

RESEARCH NOTES

A MIDDLE BRONZE AGE PALSTAVE AXE FROM ST MARGARET'S-AT-CLIFFE

A palstave axe (**Fig. 1**) in reasonable condition albeit exhibiting considerable surface corrosion was discovered in the summer 2012 by Mr Brenna Scott whilst metal detecting in a pasture field near St Margaret's-at-Cliffe, near Dover. The site lies on the eastern lower slope of a dry valley orientated NNE-SSW at NGR TR 351 443, at an elevation of 75m AOD. The implement was recovered from a depth of about 18cm (7ins), within the unstratified grassed topsoil on the field.

The axe although slightly shorter, was cast using the same method as the example recovered from a field near Ashford in the 1980s (Burrows, V. 2010). Although at present the find appears to be isolated, it is unlikely

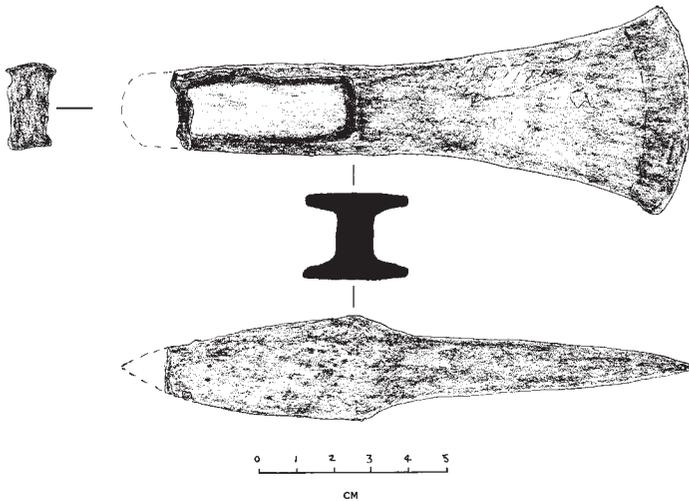


Fig. 1 The palstave axe from St Margaret's-at-Cliffe.

to have been discarded and may have originated from a deposit associated with a metalwork hoard somewhere nearby. During the recovery the implement was scratched at five minor locations; however the butt-end had been broken in antiquity, probably caused by two imperfections during the casting process seen within the butt cross-section.

The palstave is of the central stop-bar series that broadly dates *c.*2000-1500 BC. Although broken, the implement is one of the smaller examples measuring approximately 134.50mm in length but characteristic of the common low-flanged middle-late Bronze Age topology, found in southern Britain. Due to the broken butt section it is not possible to calculate where the flanges start below the butt or the exact length. The splayed cutting-edge has a wide bevel measuring 1.3cm wide with slight extra expansion on both the outer edges; the cutting-edge measuring 53.85mm wide shows no evidence of having been sharpened – together with the casting faults this could suggest that the axe may have been retained for re-casting. The blade, concave in outline, has no ornamental features on the faces or traces of a casting seam. The thickness at the central stop-bar is 26.38mm. The palstave weighs 385g and has a dark green patina. The implement has been recorded with the Portable Antiquities Schemes by Miss J. Jackson (Finds Liaison Officer for Kent).

The writer thanks the finder, Mr Scott, for bringing the implement to his attention and allowing the find to be published here. Mr William Laing kindly produced the illustration.

VINCE BURROWS

Allen., I.M., 1970, *Implements and Weapons in the Pitt Rivers Museum*, OUP, pp. 117-144.

Burrows, V., 2010, 'A Middle Bronze Age Palstave Axe from Ashford', *KAR*, 179, 225-226.

THE PLACE-NAME TROTTSCLIFFE

The name of the village of Trottscliffe is recorded in the following pre-Conquest spellings:

Trottes clyva, *Trottesclib* 788 (12th-century copy)

trotescliua, *trotescliue* *c.*975 (12th-century copy)

The Swedish place-name scholar J.K. Wallenberg explained the first element as “an O[ld] E[nglish] nickname **Trott* ‘the trotter, runner’ or the like or a stream-name OE *Trot(t)* of the same onomatopoeic origin”,¹ justifiably rejecting an earlier suggestion by Mawer and Stenton that it is a form of the Old English word and name-element *torht* ‘bright’.² The

double <tt> is found in a grant of land by Offa in 788 to St Andrew's, Rochester, copied into the 12th-century *Textus Roffensis*,³ though spellings with single <t> predominate later, and appear in the forms cited above from regulations for the repair of Rochester bridge.⁴ Of Wallenberg's two proposals, the first seemed to him preferable. A stream does rise close to the church, but the idea that any stream should be named using any metaphor depending on four legs is more than faintly ludicrous, and we should reject it. The main problem for either of Wallenberg's proposals is that English is a Germanic language, but it seems impossible to give a Germanic etymology for the word *trot*: the *Oxford English Dictionary* treats it as of French origin, and so necessarily a post-Conquest import.⁵ He therefore resorts to explaining it as a new onomatopoeic formation on the recurrent base 'tr-' with the general sense 'step', as in for example *tread*, *tramp*, and many other words in other Germanic languages.⁶

The case against the unattested male personal name or nickname meaning 'trotter' that Wallenberg offers as an alternative to the stream-name can neither be proved nor disproved, but the proposal as set out above is weak. However, it is not the only option. In Modern (High) German we find the word *Trotz* 'defiance' (Middle High German *tratz*, *trutz*⁷), in Central German *trotz* and in Low German *trot*. This family of words seems to be found originally only in the Continental branch of the West Germanic languages, not in English, and the High German form has been borrowed into both Dutch (*trots*) and the Scandinavian languages (e.g. Swedish *trots*). Although that suggests that it was originally confined to High and Low German, it would be no great surprise if it had existed in Old English too, and dropped out of use before the beginning of literacy. It would have turned up as OE **trott*, i.e. in the form regularly corresponding to the Low German word (which, for technical reasons, must be originally **trott* with the double <tt> if it shares its origin with the High German forms). It is absent from the English documentary and literary record, but this may be what we have in *Trottiscliffe*, in one of two possible applications. It might be a personal name, applied in the same way that other abstract nouns with martial senses or connotations, such as *hild* 'battle', *plēog* 'danger, risk; pledge', *sige* 'victory', *willa* 'will, command, resolution', are found as name (-element)s. Or it might be applied metaphorically to an aspect of the prominent escarpment which dominates the village. But since the application of resounding abstract nouns is not typical of Anglo-Saxon place-naming, the first variant of the suggestion, the personal name, is preferable.⁸

This account is essentially the one given ultra-briefly by Ekwall in his dictionary entry for the name.⁹ It gains support from the existence of Trottsworth Farm in Egham, Surrey, which also suggests an Old English name *Trott*, though this is first recorded after the Conquest, in 1166.¹⁰ An alternative, and appealing, interpretation of the Kent data, respecting the

fact that the word meaning ‘defiance’ is not originally found outside the confines of High and Low German, is that the name *Trott* is not, or not originally, Old English at all, but that it belonged to a Frank, i.e. a speaker of Franconian, a branch of Continental West Germanic, whose naming-system was not essentially different from that of English. That would make sense in the context of the Kentish royal house in the sixth century. King Æthelberht’s queen Bertha, as is well known,¹¹ was a daughter of the Merovingian king of Paris Charibert I, i.e. a Frank. She brought with her a chaplain with a Frankish name, Liudhard. It is hardly unlikely that she brought other retainers, on whom estates must have been settled.

On balance, then, *Trottscliffe* is likely to mean ‘Trott’s cliff’, that *Trott* is a male personal name with an etymological meaning something like ‘defiance’, and that it may well first have been the name of a Frank, even if it was eventually also adopted by English-speakers. It must finally be said that although such a name makes perfect sense within the onomastic system of Germanic, there is no such item recorded in Förstemann’s dictionary of old German(ic) given names unless it is represented by *Truzo*, which Förstemann allocates to his root/element DRUDI.¹² But then again, records of Continental Germanic names are quite sparse until well after Bertha’s arrival in Kent, and this name may have been rare and/or become unfashionable.

There is also a *Trotts Ash* in Cobham, some five miles away to the north of Trottscliffe. This is recorded as *Trottes* and *Trottesham* between 1558 and 1625.¹³ If this were as ancient as the name we have been considering, it would tend to reinforce the idea that a personal name is involved. But the record is late and unhelpfully varied. It may contain the known surname *Trott*, which is ultimately of French origin and whose medieval distribution appears to be southern (Surrey, Sussex, Buckinghamshire, according to Reaney and Wilson).¹⁴ In modern times it is south-western, focused in mid-Somerset, though there is an outlying population in eastern Kent.¹⁵

RICHARD COATES

¹ J.K. Wallenberg, *Kentish Place-Names*, A.-B. Lundequistka, Uppsala (1931), pp. 70-71, and *The Place-Names of Kent*, Appelbergs Boktryckeri, Uppsala (1934), p. 152.

² A. Mawer, F.M. Stenton and F.T.S. Houghton, *The Place-Names of Worcestershire*, CUP (Survey of English Place-Names 4), Cambridge (1927), pp. 175-176, under *Trotshill*.

³ Medway Archives & Local Studies Centre, Rochester Cathedral Library MS. A.3.5 (folios 131-132), S 129, existing also in a 14th-century copy. This is document 253 in W. de G. Birch, ed., *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, Whiting, for the editor (1885-99), and document 129 in P.H. Sawyer, ed. (1968) *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography*, Royal Historical Society (Guides and Handbooks 8), London (1968). The latter is available online at <http://www.esawyer.org.uk/about/index.html>, accessed frequently, and the charter referred to is at <http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/129.html>.

⁴ These are documents 1321 and 1322 in Birch, *Cartularium*, in Latin and Old English respectively, also in *Textus Roffensis* (folios 164b and 166b).

⁵ J.A. Simpson and E.S.C. Weiner, eds, *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edn, OUP, Oxford (1989), under *trot*. Now online and constantly updated at <http://www.oed.com/>, accessed frequently.

⁶ As all true Kentish men, and even Men of Kent, know, the name is today pronounced /'trozli/, the first syllable rhyming with *was*, and the name of the manor-house is spelt accordingly *Trosley Court*. The irregular changes involved have obscured the name's history, and for its origin we are dependent on the earliest written records, set out in Wallenberg's books.

⁷ An archaic literary form *Trutz* is also seen, for instance, in the set phrase *Schutz und Trutz* 'protection and defiance' heard in the first verse of A.H. Hoffmann von Fallersleben's *Deutschlandlied*, the imperial German national anthem. This verse is no longer sung.

⁸ For the topographical possibility, we might compare, in both sense and structure, the recorded place-name *Streoneshalh* if this is really 'nook of begetting' as proposed in Richard Coates, 'The slighting of Strensall', *Journal of the English Place-Name Society* XIII (1980-1), 50-53. But Carole Hough, 'Strensall, *Streanaeshalch* and Stronsay', *Journal of the English Place-Name Society*, XXXV (2002-3), 17-24, now explains it and similar place-names in both English and Scandinavian as having to do with productivity or fertility – abstract nouns with functional appropriateness in the landscape.

⁹ Eilert Ekwall, *Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 4th edn, Clarendon Press, Oxford (1960), p. 481. This view is followed by A.D. Mills, *Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 2nd edn, OUP, Oxford (1998), p. 353. More recently, Victor Watts, *Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-Names*, CUP, Cambridge (2004), p. 629, also takes for granted the existence of an OE personal name *Trott*.

¹⁰ J.E.B. Gover, A. Mawer and F.M. Stenton, in collaboration with A. Bonner, *The Place-Names of Surrey*, CUP (Survey of English Place-Names 11), Cambridge, p. 125.

¹¹ Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, book 1: 25, in Charles Plummer, ed., *Venerabilis Baedae historiam ecclesiasticam gentis anglorum* [etc.], Clarendon Press, Oxford (1896); Gregory of Tours, *Historia Francorum*, books 1: 26 and 4: 26, in Bruno Krusch and Wilhelm Levison, eds, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis. libri historiarum X*, 2nd ed., Hahn (Monumenta Germanica Historica, Scriptorum rerum Merovingicarum I: 1), Hanover (1951), available online at http://www.dmgh.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb00000747_meta:titlePage.html?sortIndex=010:020:0001:010:01:00, accessed 29 January 2013.

¹² Ernst Förstemann, *Alteutsches namenbuch*, 2nd edn, vol. 1: *Personennamen*, P. Hanstein, Bonn (1900), columns 423 and 1399.

¹³ Wallenberg, *Place-Names of Kent*, p. 112.

¹⁴ P.H. Reaney and Richard M. Wilson, *A Dictionary of English Surnames*, 3rd edn, Routledge, London (1991), p. 455.

¹⁵ Stephen Archer, *British 19th-Century Surname Atlas*, CD-ROM, Archer Software, Dartford (2006 and updates), gives mapped data for the surname *Trott* for the census year 1881. Data assembled by the Family Names of the United Kingdom project at the University of the West of England, Bristol (2010-14), confirms the southern distribution suggested by the names cited in Reaney and Wilson's dictionary.

FAVERSHAM MAYORS AND THE THEIR RIGHT TO THE COURT HALL.
A LITTLE MYSTERY SOLVED

When the *The Early Town Books of Faversham* was completed in 2008 it was not understood why Edward Jacob, one of the distinguished historians of the town, requested the use of the Court Hall during his mayoralty in 1754.¹ His letter of request and others by different mayors have survived in the Sondes estate archives (U791/E80) for the period 1689-1720 and 1749-59. The writers have now discovered the answer – from KHLc: Fa/ Facq 21, which is thought to date from 1780 and is headed – ‘A state of the corporations right to the Court Hall’ – and included the legal opinion of a leading lawyer.

The abbot of Faversham had been lord of the manor of Faversham until 1538 when the abbey was dissolved and its lands seized by the Crown and later passed to other landowners. There was then a long dispute between the lords of the manor and the mayor and commonalty of the town over who owned part of the land on which the court hall was later built. Henry VIII had confirmed a market and fairs to the community in 1546. Charles I, by his letters patent dated 19 February 1630 granted the manor to Sir Edward Hales,² in which grant the following exceptions are stipulated:

Except always out of this present grant reserved all those stables in the Nether Court called the Palfrey Stables with a small chamber over the porch of the same stables and one granary to the same house adjoining and a certain house called a forge and also the house and close at the Thorne and a parcel of meadow containing 14 acres³ leading from the Thorne to the said Nether close gate of the late monastery of Faversham aforesaid and sixteen feet in breadth of the east part of a certain ditch without the gate part of the land called the abbey field leading in length from the south end of the said meadow unto the wharf at Thorne together with all ways and commodities to ride to the same carry and recarry by and through the said Nether Court, Milfield, Surrenden Croft and other the premises from time to time in like manner and form as sometime the abbot and convent of the said late monastery and their predecessors heretofore had used and enjoyed which said messuage or tenement in the Nether Court aforesaid and all other the premises together last mentioned (except before excepted) were late in the tenure or occupation of John Turke or his assigns.

And also all that parcel of land⁴ of the demesne and waste sometime of the monastery of Faversham aforesaid in the said county of Kent lying in North Street near the market corner there of the south part containing in length between the south and north part six perches of land and in breadth of the north part one perch and six feet of land and of the south part three perches of land upon which the said parcel of land the mayor, jurats and commonalty of the town of Faversham do use and for all the time whereof the memory of man is not to the contrary have used to merchandize

and hold their market and of late there have erected a certain house or court house called the Guildhall in the holding of the mayor, jurats and commonalty of the town aforesaid And also all that cottage encroached and erected etc (**Fig. 1**). Sir Edward Hales afterwards conveyed to Sir Dudley Digges, knight, whose son conveyed it to Sir George Sondes, knight of the Bath, and the same is now become vested in Lewis Lord Sondes and his heirs.⁵

The lords of the manor under the above grant have claimed the Court Hall and the spot of ground on which it stands as part of the foresaid manor and have refused the said mayor, jurats and commonalty the use of the said hall for transacting the public business of the town without licence first obtained of the said Lords. The question arose as to whether the court hall was excepted out of the above letters patents and so could the said mayor, jurats and commonalty make use of the same without licence of the said lord of the manor or not. The said mayor, jurats and commonalty have for many years past immediately after their election into that office wrote and asked leave of the lords to make use of the hall during the time of their mayoralty ‘till within two or three years past during which time they have declined doing it thinking they have a right to make use of it without such leave as it appears to them not to be granted with the said manor by the above recited letters patent to the lord of the said manor but on the contrary to be excepted there out for the use of the said mayor, jurats and commonalty’.

Whilst the hall is clearly excepted out of the letters patent, James Wallace of the Middle Temple⁶ was of the opinion that ‘the lord of the manor has no title, but having been so long in possession I apprehend that possession alone is sufficient title against every body else especially the corporation who have recognised his right by asking leave etc. I think it is now too late for them to contest the matter’.⁷

DUNCAN HARRINGTON AND PATRICIA HYDE

¹ Duncan Harrington and Patricia Hyde, 2008, *The Early Town Books of Faversham c.1251 to 1581*, fn 408, p. lxxxix, in Part 1.

² TNA: C66/2498 no. 5.

³ This land is now called Bolton Land and is the property of Mr James Lawson. At KHLc U791/T142 there is an original bundle of title deeds, 1739-1848, for Thorn Field formerly Bolton’s land which contains a sale particular and map dated 1848.

⁴ The mayor, etc., pay a quit rent of 4*d.* per annum to the lord of the said manor for this spot of ground.

⁵ Lewis Monson Watson, baron Sondes of Lees Court. This nobleman was born 28 November 1728, and assumed the name of Watson in compliance with the will of Thomas Watson, Earl of Rockingham, his maternal uncle. He was elected 1758 to represent the borough of Boroughbridge in the county of York, and 1754 to represent the county of Kent. He was constituted 16 February 1754 one of the auditors of the imprest in his majesty’s exchequer, which office was suppressed by an act of parliament in the year 1785. He was created by King George II baron Sondes of Lees Court.

⁶ From the admission register of the Middle Temple he was admitted to Lincoln's Inn 22 Nov. 1754 and called to the bar there 8 June 1761. Bencher 28 May 1768. Admitted to Middle Temple 2 Jan 1765 as of Lambs Building, Middle Temple, London esquire. Bencher 5 May 1769, reader Lent 1778 and Treasurer 1782.

⁷ The reference to the permissions is KHLc: U791/E80. Annual letters of application from mayor of Faversham to use the court hall for Corporation business (2 bdls.), 1689-1720, 1749-1759.

THE MORPHETT FAMILY'S EXPERIENCE OF *GAVELKIND* IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The history of inheritance within the Morphett family of Bulleigne Farm, near Small Hythe, well illustrates how eighteenth-century Kentish families managed inter-generational land transfers under the traditional inheritance system of *gavelkind*. It began with Thomas Morphett (1669-1722) who secured an interest in a large farming property through a joint venture with his distant relatives John Curteis the elder and John Curteis the younger of Tenterden. On 24 May 1711 the three men jointly took out a mortgage to purchase Bulleigne Farm,¹ a property of 163 acres located at Small Hythe in the parish of Tenterden. With the mortgage in place, the farm was then allocated to the tenure and occupation of Thomas Morphett.²

Within a few short years Thomas Morphett had bought out the interests of the Curteis family partly using his own money with the rest put up by his brother John. To clarify the joint nature of their tenure they drew up an agreement. It declared that the brothers were co-partners in Bulleigne farm with a joint and equal interest in it. It affirmed that they were each entitled to a half share including in all the gains and profits arising from the property.³

This partnership continued until Thomas Morphett died in February 1722. His sons, Thomas Morphett the younger (1712-1795) and John (1716-1753), became co heirs according to the custom of *gavelkind*⁴ of their father's half share of Bulleigne. This gave them each a quarter share in the farm while their uncle John maintained his half share and continued to reside there until his own death on the 11 December 1745. He died unmarried and with no children of his own. His will *inter alia* devised all his land and estates to his two nephews to be divided equally between them, including his half share of Bulleigne farm. Thus having each inherited a quarter share of the property from their father and a quarter share each from their uncle, both brothers now held an equal half share in the total Bulleigne Farm estate which they operated as a partnership. As was the case with their father and uncle, the cooperation between the two brothers in practice worked out well. They had a strictly informal arrangement whereby they divided the farm into two and ran each half

separately. John lived in the main Bulleigne farm house with his family, and farmed 76 acres of the pastures and fields sitting in the 163 acre property. Thomas lived elsewhere while farming the other 75 acres of the Bulleigne estate.

The cooperative farming partnership between the two Morphett brothers, based on their shared ownership of the farm, carried on uninterrupted until John died in 1753. He was only 37 years old and died intestate. He left behind a widow, Elizabeth, who continued to live at Bulleigne farm⁵ as well as two very young sons – John (1747-1808) and Jeremiah (1752-1829). Under the custom of *gavelkind* the boys inherited their father's half share of Bulleigne farm in two equal half shares giving them each a quarter share of the farm.⁶ Following John's demise, the informal arrangements he had with his brother Thomas for joint management of Bulleigne farm were left in place as the boys' young age required Thomas to run the entire farm for the benefit of both families.

These arrangements continued until 1765 when Thomas's own son John (1742-1813), announced his intention to marry Mary Paine. John's nuptials meant the need for a marriage settlement that involved the bride's father paying a marriage portion in money and the groom and his father settling a 'a joint fee tail on bride and groom'.⁷ This was known as a jointure and was devised to protect the bride's interests should she survive her husband by obliging the groom's family to grant an inheritance to the couple jointly, and usually obliging the inheritance to eventually pass on down to the lawful heirs of the recipients.

To set up this jointure Thomas Morphett drew up a new deed on 26 October 1765 covering the one quarter share in Bulleigne farm he had inherited from his father, and which he had previously put in trust for his now deceased first wife Mary. He now conveyed this to another son the Rev. Thomas Morphett and a friend Dr Wilson in trust for the benefit the soon to be married John, using the provisions of the Statute of Uses to provide John and his bride with the sole legal estate to those properties with all their benefits and profits. According to the English law of the Statute of Uses the assurance of uses set out in the deed immediately gave John the legal estate with the right to enjoy alone all its benefits. Through the operation of this statute the Rev. Thomas Morphett and Dr Wilson received no actual estate or interest in the land, for although in form the land was conveyed to them, the effect of the superadded use was to make the limitation to them a nullity.⁸

A few years later the approaching marriage of Thomas's youngest son George to Frances Jenkins required yet another recasting of his property arrangements to meet the needs of their marriage settlement and the bride's jointure. In a set of Indentures of Lease and Release signed on the 25/26 October 1769 Thomas Morphett again used the legal device of conveying the other quarter share in Bulleigne farm to his son the Rev.

Morphett and Dr Wilson, in trust for the benefit of son George and his bride. The deed required the estate to pay Thomas and Lydia his wife an annual rent charge of £15, as well as specifying that the estate be only for the use and profit of George Morphett.

The complex efforts undertaken to provide for the marriages of Thomas Morphett's sons highlighted a longer term problem facing the family. The old arrangement of a co-partnership in Bulleigne farm, which had well suited the brothers Thomas the younger and John Morphett, and before them their father and uncle was now problematic. With six male beneficiaries across the two families all entitled to inherit parts of the farm the old division of the property was now proving an unsuitable arrangement.

This issue was brought to a head in the year 1775 when Thomas Morphett was in his mid-sixties. With four sons looking to inherit his properties after his death, he felt that he needed to put in place more workable arrangements. His problem was that although he held a half share of Bulleigne farm and his nephews (John and Jeremiah Morphett) the other half share, Bulleigne remained a single property of 163 acres run in co-partnership between the three of them. The looming problem was self-evident: under the system of *gavelkind* Thomas's four sons were all entitled to inherit an equal share of his half of the property upon his death. At that point the farm with six co-partners spread over two separate families and encumbered with increasingly complex inheritance rights and rights of dower of marriage partners, would become unmanageable. The solution was to split Bulleigne farm into two separate properties to simplify the ability of each side of this family to separately devise their property down to their subsequent generations.

As a first step a deed was drawn up on 20 December 1775 in which John Morphett's widow Elizabeth released to her sons John and Jeremiah all her dower rights to her deceased husband's share of Bulleigne farm (her jointure). This gave them unencumbered ownership of their half of Bulleigne farm. With this clarified, a new set of deeds was prepared formally splitting Bulleigne farm into two separate properties. This was a complex transaction which needed to reserve each property separately to the legal estate of the appropriate family while cutting off and barring future claims of inheritance and dower which could arise out of past arrangements. Thomas, John and Jeremiah Morphett first leased the property to Richard Curteis for a year for a peppercorn rent. This document was signed on 29 December 1775. The following day deeds of partition were executed to formalise the previously informal division of the farm into two separate halves. The parties then signed a deed of release which transferred the farm's title to Richard Curteis in exchange for 10s. conditional on an undertaking giving exclusive use of one half of the property to Thomas Morphett and his heirs forever,

and separately, exclusive use of the other half of the property to John and Jeremiah Morphett and their heirs forever. Through use of this legal device permitted under the Statute of Uses, Bulleigne farm was partitioned into two separate farms with two separate and distinct legal estates with all residual cross claims of inheritance barred. From this time each side of the Morphett family was able to go its separate way secure in the knowledge that they were now free to use their half share of the original Bulleigne farm as the springboard for building their future and separate landholdings across the County of Kent.

ROBERT K. FLYNN

¹ Indenture Tripartite of 24 May 1711, Morphett/Curteis/Phillips/Gybbon, cited in Indenture of 19 May, 1714, Morphett/Curteis, Deeds of Bulleigne Farm (163a) in Tenterden DAP Box 81/6, 1714-1795, East Sussex Record Office.

² Indenture of 19 May, 1714, Morphett/Curteis, Deeds of Bulleigne Farm (163a) in Tenterden DAP Box 81/6, 1714-1795, East Sussex Record Office.

³ Indenture of 15 March, 1716, Morphett/Morphett, Deeds of Bulleigne farm (163a) in Tenterden DAP Box 81/6, 1714-1795, East Sussex Record Office.

⁴ Alan Watson in his book *Society and Legal Change* (Edinburgh 1977) notes that all Kentish lands were presumed to be subject to *gavelkind* until the Administration of Estates Act of 1925. He identifies the features of the system of *gavelkind* as customs which applied in cases of intestacy under which land passed from the father to all of his sons in equal portions, where daughters claiming in their own right were allocated second preference, where a childless widow was entitled to inherit half of the estate and, in those cases where a tenant died without issue, where the estate descended equally to each of his brothers.

⁵ According to the Indenture of 28 October 1765 between Thomas Morphett and his son John she was still resident at the farm.

⁶ Indenture of 20 December 1775, Morphett/Morphett, Deeds of Bulleigne farm (163a) in Tenterden DAP Box 81/6, 1714-1795, East Sussex Record Office.

⁷ Joseph Biancalana, *The Fee Tail and the Common Recovery in Medieval England 1176-1502* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 9.

⁸ W.D. Edwards, *A Compendium of the Law of Property in Land* (London, 1888), p. 132.

CHALKWELL SUBSIDENCE AT OAD STREET, NEAR SITTINGBOURNE

In autumn 2012 farm machinery disturbed the top of the beehive shaped brick capping of a small chalkwell at Vinson Farm, Oad Street. The exact location has been withheld at the landowner's request.

The farm manager, Mr James Mair, informed the Kent Underground Research Group who made an initial assessment on 13 September 2012. A second visit was arranged for 4 October when the site was surveyed by Paul Thorne and John Puckett.

The top of the well-constructed brick capping was found to be only 0.4m below the surface of the field. Below the base of the cap a circular shaft, initially 2m in diameter, descended into the chalk to a maximum depth

of 13m. The shaft widened as it deepened, and at a depth of 6m below the surface was 4.5m wide. At this point the excavators had commenced digging four very small chambers roughly aligned to the cardinal points. The chamber to the north was the longest at 2.8m, the other three each being 2m long. The floors of the chambers were 1.0m above the base of the shaft.

There was very little debris in the chalkwell with only a small mound of soil 0.5m high directly below the breached brick capping which probably entered when the capping was breached. Most deneholes or chalkwells have large debris cones at the base of the shaft, evidence of previous attempts at filling in the void. That this example has such a small amount of debris indicates that this was probably the first time that the shaft had been open since the excavators had made it safe when mining had ceased.

The late Jim Bradshaw examined many underground features in mid and east Kent and the form of the Oad Street example is very reminiscent of what he classified as a 'Waltham' type, so named after the area in which he first noted chalkwells of this shape.

Some chalkwells were dug by local farm labourers but the above example appears to have been excavated by a professional team as it has been dug with far more care and expertise. It would have been dug for chalk to use as an agricultural top dressing, probably in the early 19th century.

The landowner is keen to preserve the feature and it is intended to secure the top of the brick beehive cap with a circular concrete collar and place a large concrete raft over the top to prevent earth and mud being washed in. On advice from a Kent Bat Group member a small gap will be left under the cover to allow for potential bat access and ventilation.

ROD LEGEAR

ANTI-INVASION DEFENCES OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND SLOUGH FORT, ALLHALLOWS

Research by the writer in the 1970s at the then Public Record Office and in the libraries of the Imperial War Museum and the Institution of the Royal Engineers discovered, for the Thames and Medway areas, some of the more comprehensive surviving contemporary mapping and photographic cover of First World War anti-invasion fieldwork defences in Britain. In the ensuing decades these archives have been seen by various historians, leading to some research and fieldwork,¹ but they remain a less exploited historical resource. As well as systems of defence on the Essex shore of the Thames and in Kent on the Hoo Peninsula, the archives revealed spectacular and epic fieldwork lines along and behind the north coast of

Sheppey and, overland, between the Swale and Detling. There is evidence of their survival in the form of buried trench systems and some surface structures. These, and other 20th-century defensive systems, are currently being investigated by a number of participants in the Swale District study module of Kent County Council's Defence of Kent Project. The findings will be reported in this journal.

Among the sites being researched by the writer is a small one on the Hoo Peninsula at Slough Fort on the south bank of the Thames at Allhallows. Here mapping shows a fieldwork complex conceived to reinforce the fort against a German landing.² The fort, originally armed with 7-in. rifled breech-loaders, was built in 1867 during a 'Cold War' with France to protect against an enemy force coming ashore for an overland attack on Chatham Dockyard, Allhallows being a rare place of rising and drier ground in the generally marshy lower Thames hinterland with tracks and roads inland suitable for the advance of troops. The fort was enlarged in 1891 and armed with 9.2-in and 6-in. guns, powerful enough not only to impede a landing but also to strike out at heavy enemy warships and to command the Thames estuary at a distance. It was further modernised *c.* 1906, when Germany was the perceived threat, with even more powerful 9.2-in. guns which remained in position until 1918. Meanwhile, the fort had gained further importance as a Port War Signal Station (PWS). Pre- First World War planning had identified the fort as a likely target for German forces in the event of war, whether to silence its guns, to occupy the PWS or to use Allhallows as a bridgehead to move on Chatham Dockyard, perhaps attacking the more recently built major ammunition stores at Lodge Hill and Chattenden, along the way.

With this in mind, the Eastern Coast Defence Scheme (Thames and Medway) of February 1914,³ contained a contingency plan for a half-company of the resident infantry battalion at Milton Barracks, Gravesend, to move to Slough Fort during the Precautionary Period preceding war, to 'excavate fire trenches and construct entanglements so far as materials are available'. On the outbreak of war, 1½ companies of the 15th Battalion of the London Regiment and 1½ companies of the 5th Battalion, the King's Royal Rifle Corps, were to arrive and bring the defences to completion and readiness.

A plan of what might have been carried out has been prepared (**Fig. 1**). It shows the ditches of the fort filled with barbed wire and belts of entanglements enclosing the ground to the rear and sides, with traversed entrenched lines covering the eastern and western extremities of the fort. The PWS was secured within an annexed complex, with further trenches for communication and fighting, as well as barbed wire and two blockhouses. These defences were not to exist in isolation and anti-invasion field guns were deployed not far away at High Halstow, with local mobile forces earmarked.

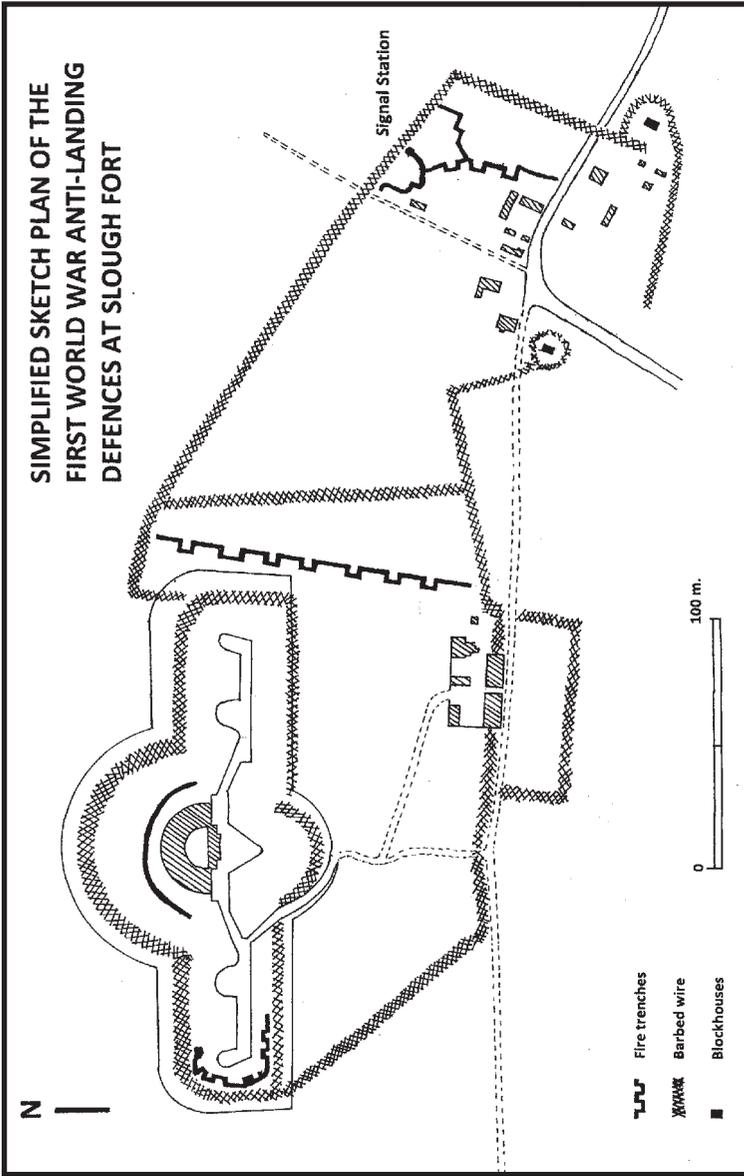


Fig. 1 Simplified sketch plan of the First World War Anti-Landing Defences at Slough Fort. (Victor Smith after NA WO78/4431.)

Although evidence of actual construction of the field defences at Slough Fort has not yet been found, it is probable that they were provided and a slight depression in the ground may indicate the infilled former location of the north-south traversed line shown on the plan at the eastern end of the fort. With the approval of Bourne Leisure, the owner of the site, and the participation of community volunteers, it is hoped to cut an evaluation trench to test for the possible presence of this defensive feature as buried archaeology. In a small way, this may contribute to our knowledge of First World War anti-invasion defences in Kent and the South-East and, depending upon the results, might also suggest possibilities for modest future enhancement of Bourne Leisure's already-started public display of Slough Fort.

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¹ By Mr. R. Curtis, Mr. K. Gulvin and, most recently, Mr. A. Anstee, as well as by the writer.

² Plans of 1919 in NA WO78/4431.

³ NA WO33/671.