

## INVESTIGATIONS AND EXCAVATIONS DURING THE YEAR

### I. REPORTS ON EXCAVATIONS SUPPORTED BY THE SOCIETY

*Interim Report by Mr. P. J. Tester, F.S.A., on the Society's Excavation at Leeds Priory.*

The second season's work, during 1974, has added materially to the information given in the last interim report (*Arch. Cant.*, lxxxviii (1973), 211–12). It is now possible to determine that the monastic church was over 250 ft. long and about 70 ft. wide across the main body of the building, excluding the transepts. Both nave and presbytery were apparently aisled on both sides from end to end, the former being of five bays. One respond base of the nave arcade is intact and its character indicates Decorated work of the late thirteenth- or early-fourteenth centuries. At the west end, the marble cill of the main doorway is in position just below the present ground surface, with remains of a narrow narthex covering the entrance.

Twelfth-century work remains in the south transept where Caen stone was extensively used, the ashlar being close-jointed with marks of diagonal tooling. An apsidal chapel projects from the east side of this transept towards its southern end. Traces of tile-mosaic paving, similar to that discovered at Boxley Abbey, occur on the transept floor.

Apparently the Norman presbytery was rebuilt on ambitious lines, probably in the thirteenth century, and in its later form was longer than the nave. So far, its remains are only represented by very thick rubble footings, and architectural details are lacking. All this evidence justifies Philipot's statement that the church was 'parallel to many cathedrals'.

Further examination of the chapter house entrance has produced fallen voussoirs bearing embattled and other forms of carved decoration in addition to the chevron and billet previously recorded. Several fine pieces of Norman figure-carving also occurred including a capital—presumably from one of the shafts flanking the entrance—showing men in combat with beasts.

In the north alley of the cloister, two aumbries occur in the south wall of the church, and here also the tiled threshold of the main doorway between church and cloister has been revealed with a curved internal step to allow for the inward swing of the door. On the south side of the cloister are remains of the first-floor refectory with traces of a flight of stone steps to the entrance situated towards the west end. By the entrance is a deep recess which accommodated the *lavatorium*. Between

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the end of the refectory and the east range occurs a passage passing from the cloister through the south range.

Further work is to be undertaken in 1975 to determine the lay-out of the Norman church buried below later work, and the east and west claustral ranges also need investigation. It is satisfactory that so much has been already discovered in only two seasons' work, totalling not more than six weeks of excavation. This is due to the persistent energy and enthusiasm of a relatively small body of our members, assisted by numerous occasional helpers, to all of whom gratitude is expressed for their support. The dates of periods of excavation during 1975 will be announced in the quarterly Calendar.

### *Interim Report by Mr. A. P. Detsicas, M.A., F.S.A., on the Excavations at the Eccles Site.*

The thirteenth season of excavations was carried out by the Eccles Excavation Committee at the site of the Roman villa at Eccles, in the parish of Aylesford, from March until November, 1974, during weekends and for a continuous fortnight in July.

Financial support for this excavation, which was conducted entirely by volunteer labour, was again granted by the Kent Archaeological Society, the British Academy, the Society of Antiquaries of London, the Haverfield Bequest of the University of Oxford and private donors; grateful acknowledgement is here made to all these benefactors and to the many unpaid helpers who made this excavation possible.

The season's work was concentrated on several areas of the site beyond the points where excavation was suspended in 1973 and may be summarised as follows:

(i) Excavation of Ditch VIII (*Arch. Cant.*, lxxxvii (1972), fig. 2, 106) was completed; its back-filling of domestic refuse dates from the late second century to the third century A.D.;

(ii) Ditch X (*Arch. Cant.*, lxxxviii (1973), fig. 1, 74) was again sectioned to east and west of the 1973 points; its complete length is not yet known, but the evidence secured confirms previous years' work;

(iii) The excavation of the Anglo-Saxon cemetery has also been completed, though it is not impossible that further burials may yet be found (*Ibid.*, 78). Close to the presumed south-eastern limit of this cemetery, a series of large post-holes may yield the plan of a building associated with it, but further work is needed in this area before any conclusion can be drawn;

(iv) Ditch XI (*Ibid.*, 74-5) was also sectioned; its back-filling contained a large layer of painted wall-plaster debris, almost certainly belonging to the reconstruction of the villa c. A.D. 120;

(v) Work was continued in the area where medieval occupation

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was established in 1973; its results await evaluation in the light of further excavation in 1975;

(vi) Additional trenching was undertaken beyond the western limit of the third bath-house (*Ibid.*, lxxix (1964), fig. 1), which has added several structural details to the plan of features lying immediately outside the south-western wall of the baths.

### *Training Course*

The seventh Training Course in Romano-British archaeology and excavation techniques was based on the site between 20th July and 2nd August, 1974; it was jointly sponsored by the Kent Archaeological Society and the Eccles Excavation Committee, under my direction and assisted by Mr. A. C. Harrison, B.A., F.S.A., Mrs. H. Lowson, B.A., and Mr. R. Lowson, B.A. This course was again recognised, for grant purposes, by the Kent Education Committee for the training of its teachers.

Thirty students, from this country and abroad, were accepted for this course, and training was given in excavation techniques, field survey and recording, as well as background talks, mid-day seminars and evening lectures on several archaeological subjects; conducted tours were also undertaken of Richborough Roman Fort, the Roman light-house at Dover, the city of Rochester and the Lullingstone Roman villa.

Both the organizing bodies and the honorary director are in the debt of all concerned with the general conduct of this training course whose willingness to offer their unpaid services continues to be a greatly appreciated gesture of support; I am especially grateful to Mr. A. C. Harrison, B.A., F.S.A., for offering to undertake more than he was asked and thus ensuring that my own burdens were considerably relieved, and to the visiting lecturers, Mrs. S. C. Hawkes, M.A., F.S.A., Mr. J. E. L. Caiger, Mr. R. G. Foord, Mr. F. Jenkins, M.A., F.S.A., Lt.-Col. G. W. Meates, F.S.A., Mr. P. J. Tester, F.S.A., and Mr. F. H. Thompson, M.C., M.A., F.M.A.

It is hoped to offer an eighth Training Course in 1975.

## II. REPORTS FROM LOCAL SECRETARIES AND GROUPS

*Fawkham and Ash Archaeological Group*, Mr. R. A. C. Cockett reports:

### ASH

Construction of a road at Westfield, New Ash Green, brought to light three further ditches at N.G.R. TQ 60556495 near to those found at Manor Forstal in 1973. Only one ditch contained pottery, but this was dated to c. 100 B.C. by Lt.-Col. G. W. Meates, F.S.A., and thus antedates the 1973 ditches by more than a century.

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The broken tip of a flint Thames Pick was found in topsoil during the construction of this same road some 200 m. to the west.

Nearly two hundred flint tools and flakes have been found on the surface of ploughed land which was formerly White Ash Wood at N.G.R. TQ 61106480; the British Museum have given a Neolithic date for these tools.

A tanged and barbed flint arrow-head was found in a garden at 127 Punch Croft, New Ash Green, N.G.R. TQ 60456525 by the occupier who retains it.

The reputed mill mound in Turner's Oak Shaw at N.G.R. TQ 60456555 is now known to be the spoil from a pond dug early this century; the information is from an eye-witness to the work.

### HARTLEY

A 'hoard' of thirteen Paleolithic flints was found in the corner of a shed being demolished in Ash Road at N.G.R. TQ 60406650. They comprised eight twisted ovates, one Acheulian axe, three smaller axes and an iron-stained Clactonian flake. Mr. P. J. Tester, F.S.A., who identified them suggests that they may have been gathered locally in the nineteenth century and intended for the collection of a local antiquary.

Continuing work at the medieval site of Scotgrove, N.G.R. TQ 602664, has completed the ground plan of the structure located in 1972. This consists of the flint-footings of what appears to have been a timbered hall-house with a timbered extension to the west and a mortared flint extension with an undercroft to the east. A bronze buckle and other bronze and iron artefacts as well as a moderate quantity of pottery were obtained from a shallow pit outside the north-west corner.

A silver King John 'short cross' penny bearing a London mint-mark of 'WALTER ON LV' was found in topsoil near the south-west corner of the Scotgrove enclosure bank.

The correction to the name of the site is made on the advice of Mr. F. W. Proudfoot, who is conducting documentary research into the history of Scotgrove.

### LONGFIELD

Removal of topsoil from the chalk hillside for extension of Martin's Quarry, Pinden Farm (N.G.R. TQ 59456970) has revealed an area of Iron Age and Romano-British occupation. Six ditches cross the site and their intersections indicate two or perhaps three phases of construction; other features include circular and rectangular pits and several post holes. Pottery has been recovered in substantial quantities;

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fragments of iron slag and wattle-imprinted cob were also found. The site clearly extends some distance eastwards along the hillside.

We were very fortunate in receiving advice and encouragement from several of the Society's officers during the excavation.

HUNDRED OF HOO. Mrs. P. Day reports:

A limited excavation on the west side of North Street, Strood, proved inconclusive. No evidence was found to substantiate Romano-British occupation recorded during the nineteenth century; it is possible that this occupation may be located closer to the line of the modern road.

At Decoy Farm, High Halstow, investigation of crop-marks suggests a salt-panning site, with finds of briquetage and Romano-British pottery; a fuller report is under preparation.

MAIDSTONE AREA ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP. Mr. P. E. Oldham, B.A., reports:

Membership of the Group, which undertakes work in excavation, field survey, building recording, industrial archaeology and local history, exceeds eighty, and a monthly newsletter informs members of Group activities. Good progress has been made on pottery processing at the Group's headquarters, part of which has been adapted for exhibitions.

Areas threatened by development are investigated, including trial-trenching at 60 High Street, Maidstone, by permission of Messrs. Laing Development Company and planning applications are constantly reviewed. Regional surveys have been undertaken at Aylesford, Brising (jointly with Oldborough Manor School), Offham and Teston. Moated sites are also being investigated, in collaboration with the Moated Sites Research Group, beginning with work at Nott Hall, Bearsted. Other sites are examined on information collected by the aerial survey section, which has received a grant from the Department of the Environment for the surveillance of the projected M20 route.

The Group has participated in efforts to protect Stone Cottages, Willington, 7-11 Ashford Road and 11 Lower Stone Street, Maidstone; efforts to prevent the demolition of 2 Bedford Place, Maidstone, have brought about the refusal by the Secretary of State of permission to demolish, and the building has now been purchased by Maidstone District Council for restoration. Most buildings on the statutory lists have been checked, and the Group's building section is assisting in a survey of vernacular architecture by Manchester University; buildings have been examined in Hart Street, Maidstone, Martins Farm, Boughton Monchelsea, and Newnham Court Farm, Boxley. The indust-

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rial section has completed its research into the history of brewing in Maidstone, and it is hoped that the report will be completed early in 1975.

In September 1973, members of the Maidstone Area Archaeological Group undertook a programme of trial-trenching on the east side of Church Street, Maidstone (N.G.R. TQ 76165595), following the demolition of the cottages, 1-8 Church Street, and with the kind permission of Messrs. Marks and Spencer Ltd. Sherds of thirteenth-century pottery, associated with broken cockle-shells and grit, were found close to Church Street in a shallow ditch about 0.50 m. below the present surface. Some sherds of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century pottery were found in the topsoil elsewhere on the site, but there were no signs of any building. No finds of Romano-British material were made although, in December 1935, a hoard of fifty-eight *sestertii* was found about 20 m. from the site (*Arch. Cant.*, *xlviii* (1936), 249-50).

*London Borough of Bromley.* Mrs. Susann Palmer, M.Phil., reports:

### ORPINGTON

The excavation of the Fordcroft Romano-British building was continued this year on behalf of the Bromley Borough Council. Three rooms have been fully excavated and several areas around the building explored. An apsidal room, partly cleared last year, can now be confirmed as part of a bath-house; close to this room lay another bath of rectangular shape. Much hypocaust debris has been found, but no *pilae in situ*. The walls of the building are 2-3 ft. wide and still stand to an average height of 4 ft.; they are built of flint, bonded with *opus signinum*. A thick deposit of silt, covering the remains, suggests that the building may have been deserted as a result of flooding and subsequently robbed of building material. Some of the walls of the building continue on the south side under Bellefield Road, but on at least two of the other sides a cobbled courtyard surrounds the building; on the west side, the courtyard is at a higher level than elsewhere, suggesting a house standing on a slight slope above the River Cray. A small area across Bellefield Road was partly explored but, as no walls were found, it is clear that the limit of the building lies under the road. An Anglo-Saxon cremation burial was found in this area.

### MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS

Among the objects given to the museum during the year, of particular importance is a collection of site books, plans, maps and archaeological notes as well as slides of the late Mrs. N. Piercy-Fox, F.S.A., relating to her researches on Wickham Common, Keston and Westerham.

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KENT DEFENCE RESEARCH GROUP. Mr. V. T. C. Smith reports:

Following the discussion at the conference of local secretaries on 17th March, 1973, a group of members with a common interest in the history of artillery fortification in Kent formed a branch of the Society, called the Kent Defence Research Group; its purpose is the planned recording and research of forts, batteries, pill-boxes and other defensive works built since the introduction of firearms, with ultimate aim to prepare for publication a comprehensive report on the development of artillery fortifications in Kent. Detailed information is being collected and reports on individual works are being compiled; a list, showing the name, location and nature of defensive works is already well advanced. A photographic survey of the Thames defences is almost completed, and further documentation is proceeding. A paper on the artillery defences at Gravesend appears elsewhere in this volume.

Excavations on the site of the Tudor blockhouse at Milton, Gravesend, have revealed substantial foundations, and further work is to be carried out in 1975 to complete the plan of the structure. Representations have been made to the Gravesham Borough Council for the preservation of New Tavern Fort, Gravesend, and two pieces of ordnance have been obtained for mounting and display at the fort. The Group successfully applied, through the Kent Historic Buildings Committee, for the scheduling of Cliffe Fort as a historic monument. The defences of the Medway are also being studied by Mr. D. R. Barnes. Fort Horsted was threatened in 1973 by re-development; however, following a public inquiry, planning consent was refused and the fort is now a scheduled building. A pair of metal gun-port doors from Garrison Point Fort, Sheerness, has been recovered for preservation. At Dover, study of the defences is undertaken by Messrs. T. D. Crellin, J. Gaunt and K. Parfitt. Preliminary work on the harbour defences and the Western Heights fortifications has been carried out and a record has been made of Fort Burgoyne and a number of batteries within and outside the Dover area.

The Group welcomes assistance from local secretaries and, in particular, reports concerning possible re-development of defensive works. New members are required, and anyone interested should contact Mr. D. R. Barnes, at 24 Walters Road, Hoo, Rochester, Kent, ME3 9JR.

DARENT VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRAINING SCHOOL. Miss E. Mynott reports:

A training school was sponsored, in July 1974, by the Darent Valley Archaeological Training School, in conjunction with the West Kent Archaeological Group and the Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit (C.I.B.). Twenty-five students were chosen, all sixth formers from West

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Kent secondary schools. The scheme was again supported by grants from the Kent County Council and the Kent Archaeological Society whose help is gratefully acknowledged.

As the training school was held during surveying along the line of the new Dartford to Swanley motorway, the training excavation took place on one of the sites about to be destroyed, a late-Iron Age site in the parish of Sutton-at-Hone newly discovered by the Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit. The main emphasis of the school was on practical work in excavations techniques and the use of tools; the students also undertook two field surveys on the line of the proposed motorway, processed many of the finds and visited Lullingstone Roman Villa, Eynsford Castle and Fort Farningham.

The site excavated was that of a late-Iron Age farmstead, covering at least two acres. The major enclosure was circular, with a deep V-shaped ditch, and flanked by a small cattle enclosure to its south; an eastern drove-way led to the main entrance. Storage pits and post-holes were located and domestic rubbish, containing pottery, bones and quernstones, was recovered.

DOVER ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP. Mr. T. D. Crellin reports:

Investigations by the Dover Archaeological Group included the following items:

A hand axe, probably of the Acheulian period, was found on a field at Finglesham Farm (N.G.R. TR 332541) and a subsequent field survey recovered a number of Neolithic flints. A well was fully excavated in a field at Worth (N.G.R. TR 334556) to a total depth of 8.07 m., and many sherds, pieces of leather and flints were recovered from its filling; the earliest pottery may date from the thirteenth century. A well, approached by an adit in the cliff behind the demolished Scotts Dye-works, was recorded in Snargate Street, Dover (N.G.R. TR 317408), and it seems probable that this well was dug in connection with the Grand Shaft Barracks. During drainage works, a length of flint walling and part of a structure, resembling a pier, were exposed near Woodnesborough Gate, Sandwich (N.G.R. TR 330576), but complete investigation proved impracticable. An artificial cave was discovered below the surface of the churchyard and the vaults at the back of the cemetery at 'Old' St. James' Church, Dover (N.G.R. TR 323416); it consisted of two central pillars and a manger-like feature behind them, and a partly completed opening into an adjoining cave, largely filled with chalk rubble—no dating evidence was found. Two features were recorded on Whitfield Recreation Ground, Whitfield, Dover (N.G.R. TR 303453), a U-shaped ditch or gully and a shallow U-shaped ditch or pit; pottery and pot-boilers from the former feature may indicate an Iron Age date.



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At Dover Castle, Miss H. S. Ames is watching, on behalf of the Department of the Environment, work for the construction of a new drainage system, and remains of medieval walls and a late-medieval drain have been recorded within the Keep yard.

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