

INVESTIGATIONS AND EXCAVATIONS DURING THE YEAR

I. REPORTS ON EXCAVATIONS SUPPORTED BY THE SOCIETY

Interim Report by Mr. A. P. Detsicas, M.A., F.S.A., on the Excavations at the Eccles Roman Villa.

The ninth season of excavations was undertaken by the Eccles Excavation Committee, at weekends between Easter and October, 1970, at the site of the large Romano-British villa at Eccles, in the parish of Aylesford.

The work was financially aided by the Kent Archæological Society, the British Academy, the Society of Antiquaries of London and the Haverfield Bequest of the University of Oxford. The season's excavations were again concentrated in the area of the villa's living accommodation and the results obtained may be briefly summarized as follows:

(i) Further trenching across the line of Ditch VI, beyond the southern limit reached in 1968, has provided evidence for a probable turn of this ditch to south-east which will need further exploration in 1971.

(ii) Five more rooms were added to the plan of the villa's central range; their walls had again been partly robbed but elsewhere survived to show the usual construction of ragstone and yellow mortar, internally rendered with painted wall-plaster.

(iii) The south-eastern limit of the villa's fronting corridor has now been reached at a point of some 40 ft. from the limit of the 1969 excavations; from that point onward, it continues to south-west to form the south-western wing of the house which will be explored next year.

(iv) The rear corridor of the villa was extended by approximately the same length; its walls had been almost completely robbed.

(v) A small two-room unit had been later added to the rear corridor at its south-western limit; one of these rooms had been provided with a channelled hypocaust and served, probably in its final phase, as a corn-drier.

(vi) The area to the east of this unit had been used as a burial ground and several inhumations were recorded, though it is not certain that they belong to the Romano-British occupation of the site.

(vii) Trenching was also undertaken in the area to the north-east of the main range; this part of the site had been laid with yellow mortar and, later, cut through by several domestic pits.

(viii) The south-eastern limit has also been reached of the structure provisionally designated as *Room 94*.

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A considerable amount of work still remains to be done at this extensive site and the 1971 programme of work will be aimed at continuing the examination of the villa's south-eastern wing and allied structures.

Training Course

The third Training Course in Romano-British archaeology was conducted at the site between 25th July and 8th August, 1970; it was jointly sponsored by the Kent Archaeological Society and the Eccles Excavation Committee and directed by Mr. A. P. Detsicas, M.A., F.S.A., assisted by Mr. A. C. Harrison, B.A., F.S.A., Miss H. Balsdon, Miss S. M. Emerton, Mr. R. W. Chapman and Mr. R. Lowson, B.A. Once again, the course was officially recognized for grant purposes to teachers serving in Kent under the Kent Education Committee.

Over 25 full-time applicants, from a total exceeding 100, could be accommodated locally; they included some members of the previous year's training course. The training programme provided students with practice in the field in excavation techniques and recording of the archaeological evidence, including surveying, field drawing and electric resistivity surveying as well as background talks, at noon and in the evenings, on archaeological surveying and drawing, coarse pottery, samian ware, electric resistivity surveying, site photography, small finds, prehistoric and Iron Age Kent, Kent after the Romans, Roman Canterbury, Roman sculpture, Roman and medieval Rochester, the Lullingstone Roman villa, the Eccles Roman villa, Romano-British Kent and other subjects. Two conducted tours were also undertaken with visits to the Saxon Shore fort at Richborough, Canterbury, the city of Rochester, and the Roman villa at Lullingstone; a whole afternoon was also devoted to a seminar on small finds in Maidstone Museum.

Both the organizing bodies and the director are very much in the debt of those who assisted in the general conduct of this course and ensured its outstanding success, and to the visiting lecturers, Professor D. E. Strong, M.A., D.Phil., F.S.A., Mr. J. E. L. Caiger, Mr. I. J. Bissett, Mr. R. G. Foord, Mr. F. Jenkins, M.A., F.S.A., Mr. D. B. Kelly, B.A., A.M.A., Lt.-Col. G. W. Meates, F.S.A., and Mr. P. J. Tester, F.S.A.

It is hoped to offer a fourth Training School in 1971.

Interim Report by Mr. J. H. Money, M.A., F.S.A., on the Excavations at Castle Hill, Tonbridge, Iron Age Hill-forts.

From August to October, 1970, there was a second season of work on various parts of the two forts.

It was considered that the entrance of the smaller fort, which was not found last year, might lie where the modern track enters it. Digging

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showed that there was no causeway at this point. It must be assumed, therefore, that the entrance lies within the ploughed field where the defences have been demolished, but so far it has not been located either by digging or a study of air photographs. The crest of the rampart was stripped over several yards and further evidence found of post-holes.

The main effort was concentrated on a section (93 by 6 ft.) through the ramparts and ditch of the larger fort. This showed that the fort was defended by an inner rampart about 18 ft. wide (the exact width can only be conjectured, as the tail has been destroyed by modern agriculture), which had survived to a height of only 3 ft.; much of the material had silted or tumbled into the ditch and with it all traces of any revetment or palisade there may have been (with the possible exception of what appears to be the butt-end of one palisade post-hole on the crest). Behind the rampart was a shallow depression from which some of the material had been quarried.

Between the inner and outer ramparts was a steep-sided V-shaped ditch, 27 ft. wide and 12 ft. deep, cut mainly from the natural rock. It was of much the same character as the ditch of the smaller fort excavated in 1969, but was wider and deeper.

The outer rampart, which was 30 ft. wide and had survived to a height of 6 ft., was in a considerably better state of preservation than the inner. A post-hole found on the crest suggests the existence of a palisade. There was no outer ditch.

Under both ramparts there was scattered charcoal, which probably represents the burning of brushwood, etc., before the fort was built; it is hoped to obtain radio-carbon dates on it as a means of getting an approximate date for the fort.

A search for occupation material within the fort was made behind the main section and in an area inside the entrance, some 100 yds. to the south-east. Nothing came to light apart from a few pieces of charcoal and burnt sandstone.

An examination of air photographs shows the existence of ploughed-out ramparts running across the field, thus establishing that the fort was not unfinished, as had originally seemed likely.

In 1971 it is planned to make a complete excavation of the entrance, to establish whether or not there were palisades on the ramparts and explore within the fort for occupation material.

II. REPORTS FROM LOCAL SECRETARIES AND GROUPS

Ashford Area. Mr. J. Bradshaw reports:

WYB

Due to threatened industrial expansion in an area noted for Romano-British material, the Ashford Archæological Society carried out excava-

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tions to determine the extent and dates of what had apparently been a large settlement.

The traces of a ditch at N.G.R. TR 04774730, which area had had the soil removed in 1938 to a depth of 2 ft., were sectioned; coins from the lower deposits of domestic refuse gave the dating as the last half of the first century A.D.

- (1) A corroded *as* of Claudius, probably barbarous.
- (2) *As* of Titus, A.D. 72, R.I.C. 623, in good condition.

The second area at N.G.R. TR 04934746, was industrial in character, with ironworking and primitive smelting hearths in conjunction with some other industry that required a stone floor and efficient surface drainage. The pottery and coins were of late-first century A.D. to early-third century, with a small amount of fourth-century ware. The owner of the site, Mr. R. Dockeray of Boughton Corner, Bilting, gave every assistance and is permitting further work to be carried out in 1971.

KINGSNORTH

During the spring of 1970, John Reeves of Pound Lane, Kingsnorth, found the broken remains of a cremation burial deposit adjacent to the outbuildings of Westhawk Farm, Kingsnorth, N.G.R. TQ 99904005.

At a depth between 2 ft.—2 ft. 6 in. was a large number of sherds mixed with pieces of burnt bones, the broken base of a large pot, and several pieces of thin green glass with bone fragments within the base. These, and other pieces later recovered from the filled-in hole, were the partial remains of:

- (1) The base and lower sides of a coarse-ware pot, well fired, with a slight cordon on the shoulder. There was some burnishing, and the fabric contained hard grey clay fragments, probably crushed sherds.
- (2) The broken but complete remains of a small green glass vessel, 2½ in. in height and diameter, of bowl form.
- (3) Pieces from a similar but smaller pot than number one, unburnished.
- (4) Hard, red sandy sherds from a thirteenth—fourteenth-century cooking pot.

The cremated bone fragments were from an adult and the date of their deposition uncertain, the glass vessel being middle to late-first century A.D. The most interesting feature of the find is its proximity to the crossing of Margary's Routes Four and Five and the first evidence of Romano-British influence in the area.

LYMINGE

A group of three probable bowl barrows in a Forestry Commission's plantation centred on N.G.R. TR 13854272; mutilated by a track and

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burrowing rodents. Their close proximity seems to suggest a single bank, but the northernmost mound is centred west of a common axis. The surrounding area is littered with what appear to be medieval iron-digging pits.

BLHAM

A group of three bowl barrows in a Forestry Commission plantation, the larger one to the south being cut through by a forest road and having been used in the nineteenth century as an artificial fox earth. Centred at N.G.R. TR 16104555.

OLD ROMNEY

Mr. R. J. Finn-Kelcey of Wheelsgate Farm, reported that human remains and building débris had been revealed during the ploughing of old pasture in the spring of 1970. Known as St. John's Glebe, and situated at N.G.R. TR 035254, it contained an earthen bank apparently connected to the west with the moated area marked as such on the Ordnance Survey sheets.

On examination, the burials were concentrated to the south-west and south of the building débris; and one stone-lined grave, covered by two large pieces of shelly limestone, probably *Paludina*, was removed for reconstruction in Old Romney churchyard.

The scatter of flints, mortar and broken slate roofing-tiles were suggestive of a large building; and a trial trench indicated the former existence of a structure whose east-west wall foundation was over one metre in width.

RUCKINGE

In 1970, Mr. Derek Body, of Bainbridge Farm, Ham Street, took from the side of a newly-cut sewer a Romano-British cremation deposit, consisting of three complete glass vessels and two samian vessels. This site at N.G.R. TQ 02193205 is in Romney Marsh, and a full examination of the surrounding area is to be undertaken during the 1970-71 winter.

WESTWELL

In the northern portion of this parish and to the south of the Charing-Faversham road is a field with considerable amounts of iron slag and cinder. Belonging to Mr. M. J. Preisig of Impkins Farm, the material is found in three areas centred on N.G.R. TQ 97155055 and 120 yds. apart, at 590 ft. A.O.D. The largest area at the above reference had been examined by Mr. Preisig, but nothing was found to indicate the origin, and the Ashford Archæological Society was asked to help.

A small trench was cut at each point and sufficient quantities of charcoal and burnt soil found in each to ascertain that smelting had

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occurred in the area. At N.G.R. TQ 97105061 slag, red ash and charcoal were stratified to a depth of 2 ft. 4 in. and between the lower 2 in. of ash and the natural clay two pieces of pot were found.

They were joining fragments from a slightly sagging-base pot, brown in colour and well fired, similar in texture to both Potter's Corner, Ashford, and Tyler Hill wares of the fourteenth century.

Without further evidence no conclusion is possible as to the date in which the working occurred; but in a nearby coppice wood at N.G.R. TQ 97405022, adjoining the A252 Charing-Chilham road, a large mound of undisturbed slag occurs which may be contemporary. Alternatively, this latter material may be connected with the sewage disposal unit of a 1939-45 army camp at N.G.R. TQ 97185015.

BOUGHTON ALUPH

In the area N.G.R. TR 034495 a probable Neolithic long barrow was reported to and confirmed by the Ordnance Survey archaeological team. Not yet surveyed due to dense undergrowth and trees, it measured over 37 yds. in length, 11 yds. in width, and 2½ yds. in height. As there is no sign of a chambered tomb, it is of the Cotswold earthen type similar to the one at Chilham known as Jullieberrie's Grave and the other recently recorded in Elmsted parish.

London Borough of Bexley. Mr. P. J. Tester, F.S.A., reports:

Bexley Council has reversed its decision to rebuild the North Cray medieval hall-house. This, as previously reported (*Arch. Cant.*, lxxxiii (1968), 254), was carefully dismantled in 1968 to clear the site for road widening and the timbers are at present in store at Crayford. As the Council has now declared that the cost of reconstruction cannot be met from public funds, attempts are being made by Bexley Arts Council to raise the necessary £12,000 from other sources. One can only record that the decision by Bexley Council is a grave disappointment to those concerned in preserving the building as they had been given firm assurances that as it could not be preserved on the site it would be reconstructed elsewhere by the local authority.

In April, 1970, a long Public Enquiry was held to settle the fate of the Georgian stables in Danson Park. The owners, Bexley Council, sought permission to demolish and build a store, garage and public lavatory on the site. Strong opposition came from local preservationists and also the Greater London Council. As a result the Minister of Town and Country Planning refused permission to demolish, and Bexley Council are now having to consider the repair of this sadly neglected building which is on the Statutory List under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

The mill in Bexley village, burnt out in 1966, is being rebuilt to serve

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as a public house and restaurant. This work is now well advanced and, so far as can be judged, the new building will be a faithful reproduction of the old one as regards external appearance.

SIDCUP

A plan of the earlier church at Ruxley, revealed by the excavations of the Archae-Numis Research and Development Club, has been published in the *Kent Archaeological Review*, No. 20 (Summer, 1970) and conveniently illustrates features referred to in a previous description in *Arch. Cant.*, lxxxiii (1968), 259-60.

Council for British Archaeology, Group IIA

A one-day Conference on 'South-eastern Archaeology and the Sea' was held at the Spa Hotel, Tunbridge Wells, on 28th November, 1970, and was attended by a very large audience from Kent, Surrey, Sussex and the London area. The Conference was chaired by Mr. F. H. Thompson, M.C., M.A., F.M.A., Asst. Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries of London, and a panel of speakers lectured on the Changing Coastline of Kent and Sussex, the Saxon Shore Forts, Roman and Medieval Lighthouses in South-east England, the Cinque Ports, the Thames Fortifications and the Excavation of Shipwrecks. The Conference, which interested many more people than could be accommodated, was supported by the County Archaeological Societies of Group IIA.

Council for Kentish Archaeology. Mr. P. E. Oldham, B.A., reports:

The 1970 work of the Council for Kentish Archaeology has been dominated by the largest operation so far undertaken under its Emergency Scheme. The York Street By-pass Scheme at Dover will destroy archaeological deposits in an important part of the town centre. Backed by grants from the Ministry of Public Building and Works, Dover Corporation, the Kent County Council and the Marc Fitch Fund, as well as the C.K.A., over 140 diggers from all parts of Kent worked under the direction of Mr. B. J. Philp, the C.K.A. Emergency Officer, for 90 days to uncover the important Neolithic, Roman, Saxon and Medieval remains to be expected on such a strategic site. As part of the continuing emphasis on gaining public sympathy for the work of the archaeologist, an Open Day was arranged, including an exhibition of finds from Dover and other Kent sites. Over 2,000 people visited the exhibition. (*Note: A grant of £100 was made towards this project by the Kent Archaeological Society—Gen. Sec.*)

Promotion of the *Kent Archaeological Review*, a news and instruction magazine published quarterly, has been increased with the intention of selling to the public through shops. The annual circulation already exceeds 6,000. A Young Archaeologist Award Scheme has been estab-

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lished to encourage a high standard of archaeological work among young people. The panel of lecturers scheme to provide speakers on archaeological topics has been reorganized, and an archaeological book distribution centre has been established. After the Annual General Meeting in Gravesend a series of public lectures was held, the lecturers being Mr. G. de G. Sieveking, M.A., F.S.A., Dr. F. Hull, B.A., Ph.D., and Mr. S. R. Harker.

As emergency excavation techniques are becoming increasingly important to the archaeologist, Kent's advance in this field is being widely recognized, as can be seen from a recent article in *Current Archaeology*. The Emergency Scheme has been further improved by a system of central reporting. The watching of gaspipe-laying operations and major roadworks has again been organized and evidence of previously unknown sites continues to appear. For example, the Fawkham and Ash Archaeological Group, under the direction of Mr. R. M. Walsh, is now investigating a Roman site discovered as a result of gaspipe-laying operations.

The Sixth Annual Conference held in Tonbridge in March was this time limited to Group members as the lectures provided instruction in archaeological methods of working, but over 100 people attended. The C.K.A. public liability insurance scheme now has six member groups as participants and the pool of equipment available for hire, including the proton magnetometer has been fully utilized.

Following the expansion of its work and resources, the C.K.A. has been registered as a charity.

Edenbridge and Westerham Area. Mr. J. C. Irwin reports:

In June, 1970, Edenbridge celebrated its '850 Festival', the purpose of which was to mark the 850th year of its known existence as an ecclesiastical parish. Local organizations co-operated in organizing a week of cultural activities which included a history lecture inaugurating the Festival and an historical exhibition illustrating (mainly by photographs) changes in the parish over the last 100 years.

Gravesend Area. Mr. A. F. Allen reports:

February, 1970. Edward II penny found during building work at St. George's School, Gravesend. Found in ploughsoil. No associated features or pottery, etc. Worn and may have been partly clipped. St. George's School has a photograph, but the finder, a workman, kept the coin.

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, GRAVESEND

During alterations to the eighteenth-century parish church of St. George's at Gravesend, several interesting features relating to the

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earlier church which stood on the site before the Gravesend 'great fire' of 1727, were found, and some of the features of the eighteenth-century church were changed.

The removal of the wooden floor under the pews in the north side of the main aisle, disclosed four stone column-bases in line with the Georgian pilasters at the east and west end walls of the nave. The two eastern bases were rough and though one appeared, on close examination, to have perhaps formed the base of a cluster of columns, little more can be reported of them. The two western bases, however, were cleared of the hard core which was being loaded into the space beneath the floor as the foundation of a new concrete floor, and were found to be the octagonal bases of two pillars with typical fifteenth-century moulding at the foot. It was first thought that these were part of the arcade of the old church but, on removal of more rubble, it was found they were supported on eighteenth-century brick, which was further supported on what appeared to be an older wall or footing some 3 ft. below the floor level of the eighteenth-century church. Attempts were made to discover extensions of this wall or return angles, but none were found, and its age and purpose could not be determined. Likewise, the natural ground level could not be ascertained as the building work was being conducted to a tight schedule to get the church ready for worship on the following Sunday.

The bases of the support for the present west gallery were also disclosed by the removal of the wooden floor, and one of these appeared to be another octagonal column of the same period and type as the two already described. This provided a clue as to the purpose of the four bases found on the north side, each of which had a square access cut into their tops. The original Georgian church, built in 1732, had been built with a gallery on the north side of the church, and these stone bases were obviously re-used fragments of the old church to support the wooden shafts of the gallery on the north side. When the southern floor was lifted similar supports, but this time in Georgian brick, were found along the southern side of the church having been placed there when the south gallery was built in 1818. The stone column supporting the western gallery, however, presents a slight problem. The present western gallery was not built until 1764. There is no other evidence above ground of any part of the older church, and it is difficult to explain how this could still have been available for use in 1764, though the use of the other stonework in 1732 seems logical. It should here be noted that both north and south galleries were removed when the church was enlarged by a north aisle and much other work done in 1897.

The westernmost octagonal pillar was removed and is now in the church, but the others were buried beneath the hard core and cement

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of the present new floor of the church, the eastern blocks having been broken up by the workmen.

During the work the base of the south wall of the eighteenth-century church was uncovered and was found to be constructed of ragstone blocks; it is probable, however, that this is re-used material and not evidence of the south wall of the former church having been on the same site as the present one.

The alterations now made in the interior of the church should be noted. The altar rails of 1732 have been moved back to their original position across the altar arch. The Clayton and Bell reredos presented to the church in 1898 has been removed from the east end but is still at present in the church.

The last of the Victorian wall paintings, those on the ceiling of the apse, copied from a Benozzo Gozzoli fresco at Florence and painted by the then Rector, the Revd. John Horsley Haslam in 1897, have been painted over.

A number of small finds were made, and it is hoped to include these in a paper about the church which Mr. Hiscock has under consideration.

SHORNE

In the summer of 1969, a severe heath fire on Randall Heath (N.G.R. TQ 683703) laid bare the surface of a considerable area of the sandy soil of the Heath, which is normally covered with thick bracken. Dr. and Mrs. Dalton recovered from this surface a large number of Mesolithic flint implements, which are being studied. The site is a patch of sandy heathland (mainly bracken with intruding rhododendrons) sloping sharply down to a valley in which runs a small stream. It seems unlikely the spot is much altered since mesolithic hunters camped there. It is hoped that further details of the finds will be available as the result of study at some later date.

CHALK AND SHORNE

Gas-main excavations. During July and August, 1970, a gas main of the Central Gas Board has been laid across the whole area and has been kept under observation. The main enters the district where it crosses the Thames near Shorne Mead Fort (N.G.R. TQ 690748). At this point work is still proceeding, cutting through the sea wall, and watch is being kept on this point. It then proceeds southwards crossing the A226 at a point some quarter of a mile south-east of Chalk Church, and thence south-westward to the A2 which it crosses near Marling Cross (N.G.R. 662703) and then turns westward on the south side of the A2 out of the Gravesend area.

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The following matters were observed:

(1) Approximately 600 yds. south of the Sea Wall the excavation cut through a Roman occupation area (N.G.R. TQ 691743). The state of the waterlogged clay in the cutting did not permit of any proper investigation, but the pottery found in the spoil was Roman, though of not sufficient quantity or character to make any attempt at approximate dating. The layer of reddish clay associated with this find at an approximate depth of 2 ft. suggests that it is a possible 'Red Hill' type of marsh settlement like that found about half a mile to the north-east reported in *Arch. Cant.*, lviii (1954), 213.

(2) At a point where the cutting left the true freshwater marsh to higher ground (N.G.R. TQ 690733), the cutting appeared to have destroyed a Roman pottery kiln forming another of the complex of Roman kilns reported in *Arch. Cant.*, lviii (1954), 114. Large fragments of baked clay were found amongst the upcast spoil and a few fragments of pottery, but again not sufficient to justify dating or drawing.

(3) Immediately to the south of the A226 (N.G.R. TQ 683722) the excavation cut through a most interesting complex of trenches and/or rubbish pits for a distance of some 450 ft. southwards from the road boundary. Because of the speed of the work on the gas main and the fact that examination had to be conducted whilst work was being constantly carried on with heavy machinery, it was not possible to carry out any proper excavation, the examination being restricted to noting the site and a superficial examination rather than work which would have been inevitably interrupted by the gas-main workmen and machines. The finds were measured and mapped, and sufficient material was found to establish the whole complex as Romano-British of apparently the first century A.D. A scale drawing of the sections revealed by the excavation of the pipe trench has been deposited with the Society, but the site remains to be more fully examined at some future date, if opportunity offers, though at the moment the opportunity appears to be remote, the land being under intensive cultivation.

The finds may be summarized as follows:

Approximately 50 ft. from the edge of the A226 bank a rubbish pit or trench was observed in the western side of the excavation, approximately 5 ft. deep and 6 ft. wide at the top.

Some 25 ft. south of this the gaspipe trench had been cut along the line of a ditch approximately 5 ft. deep for a distance of some 110 ft. This showed in the west side of the trench but not on the east, and no return ditches were visible in the clean chalk on the east side of the trench, so it is surmised that the length of trench is the eastern side of a rectangular entrenchment extending to the west. The ditch was cut into solid chalk with sloping sides and filled with humus earth with patches of burnt clay (perhaps a hearth) at the northern end of the filling at a

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depth of about 2 ft. A number of fragments of Roman pottery of the first century A.D. including one small fragment of samian ware without pattern or stamp but which appeared to be part of a Form 33 vessel were found. It may be noted that the profile of this long ditch ended at both ends with a shallow extension about 2 ft. 6 in. in depth extending about 6 ft. beyond the main ditch. Some 15 ft. south of this ditch the excavation cuts through what appeared to be a shallower ditch crossing the excavation at almost a right angle. This was 12 ft. wide, 2 ft. 6 in. deep on the west side of the trench but some 4 ft. deep on the east side.

Twenty feet south of this ditch was what appeared to be the remains of a shallow wall footing of flints without mortar crossing the trench. It consisted of only a layer of flints about two flints deep. On the east side of the trench this was associated with a trench or rubbish pit with a straight edge on its northern end which was beneath the conjectural wall, to a depth of 3 ft., the pit then showing a profile sloping towards the surface to the south extending to a distance of some 17 ft. On the surface at this point was found a number of Roman bricks and roofing-tiles. These were not apparent on the first inspection and were only revealed after the heavy machinery used on the work had cut into the surface to a depth of 4 to 6 in. The material was considerably damaged by the machinery, and although some water was found no certain indication of any building was revealed in the tentative excavations a foot or so deep made whilst work was going on. The surface traces extended for a distance of about 20 ft. from north to south and some 10 to 15 ft. eastward from the trench. The ground on the west side of the excavation at this point was covered by a heap of soil some 8 ft. high, but examination of what was available on the west side produced no trace of any other brick or tile, and the sides of the trench showed no strata or other sign which could be associated with this material.

Beyond this point at a distance of approximately 255 ft. from the A226 the excavation passed through what appears to be three more ditches. The most northerly was about 15 ft. wide but only 2 ft. 6 in. deep over most of its length, though underneath the southern end of the ditch was a deeper part 4 ft. deep with sloping sides about 5 ft. across. The next trench or ditch was 5 ft. beyond and appeared to be a simple ditch about 5 ft. wide at the top, 4 ft. deep, and approximately 2 ft. wide at the bottom. Continuing southwards along the trench the subsoil showed signs of disturbance and then came a third shallower trench some 2 ft. 6 in. deep and 5 ft. wide at the top. At 350 ft. from the A226 the subsoil again showed signs of disturbance for a distance of approximately 50 ft., and at 400 ft. a large, relatively shallow area of excavation appeared extending southwards for some 30 ft. Some 23 ft. of this was filled with dark earth and humus material to a depth of approximately 2 ft., but beneath this was a further irregular excavation

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some 17 ft. wide and approximately 7 ft. deep from the surface, filled with a chalky marl. This profile was duplicated on the east side of the trench. All these trenches had occupation material in them with pieces of pottery and bones. In one pit was burnt clay which had been subjected to such heat that it was vitrified, but the fragments were too small to determine what the clay represented. All the pottery so far as it could be dated appeared to be of early, probably first-century, type, and is in the Gravesend Museum.

The whole reveals a large complex of Romano-British occupation with ditches whose purpose must remain conjectural. The following additional points, however, may be noted.

The site is on the crest of a marked ridge of chalk downland on which Chalk Church stands. Many crop-marks have been observed on the site in the past though without any definite pattern being discernible. Examination of the fields had hitherto provided no clue as to the origin of these crop-marks.

The general direction of the trenches suggests that they ran from east to west for the trench whose length was cut by the gas-main excavation, suggests that the earthwork was set with its sides to the four cardinal points of the compass. It may be remarked that in the gas-main excavation on the north side of the A226 no trace whatever of any ditches or rubbish pits could be observed.

All the depth measurements were taken from the surface at the time of observation, but some 9 in. of topsoil had been removed prior to the gas main excavation being made. It is to be regretted that no proper sections to determine stratification could be made, but much of the pottery was in the lower parts of the trenches, though the burnt clay was normally about 2 ft. below the surface and some material could be found throughout the trench fillings.

It is stated by a Gas Board representative that the point where the main crosses the 4-ft. road there will be a permanent post marking the position of the main.

(4) The remainder of the pipeline to the boundaries of the Gravesend area was walked but no other discoveries were made, except that at a point near Clay Lane Wood (N.G.R. TQ 665706) the excavation went through a V-shaped trench some 3 ft. deep, but no finds could be observed in the filling.

(5) A secondary gas main in an easterly direction in lower Shorne disclosed no finds, but cut through what appeared to be the north-eastern corner of the ditch round Merston referred to in my paper on Merston (see *Arch. Cant.*, lxxi (1957), 203).

Hundred of Hoo. Mrs. P. P. Day reports:

The excavation at Eastborough Farm, Cooling, site of a Romano-

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British encampment, salt and pottery industries, has continued this season. One salient fact emerging is the changing pattern of dykes and creeks in the salt-marsh. This was also clearly demonstrated when the foundations for the power-station were excavated at Cockleshall, Grain. No occupation evidence was observed here, whereas at Eastborough a long range of dating evidence has been obtained, covering first-third centuries A.D., a longer occupation than has previously been recognized in the area on similar sites. A small exhibition based on this Cooling site has been organized for Maidstone Museum. At High Halstow, small finds of seventeenth-eighteenth centuries, mainly coins and cheap rings, were noted. These appeared in the top spit in the garden of a house opposite the church, sited in place of an old thatched cottage and shop. In this area several old French coins have come to light, believed to be connected with French seamen's trips to the 'Red Dog'—smuggling was carried on in this remote district until well into the nineteenth century. Watch has been kept on transfer of historic houses in the area; new members are in view. No unauthorized digging has taken place, as far as is known. A lecture on Roman Rochester by Mr. A. C. Harrison, B.A., F.S.A., was much appreciated by Halstow W.I. One owner at least of a listed building was approached by a private person from another county wishing to form a society of such owners; an official pamphlet setting out availability of grants (and responsibilities), and general explanations to owners or intending owners of historic buildings is available at the Citizens' Advice Bureaux.

Isle of Thanet. Mr. D. G. Scurrall reports:

At Broadstairs, work at the Saxon cemetery has continued under the direction of Mr. A. C. Hogarth, and some 283 graves have now been unearthed. A bronze brooch, a buckle, pottery and imported glass have been found. Also at Broadstairs, excavation has taken place where Haward Hearn worked about 1910, and seven graves of Anglo-Saxon date have been investigated under the direction of Mrs. L. E. Leslie Webster and Mrs. V. Fenwick, of the Department of Medieval Archæology of the British Museum.

In Margate, a chance find of a Roman rotary quern near the Tivoli villa site suggests that more excavation should be undertaken there. The Margate and Ramsgate Societies continue their efforts to retain threatened Georgian buildings, and Margate has suggested the up-grading of listed buildings in the area.

Maidstone Area Archæological Group. Mr. P. E. Oldham, B.A., Hon. Secretary, reports:

The Maidstone Area Archæological Group, which is based on Maidstone Museum and has a membership exceeding seventy, has organized the activities in its first year with the objective of providing

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basic training. Instructional lectures have been arranged at the monthly meetings and visits have been made to the Roman villa site at Lower Warbank, Keston, being excavated by Mr. B. J. Philp and to earthworks in the Ashford area under the leadership of Mr. J. Bradshaw.

As a training exercise and by kind permission of the landowner, Mr. J. M. R. Best-Shaw, a survey of Kilwood, Boxley, was conducted. Field names and land surface features were studied before a demonstration of the proton-magnetometer belonging to the Council for Kentish Archæology was given by Mr. D. T. Jackson. Trial-trenching produced sufficient bricks and glaze to confirm the proximity of kilns in an area of extensive industrial activity in the past.

Reacting to the projected rapid expansion of population in Maidstone and the surrounding villages, and the consequent rise in the pace of development, the Group has inaugurated a systematic regional survey programme to determine the nature and extent of all known archæological sites and to search for new sites. This programme should establish an order of priority in a research policy within a few years. To provide training, a pilot study of Barming was undertaken and work has started on the sites of suspected Roman buildings on Court Lodge Farm and Hall Place Farm by permission of their respective owners, Mr. L. S. Gunyon and Mr. T. Kemsley. In addition an underground chamber in the garden of Old Hall, Barming, has been recorded. As part of the scheme, the Group supported the survey of a possible Roman site at Brishing by the boys of Oldborough Manor School under the direction of Mr. A. F. Loweth.

Following information from the Ministry of Public Building and Works of plans to build a telephone exchange near the probable site of the Roman villa at The Mount, Maidstone, a limited excavation was conducted under the direction of Mr. A. Miles. Most of the site is covered by a large amount of overburden dating from the construction of the railway tunnel near Maidstone East Station, but elsewhere remains of a substantial building were confirmed.

The small building recording group has checked the lists of scheduled buildings in the area and now intends to establish a system for regular surveillance of such buildings. With the consent of the owners, Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers, a visit was organized to Wouldham Court Farmhouse, recently the subject of a public inquiry. The industrial archæology group, under the direction of Mr. R. J. Spain, has commenced an investigation of the site of an early paper mill on the River Len at Otham.

Springhead. Mr. S. R. Harker reports:

Work during the past season has been concerned with two distinct areas:

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(1) NORTH OF ROAD R.1

This has extended the scope of the 1969 operations which were mainly concerned with Road R.1 itself and the structures immediately adjacent to its northern edge. This included an area where electrical resistivity measurements were indicative of a ditch. This was not apparent in the upper levels which consisted of several gravel and chalk layers; some could be identified as paths but others had no obvious directional characteristics. There was a fair concentration of fourth-century occupational débris but little to suggest more than sporadic use during the third century. A number of shallow pits were noted including six infant burials.

Beneath the lowest gravel layer was a much disturbed occupation layer with pottery and other artifacts mainly attributable to the Antonine period but with a fair proportion dating from the second half of the first century A.D. There were many hearths; some of which must have been associated with industrial activity, including bronze- and iron-working from the evidence of iron slag and cinder, and in one area a concentration of bronze droppings associated with a small bowl hearth.

Deeper penetration revealed not one large ditch but a complex system of three almost parallel ditches running NW/SE crossing the line of a fourth roughly at a right angle. The situation is further complicated by several large pits. One of the three ditches has been traced over a distance of 100 ft. and in fact underlies the road. The remainder have not been confirmed within the current excavations, and further work remains to be done before the extent and purpose of the ditches and pits can be established. It is clear, however, that each of the ditches and some of the pits were filled quickly and did not silt up gradually. The pottery recovered from the fill is mainly of 'native' type in coarse gritted fabric, together with cordoned ware and a few sherds of *terra rubra* and *terra nigra*, suggested a mid-first-century date. This must be confirmed by further work.

(2) IN THE TEMPLE TEMENOS TO THE SOUTH OF ROAD R.1

The mortared wall located at the end of the 1969 season has now been firmly established as the *cella* of yet another temple which has been designated Temple VII. Only the foundations and the lower part of the walls have survived but it is of typical Romano-Celtic form having a *cella* 12 ft. 6 in. by 14 ft. 6 in. and external dimensions 27 in. by 29 in. (approx.). Excavation has not yet reached the point where definite conclusions can be reached on the floors and foundations or the dating of the structure which on the evidence so far available appears to be of late-first or early-second-century date.

It is interesting to note that the fallen west wall of the latter completely sealed the north-east corner of the ambulatory and the *cella*.

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Rochester. Col. E. T. L. Baker reports:

With regard to the building of the duplicate road-bridge at Rochester, watch was kept for any finds of interest. The deep foundations for the pedestrian underpass at the Strood end of the Bridge approach revealed cobbles some 2 to 3 ft. below the existing surface, appearing to be on the line of the diversion of the High Street made in 1392 when the medieval bridge was built. Very little, if anything, appeared of the line of the possible Roman road to a bridge roughly on the present line.

Rochester. Mr. A. C. Harrison, B.A., F.S.A., reports:

The Archaeological Society of Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School has continued its investigation of the area of the East Gate on both sides of the High Street at Rochester. On the south side another cellar was cleared of débris which enabled more of the wall belonging to the medieval gate-house tower to be uncovered. This was very solidly constructed of flint and ragstone, 5 ft. in width and surviving to a depth of 5 ft. 6 in. The opportunity was taken to cut another section across the Phase I Roman ditch and some useful pottery was recovered from its silt.

On the north side of the street this same ditch was found to continue for 12 ft. inside the front wall of the old Mathematical School building and to come to an abrupt end at this point. This would seem to confirm the suggestion made last year (*Arch. Cant.*, lxxxiv (1969), 242) that the Roman road and the Roman east gate did not coincide with their medieval successors at this point. As this area is about to be redeveloped, it is hoped that this very important site will be fully excavated next year.

Tunbridge Wells Area. Mrs. M. E. Davies, B.A., reports:

Two lectures, both held at the Adult Education Centre, were much enjoyed, although attendance fell somewhat short of expectations. The first, on 8th April, was given by Dr. Felix Hull of the County Archives Office, Maidstone, who took as his subject 'Kentish Place Names'. The second, on 12th May, was by Lieut.-Col. G. W. Meates, F.S.A., who spoke on his recent excavations at Stone-next-Faversham.

(The Hon. Secretary of the Branch takes this opportunity to explain to the three members, whose names are unknown to her, and who arrived early for the first lecture and left again on being told that no lecture had been arranged, that this was an error on the part of their informant—not a K.A.S. member!)

At the Southborough Society's Open Day, on 17th May, the Branch

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Secretary mounted an exhibition on The Kentish Hop Industry. Material was very kindly lent by the Tonbridge Historical Society, the Tunbridge Wells Museum, and Messrs. Whitbread.

Several 'finds' in the area reported to the Secretary included more mesolithic flint artifacts from Southborough Common, and a mould for making farm tokens (described elsewhere in this issue).

The Secretary would like to put on record her appreciation of the help so readily given, in spite of his other commitments, by Mr. K. W. E. Gravett to local members studying the history of old houses in the area.

She much regrets to have to announce the sudden death of Mrs. M. K. Norwood, who joined the K.A.S. in 1962 and had been a staunch supporter of its activities throughout the ensuing period. Her presence at local and county outings and at local meetings will be much missed.

Wealden Archaeological Research Group. Mr. A. B. Cardwell reports:

The Wealden Archaeological Research Group was to have begun excavating the Roman remains at Farningham Farm, near Cranbrook, this year but postponed this project and turned instead to a more recent iron-working site at Hammermill Farm, Biddenden.

On this site, which is thought to have closed in the latter half of the seventeenth century, the 'bay', or dam, of its original pond, and much of the man-made channel, which once conveyed the water to turn the foundry wheels, are still clearly defined. It seems likely that the site will be found to contain both blast furnace and forge.

Excavation has been started to locate the site of the furnace at the foot of the bay, and abundant brick and tile débris, which is in places at the present soil surface, has facilitated this preliminary work. There is much evidence here of furnace workings: slag, roasted ore, burnt brick and stone and deposits of ash.

By following the layers of brick and tile rubble, the wheel-pit was found, its rim lying some 4 ft. below the present surface and its depth as yet unknown. It is loosely filled with bricks and tiles which must have slid into it as the building decayed. Remnants of timber shoring clearly define the sides of the pit, and it is still an underground watercourse. Its wet clay provides recreation for a large number of contented leeches and, although these creatures make undesirable companions, they do help to delineate the buried parts of the leat which powered the bellows.

Prominent among the small finds so far discovered are fragments of clay-pipes, which fortunately include some bowls; only a few potsherds have been found.

Next year the watercourse will be further excavated, and it is hoped that this will help to orientate exactly the furnace building which can then be uncovered.

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West Kent Border Archæological Group. Miss E. M. Mynott, Hon. Secretary, reports:

The West Kent Border Archæological Group has been very active throughout the year and membership has continued to expand. The Group's activities have been varied and include the following:

(1) *Training scheme*

The Group undertook its fourth year of excavation on the extensive Roman and Iron Age sites at Lower Warbank, Keston. The Bromley Training School, run in conjunction with the London Borough of Bromley, was continued for the third successive year. More than 100 people of all ages were given instruction in excavation method and technique. The first part of the course consisted of lectures (for the first-year students), processing finds, drawing plans and sections (second-year students) and research work (third-year students). On the site at Lower Warbank work was concentrated on the south wing of the main villa-block and on the Roman and Iron Age structures. In October the site was again opened to the public and more than 3,000 people were given conducted tours of the site. The work was directed by Mr. B. J. Philp, with supervisors Messrs. G. B. Clewley and D. N. Broadfoot, assisted by the resident team of archæologists. A grant of £75 was kindly given by the C.B.A. for this training school.

(2) *Field surveys*

During the winter months field surveys were carried out in the Keston and Farnborough areas. These field surveys, designed to locate previously unknown sites, were started in 1957 and have continued each winter since. Many new sites, of various periods, continue to be found.

(3) *Trial excavations*

As a result of this year's field surveys trial excavations took place on two newly discovered sites in Farnborough. One proved to be a Romano-British farmstead site and the other contained a substantial post-medieval boundary wall.

Trial excavations were also undertaken in a large private garden to the north of the Roman cemetery at Warbank, Keston.

(4) *Operation Gaspipe*

Two new gaspipe lines in the West Kent area were followed for many miles. Mr. E. Connell directed the watch on the Westerham pipe-line and several members, under Mr. B. Philp, kept watch on the Fawkham-Farningham-Dartford line. Several important new sites were found.

(5) *Emergency work*

Priority is always given to emergency work and a watch has been

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kept on building developments in the area. In the spring rescue work was carried out at the Iron Age hillfort at Squerryes, Westerham, and a large contingent from the West Kent Group helped on the large-scale rescue excavation at Dover in the summer.

(6) *Air surveys*

Part of the Group's work in locating new sites was a series of air surveys. Flights were from Biggin Hill and proved to be very interesting and informative.

(7) *Conservation*

As a contribution to European Conservation Year, work was carried out on three important archaeological sites. A bank and ditch on Hayes Common and sections of the ditches and ramparts at the Iron Age hillforts at Holwood, Keston and Squerryes, Westerham, were cleared of the dense undergrowth and small bushes. These features will thus suffer less from root disturbance and can more clearly be seen by the public.

(8) *Research Centre and Publications*

On three evenings each week work has continued in the Group's Research Centre in Bromley. Finds are processed, and sections, plans and drawings are being prepared for publication. The Group's recent publication *A Walk through Keston* has now sold out.

(9) *Preservation of buildings*

Members attended the second enquiry into the proposed demolition of Priory Outbuildings, Orpington. The Minister confirmed the preservation order, but as yet the London Borough of Bromley has made no plans for its restoration.

(10) *Ringway 3*

The proposed line of Ringway 3 passes through Keston and Farnborough. The ringway, of motorway specifications, would spoil one of the finest pieces of unspoilt countryside left near London. Field surveys and excavation work are being carried out ahead of the roadway scheme. Formal objections have been raised by the Group, in conjunction with C.P.R.E., and representatives will be attending the enquiry.

(11) *Jumble sale*

The main source of income for the Group is the annual jumble sale. This year it proved to be a great success and over £120 was added to the Group's funds.

(12) *Winter lectures*

The fourth series of winter lectures on Kentish archaeology for members of the public began in October in Bromley. These monthly lectures are well supported and have proved to be very popular.