

Volume 90 abstracts

The Early Saxon cemetery at Park Lane, Croydon

The Early Saxon cemetery at Croydon was first discovered in the late 19th century, when c 104 5th-7th century items - grave goods and burial urns - were recovered during the construction of terraced housing along Edridge Road. The investigations reported here relate mainly to the Wessex Archaeology excavations (1999 and 2000), and incorporate the findings from the 1992 Museum of London Archaeology Service evaluation of the site and a reappraisal of the Edridge Road material in the light of the recent finds. The Wessex Archaeology excavations uncovered all or parts of 46 Saxon inhumation graves and two cremation burials, representing those on the east side of the cemetery. A high proportion (72%) of the graves contained goods, comprising weaponry (33%) - including four swords - jewellery (13%) and several high status items, including a bronze bowl filled with hazelnuts. The finds indicated a predominantly 6th century date, with a range potentially extending from the late 5th to late 7th/early 8th centuries. The cultural affinities indicate links with the South Saxons, with limited Kentish influences and sparse Anglian ones. While there was relatively good preservation of organic remains including textiles, horn, wood and skin/leather, the human remains were poorly preserved with small quantities of bone recovered from only 48% of graves. A late Roman/early post-Roman inhumation burial - of plaster burial form - was found on the east side of the Saxon cemetery, perhaps indicating at least one influence on the choice by the Saxons for the location of their cemetery.

An Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Headley Drive, Banstead

An Anglo-Saxon cemetery of the 7th century AD that was unexpectedly encountered during housing development near Tadworth, in Banstead parish, in 1986, was the subject of salvage excavations. Despite problems resulting from poor recording of the excavations, the finds receiving little immediate conservation, and the reburial of the skeletal material, it is possible to investigate and discuss many aspects of what proves to be an interesting and important site, even though the grave goods are few.

The swords of the Saxon cemetery at Mitcham

The purpose of this paper is to gather together and interpret for the first time the detailed information on the seven surviving swords from the pagan Saxon cemetery at Mitcham. What follows is an appraisal of these weapons in the light of a recent lengthy investigative project undertaken by the authors. This looked into the background of each weapon, the accurate recording of measurements, evidence for manufacturing methods of blades, hilts, guards and pommel arrangements and a suggestion as to their combat usage. The weapons are put into context and explained in the light of contemporary comparative material across Europe. The Mitcham cemetery, with its higher than usual number of swords (at least thirteen), affords a greater amount of information to be drawn upon than is usually the case. Although the varying quantities of weapons in pagan Saxon burials may have more to do with differing regional ritual practices (Härke 1989, 59; 1990, 22-43), Mitcham does at least afford, through its seven surviving swords, the chance to consolidate a greater amount of information on roughly contemporary swords from the same site. Of approximately 238 burials at Mitcham, 47 were weapons burial rite graves, and at least thirteen of them contained swords. This compares with 272 inhumation burials incorporating 66 weapons burial rite graves and 27 swords from Sarre in Kent; 106 inhumation burials incorporating 49 weapons burial rite graves and five swords from Gilton in Kent and 151 inhumation burials incorporating 38 weapons burial rite graves and nine swords from Alfriston in Sussex. It is likely that the Mitcham sword total was higher than the confirmed figure of thirteen.

The peasant land market on the bishop of Winchester's manor of Farnham, 1263-1349

This paper explores the nature of the peasant land market on the bishop of Winchester's manor of Farnham in the period 1263-1349, as revealed by the entry fines recorded in the Winchester pipe rolls. The aim is to demonstrate, first, that inheritance was the pre-eminent means by which land was transferred from one tenant to the next. Secondly, the paper suggests that despite the large amounts of purpresture available, the visible inter-vivos land market was surprisingly muted. Purpresture was land recently brought into cultivation which lay outside the ancient tenurial structure of the manor. Nevertheless, at Farnham, this new land tended to be absorbed into the standard customary holdings and remain within the family, thereby stifling the growth of an active market in land. This was a distinctive feature of the manor's pattern of landholdings. Finally, the paper also reveals that the bishop of Winchester might intervene to prevent the accumulation or fragmentation of customary tenements. Thus, lordship appears to have been a powerful factor in the evolution of the peasant land market on Farnham manor.

The archaeology of 151-153 Bermondsey Street, Southwark

The article describes archaeological excavations at 151-153 Bermondsey Street, Southwark. The earliest recorded occupation, which was confined to the area of the site lying immediately adjacent to the street, was contemporary with the construction of Bermondsey Street possibly as a causeway. The land was reclaimed from marshland in the late 12th century. Documentary evidence indicates that the site lay within the northern precinct of Bermondsey Abbey at this date and that it may have been delineated by a stone precinct wall on the eastern side of the street. No evidence for a precinct wall was uncovered, but remains of a late-medieval building, which may have fronted Bermondsey Street, were found. This building may have stood until c1580. Three major phases of post-medieval construction activity were recorded, including a major rebuilding phase dated to after 1660, and incorporating medieval building stone and ceramic building material probably robbed from Bermondsey Abbey. Photographs and drawings indicate that the late 17th century buildings were still standing at the end of the 19th century, when they were in use by a currier and may previously have been occupied by a wool stapler. During the 18th and 19th centuries the marshy hinterland behind the street frontage was used for various industrial processes associated with the leather industry.

An analysis of accounts for repairs to buildings in the Royal Park of Guildford in 1514

The manor house and the main entrance lodge of the Royal Park of Guildford were repaired in 1514 and the accounts provide a wealth of factual information about the work carried out. In particular the names of the craftsmen and labourers are given, together with the days on which they worked over a 28 week period and the wages they received. The materials used are also itemized with the names of the suppliers and the purchase and transport costs. The buildings no longer survive and the accounts provide only indirect information on their character and the nature of the work involved. However, by analysing and interpreting the accounts in detail, some conclusions have been drawn. The wider significance of the results is discussed.

An evaluation and excavation of Iron Age and Roman occupation at Mansfield Road, RAF Chessington, 1994

A series of evaluation trenches and an excavation at Mansfield Road, Chessington, revealed a number of ditches and associated finds. A small assemblage of pottery dating to the mid-Late Iron Age through to the 3rd century AD suggests continuing activity on the site over this period. The small number and poor condition of the finds indicate that the site was perhaps an

impoverished farmstead or was peripheral to a more densely settled area. A number of well-preserved grain samples recovered from the site provide an insight into crop growing and processing for this region.

A Roman tilery at Doods Farm, Reigate

This report brings together references to a number of discoveries of Roman tile in the vicinity of the former Doods Farm, Reigate, now the junction of Doods Road and Doods Way with Wray Common Road (TQ 266 507) which taken together strongly suggest the site of a tilery. The report also describes the results of limited excavations in the gardens of three houses on the site and identifies tiles from Doods Farm among those supplying Roman London.

Excavation of Roman and medieval deposits at the rear of 29-55 High Street, Dorking

This report describes an excavation and watching brief to the rear of 29-55 High Street, Dorking. A small number of archaeological features of Roman, medieval and post-medieval date was recorded together with a few Saxon finds. The most notable structural find was a late medieval well.

Excavation at Borelli Yard, Farnham: the tile kiln

This report describes the excavation of a roof tile kiln built with great brick, voussoirs and tile which is dated on archaeological and documentary grounds to 1200-20. Products from this kiln have been identified in Farnham Castle and Bishop's Waltham Palace. The connections between the Borelli Yard kiln and those in Farnham Park and at Guildford Castle and Palace are explored. Important documentary evidence for tile production at Highclere (Hampshire) is examined to illustrate the organization and running of the roof tile industry.