



Roman Surrey

AD 43-410



The invasion and its aftermath

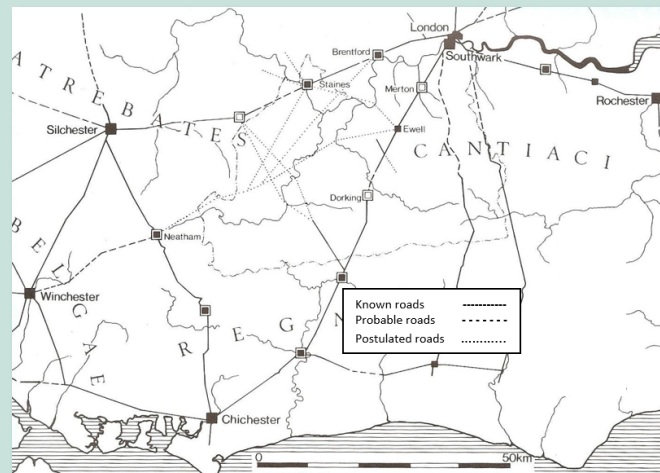
Although there is little evidence for a military presence in Roman Surrey following the invasion of Claudius in AD 43 (pictured in this silver *denarius* from Frensham), it is likely that campaign forces under future Emperor Vespasian crossed the county. In 1976-8, excavation at



the site of the Petters Sports Field, Egham (*right*) uncovered an early ditch and associated palisade, which – along with a bronze military harness mount of mid-1st century date – may indicate an early military post, possibly related to the aftermath of Boudica's revolt. (Photos: David Graham and David Bird)



Roads and roadside settlements



Roman roads in Surrey are often postulated, but few other than Stane Street have been accurately plotted. However, excavations at the roadside settlement of Flexford from 2009-2015 found evidence of an east-west road which ran along the ridge to the north of the Hog's Back and may have connected Winchester to London. A trench placed across this metalled road showed it to be 12m wide – including the ditches either side – and in use from the 2nd to 5th century, as dated by late Roman coins such as this rare copper alloy nummus (*right*, struck between AD 408 and 423). (Map: David Bird; Photos: David Calow)



Metal Detecting

If undertaken responsibly, detecting can make important contributions to archaeological knowledge. Detectorists are reminded that it is illegal to trespass – remember all land has an owner! – and to record finds with their local Finds Liaison Officer and the Portable Antiquities Scheme. For more on the Code of Practice, see



www.finds.org.uk

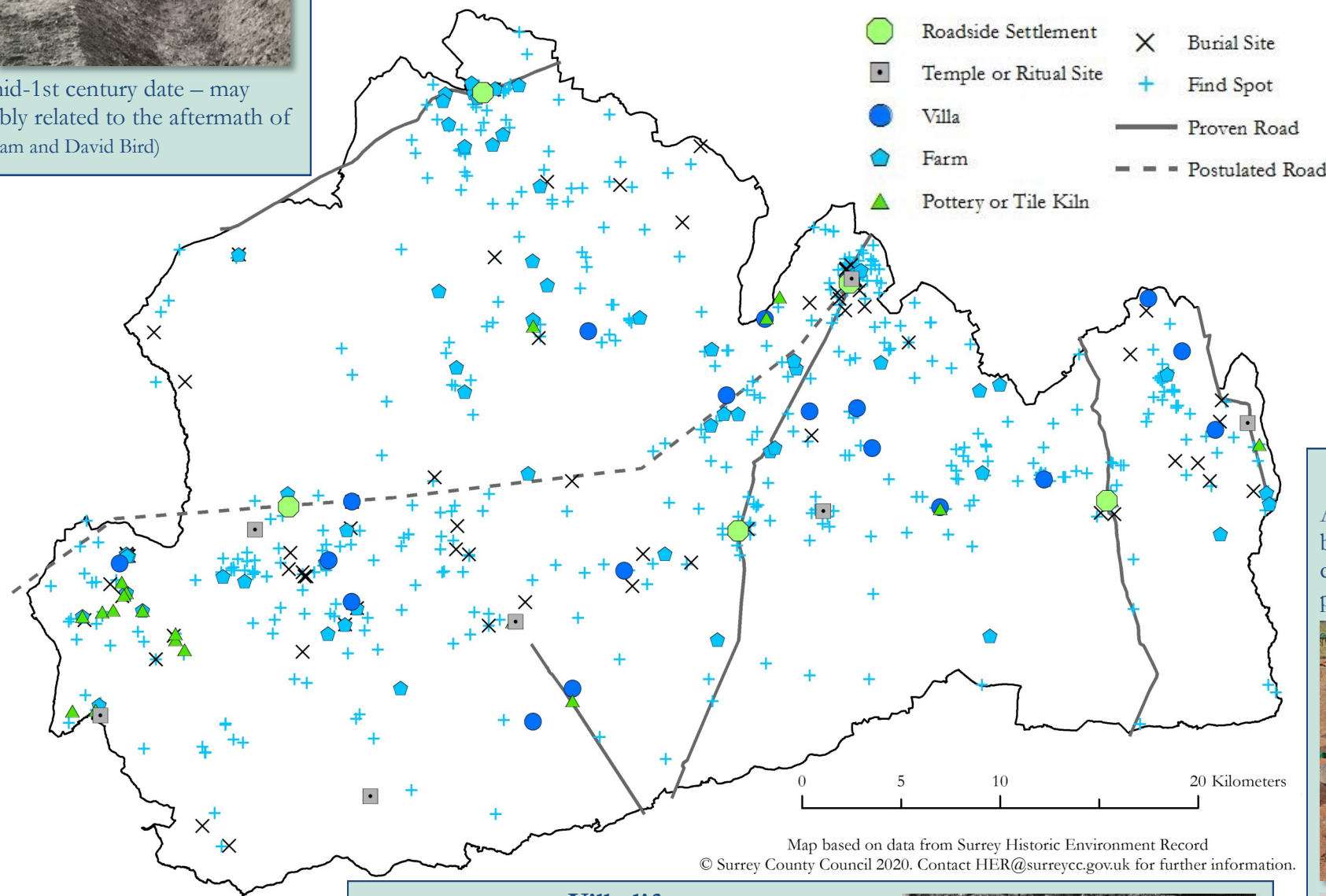
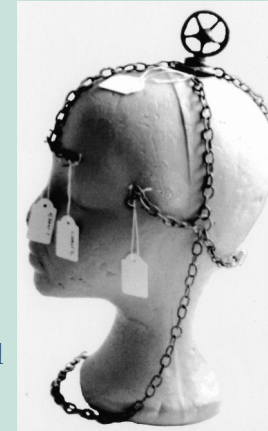
Burials and beliefs

Although there are cremation vessels from a small number of early sites (see Alton on the Hampshire border, *right*), relatively few inhumations – the dominant later burial type – are known in Roman Surrey. Burials were often accompanied by grave goods – such as the Samian ware bowl (*above*) which furnished a burial from London Road, Staines – and situated outside of settlements, often lining the roadsides. At Beddington, coffins – one lead, one stone – were discovered near the church, and more recently two lead coffins were unearthed in a quarry near Bletchingley. (Photo: David Bird, David Graham; © Wessex Archaeology)



Ritual ceremony

Characteristic 'Romano-Celtic' temple buildings are known at Wanborough (*below*), Titsey and Farley Heath. Personal items were frequent offerings at these and other ritual sites – shoes, jewellery, weapons, coins, toilet articles and even special stones as at Ewell's ritual shafts – and head-dresses (*above*) and the bindings for other clearly ritual items, such as the sceptre from Farley Heath (*right*), also indicate the important ceremonial function these sites held. (Photo: David Bird; Drawings: David Williams)



Villa life

Although there are as many as 30-40 villas suspected to have existed in Roman Surrey, these rural buildings were exceptional and often incorporated luxury features including under-floor heating, baths, mosaics and painted wall plaster. Most were excavated in the



late 19th or first half of the 20th century, such as the early 3rd to late 4th century house and bath complex at Six Bells (*above*) in Farnham, whose dig in 1946-7 involved German POWs. Abinger villa, well-known for its mosaic floor (*eff*), was first dug in 1877 and re-excavated twice since the 1990s, with recent work indicating the site's multi-period activity. (Photo: AWG Lowther; Emma Corke)



Industry and production

Although Roman Surrey lacks high quality iron ore or building stone, there is an abundance of woodland and clay beds, which resulted in its first major industry: pottery and tile-making. A number of kiln sites are



known, including Dockenfield which produced mainly roofing tiles (*left*), whilst Ashted was a major industry producing all kinds of tiles including box-flues for heating systems (*bottom left*). The Alice Holt pottery industry manufactured coarse, grey kitchen ware from the 1st to 5th centuries which dominated the



southeast markets, and though many kiln sites – such as Kingsley (*bottom right*) – are across the Hampshire border, a number are known around



the Farnham area. (Photos: David Graham & David Bird)