁴ could not have held a pond and are more likely to be ornamental in purpose – possibly part of an enclosed medieval garden. It was conclusively shown that other earthworks in the same field, alleged to be building platforms, are actually associated with a previously unrecorded leat supplying the fish-ponds and with the course of a medieval hollowed trackway called Stobbe Lane.

The survey and full report are available at the National Monuments Record Centre, Kemble Drive, Swindon SN2 2GZ (reference: TQ 55 SE 21) and the Kent Sites and Monument Record.

ALISTAIR OSWALD

³ R. Harris, 'Romshed Farmhouse, Underriver, Kent', unpublished typescript, 1986.

⁴ O.S., Field investigation, 1971.

KENT UNDERGROUND RESEARCH GROUP REPORT

A number of sites have been investigated by our members during 1994.

SHOTTENDEN – Jim Bradshaw visited the sites of three subsidences. The first at N.G.R. TR 04905416 appeared beneath the rear wheels of a tractor employed in grubbing an orchard. It was found that the subsidence was the result of the collapse of a chalkwell chamber. At the east end of the 4.30 m. long chamber was the filled original shaft of 1.10 m. diameter.

A second shaft appeared at N.G.R. TR 04915404 and was 9.80 m. deep to infill, with no chambers visible at the bottom. An unusual feature was that the footholds cut in the side of the shaft spiralled down in a clockwise direction for 180° in the 7 m. of chalk in which they were visible.

At N.G.R. TR 04845384 on a south-facing chalk bank above an old quarry the ground collapsed in an almost perfect circle to a depth of 1.50 m. and a diameter of 9 m. This suggested a subsidence of an old shaft or chalkwell chamber.

NEWINGTON – At Chesley Farm, Newington, a subsidence occurred at N.G.R. TQ 84846412 in April 1994. A survey by KURG members found it to be a shallow four-chambered chalkwell, probably dating from the eighteenth century. The farmer, Mr Holt, kindly supplied details of other chalkwells that had appeared over the years and their positions plotted as, N.G.R. TQ 84146404, TQ 85016354, and TQ 84736346.

NORTHUMBERLAND HEATH – A subsidence in the rear garden of a house in Courtfleet Drive, Northumberland Heath, led to the discovery of a 1.30 m. high × 1.30 m. wide tunnel blocked at one end by a concrete plug. It is probable that the tunnel was the remains of a small sand mine driven from a nearby hollow to supply sand for local building use.

MAIDSTONE – Another underground ragstone quarry has been surveyed east of Maidstone and near to the one investigated at Mote Park.

The site was first noted in 1938 by members of the London Speleological Group and a rough survey made in 1948. At that time access was from a hole at the base of an overgrown quarry to the east of Willington Street and the site was known as Senacre Wood Cave.

In more recent years housing development has taken place both around and in the floor of the old open-cast ragstone quarry. The entrance remained more or less open and is now in the garden of a house in The Beams, Ufton Close, whose rear boundary is the old quarry face.

A survey of the underground galleries showed that the stone had been worked in a similar way to the Mote Park mine in which large areas were worked out and filled with waste material retained behind dry stone walls. Several natural vertical fissures crossed the mine and a number of roof falls have occurred in the past. Documentary research into the underground ragstone quarries of the area is continuing.

R.F. LeGEAR

TECHNOLOGY OF ROMAN IRONWORKING AT CRANBROOK

Three very important features of the Roman ironworking at Little Farningham Farm, Cranbrook, were noted after excavation during 1958-60, but they need to be related to each other for fuller understanding of the technology.

First, there was an actual bloom which was submitted to the Iron and Steel Institute and metallurgically examined by Mr G. T. Brown, M.Sc., who gave the following analysis: Carbon 1.46%, Silicon 0.2%, Sulphur 0.03%, Phosphorus 0.02%, Nitrogen 0.004%.

The high carbon content is attributed to a furnace worked at a relatively high temperature, although not quite high enough to achieve melting of the iron. Such a furnace would need to be equipped with apparatus for supplying a forceful, and more or less continuous draught.

Secondly, a large number of tuyère fragments was recovered from the site, and they are now stored in Maidstone Museum. Tuyères are openings in a lump of clay placed in the outer covering of a furnace, and intended to receive the blasts of bellows, and to convey them into the smelting fire in order to raise the temperature.

The more complete tuyères found at Little Farningham Farm measured approximately $2\frac{1}{2} \times 3 \times 4$ in. and each contained a pair of tubular passages, 1 in. in diameter, passing through them longitudinally with divergence from the trumpet-shaped mouth which remained outside the furnace to the opposite end, and was heavily clinkered from exposure to the fire inside. How did the tuyères facilitate the application of sufficient draught for maintaining the high temperatures which were achieved in the furnaces?

It would allow the draught to spread widely and fan the fire continuously if two pairs of bellows could be used simultaneously. However, it would not be easy to fit both into the trumpet-shaped mouth of the half-baked, two-holed, and fragile tuyères container. But, two pairs of bellows could have been used in conjunction with some intermediate appliance fitting into the tuyères trumpet, and serving to conduct the blast from bellows.

The unique 'bellows pot' found at this site, and now in Maidstone Museum, seems to supply an answer. Of the three holes which occur equidistantly round the circumference of this curious, bulbous pot, only one has a projecting rim or spout which could be fitted into a tuyère mouth, the so-called trumpet end, giving access for air into the lower part of a furnace covering.

The other two holes would accommodate two pairs of bellows, conveniently separated to be pressed alternately by the operator to keep

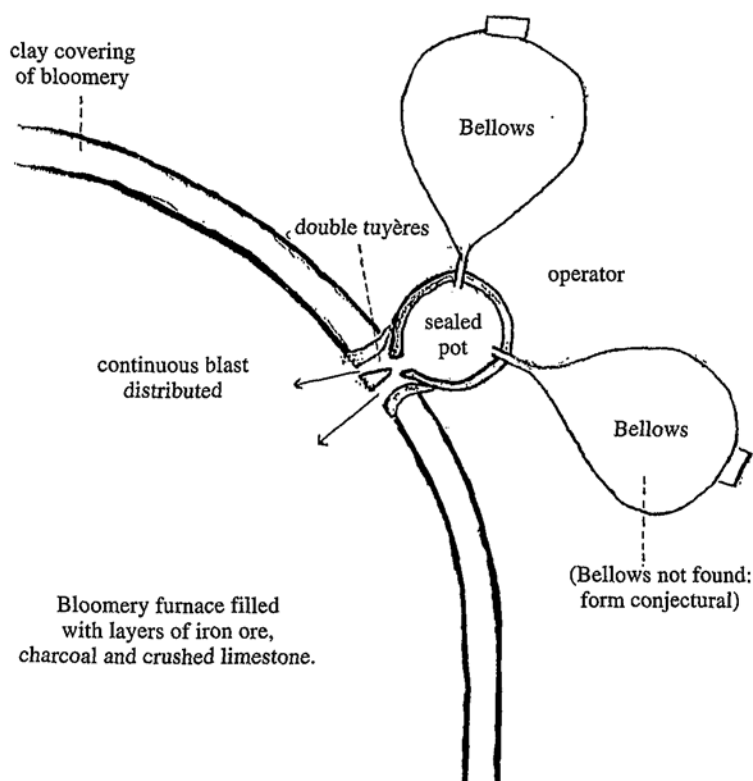


Fig. 1. Transverse Section: How a bellows pot could be used to produce a continuous blast into a bloomery furnace.
 Each operator deflated his two pairs of bellows in alternation. The blast could be increased by multiplying the apparatus around the circumference of the bloomery.

up a continuous blast through the pot which seems designed to be sealed over the top. It has a flat rim, and a groove at the base of the neck. Both features are presumed to have functional significance.

The diagram (Fig. 1) shows a transverse section of the conjectural arrangement of the pot in relation to a bowl furnace. We should expect to find the apparatus repeated several times round the circumference of the bowl for effective firing to achieve a maximum temperature not far short of melting the iron.

It may be relevant to cite the twentieth-century use of a somewhat similar method of iron working in Uganda. It is taken from H. B. Cott, *Uganda in Black and White* (Macmillan, 1955, 106).

'In most districts one can still see iron workers heating and handling the metal as their ancestors have done from time immemorial. The charcoal fire is fanned by a circle of women and boys, each holding in either hand a stick which is attached to a bladder-shaped skin stretched over an earthenware jar that serves as bellows. By rapid, alternating thrusts, a stream of air is blown along a wooden, clay-spouted vent, and so the forge is fed with a draught coming from all sides.'

The Roman *Classis Britannica* may have been using a technique which has continued among primitive people into the present century. Until other 'bellows pots' are found, the usage must remain conjectural.

M. CECILY LEBON

A MIDDLE BRONZE AGE PALSTAVE FROM HEADCORN

The palstave was found during a metal detector survey at New House Farm, Headcorn in 1994. It is 143 mm. in length, the blade edge is 55 mm. wide, and the total weight is 283 g.

Some 900 m. due south of the parish church and 450 m. from the River Beult is a small hill known as the Marl Bank. The palstave was discovered in the ploughsoil on the crest of this hill at 30 m. O.D. Despite an intensive search no other artefacts of this period were located.

There are signs of contemporary wear along the edges of the blade. The palstave has suffered varying degrees of corrosion and the original surface only survives over a small portion of the implement. Below the stop-ridge is a small hollow which is a feature of many low-flanged palstaves of the south-eastern type.¹ Close parallels for the Headcorn palstave can be found in some of the material from the 'Workhouse' site at Taunton, Somerset. A pair of 'Crediton' palstaves from this hoard are slightly larger at 167 mm. in length,² but otherwise appear to be of the same type, which can be assigned to the Taunton phase of the later Middle Bronze Age.³ The nearest other finds of Bronze Age material are from Benenden and Marden.

¹ PPS, xxv (1959), 167.

² S.M. Pearce, *Bronze Age Metalwork*, (1984), 31.

³ D.B. Kelly, *Arch. Cant.*, xcvi (1981), 304.

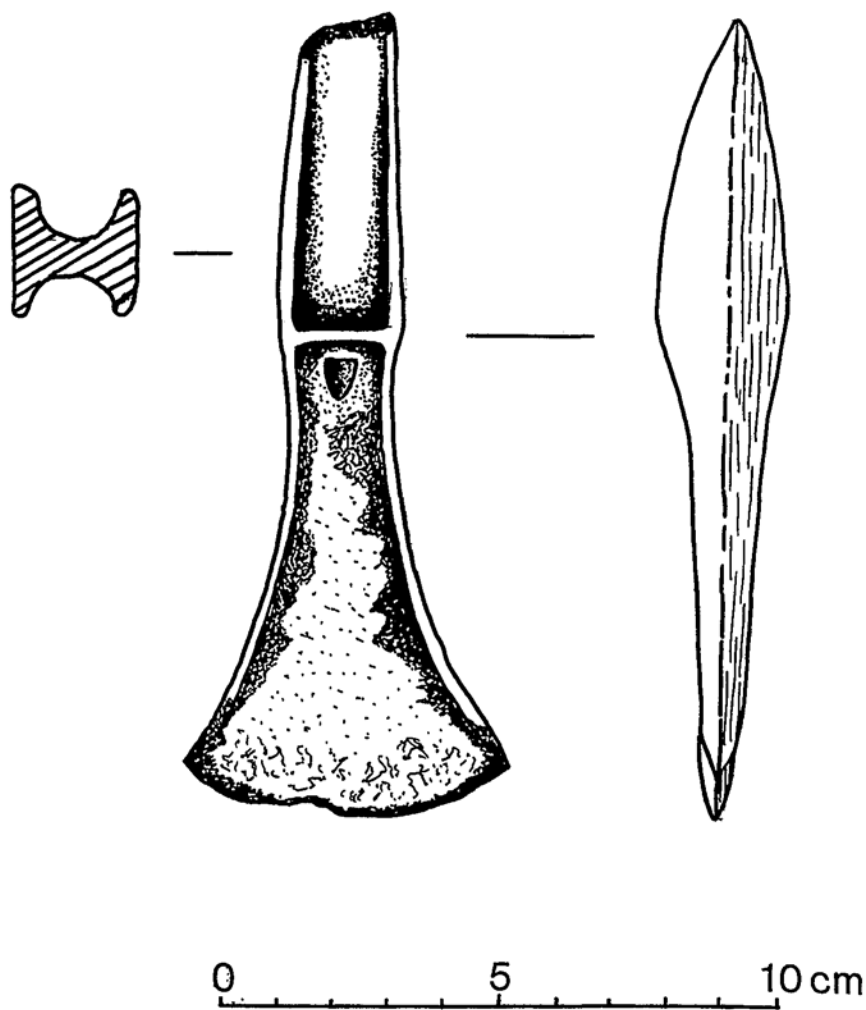


Fig. 1. A middle bronze age palstave from Headcorn. (Drawn by N.R.A.)

A palstave was found during the construction of the Sanatorium (now Benenden Hospital), but the type is not known.⁴ The artefact was submitted to the British Museum who assigned it to the Middle Bronze Age, c. 1000 B.C.

⁴ *Arch. Cant.*, li (1939), 204.

A Bronze Age hoard was found at Marden during the nineteenth century.⁵ The Headcorn palstave probably represents a chance loss, but is further evidence for penetration into the Weald at an early date. A palstave from East Malling⁶ is of similar type as is an example from Plaxtol.⁷ A further implement from Newington, near Folkestone, is of almost identical size and type though with rather more corrosion over the surface.⁸ From the general area of the find-spot has come a scatter of lithic material of probable Neolithic date, the assemblage including finished blades and scrapers, as well as quantities of waste flakes.

N.R. ALDRIDGE

⁵ *Arch. Cant.*, v (1862), 41–44.

⁶ *Arch. Cant.*, lxxxvi (1971), 220–1.

⁷ *Arch. Cant.*, xcvi (1981), 301, 304.

⁸ *Arch. Cant.*, civ (1987), 373.

HEADCORN

A medieval lead seal matrix (Fig. 1, shows an impression) was found by metal detector during 1994 (N.G.R. TQ 83154315). It is inscribed + S' Stepht de Steaphet, (seal of Stephen? de Steaphet). In the centre of the seal there is a crudely incised fleur-de-lys; the reverse is plain. Diameter 31 mm.

The second part of the personal name may represent the place name 'Steap-hurst',¹ which is recorded as 'lost' in the parish of Biddenden. The seal matrix was found 400 m. due north of a prominent isolated hill in the south of the parish of Headcorn (N.G.R. TQ 83054275). To the west of the find-spot, at Brook Wood, is the site of a medieval moated enclosure that was destroyed during the 1980s (N.G.R. TQ 82754312). In 1961, this was described by the Ordnance Survey field archaeology team as 'a well preserved rectangular homestead moat'.²

It is suggested that during the early medieval period this site may have been known as 'Steap-hurst', taking its name from the adjacent steep hill which was clothed in thick tree cover, and was located in Headcorn rather than Biddenden, as was suggested by Wallenberg. Among the dens

¹ J. K. Wallenberg, *The Place Names of Kent*, Uppsala, 1934, 334.

² A. S. Phillips, Ordnance Survey Arch. Record Cards, 1961.



Fig. 1 Medieval Lead Seal Matrix. (Drawn by N.R.A.)

listed in the *Kent Feet of Fines* for 1257 is Stepherst. Discussing this, K. P. Witney suggests that it was situated where the parishes of Biddenden, Frittenden and Headcorn meet³ (the Brook Wood moated site would fit this location precisely). The hill itself has been extensively field-walked; however, this has failed to produce any evidence for occupation which possibly lends further support to the suggestion that the tree cover was fairly extensive in this area during the medieval period. It appears therefore, most probable that the seal matrix originated from the moated homestead. It probably dates from the thirteenth century and is similar to personal seals from Appledore⁴ and Wichling,⁵ which have been published in *Arch. Cant.* The Appledore matrix has a 'fleur-de-lys' of comparable form to the Headcorn example.

N.R. ALDRIDGE

³ K. P. Witney, *The Jutish Forest*, 1976, 255-6.

⁴ *Arch. Cant.*, xcvi (1981), 300-1.

⁵ *Arch. Cant.*, xciv (1978), 265, 268.

RESEARCHES AND DISCOVERIES

RECENT FIELDWORK RELATING TO THE ROMAN ROAD FROM SUTTON VALENCE TO ASHFORD (MARGARY ROAD NO. 131)

It has never been established exactly where this road was located, or indeed, whether it existed at all as the evidence for it has been somewhat tenuous. The alignment of this road has been projected across the eastern Weald to link the confirmed sections of the route heading north-west from Lympne and south-east from Sutton Valence.

The late I. D. Margary in his volume recording the results of his investigations regarding the road communications in the Weald during the Roman period,¹ suggests that the evidence for this section of the road is fragmentary, but that the alignments of the roads at either end strongly argued for its existence. Fieldwork over the last two years has concentrated on examining any previously known along with newly located Romano-British sites in the area and relating these to any surviving evidence for the existence or otherwise of the road. Almost all of the accessible sections of the route postulated by Margary have been re-examined and compared with a recently located alternative route situated somewhat further to the south.

Only 1 km. (0.6 mile) of this route and Margary's actually coincide, out of a total possible distance of 21 km. (13 miles), between Sutton Valence and Ashford. It was possible, in a number of locations, particularly in the parish of Pluckley, to examine recently excavated field ditches for any traces of Margary's road. Despite their depth none showed any traces of road structure or metalling. The 'new' route appears to have been laid in straight lengths with any changes of alignment occurring where the road was required to negotiate an incline, or cross significant water-courses on the route. In several places sections of the road have been exposed and in some of these the metalling was found to consist partially of iron slag and cinder, which is usually an indicator of Roman date, together with local stone.

A number of possibly significant findings have emerged from the initial analysis of this research. The 'new' route from Sutton Valence does not appear to have joined with the section from Lympne at a crossroads slightly to the west of Park Farm at Kingsnorth to the south-east of Ashford. It would seem that this was due to the different alignment of the 'new' route which crosses the Roman road from Benenden to Ashford in the parish of Shadoxhurst rather than Kingsnorth and appears to have continued on towards Ham Street which in the Roman period was sited

¹ I.D. Margary, *Roman Ways in the Weald*, 1965, 228-43.

close to the waterway known as the 'Limen', and with access to the sea. In addition a number of the present roads, which tend to be orientated north-east to south-east across this part of the Weald, seem to cross the new line of the Roman highway almost at right angles; moreover, as these same roads traverse progressively farther from the Roman road, they appear less well defined and more erratic in their course. Were these roads part of a network of contemporary additional roads crossing the Weald and predating the drove-roads? It has been observed that a significant number of the hedgerows close to route 131 appear to be aligned directly to the road, which suggests perhaps that it continued to be a significant feature of the landscape at whatever period these hedgerows were planted. From the date range of the pottery from those sites close to the road, which have all produced evidence of iron working, it is suggested that the road may have been in existence by the late first century A.D., with the pottery apparently ceasing around the mid-third century. This seems to mirror the evidence regarding the Roman iron industry within the Sussex Weald.

HEADCORN, MOAT FARM

A watching brief was undertaken at the request of the KCC Archaeology Dept. during the early spring of 1995, on the site of a new dwelling to be built on land adjacent to a small water-course immediately north-east of the farmhouse at Moat Farm (N.G.R. TQ 83154440).

No archaeologically significant features were revealed during the stripping of topsoil, even though the site abuts the northern arm of the 'moat'. It would seem probable that the stream may originally have flowed around the eastern and southern sides of the farmhouse (a fifteenth-century timber-framed, jettied building), which, although now levelled, are depicted on the Tithe Map of 1841, thereby forming two of the other sides of the 'moated' enclosure. The western side is probably represented by the partially silted-up pond which adjoins the farmyard. The north side is probably an artificially created channel that appears similar to the leat of a watermill. If this is so, then the pond would be located in a suitable position to provide a head of water for an undershot watermill situated somewhere close to the road bridge (N.G.R. TQ 83054435).

SMARDEN - A ROMANO-BRITISH IRON WORKING SITE AT ROMDEN

An extensive iron-working site has recently been re-located, having been lost for the past eighty years. The site was originally discovered around 1912 by the then owner of Romden Castle, Mr W. Basil Worsfold. Together with four other antiquarians of the time he appears to have

carried out a number of investigations including the digging of trial trenches around the property.¹ They located iron slag and sherds of pottery, some of which were said to be Roman and others medieval, which appeared to be concentrated in three fields. These fields were known as 'The Orchard', 'Black Pitts' and the 'Hamlets'. The latter is the site of a medieval moated complex (described here in a separate note), adjoining the two other areas although on the other side of the river.

A chance discovery made during 1994 in the two fields to the east of Romden Bridge of a large spread of iron slag, resulted in further research being carried out which confirmed Worsfold's 1912 site and this to be one and the same.

A coin of Faustina, together with a possible contemporary burial, had been found at Romden c. 1856,² although the exact location is not certain. This was apparently the reason for Worsfold's investigations which took place during June and August 1912.³

The centre of the site is 200 m. due east of the bridge, (N.G.R. TQ 8985 4220). It appears that the largest concentration of tap slag coincides with a low mound which may be natural or, alternatively, could possibly be a ploughed down slag-heap. This is somewhat appropriately located in the field known as 'Black Pitts'.⁴ The slag extends out from around this spot for some 200 m.; the largest pieces measure 40 × 40 cm. and 10 cm. in thickness. A few fragments of clay furnace lining were found in the area of the low mound. Field-walking eventually produced a number of sherds of possibly late first–mid second century pottery. The grog-tempered fabric is comparable with the majority of the Romano-British pottery from a number of other sites recently located in the Low Weald (reports in preparation).

The site is the largest Romano-British iron-working site so far discovered in the Weald of Kent and appears to be on a similar scale to some of those from the Sussex Weald.

BETHERSDEN, TUESNOAD

Further evidence for possible early iron-working has recently been recorded close to Tuesnoad Farm at Bethersden, in the Low Weald. The site lies 150 m. north of the farmhouse, (N.G.R. TQ 90934220). A spread of dark soil together with tap slag and cinder was exposed in the

¹ W. Basil Worsfold, 'Romden Place and its Restoration', *Arch. Cant.*, xliii (1931), 82–3.

² *VCH*, iii (1932), 168. George Payne, 'An Archaeological Survey of the County of Kent', 1889, 19. (Record of a Roman Interment at Romden, in Smarden).

³ Worsfold, *op. cit.*, 82–3.

⁴ Tithe Map, and Apportionment, Smarden, Ref: TR30/17/332. Local Studies Centre, Maidstone.

ploughsoil. There was a lack of any datable material but the site is barely 1.3 km. ($\frac{3}{4}$ mile) east of the extensive Romano-British iron-working area recently located at Romden in the parish of Smarden. The Ordnance Survey archaeological record cards, relating to the parish of Bethersden,⁵ record the following finds made from the same general area c. 1860: 'A black patera together with sherds of another vessel of red ware were found in a field at Tuesnoad Farm around that date'. It is possible that these may have originated from a cremation burial; however, further evidence is absent and the exact find-spot is not recorded.

SMARDEN, A MEDIEVAL MOATED SITE AT ROMDEN

A previously unrecorded moated site which fails to appear on even the largest scale O.S. maps is situated some 175 m. north-east of the somewhat misleadingly named Romden Castle in the south-east of the parish (N.G.R. TQ 89754225).

The site is situated within an unploughed rectangular field adjacent to Romden Bridge. Along the west side is a bank and ditch. At the northern end of this field is a roughly square raised platform surrounded by a moat, water filled during the winter months. To the south the site is bounded by the infant River Beult, the west bank appears to have been artificially widened, possibly to provide a somewhat more effective barrier. The field is known as 'The Hamlets' and was briefly investigated by W. Basil Worsfold in 1912,⁶ during his residence at the castle.

This was at the same period during which he located the iron-working site which lies in the fields to the east. Worsfold records that some of the pottery found during his investigations appeared to be medieval,⁷ but fails to make clear whether any came from 'The Hamlets'. Between the moat and the river, he refers to the 'embanked quadrilaterals', and suggests that these were the site of the dwellings of the populace employed at the manor of Nicholas de Rumdene in the mid-thirteenth century. Worsfold evidently assumed that the manor house would have been sited beneath the present Romden Castle, whereas it would seem more probable that the moated site would have been its predecessor. Possibly the decision was made to re-locate the

⁵ Ordnance Survey Record Card, Bethersden, TQ 94SW, 2/1/64.

⁶ Worsfold, *op. cit.*, 74.

⁷ Worsfold, *op. cit.*, 82.

house to a somewhat drier site less prone to flooding. During the fifteenth century much of the surrounding countryside was owned by the Guldeford family. It is possible that the move was made around this period when a high quality 'Wealden' hall house was erected to the west of the present house, and some 250 m. west of the moated enclosure. This has been recorded in some detail by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust after it was blown over in the Great Storm of October 1987,⁸ and is at present awaiting re-erection.

N.R. ALDRIDGE

⁸ *Arch. Cant.*, cvii (1989), 367-74.

REPORT ON WORK BY THE THAMES TRUST FOR ARCHAEOLOGY

Recent field work in Thanet by the Archaeological Trust and Society made discoveries that are of great interest and, in one or two cases, are quite unique in the South-East. Since these will be the subject of future full publications they will only be referred to in a general way in this report.

The first is 'South Dumpton Down', a site adjacent to Dumpton Gap Road, Broadstairs. This site has been the subject of previous evaluations carried out at the request of the County Archaeologist, Dr John Williams, on land belonging to the KCC and being sold by them for urban development. The results of the investigation were reported in *Arch. Cant.*, cx (1992).

As a result of the findings of the evaluation at South Dumpton Down, it was decided that a fuller excavation was required prior to planning consent being given.

The excavation revealed abundant evidence of three phases of human settlement from the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age (Phase I) through to Early Iron Age (Phase III) c. 2000-350 B.C.

Phase I: Late Neolithic-Early Bronze Age c. 2000 B.C.

This period was represented by a length of curving ditch, a probable remnant of a ploughed-out barrow. Of much greater interest, however, was the discovery of a ditch of oval plan cut in five segments each of which differed in depth, width and profile, reminiscent of causewayed camp ditches. The segmented ditch enclosed three interconnecting pits containing seven burials, five of which were incomplete. At the bottom

of pit B was a Food Vessel while, surprisingly, a Beaker was found high in the fill of pit A.

Parallels for this type of multiple burial containing both Beaker and Food Vessels are restricted to a small group of barrows concentrated in East Yorkshire. However, the South Dumpton monument is unique in that it displays the sequence of Food Vessels preceding the Beaker and being the only one excavated to modern standards.

Two rare Beaker period flat graves were also found. One containing the remains of three individuals was in close association with the barrow ditch.

Phase II: occupation: The Middle Bronze Age c. 1200–1000 B.C.

The evidence consists of a ditched enclosure, the plan of which resembled a flattened pentagon with its long axis aligned north–south. Two causewayed entrances faced east and west.

Lengths of ditch probably representing a secondary enclosure or pound were nearby.

A hoard of an ornament and palstaves was discovered in the enclosure ditch while a quoit-headed pin was recovered from another find-spot. Apart from these major finds the enclosure ditch also yielded some sparsely distributed pot-sherds and a variety of artefacts including a hone, bone tools and a small flint assemblage of a scraper, hammer stone and three waste flakes.

While ceramic finds from two ploughed-out pits and ditch were more sparse than might have been expected, in total they form an important assemblage of local Deverel Rimbury ware.

Four clusters of post-holes with two midden pits, all presumably representing huts or structures were also revealed during the excavation of the enclosure.

Phase III: Early Iron Age c. 550–350 B.C.

These remains consist of parts of two apparently rectilinear enclosures formed by palisade trenches, one of which contained three burials, all without skulls. Within the enclosures are two complexes of post-holes representing huts or other structures.

Forty-six pits were scattered throughout the enclosures and beyond. Whatever their original function they had in every case contained layers of midden material and ash or soils made red by burning. One pit contained ash slag and some iron slag nodules while four others contained burials.

One of the largest pits contained the burial of a well-built adult. Fragments of an iron buckle and carved bone pin were found by both shoulders.

All layers of pit fill were rich in sherds, bones (some worked). Ceramic and carved chalk spindle whorls and pieces of hones and Folkestone Greenstone querns were among the finds. The southern boundary of the settlement area consisted of a fosse or sunken way. It had been noted that earlier Middle Bronze Age ditches either respected or ran parallel to this feature thereby inferring that the fosse, or something following the same line, had been in existence during Bronze Age times.

The dimensions of the sunken way or fosse varied from 13.50 m.–8.50 m. wide and from 2.50 m.–2 m. deep. Possible wheel-ruts were observed on the chalk floor.

This area of Iron Age settlement excavated in 1994 when combined with the earlier discoveries of Howard Hurd (1907) and Tim Champion (1971/2) in adjoining areas can now be seen as a single entity covering a minimum of 25 acres – a large and significant settlement.

OTHER PREHISTORIC DISCOVERIES

The Trust carried out an evaluation prior to the granting of planning consent for a Business Park extension at a site which was on high ground north of Minster, Thanet. The site abutted an ancient monument and also contained within its perimeter a crop-mark of an oval enclosure with internal features. These had been plotted by the R.C.H.M.E. during their programme of aerial photographic survey of the County in 1986/7.

Metal detector survey and field walking produced a scatter of waste flakes, worked flints including scrapers in all stages of patination. Only late medieval and modern pottery were present while only modern metal artefacts were detected.

The site area was laid out with a system of machine-cut trenches which revealed pits or large post-holes and ditch sections and a plough-disturbed Jutish burial. Residual sherds of two Beakers, one cord decorated, were found in the fill of the grave. In a nearby pit was a bronze ring similar in shape and size to the suspension rings of the bronze mounted wooden buckets sometimes found in Saxon graves.

It was the material from the fill of the ditches that was to provide the major interest. These included sherds of domestic Beaker from two vessels and barbed and tanged flint arrowhead. Taken together with the residual sherds from the Saxon grave, the surface flint scatter and a marked lack of evidence of any later prehistoric occupation, it suggests that the site is a domestic settlement of the Late Neolithic–Early Bronze Age *c.* 2000 B.C. If the definition of such sites is restricted to

those enclosed by banks or ditches with occupation evidence then only thirty–forty have ever been encountered by British archaeologists (Alex. Gibson. pers. comm.).

Further prehistoric remains were discovered during an evaluation at the Kent International Business Park, Manston, Ramsgate. The investigation of the large 63-acre site was carried out by machine cutting a series of 178, 20 m.-long trenches, set to a pattern to ensure maximum coverage.

Finds included two bronzes mentioned below and the ditches of what is presumed to be a Late Iron Age, 'Belgic' farm enclosure.

Thanet's Bronze Finds

To Thanet's already impressive bronze hoards of Middle and Late Bronze Age date must be added the following recent discoveries.

The two bronze finds from the Kent International Business Park, Manston, Ramsgate, mentioned above. The first of these was discovered as a result of a metal detector survey and consisted of a damaged Late Bronze Age spearhead (See Fig. 1, 1). This was found as two fragments 3 m. apart in disturbed top soil. Subsequent investigation by trenching revealed nothing of interest. Because of its incomplete nature nothing can be said of the spearhead other than that it is a sophisticated thin-walled casting in keeping with the Ewart Park tradition.

The other bronze was found in a small chalk-cut hollow exposed in an evaluation trench. It is a fragment of an axe in a form transitional between flanged axes and palstaves (See Fig. 1, 2). The form is difficult to date because of its long life c. 1400–800 B.C., the Middle to Late Bronze Age. These bronzes were found some 200 m. apart.

A Bronze Hoard from Allend Grange

This was shown to the Trust by the finder, a metal detectorist, but unfortunately, it had to be returned to the owner, a farmer, before it could be drawn or photographed. The hoard is singular in that it consists only of twenty-six bun ingot fragments ranging in size from 10 mm. to 120 mm. across. The total weight of the fragments was 11 kg. with the largest fragment weighing c. 750 grams. Several of the larger fragments had impressions or remains from unmelted or semi-molten artefacts, cutting edges and sockets being visible. Pot-sherds, allegedly from an intense scatter about the find-spot were coarsely gritted with flint in the manner of local Deverel Rimbury fabric. It was also reported that the find-spot lies within a circular crop/soil mark over 20 m. in diameter.

A Late Wilburton type sword

This was found on agricultural land at Shatterling, a hamlet between Ash and Wingham (N.G.R. TR 257585). The exact find-spot co-ordinates have been recorded in the Kent Sites and Monuments Register but are omitted here in deference to the wishes of the landowner/finder.

The sword was found during the excavation of a septic tank at a depth of 1.20 m. from the surface in what appears to be ochre-coloured sandy measure of the Thanet Beds. It was lying flat on a natural layer of water-rolled flint pebbles; the sand above and around it contained a number of pot-sherds. Although the find-spot is situated on an escarpment above a valley, the writer when called to the site to investigate found that water was welling up through the pebbles.

The sword as shown in Fig. 1, 3 is 0.60 m. in length and is complete although bent and with a crack in the hilt. It has slots instead of the usual rivet holes. The seven rivets used to secure the two hilt plates of ? bone were in place when found. As shown by section in Fig. 1, 3b, the heads of the rivets are angled, demonstrating the sectional shape of one side of the hilt. Also, on that side (as illustrated) the surface of the bronze was slightly pitted so as to show a 'shadow' of the hilt, the inverted Y-form indent being perhaps to allow a thumb grip on the flat of the blade.

In form this sword with its slightly curved ricassi and straight shoulders is late in the Wilburton series and transitional to the Ewart Park style. An unusual feature is that it possesses only rivet slots and not a combination of slots and holes. Swords of this type are usefully referred to as the Blackmoor stage since several comparable swords occur in the Blackmoor Hoard. Current dating evidence suggests tenth century cal. B.C. for this stage (S.P. Needham, pers. comm.). Parallels consist of a very similar sword from the Seine in Paris (O'Connor, *Cross Channel Relations in the Later Bronze Age* BAR Int. Series (ii), 1980, Fig. 53.2) and two others from the Thames at Battersea and Kerguerou, Finisterre (Eds. Megaw and Simpson, *Introduction to British Prehistory*, 307, Figs. 4 and 5).

A Bronze Hoard from Flete, Manston

This was found by metal detector on an agricultural development site near Flete, Manston, and is now in the keeping of the Trust for Thanet Archaeology. While the find-spot co-ordinates have been recorded for the Thanet and Kent Sites and Monuments Register, they have been omitted here at the request of the finder.

The hoard consists of the following items numbered as they appear

in the accompanying illustration (Fig. 1). (4) A blade fragment of socketed axe. (5) A fragment from the mouth and upper body of a socketed axe (not the same implement as (4)). It has a heavy collar with rounded mouth. (6) A shaft fragment of a socketed gouge without cutting edge or mouth. A fragment of bronze that is perhaps part of the socket mouth had been tightly wedged into the socket cavity. (7) Part of the thrusting point of a Carp's Tongue sword. (8) Fragment of a blade of a dirk or rapier. (9) and (10) Bun ingot fragment. (9) had been the moulded cast of a long rounded object. Not illustrated are other irregular-shaped bun ingot fragments or casting splashes that were present.

At this point it is of interest to consider these most recent and so far unreported hoards and single finds with the Middle and Late Bronze Age hoards already recorded in Thanet. There are nine palstave and ornament hoards and depositions in Thanet, which, unless there has been a recent spectacular increase in discoveries throughout Kent, represent the overwhelming majority of finds of this type of hoard in the County. When the few single palstave finds are included with those in the hoards there is a total of sixty-seven palstaves in Thanet. Throughout Kent there are sixty-two, mainly single finds.

Further, nine Late Bronze Age hoards have been recorded from Thanet; this includes the large hoard of 196 pieces found during the late 1890s, though the exact whereabouts of the discovery is unknown. Recent work in the area has revealed the presence of two further hoards in the same general area. As all of the Thanet hoards have either been or are about to be published it is not necessary to go into the details here but one general comment may be made about the distributions of the Middle and Late Bronze Age hoards. It is noticeable that the palstave and ornament hoards of the middle period are found to the north and west of the island, in the areas of the Estuary and Channel coast, in marked contrast to the later hoards which are found without exception along the shore-line of the old Wantsum Channel.

Two Ring ditch sites at Manston

During August 1994 members of the Thanet Archaeological Society investigated two ring ditch sites on the western rise of the 'Hollins Bottom' valley between the eastern runway approach to Manston Aerodrome and the 'Lord of the Manor', Ramsgate. Both sites were previously recorded as crop-marks, being close to a Beaker barrow excavated in 1987 (Perkins D.R.J. and Gibson A.M. 'A Beaker Burial from Manston near Ramsgate' *Arch. Cant.*, cviii (1990), 11-28.)

The investigation was part of the Thanet Archaeological Society's 'Barrow Research Programme'. Since a new road is to pass through the

area in the near future these excavations would prove of value in serving as a prior evaluation. Further, the Society initiative enabled the study of the 'Lord of the Manor' barrow group to be completed. This was LOM VIII (Lord of the Manor VIII) and after topsoil was stripped it was seen to have a diameter of 25 m. The ditch was sectioned at the four cardinal points and these showed a profile of a truncated V, on average 2.50 m. wide and 1 m. deep. All four sections revealed that a major recutting operation had taken place at some time when the original ditch had been deeply infilled. The recut had the effect of increasing the width of the ditch by 1.50 m. and adding 3 m. to the overall diameter of the barrow. Part of a bronze object and a loom weight were found high in the post-recut ditch fill.

At the centre of the ring ditch was found a shallow oval pit c. 1.20 m. \times 0.50 m. and 0.25 m. deep; in this were two human teeth and small fragments of flint-gritted pottery. This feature was encircled by a ditch 9 m. in diameter and about 0.30 m. wide by 0.20 m. deep. The fill of this yielded more small fragments of pottery, one with impressed decoration as of a beaker.

Ceramic and environmental evidence from the ditches and internal features of these sites are the subject of ongoing study and it is hoped that publication of this site will be possible in the near future.

When exposed by topsoil stripping the second ring ditch proved to have a diameter of 15 m. with a ditch of truncated V-section, on average 2.60 m. wide and 1 m. deep, the flat floor of the ditch being only 0.90 m. wide. The chalk surface of the enclosed area was heavily scarred by subsoiler cuts. There was only one internal feature and that was a post-hole of unknown date. The ditch sections indicated a fairly rapid initial filling by loose chalk rubble of the lower third of the ditch. This had been followed by a slow infill of loam and chalk nodules culminating in a weathered surface, the whole eroding into the ditch from within the enclosure. Above this the fill of loam yielded Romano-British sherds.

The Thanet Archaeological Society's barrow research programme seems to be defining several classes of monument among the island's barrow cemeteries and groups chronologically spanning the Late Neolithic to the Middle Bronze Age. This ring ditch may well fall into the latest group as a barrow of the Deverel-Rimbury period.

DAVE PERKINS

INVESTIGATIONS AT NORTH FORELAND HILL

The Thanet Archaeological Society has long been interested in the potential of the hillside fields to the south-west of North Foreland Lighthouse and of North Foreland Hill. Archaeological remains at this site were first mentioned in *Arch. Cant.*, xii (1877-78) xxxiv, and later crop-marks were referred to (Jessup 1957; Perkins 1993).

These crop-marks show an extensive system of double parallel ditches running northwards along the landward slope of North Foreland Hill for some 400 m. before turning seaward just north of the lighthouse where they are lost under a road but can just be glimpsed beyond it curving towards the cliff-line. During the spring and early summer of 1995, members of the Thanet Archaeological Society were kindly given the opportunity to carry out an investigation of these marks by the farmer, Mr G. Philpott.

The topsoil on the slopes proved to be only 300 mm. deep, so that if any earthworks associated with the ditches had existed, all trace of them has gone with plough attrition which has also reduced the surface of the Upper Chalk bedrock. Ditches and other surviving features are, therefore, truncated. Several sections 2 m. wide were taken across the parallel ditches. Details of a typical section are given below illustrated by Fig. 2.

Section 1300-1400. This revealed an 'inner' up-hill ditch (F.1400) of V-section, 2 m. wide and 0.81 m. deep. Chalk rubble and silt from up-hill had commenced its infill, with a loam and chalk mixture completing the process, again from up-hill. Further down hill a much larger ditch had been cut truncating the fills of two earlier and smaller ditches, see Fig. 4, a and b. This later ditch (F.1300) was roughly 5 m. across by 1.5 m. deep, and of truncated V-section. Its primary infill of chalk rubble and silt had come from down hill, being followed by a long slow filling with loam. In another section the fill of ditch (b) was seen to be cut by 'post ghosts', so that it presumably functioned as a palisade trench.

The ceramics from the ditches have been kindly spot-dated by Nigel Macpherson-Grant. Initial study indicates a Middle-Late Iron Age construction, say 300-25 B.C., with the ditches infilling during the Belgic-Romano-British period, c. 25 B.C.-A.D. 150. There are, however, elements of continuity into at least the third century, and, with one possible Alice Holt vessel, into the fourth. A fragment of a Roman fine grey sandy lamp, c. second/third century was also found.

From the information gained by plotting and material evidence, our initial tentative conclusion is that the ditches probably once formed the defences of a hillfort or oppidum with an area of at least 24 ha.

(60 acres), built during the Middle to Late Iron Age. While the dimensions of the ditches are not as massive as often encountered in such sites, it must be born in mind that the steepness of the hill, and proximity of high cliffs augmented these defences on a site that was at that time on an island. Thanet Archaeological Society intends to carry out further research at the location.

PAUL HOGWOOD

REFERENCES

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D.R.J. Perkins, 'North Foreland Avenue, Broadstairs', *Arch. Cant.*, cxii (1993), 411.

REMAINS OF SAXON BUILDING DISCOVERED

While co-operating with the Wessex Archaeological Trust in carrying out an evaluation prior to planning consent at a site near Manston, Ramsgate, the remains of buildings and ditches containing thirteenth–fourteenth century pottery were discovered. There is no evidence that the use of the buildings continued into the post-medieval period, although this is considered likely. These remains are almost certainly the site of 'Upper Court', which according to John Lewis (1723) were 'carted off to build a barn in the reign of Queen Ann.'

Also present was a short length of ditch containing fragments of animal bone and Late Bronze Age pottery. Of greater interest was the finding of a Saxon sunken-featured building, rectangular in plan, aligned approximately east–west and measuring 3.60 m. long by 2.20 m. wide, surviving to a depth of 0.32 m. A single post-hole was found at the western end; whether a similar post-hole existed at the other end could not be determined as this area remained unexcavated. The fill from the sunken pit floor produced one amber and five glass beads, several fragments of a glass cup or small bowl, an ? ivory pin, a perforated copper alloy disc, two small pieces of iron (? smithing) slag, a pottery spindle-whorl and a number of pottery sherds. This Saxon building containing evidence of spinning and iron-working only 500 m. from the Ozengegg, a sixth–seventh-century Jutish cemetery, makes this a discovery of considerable interest.

LEN JAY

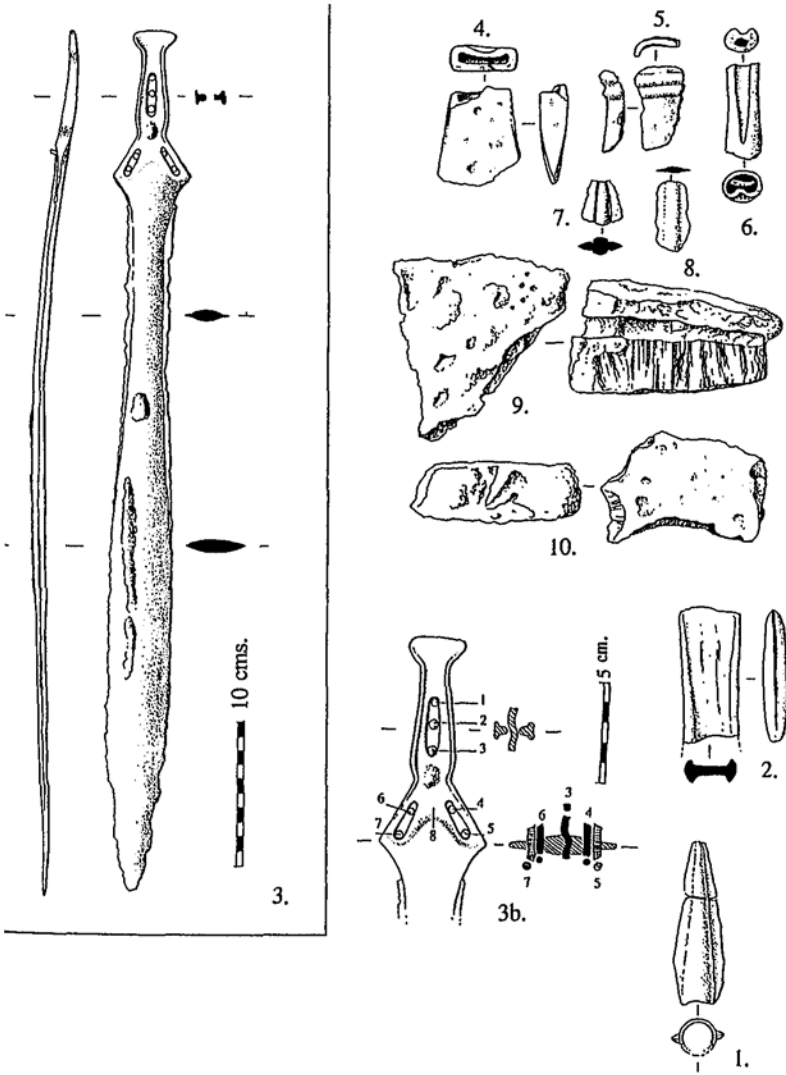


Fig. 1. Recent Thanet bronze finds; sword and objects to scales as shown.

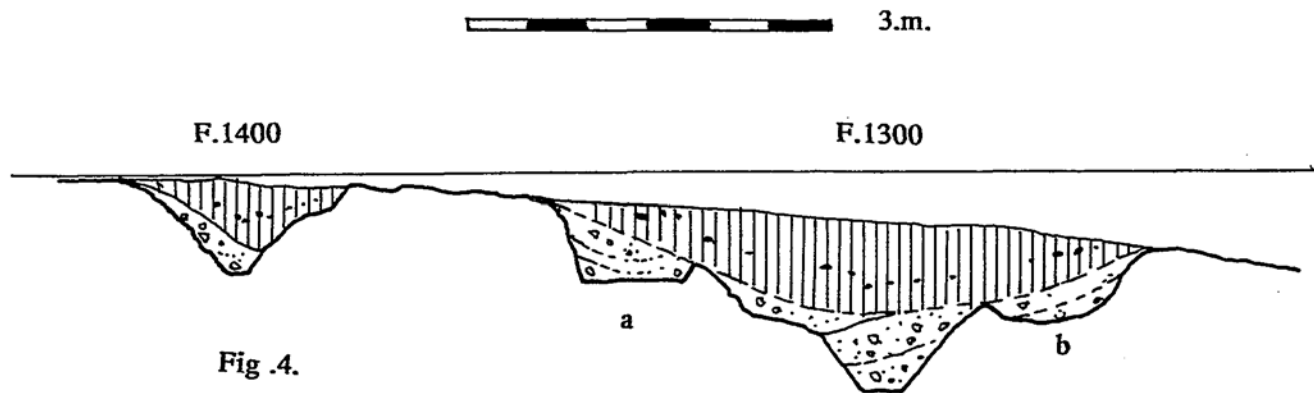


Fig. 2. North Foreland Hill: Sections.

Fig. 4.