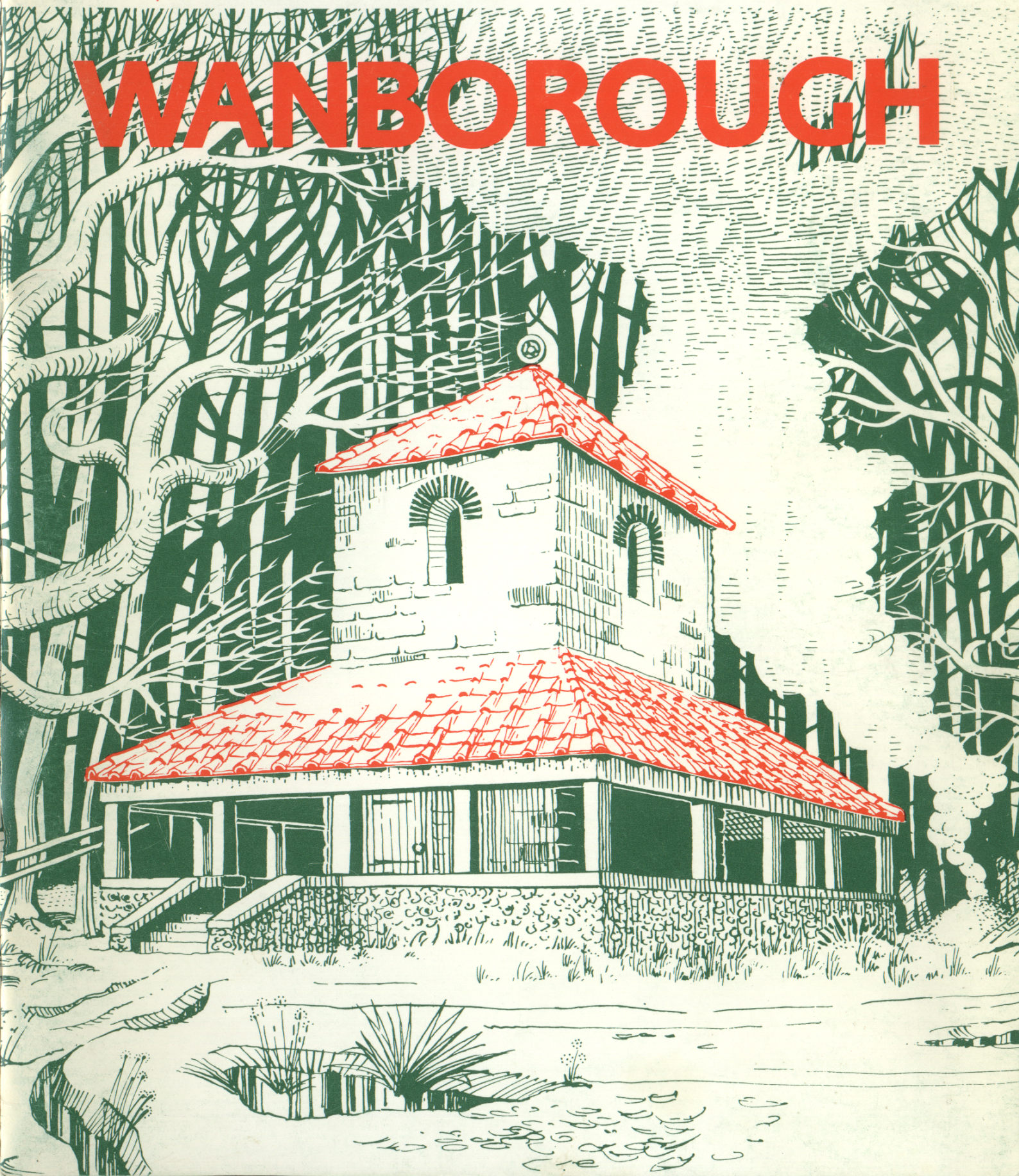


the
ROMAN TEMPLE

WANBOROUGH



Ancient coin finds at Wanborough are treasure trove

£5,000 towards cost of dig

Servicemen accused of ancient coins theft

HUNDREDS of valuable ancient coins unearthed by fortune seekers in a Wan-

one to dig in it except Surrey Archaeological Society. He said that he was not a finder himself and that he had used the field to grow crops.

came from the same hoard — most of them came from the area which had been disturbed and all relate to one another." Dr. John Kemp, keeper of

that this was a treasure trove deposited by a particular person who meant to retrieve them."

"This is not a grave situation where money has been deposited for a dead person and the owner has abandoned it. It has all the classic characteristics of a hoard, and should be treated as such."

During evidence from Drs. Bird and Kemp there were murmurings of discontent from several of the finders seated at the back of the court. These reached a crescendo at the end of evidence when a finder, whose finding was not the subject of the current inquest, stood up and complained. He said that the inquest had not been held properly and was

one-sided. His demand allowed to give evidence rejected and he was as leave the court by the door. Summing up, the coroner iterated the questions to

"That the coins were of or burial offering, so be discounted. Though know of a temple in the is dated later than the. The mix of coins and value also seem to exclude or burial offering."

* Verdicts of treasure were returned by juries previous inquests into fi of coins from the site.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS working on the site near Wanborough were given a boost in the form of a £5,000 cheque to help towards the cost of the project.

Oil firm Conoco — itself undertaking explorations of a different kind a few miles away at Normandy — presented the money, which represents a quarter of what the "dig" is expected to cost.

Significant finds of pottery and other artefacts are being made, despite what Surrey

TWO men appeared before Farnham Magistrates' Court this week accused of stealing more than £20,000 worth of ancient gold and silver coins from the treasure trove site at Wanborough Hill.

month or so later and stole a further £4,000 worth of coins, and this forms the basis of another charge.

Mr. Pocknell is accused of returning between February 2 and July 3 and stealing another five coins worth £700.

Farnham magistrates adjourned the hearing until

Experts move in at Iron Age site — after the looters

LOOTING at a Surrey site by people with metal detectors — thought not to be associated with well-established detector clubs — has cost archaeologists what they describe as an enormous loss of information about Surrey's past.

The site is at Wanborough, where the discovery of some of the most important Iron Age

Unfortunately, at the subsequent inquest, at which the coins were declared treasure trove, the location of the site was revealed. This led at once to larger scale metal detecting in which deep holes were dug into stratified levels.

About 200 more coins were found and declared to the British Museum; various Roman bronze artefacts were also discovered, some of which have been seen by qualified people but without adequate

Epaticcus, Tincommius, Epillus and Anted... are represented. The site was presumably of major religious significance, and some of the Roman finds that have been glimpsed suggest that a religious use may have continued on the site in that period.

Said the archaeological society: "It has proved almost impossible to protect the site from determined looters, whose only interest lies in the money they can gain from

CBA NEWSLETTER

September/October 1985

Detector looting results in rescue excavation

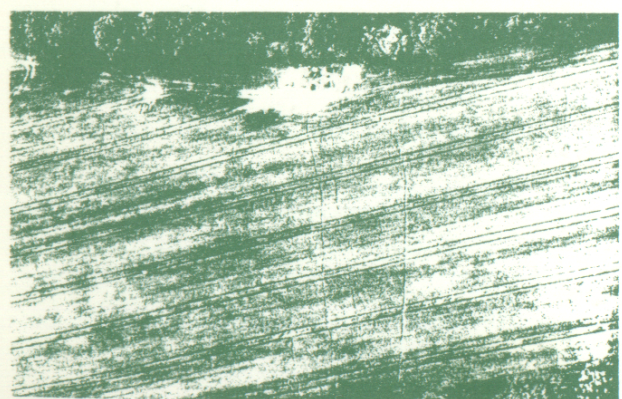
The activities of treasure hunters on an important new Iron Age and Romano-British site in Surrey have become so destructive that the Surrey Archaeological Society has found itself obliged to mount a major rescue excavation to salvage information before it is removed or destroyed.

A detector user working on a footpath in Surrey, just below the crest of the Hog's Back, discovered a dozen or so important Iron Age coins in 1983. The coins were properly reported to the Museum in Guildford and the finder was requested not to make the location of his find public, a request with which he was happy to comply. At the subsequent inquest, however, that location was divulged by the Coroner, and as a result a group of detector users from a nearby town began operations on a much larger scale than the finder of the original coins. Their efforts were well rewarded: some 200 coins, mostly late 1st century BC and early 1st century AD, including a number of previously unknown types, were reported — in this case to the British Museum rather than the Guildford Museum, with whom the detector users' relations were less than cordial. A substantial Treasure Trove award was made at the inquest that followed (though the detector users have made very public their dissatisfaction with the level of that award.)

Following the second Treasure Trove inquest, a new group arrived on the scene — treasure hunters of the most unregenerate and irresponsible kind. Operating at night, they dug enormous holes all over the footpath and the adjacent field, to the fury of the owner of the land, who had not hitherto been greatly put out, since the work had until then been confined to a public footpath, the ownership of which was apparently in dispute. The damage to his standing crops was such that he felt obliged to employ the services of a security firm to protect his land, but even this did not result in any appreciable diminution in the level of looting.

There is evidence that over 2000 coins and an incalculable number of metal artefacts have been taken from the site and sold into the antiquities black market; items from the site have been shown to have reached Europe and even the USA. There have been a number of successful prosecutions, since the Surrey Constabulary has felt obliged to

(contd overleaf)



Aerial view of Wanborough (Surrey) site, showing treasure hunters' tracks through standing corn to site (top centre). Photo: David Graham

Treasure trove sites plundered at night

By JOHN WEEKS Crime Staff

MILLIONS of pounds worth of historic coins are being plundered from treasure trove sites by teams of fortune hunters who operate with metal detectors in the middle of the night.

The racket came to light when more than 5,000 coins were stolen systematically from land owned by Lord Taylor of Hadfield, chairman of Taylor Woodrow, the builders, at Wanborough, Surrey.

The coins, mainly from two Celtic tribes called the Atrebaetes and the Catuvellauni, are valued at between £500,000 and £1 million.

Only about 900 of the gold and silver coins, believed to have come from the coffers of a religious temple dating back to about AD80, have been recovered so far.

Sites 'ruined'

Det. Sgt. Alan Bridgman, from Farnham, has discovered that the fortune hunting has

Plunder coins 'taken abroad'

POLICE investigating the plundering of ancient coins worth more than £3 million from a field have extended their inquiries into Europe.

Detectives believe more than 5,000 gold and silver Celtic and early Roman coins have been illegally dug up from the estate of Lord Taylor, founder of construction firm Taylor Woodrow, at Wanborough, near Guildford, Surrey.

It is thought that many of the coins, worth up to £3,000 each, have been smuggled by Hadfield, founder of Taylor Woodrow, to dealers in Belgium, Switzerland and Germany. A few have even turned up in New Zealand.

Target

The field became the target of night-time treasure hunters with metal detectors after a hoard of coins from around 140 BC was found in 1982. Now the site is under constant police surveillance.

"The plundering has been highly organised," said a Surrey police spokesman.

The metal detector world is becoming a shadowy sub-culture with hundreds of people ready to make fast money without asking too many questions.

"In this case it is likely there is a small number of people at the top using others."

Nine people have been convicted of offences involving coins from the field, and another nine are awaiting trial.

ROMAN SITE LOOTED

By GUY RAIS

LORD TAYLOR of Hadfield, founder of Taylor Woodrow, is mounting an all-night guard on a wheat field on his Surrey estate after looters with metal detectors dug up Roman coins.

The field at Wanborough, near Guildford, is believed to be the site of a Roman temple and in exploratory excavation was carried out by archaeologists some years ago. The coins being removed are of gold and silver.

Before leaving on a business trip to Canada yesterday Lord Taylor said: "These vandals have been tramping across the recently-sown wheat field and digging it up in their search for these Roman coins."

"I plan to preserve the field until we have harvested the wheat, hopefully in August if we have a good summer, and then arrange a proper dig."

Dr David Bird, Surrey's county archaeologist, said: "At first two or three local people found a few coins which they took to Guildford Museum, and there was a treasure trove inquest."

Historic site plundered

By John Ezard

It was, until this time last year, an undistinguished wheat field at Wanborough near Guildford, a small corner of the property of Lord Taylor of Hadfield, founder of Taylor Woodrow. "Tranquil" was the word used about it nostalgically by Surrey police yesterday.

A bridle path runs nearby and a Celtic settlement is known to have stood there, dating from the battle of King Tincommius of the Atrebaetes, the dominant tribe south of the Thames, against the invading Romans. A small hoard of Celtic and Roman coins found in the field in 1982 was sent to the British Museum. But it remains as quiet as for most of the past 2,000 years.

Then last August a treasure trove inquest disclosed that 14 Celtic and Roman coins worth £2,000 had been discovered somewhere in the area. And the metal detector mob moved in, doing what they always do. "They went to the local library, read up the history books — and got a grid reference," said police Sergeant Alan Bridgman. "An hour

after the inquest, a dozen men were on the site."

A second treasure trove inquest last February announced that 234 coins to the value of £30,000 had been found and handed in. Police and British Museum staff estimated that by yesterday a further £250,000 worth had been stolen by hundreds of men digging with metal detectors at night.

The site has been attacked and trampled by people from all over the country," said Sgt. Bridgman, the officer in charge of investigating one of the biggest campaigns of plunder since detectors were invented. "They disappear when police arrive. They have trampled the wheat to nothing. The field now closely resembles the Somme battlefield."

Investigations have taken Surrey police officers all over Britain and to the Continent to investigate sales of the coins in Belgium, Switzerland and Germany. They believe these have been bought and marketed through all levels of the British antiquities trade.

"The trade has not been very fussy," Sgt. Bridgman said. "They all know the origin of these coins — a sudden

GOLD diggers are flocking to the Hog's Back by moonlight and looting the land of ancient treasure.

The looters — usually armed with metal detectors — have robbed the area of several hundred gold and silver coins, many of which have now ended up on the black market.

Local archaeologists are outraged at the night-time activities and have described the people responsible as "cowboys."

Landowner Lord Taylor has now hired a guard and mounted patrols on his fields.

The night watch, which was set up on the suggestion of the police, has paid off. Twice the alarm has been raised and the police have swooped. So far nearly a dozen looters have been arrested.

"We are now investigating the incidents and charges could follow," said Det. Supt. John Hurst of Guildford police.

It has been known for some years that land around Wanborough Hill held ancient remains. An exploratory dig in the 1970s revealed the presence of Iron Age and Roman material. It is thought a Roman temple could be buried in the area.

Trouble on the Hog's Back began earlier this year when the site was identified during a treasure trove inquest, accord-

by Geraldine Banks



Lord Taylor

Occasionally he sees their torches in the distance but by the time he gets to the field they have gone.

County council archaeologist Dr David Bird said this week he was "appalled" by the digging on the Hog's Back.

"It's tragic," he said. "It is one of the most important archaeological finds in Surrey in the last 20 to 30 years and now it is being destroyed by these cowboys. There is no knowing

5,000 ANCIENT COINS STOLEN

By Our Crime Staff

More than 5,000 ancient gold and silver coins have been taken from a treasure trove site in Surrey, mostly going to dealers in foreign countries, including Switzerland and Belgium, police said yesterday.

The site in Wanborough, is on land at the home of Lord Taylor of Hadfield, chairman of the building company Taylor Woodrow and has been plundered by hundreds of amateur treasure-seekers over the past year. Nine have been convicted and a further nine are awaiting trial.

the

ROMAN TEMPLE

at

WANBOROUGH



SURREY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY
Castle Arch
Guildford

PRIVATE FARM

Police informed and we agree to prosecute persons found digging in our fields that have been sown with wheat, barley, etc.

Further, there is danger, because also our farm team are constantly out shooting vermin... You have been warned - so, please keep out...

The sign on Lord Taylor's farm.

Introduction

In 1968 an agricultural worker, the late Mr. C. J. Sage, who lived in Green Lane at Wanborough, reported to Guildford Museum that he had found Roman pottery and roof tile when a nearby field had been ploughed. As a result the then curator of the Museum, Felix Holling, and Rosamond Hanworth of the Surrey Archaeological Society went out to see the site with him. They noticed too that what looked like the footings of a masonry wall were projecting through the mud at one place in Green Lane. They wrote a short note for the Society's *Bulletin* 49, for January 1969, and there matters rested for several years.

Eventually, in 1979, the Archaeological Field Officers, Martin O'Connell and Rob Poulton, employed by Surrey County Council, were able to carry out a trial excavation in Green Lane, uncovering part of a wall which seemed semi-circular at one end as though forming an apse. Their excavation was very small, but a geophysical survey amplified and confirmed what they had found as well as showing that there might be other buildings. Unfortunately, no further work was possible at this time and the report of this excavation was published in Volume 75 of the Surrey Archaeological Society's *Collections*. Meanwhile, in 1983 some metal detector users got in touch with Guildford Museum to report that they had found coins, of both Iron Age and Roman Republican date, in the lane close to Martin and Rob's excavation. This led to a coroner's inquest to determine whether or not the coins were Treasure Trove.

Unfortunately in the proceedings which took place in 1985 a former coroner made public the exact location of the find, with the disastrous result that in early 1985 a new breed of treasure hunters descended in droves on the site.

This part of Green Lane is owned partly by Surrey County Council and partly by Lord and Lady Taylor of Hadfield, who farm the land to its south. The treasure hunters trampled all over the farm land, scrambling to dig up whatever they could and make off with it. It is now clear that many hundreds, perhaps thousands of coins were looted from the site. The original finders had acted responsibly; those who followed did not. To camp out in the woods by night; to wander around private property, incidentally causing considerable alarm to householders; to ruin a growing crop by trampling through it and by digging very large holes is at least anti-social.

We in the Surrey Archaeological Society watched these events with growing dismay. That spring we wrote to Lord Taylor asking whether we might mount a rescue excavation to retrieve what we could, for study and conservation, for this was clearly a very important archaeological site – how important, this booklet sets out to explain. Lord and Lady Taylor were interested and very helpful, and granted permission for an excavation to take place later in the year, once the remains of the crop had been harvested. That gave us time to plan and mount an excavation, but it also gave the looters more time in which to ravage the site.

Conoco Ltd. made a generous financial contribution towards the financing of the excavation. Seen here viewing the progress of the dig after the cheque presentation are (from left to right) Lord Taylor of Hadfield, Viscountess Hanworth, President of the Surrey Archaeological Society, and Mr. Jeff Tetlow, Conoco's onshore production manager.

The Organisation of the Excavation

English Heritage, the statutory body, had been approached for support and funding by the Surrey County Council very early indeed in the proceedings. Unfortunately they were not, at that time, able to fund any work. Had they been able to at an early stage it is likely that much more of this nationally important site could have been saved. Later on they did find that they could extend to us both practical and also financial help, for which we are very much indebted to them. As it was, clearly the Surrey Archaeological Society, as guardians of Surrey's archaeology, had to shoulder the responsibility of taking action. A committee was set up, a team of excavators was assembled, and a large initial donation having been made by the Society's Council, an appeal for more funds was launched.

The response to our appeal was generous in the extreme, as can be seen by the list of donors at the end of this booklet. It took the form of large grants of money, practical help of gifts and loans of equipment including a site hut, blankets, calor gas and even a cellular telephone system as an alarm in times of emergency. Individual donations came in from many members of the Society while several academic societies and their members gave



advice and campaigned on our behalf. Once the excavation started, in September 1985, the work was carried out jointly by a team of professional archaeologists working alongside volunteers, many of whom had considerable previous digging experience. Digging took place seven days a week and was led by Martin O'Connell of Surrey County Council who was present on site almost every day for the entire excavation. Surrey has always had a particularly happy relationship between amateur archaeologists and professionals. This is not the case everywhere up and down the country, but where it can be achieved everyone gains. This relationship was certainly tested out in November and December of 1985. For long periods the rain was unrelenting, it was cold, the ground was slimy and there were uneasy nights for those who stayed to guard the site. It was necessary for someone to stay on the site all the time; even so raids occurred and we had to install an infra-red burglar alarm system to save diggers from having to stay awake all night.

Particular mention must be made of the work of the Surrey Police. Vigilant, cheerful, undaunted they patrolled the lane through daylight and at night doing their best to protect the site and to prevent the depredations of those gentlemen whom they, and we, sensed were never very far away. It is sad to say that at the end of all their efforts, which included following up clues not only in this country, but elsewhere in Europe and even in the United States, such is the law of the land that only a tiny number of people were brought to justice, and only a tinier number still were ever convicted. It is very difficult to place a monetary value on what was taken, but the total value may well have been in excess of £2 million. The total amount of fines imposed amounted to less than £2,000.

Many attempts have been and are being made to reform the law of Treasure Trove. As it stands to-day a landowner has no effective redress and theft of property is virtually condoned. What could be studied, conserved and made available for all to enjoy is being used for the clandestine enrichment of greedy people who do not spare a thought for the fact that they are destroying the nation's heritage.

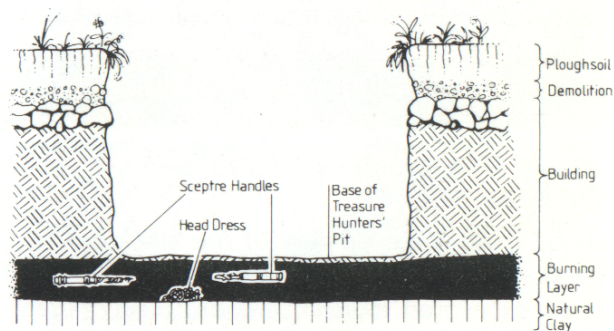
It is due to the joint efforts of those who generously donated in response to the appeal and those who worked so hard both on the site and behind the scenes that we are able to present to you in this small booklet, the results of the rescue excavation which took place between late September 1985 and early January 1986. During that short period there was revealed one of the most important finds of its period in Surrey.

Archaeological Investigation

Modern archaeology is founded on the principle of stratigraphy, borrowed from geology, which says that what is lower down in the soil should be earlier in time than what is above it. On archaeological sites which have been occupied for a long time several layers may have accumulated, one above the other, and obviously the nearer they are to the surface, the more recent they are. Unfortunately real life is not so simple, for as the layers build up people dig down through them – rubbish pits, ditches, trenches for wall foundations, holes for posts, etc. – and so complicate the picture. Luckily, even when backfilled, these features all leave their mark, and the archaeologist can identify them by careful cleaning of the soil and noticing the various colour changes. These different holes in the ground often contain in their fills pieces of rubbish such as broken pottery. These fragments are collected by the archaeologist and recorded as coming from their respective features. They can be used, with care, to date the features and levels associated with them. In this way archaeologists can establish that a particular site is, say, of the Iron Age, or they can date the different phases in the life of a Roman villa.



The Wanborough site in 1985, prior to excavation, showing the damage to the standing crop and to the remains of the Roman temple beneath. The tracks of the treasure hunters across the field to the woods can also be clearly seen.



Left: Detail plan of part of the temple showing the distribution of some of the items of priestly regalia. The red areas represent the extent of the holes dug by treasure hunters from which other objects have been removed.

Above: Reconstructed section through a hole dug by a treasure hunter illustrating how close the vandals had come to removing important objects from their original context.

These features and layers are vital to the archaeologist and often survive only as ephemeral traces in the soil. They can be easily destroyed by careless digging and cannot then be reconstructed. Anyone digging from the surface can cut into or through features and damage them. This is why archaeologists are concerned about any disturbance of the soil, for instance by deep ploughing or mineral working, or by the unscrupulous treasure hunter using a metal detector, who is prepared to dig through undisturbed archaeological features to remove metal objects, and thereby both damage those features and possibly take out important dating evidence. This is not to say that everyone with a metal detector acts in this way, far from it. But unfortunately those who do can cause much damage to archaeological sites. So it was at Wanborough.

The Site

The site lies a little to the north of the Hogs Back, the well-known chalk ridge between Guildford and Farnham, where the North Downs dwindle to a width of only a few metres. To the north is the London Clay, overlain in places by the sands and clays of the Bagshot Beds, and elsewhere by other more recent alluvial deposits such as river gravels. The Roman site is on the Clay proper, an unpleasant subsoil for the archaeologist, whether wet (when it is too sticky to work properly), or dry (when it is too hard).



DAVID WILLIAMS

Above: The problems of wet weather archaeological work on London Clay. Wanborough in December 1985.

Right, Top: View of part of the site after excavation showing the cumulative damage caused by treasure hunting. Middle, left: The site being planned in detail. Middle, right: The interior of the cella being excavated. Bottom: General view of the site during excavation.

The original positioning of the temple is today difficult to visualise because its site is crossed by a green lane. It seems to have stood on a slight rise in the gently undulating countryside. Today the lane is unusually quiet and surprisingly peaceful despite being so near Guildford, except when owners of four-wheel drive vehicles or motorbikes choose to use it, churning up the track into a muddy morass. It passes through fields and areas of ancient woodland, the latter presumably little changed since at least Roman times.

Archaeological work was concentrated around the areas obviously disturbed by the looters, in field and lane. It was quickly found that there had been far more damage than was apparent on the surface, for clearly one large hole, once it was finished with, had then been backfilled with the upcast from the next, and so on, and only the most recent were still open. The hedge had been undermined from two directions and in one long stretch it was mostly dying off. In all it was calculated that at least 300 square metres had been destroyed in archaeological terms, and over this area the crop had also been ruined. Much of the archaeological investigation was concentrated in one large trench, readily divided into two halves because one end had been destroyed but the other, containing the building, only partially so. Fortunately most of the Roman temple, as the main building turned out to be, had survived, but the area which would have given the archaeological evidence for the original deposition of the coins had been almost totally lost.



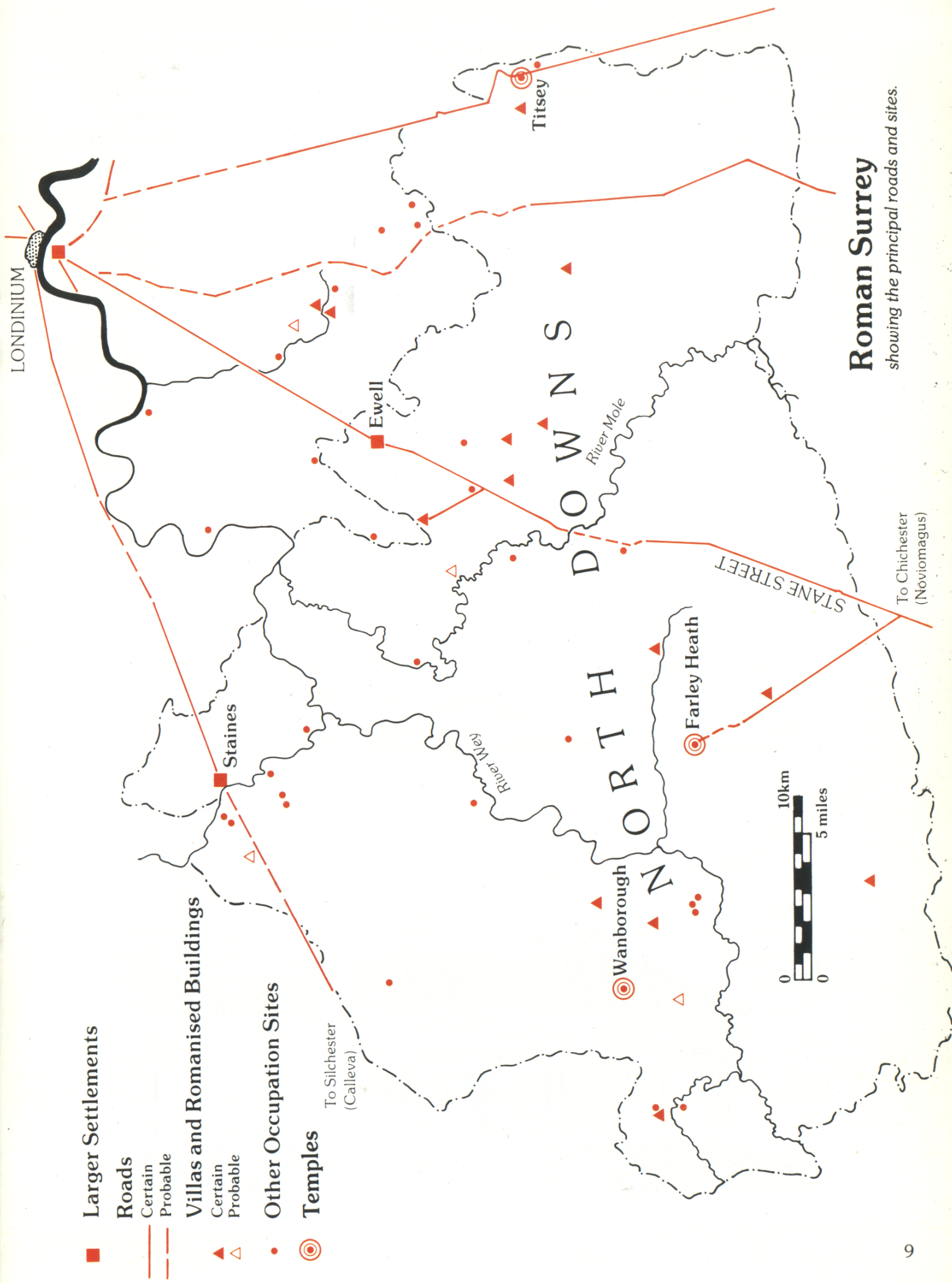
The Roman Temple

The earliest layer showing signs of occupation could be dated to the second half of the 1st century, or the first half of the 2nd century. There was evidence to suggest that the coins may have come from the surface beneath this layer, which consisted largely of a spread of black organic and ashy soil containing charcoal, small fragments of burnt bone and quantities of objects of both domestic and religious significance. There were broken sherds of pottery, tiles, and animal bones, while the objects of religious significance included four bronze ceremonial head-dresses, and the remains of one complete sceptre, with a handle at each end. Fifteen other bronze sceptre handles were also recovered. No surviving remains of a shrine or temple were found associated with this early layer. If one existed the evidence must have been destroyed during the construction of the later, known, temple or much more recently as a result of the destruction caused by treasure hunting.

The temple was built over the black layer just described. In design it was typical of the so-called Romano-Celtic temple; many examples have been identified in Britain, France and Germany. They consist of an almost square *cella* (an inner sanctuary) within a square *ambulatory* (a covered walkway which surrounds it). The most usual plan is rectangular, but circular and polygonal designs are known. In most cases, as at Wanborough, only the foundations survive, and so the appearance of the superstructure can only be a matter of speculation. The so-called Temple of Janus, at Autun in central France gives an idea of what a Roman-Celtic temple looked like. It has a *cella*, a square tower-like building which now stands to a height of 24 metres, lit by windows set high in the walls. The *ambulatory*

Aerial view of the Romano-Celtic temple on Farley Heath. Also a target for treasure hunters, this temple site was excavated in the 19th century and in the 1930s.



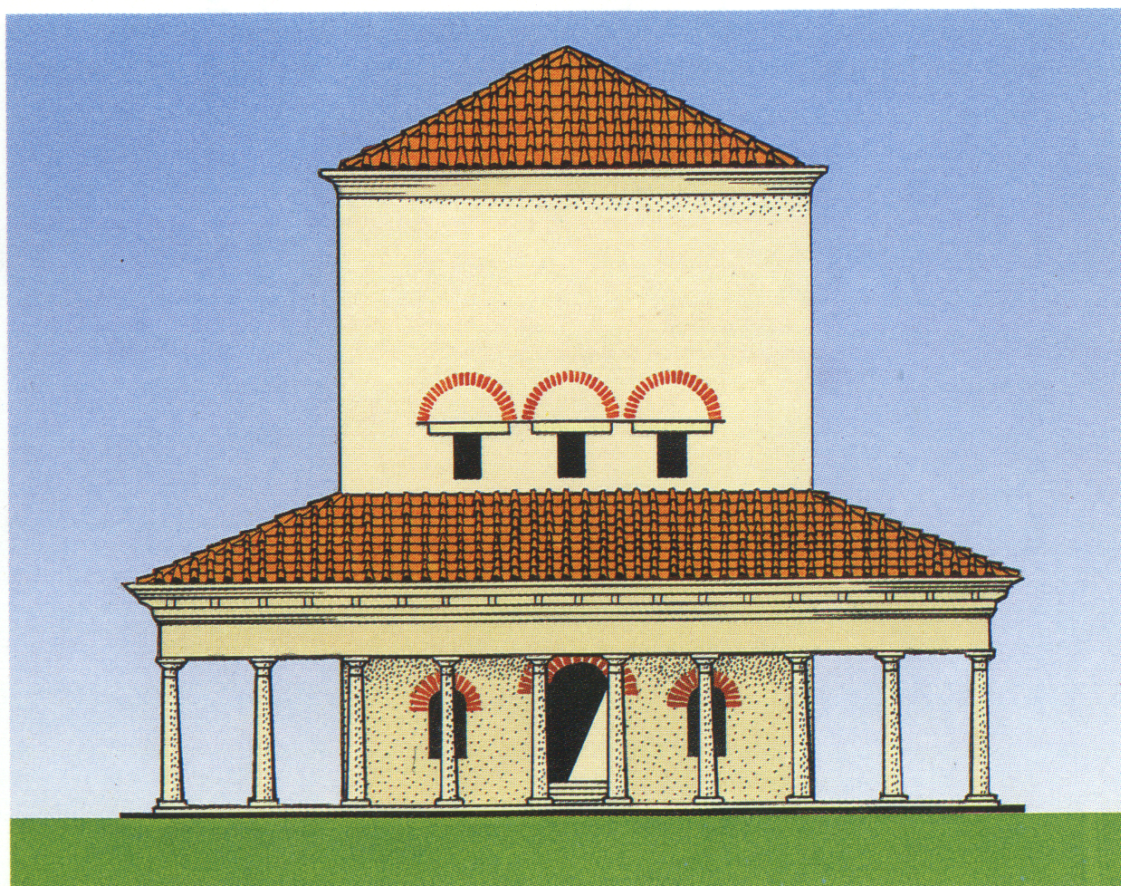


Roman Surrey
showing the principal roads and sites.

roof is missing now at Autun, but it would have been set lower than that of the central *cella*, and it would probably have been supported on a series of columns. Autun is a particularly large example, but the common form of Romano-Celtic temple is likely to have been similar in other aspects. Remains of mosaic floors and plastered walls with painted decoration have been discovered at some temples. The *cella* served as the sanctuary of the deity or deities, so it might contain a statue or image of the god or gods sacred to the site.

The Wanborough temple is only the third Romano-British temple known in the county of Surrey; the others are at Farley Heath and Titsey. It was of average size, measuring fifteen metres square. When the foundation trenches of the building were being dug the clay which was removed was used to form a bank between the *cella* and *ambulatory* walls. No floor levels have survived, but the *cella* floor appears to have been at a lower level than that of the *ambulatory*, and it may have had a tessellated pavement to judge from the many black ironstone tesserae found in that part of the site together with a smaller number made from red tile or white chalk. Fragments of painted wall plaster show that the temple would have had decorated walls. Two projections from the wall of the *ambulatory* may have served as buttresses, the side walls of steps or perhaps as altar or statue bases.

The foundations of the building were almost entirely of flint. The only evidence for the superstructure came from the rubble overlying the site. This consisted of flint, roughly shaped slabs of Lower Greensand, crude blocks of Upper Greensand and a great deal of tile. It seems likely that, if the building was not half-timbered, the walls were built from flint with bonding courses and stone quoins for the corners. It is clear that the roof of the temple was tiled from the vast amounts of both types of Roman roofing tile (*imbrex* and *tegula*) that were collected during the excavation.



Associated Buildings

It is still uncertain what was the nature of the building with an apparent apse at one end which was uncovered in 1979, and investigated again in the autumn and winter of 1985/6. It had been in use at the same time as the temple and lasted into the early 4th century, when apparently both were demolished. At this time the temple itself was extensively robbed of building stone and the site was levelled. A track which was probably used at that time was discovered by geophysical survey during the excavation and traced for a short distance running south-west from the temple towards the Hogs Back.



The plan, as recovered, of the Wanborough temple and associated structures showing the area of excavation and, in red, areas destroyed or damaged by treasure hunters.



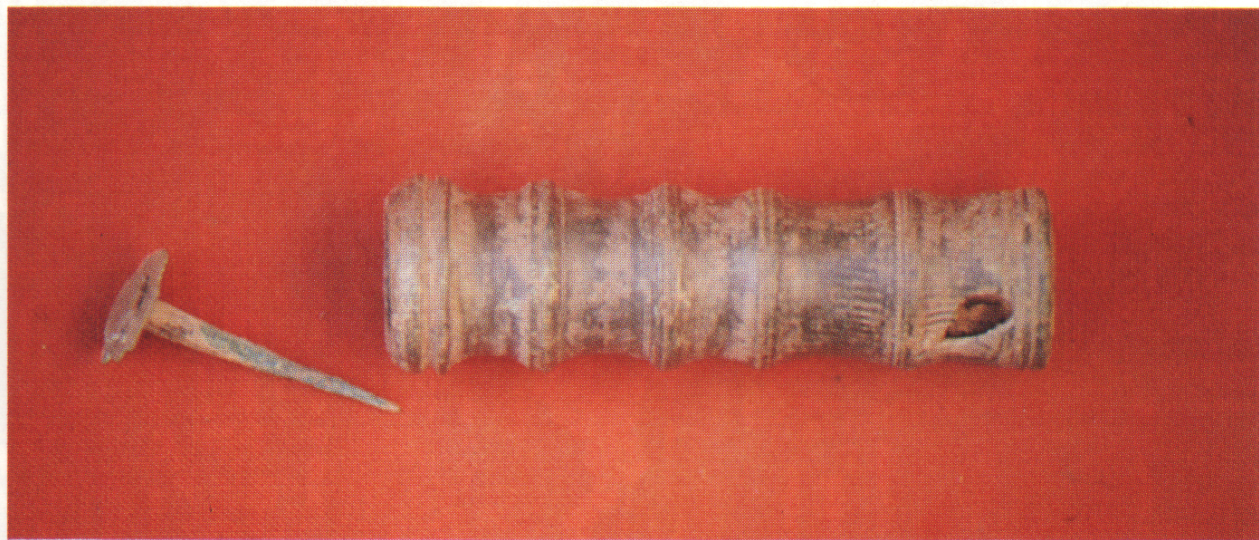


The Regalia

Among the most exciting finds at Wanborough were the many items of bronze priestly regalia. They are undergoing conservation at present and have yet to be studied in detail, but it is already clear that they form one of the most important finds of their kind ever to have been made in Britain. Fortunately, so far as we can tell, most of these objects eluded the looters.

The religious regalia fall into two main groups: sceptres and chain head-dresses. One complete sceptre and fifteen other sceptre handles were found in the excavation and at least four others are known to have been looted from the site. The handles are hollow bronze cylinders, sometimes closed at one end, which were fitted to a wooden staff. The staff itself was wrapped in a spiral bronze binding, many fragments of which were found. In two cases longer pieces of the wooden shafts survived, making it possible to reconstruct the object with some certainty. The complete staff certainly had a handle at each end, and measured some 93cm in length. The Wanborough handles vary greatly in detail: some are simply cylindrical and nearly plain, others have ribs with delicate incised decorative patterns and some are closed at one end. They vary in length from 6.5 to 12cm, being around 2cm in diameter. Similar handles have been found elsewhere, though never in such quantity. In some cases the staff seems to have been tipped by a symbolic object such as a bird but none of those were found in the dig at Wanborough.

Below: One of the many bronze sceptre handles found during excavation. The rivet would have secured the wooden staff. Length c.6.5cm. Bottom: The complete sceptre.



CHRIS PHILLIPS

DAVID WILLIAMS





DAVID WILLIAMS



Two of the Wanborough chain head-dresses. That at the top incorporates a wheel surmounting a circular disc, whereas that below lacks the wheel but is otherwise more elaborately decorated.

As objects, the head-dresses are even more exciting. They each consist of a small bronze disc with four chains leading to large rings, themselves connected by chains. From two of the rings hung a further necklace-like chain, in one case with a leaf pendant attached. Three of the head-dresses survived particularly well. Although careful tests have been made, the conservation laboratory has not found any evidence for any material, such as leather, and it is therefore not possible to be sure how the head-dresses were worn – whether or not over a leather cap, for instance.

A few more solid crowns have been found in various parts of Roman Britain, but two recent studies of native religion can only record three other chain head-dresses from the whole province. Neither mention the example from the temple site at Farley Heath (on display in Guildford Museum), southeast of Guildford. Thus, although it is likely that some have gone unrecognised, of a total of eight certainly known from Britain, five come from Surrey and four of these are from Wanborough. Three of those found in our excavations have another claim to importance: the bronze discs each had a wheel mounted on them, standing vertically. There seem to be no known surviving parallels for head-dresses with wheels in the Romano-Celtic world; but an Iron Age coin found near Petersfield in Hampshire shows a head wearing what might now seem to be, perhaps, a wheel head-dress. Then again, battle trophies copied in stone on the Roman triumphal arch at Orange in France include a Gaulish warrior's helmet with a wheel mounted on top.

The wheel was a Celtic sun symbol, and was representative of their chief god, who became equated in the Roman period with Jupiter. The Roman authorities were always ready to allow native religions to continue, provided they did not exclude the Roman state gods. When native religion survived, it often came to mean that there was a strange amalgamation of Roman and Celtic deities, who were worshipped in the small shrines like Wanborough, but all too often very little is known about them. We do not always know who was worshipped where, and know even less about the ceremonies that were performed at these religious sites. The Wanborough material is therefore a significant addition to our knowledge.

One of the wheel head-dresses laid out after conservation. Inset, top: A wheel head-dress showing the method of attachment. Bottom: A coin of the Iron Age from Petersfield apparently representing a horned helmet surmounted by a wheel symbol.



The Coins

The Surrey Constabulary have estimated that almost 5,000 coins were taken from the site by treasure hunters; certainly nearly 500 were recovered in the rescue excavation. Coins of the Iron Age from the dig included 11 gold, four gold-plated, and over 350 silver, with a few bronze. From the Roman Republican and early Imperial periods there were 22 silver coins, none dated later than the conquest of Britain, though we know that there were some early Imperial coins of the post-Conquest period found on the site – by others. There were 21 Roman bronze coins, most of them of late date, and they, and others known to have come from the site, indicate that coins were lost on the temple site right up to the end of the Roman period. In addition there were 48 bronze coins which could not be identified, the majority of them probably belong to the Iron Age.

One of the most important questions which archaeologists hoped that the excavation would resolve concerned the reason for depositing such a large number of Iron Age and Roman coins, and how they came to be buried. To answer this question coins had to be found in a stratified context, that is, sealed within the layer in which they were originally buried. Unfortunately at Wanborough the massive, indiscriminate holes which had been dug into the site by the treasure hunters meant that the stratified layers had largely been destroyed. As a result, most of the coins which were recovered during the dig were found lying where they had been dropped and trodden in, overlooked by the treasure seekers in the disturbed soil. This means that we must rely on the evidence of the coins themselves to answer our questions about the site.

Dr. J. P. C. Kent, an expert in numismatics at the British Museum, is carrying out a detailed study of the coins, but already after a preliminary examination he confidently asserts that the coins, Iron Age, Roman Republican and Early Imperial issues, were part of a hoard deposited at some time close to AD 60 which is the date of the uprising of the Celtic queen, Boadicea (Boudica) of the East Anglian tribe, the Iceni. The fact that there is no evidence from the other finds to suggest that the site was occupied in the late Iron Age adds weight to Dr. Kent's argument.

CHRIS PHILLIPS



Some of the gold coins from Wanborough. The majority of coins from the site were issued by rulers of the Atrebat, an Iron Age tribe whose territory at one time seems to have covered parts of Surrey, Hampshire and Sussex. The name of Commius, founder of the dynasty, frequently appears on their coins (eg lower right). Their last king was Verica, one of whose coins is seen lower middle.



A selection of silver coins from Wanborough. The Atrebatres came increasingly under pressure from tribes to the north of the Thames. Epatiecus seems to have taken the area around Silchester from them. Several of his coins are seen in the second and third rows, and another is second from right in the second row up. Also present are coins of Eppillus (eg second from left, top row) and Verica (eg left side, fourth row). Again, some coins are marked for the Commian dynasty. The two larger examples in the fifth row are much worn Roman Republican coins and the adjacent scrap of bronze may have formed the base for a forgery.

The Other Finds

Apart from the regalia and the coins there were a number of other more common finds. These included fragments from at least two glass flasks and pottery covering the period from about AD 50 to 60 to the late 3rd or early 4th century. The bulk of this pottery was of local manufacture, from the nearby Alice Holt and Farnham kilns. Other finds from the excavation included two glass beads, a few brooches of which two had enamel inlay, a bronze hinge and one of iron. It is possible that a few more metal objects may be identified in the course of conservation, and from the court cases it is known that some are in the hands of unauthorised diggers and have thus not been properly studied.

The excavation produced one other type of find in profusion. Literally thousands of fragments of Roman tile, mainly roofing tile, were collected and they are being studied. Each piece is being recorded and such information as fabric, dimensions and any markings, for example animal footprints, are being entered into a computer. This is a major study and will take over a year to complete. The results will hopefully tell us a great deal about the structure of the temple, particularly the roof.



The Roman pottery and glass from Wanborough awaits detailed study. Shown here are a mixing bowl (mortarium) from the Verulamium (St. Albans) region; two bowls made in the Alice Holt/Farnham area potteries and a mould blown glass bottle.

Conservation and Display

Merely to dig the finds out of the ground, study them and publish the results is not enough. The finds, especially the very important metal objects, must be conserved so that future generations of students and visitors to museums can look at the objects themselves. The conservation process is long and highly skilled involving chemical stabilisation of the metal. Once this conservation has been carried out the important objects will be put on display at Guildford Museum. This has been made possible as the rightful owners, Lord and Lady Taylor, have very generously given the finds to the Surrey Archaeological Society so that they might be displayed for everyone to see.



Wanborough, the site from the air in May 1988, looking northwest from the direction of the Hogs Back, showing the well-wooded cover of the area. The spread of bare soil within the green field results from metal detecting activities, still continuing on the site more than two years after the excavation ended.

The Wanborough Temple in its Setting

After the Roman invasion of AD 43 and the subjugation of southern Britain, the Romanisation of the southeast proceeded fairly rapidly. Less tractable areas, such as the heavily wooded claylands on which Wanborough lies, were developed for agriculture, possibly for the first time. The countryside will not have been entirely empty. A small quantity of Bronze Age pottery was found on the site, possibly associated in some way with a nearby barrow. Nevertheless it is clear that, in the Roman period, there was an expansion of farming and other activity on land which had formerly been found unattractive and hard to cultivate. Villa estates grew up at Broadstreet Common, at Compton, possibly at Tongham and perhaps at Wanborough Manor a short distance away to the southeast, while pottery from the kilns in the area around Farnham and Alice Holt Forest was distributed all over southern Britain. It would have been the people from these communities who would have paid homage at the Wanborough temple. From how far afield people would come to make their offerings at the shrine can only be guessed at. Although it is clear that the full extent of the complex has not been defined, the material evidence suggests that it could have been a fairly prestigious centre, possibly attracting worshippers from outside the immediate neighbourhood.

The temple ceased to function after about AD 300/350 but although we know that farming continued on the nearby villa estates until the end of the Roman period, archaeology has told us nothing so far about the site in Saxon times. We cannot yet say when or why the Green Lane came to run across the site, nor why the parish boundary lies where it does. The hedge which borders the lane is itself very old. One way of trying to arrive at its date is to count the plant species growing in it, but this would be almost meaningless unless one did a similar count of other hedges in the area, and this is work which has not been carried out so far. It is obvious that there is scope here for more research by local historians. However, we can pick the story up again from later documentary evidence which is of some interest, and we will now turn to that.



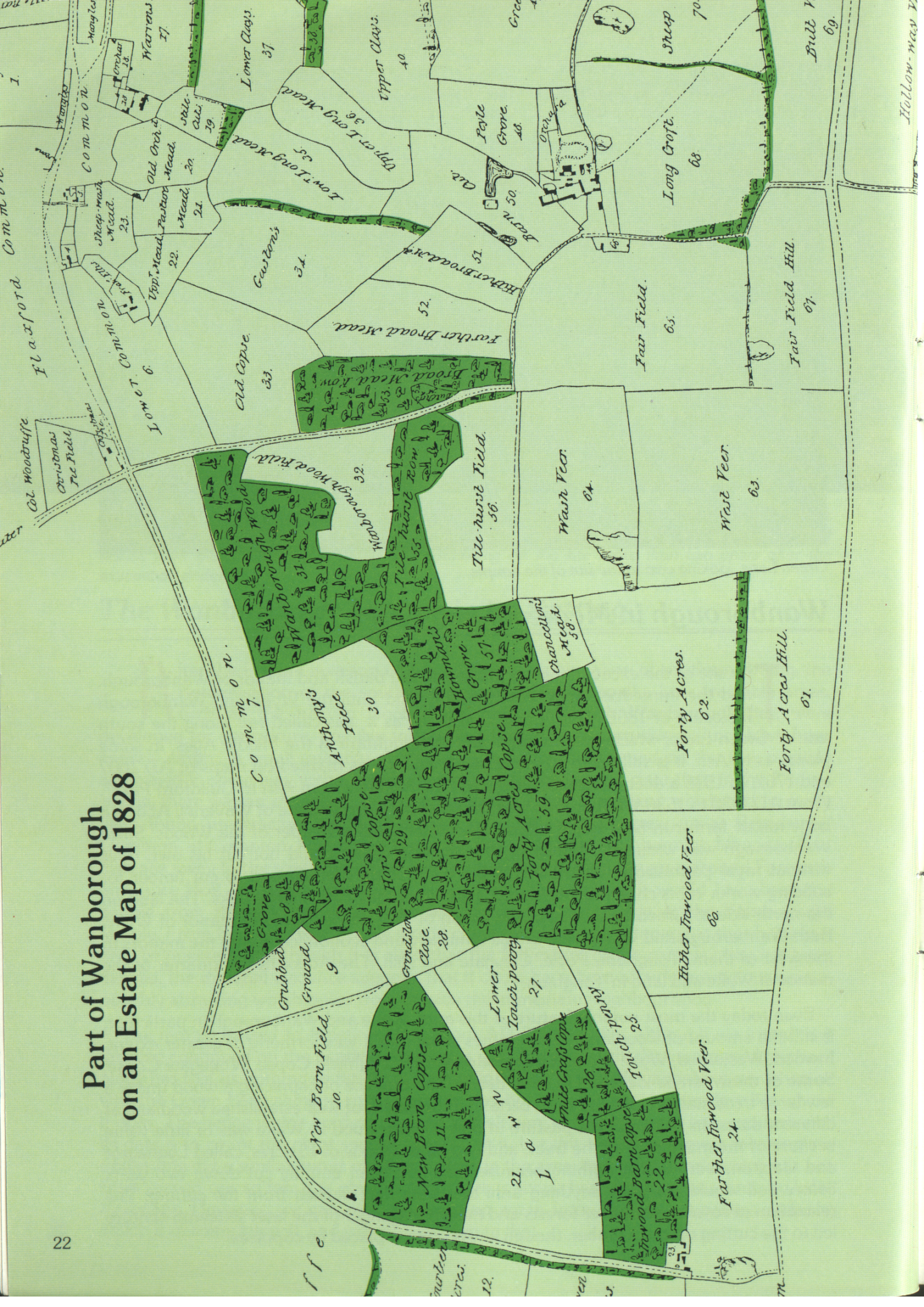
Green Lane, looking east to the site of the temple.

Wanborough in Medieval and Later Times

The site of the excavations lies just inside the parish and manor of Wanborough, and the immediate area was common land until the Wyke and Wanborough Inclosure of 1805. This "Long Common" as it was called ran along the south side of Green Lane, which was an important thoroughfare in the Middle Ages. In some places as at Ash, it is still up to 10 metres wide and it was marked on maps of AD 1607 and 1762. In 1538 a document described it as "the highway from Ash to Guildford Park". From AD 1130 to 1536 Wanborough was the principal Surrey estate of Waverley Abbey, a large mixed farm run by a Bailiff whose officers included a Keeper of the Woods. Since Wanborough was within the Forest of Windsor the Abbot could not cut his own trees without royal permission; we know that in AD 1231 he was allowed to cut timber for building works in his church at Waverley. This would have been large oaks. The land on the north side of Green Lane was in the parish of Worplesdon and the manor of Wyke. Both Wanborough and Wyke were united tenurially and economically with the manors to the west of them: Tongham, Poyle, Cleygate and Ash. The Abbot held a quarter of the manor of Wyke and land in Tongham.

Even today the most notable feature of this area, Wyke and Wanborough in particular, is still the amount of woodland. Place names show that it was formerly of greater extent: Inwood, Westwood, Wyke Wood, Grubground Copse, Highfield Copse, Whitegate Copse. Some of these can be identified in early deeds. The practice of coppicing a wood under a few large trees makes it difficult to be certain of the extent of well-established woodland at different dates. In AD 1353 the pasture in one 20 acre wood in Wyke was of little value because of the magnitude of the trees, and two other woods of 15 acres, called Lyghegrof and Garston, were worth nothing because they had been entirely cut down two years before and would not yield anything until ten years had elapsed from the cutting. The relaxation of royal control over forests and the wood hunger of the later sixteenth century led to the cutting of much timber, though it was often replaced by coppices.

Part of Wanborough on an Estate Map of 1828



The wood to have survived longest in an undisturbed state appears to be the Wanborough Wood itself, close to the site of the excavation. A grant of AD 1603 included 60 acres of "woodlands and wood grounds set with great oaks and other woodlands parcel of Wanborough Wood adjoining the Great Coppice of Wanborough on the west". In AD 1613 a 35-year lease included "the New Coppice of Wanborough, 200 acres of woodground and coppice ground parcel of Wanborough Wood, on the west side of the standing wood the residue of Wanborough Wood".

From the early seventeenth century much land and several manors belonged to the Woodroffe family of Poyle House in Tongham. Writing in 1778 the antiquary William Stukeley stated that large quantities of Roman antiquities were found on George Woodroffe's estate "at Tongham". Unfortunately there is no indication of which part of the estate he was describing, and so it is not possible to say whether or not the Wanborough site itself was meant.

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Stopping the plunderers

Iron Age coin hoard is treasure trove

Coins worth £1/4m grabbed

A TREASURE trove site at Wanborough, near Guildford, has become the starting point in a Surrey police investigation that has not only become national, but also Continental.

It is known that upwards of 5,000 gold and silver Celtic and early Roman coins have been plundered from the site and sold throughout the antiques trade, possibly reaching Belgium, Switzerland and Germany.

Nine people already have been convicted of criminal offences in respect of the coins' theft.

The coins - minimum value £250,000 - are predominantly from the reigns of ancient British tribal kings, Tincomminius, Eppilius, Verica, Epaticus, and Caracatus.

Should any dealer or individual be offered coins of this type or era they are asked to tell Detective Superintendent Hurst at Farnham Police Station (Tel 0252 716262, Ext 31).

This means that under ancient law, the coins are ruled to be property of the Crown, not the finder. The key criterion for treasure trove is that the coins should have been intentionally left or buried, and not accidentally lost or abandoned.

Coins case: three for trial

FARNHAM magistrates committed three men for trial at the Crown Court accused of stealing thousands of pounds worth of ancient coins.

The three, all members of the Armed Services, are alleged to have stolen the gold and silver Celtic and Roman coins from a treasure trove site at Wanborough Hill earlier this year.

Mr. Christopher Ronald Brown (34), a corporal in the Army and stationed in West Germany, was charged with stealing coins worth £20,000 between January 15 and February 1. He is also charged with returning to the site between March 15 and April 12 and taking another £4,000 worth of coins.

Mr. Derek Pocknell (35), a sergeant in the RAF of Mulberry Way, Chichester, Basingstoke, was also accused on stealing £20,000 worth of coins from the site in January and February but a charge concerning another raid was dropped.

A third man, Mr. Andrew Smith (29), of 5 Airborne Brigade, Signal Squadron, Aldershot, was alleged to have gone to the site between March 3 and April 12 and taken £4,000 worth of coins. The site is owned by Lord Taylor of Hadfield.

Devastated "We had to wait until the crop was cleared but part of the area we dug had already been devastated by vandals coming in by night," he said.

"Large holes had been dug, the bank had been dug into so that the trees and bushes had been killed off for quite a long stretch.

"Some 300 square metres were churned over a metre deep, and half a long trench was dug over.

"In the rest of the trench we found the remains of a Roman temple which had succeeded a 'black level' with very important items of Roman religious bronze regalia."

Dr. Bird said the looters had also removed items of regalia, but some of them had been salvaged.

Unique site

The coins dated almost exclusively from the 1st Century AD, and the site was unique in the number and quality of the hoard.

Dr. Bird said the coins had most likely been put there as a safe place. It may have already been a religious site.

Mr. Fred Hancock, who described himself as an "expert coin restorer," said most of his find had been seized by the police in a raid on his house in New Addington.

He explained that he had

PROFESSIONAL treasure hunters who churned over an Iron Age temple site at Wanborough to retrieve hundreds of Celtic coins have lost the right to keep their hoard.

Exercising powers dating back a thousand years, the Surrey Coroner, Mr. Michael Burgess, held an inquest into the rightful ownership of the coins last week at Guildford.

Key criterion After detailed accounts of the discovery plus archaeolo-

Coins case adjourned

THREE servicemen accused of stealing over £24,000 worth of Celtic and Roman coins from a treasure trove site at Wanborough have appeared before magistrates in Farnham.

They are charged in connection with alleged thefts earlier this year from a field at Wanborough Hill.

Mr. Christopher Brown (34), of Ilford in Essex, but currently serving with the Signal Regiment in West Germany, and Mr. Derek Pocknell (35), of Bramley Barracks, Aldershot and serving with the Parachute Regiment, are jointly charged with the theft of £20,000 worth of Roman and Celtic coins.

Mr. Brown is further charged with stealing coins worth £4,000 and Mr. Pocknell is charged with stealing coins worth £700. A third serviceman, Mr. Andrew Smith (28), of Bramley Barracks, Aldershot, is accused of stealing gold and silver coins worth £4,000, the property of the Crown at Wanborough.

Magistrates heard defence applications for the cases to be heard by summary trial, but decided to adjourn the hearing until September 11 when the cases are due to be committed to the Crown Court for trial.

All three men were granted unconditional bail.

sand years of history, it is a race against time for the dozens of archaeologists and volunteers who spend the day sifting through the top soil.

"The weather is our worst enemy," said Martin O'Connell. "We're coming up to the winter and if it rains, the work will be much harder and slower. Snow will halt things altogether."

COST OF DIG

But the finances for the dig seem secure. The whole project is expected to cost about £20,000 - most of it going on wages for the archaeologists.

Money has come from local industry, councils and private individuals. Last week the Oxford Film Company, who are to start filming for and in near Normandy at the end of the year, presented a cheque for £1,000 to the president of the Surrey Archaeological Society, Mr. John Hanworth.

close study by the Surrey Archaeological Society, they are sent to a local police station for safe-keeping but will eventually be on display in Guildford Museum.

Archaeologists are baffled why there should be so many coins on the site, though they are convinced it is unique among Iron Age excavations.

Nothing else they have found points to the sort of settlement it was. Several bits of pottery have been recovered and two bronze sword handles, but nothing suggests that the settlement was a particularly wealthy one.

The only thing which seems certain is that the area was abandoned, probably in the second century, as there is no evidence of people living there in later centuries.

VITAL CLUES

The next task is to evaluate the Roman find and its

Date set for coins case committal

THE three servicemen accused of stealing over £24,000 worth of ancient coins from the treasure trove site at Wanborough have appeared before magistrates in Farnham again.

But Mr. Christopher Brown, Mr. Derek Pocknell and Mr. Andrew Smith objected to their cases being committed to the Crown Court as a straightforward "papers" committal and the hearing has now been adjourned to November 27 for a longer, old style committal where oral evidence can be given.

The three men were granted unconditional bail. Mr. Brown and Mr. Pocknell are jointly charged with the theft of £20,000 worth of Roman and Celtic coins and with further charges of stealing £4,000 and £700 worth of coins.

Mr. Smith is accused of stealing coins worth £4,000.

one of the greatest ever finds of Iron Age coins in Britain.

The landowner, Lord Taylor of Hadfield, had to employ a security firm for protection of his land because of extensive damage to crops.

The Surrey Archaeological Society is anxious to rescue as much of the archaeological material as possible, reveal the exact extent and nature of the site with the period of its use, and assess the part it played in the economy and settlement of the Guildford area.

Contribution cheques to the excavation appeal should be made payable to SAS Wanborough Excavation Fund, and sent to Lady Hanworth, the Surrey Archaeological Society's president, at Castle Arch, Guildford GU1 3SX.

sift through to study different eras.

Roman has been mixed with Iron Age and archaeologists working on the site have been left with the empty crisp packets and cigarette ends left by the treasure hunters.

EVIDENCE REMAINS

But not all the historical evidence has been stolen or disturbed. Despite months of unrestrained hunting by metal detector enthusiasts, resulting in several prosecutions, coins are still being found on the site.

In only three weeks of digging, members of the Surrey Archaeological Society have found about 80 coins most of them base metal but including several silver pieces.

Some of the coins are tiny, no bigger than a small finger nail. Ironically, archaeologists are having to use metal detectors in their search - but they

COINS IN CONTEXT

Martin O'Connell, director of the Surrey Archaeological

Chamber calls for support for Iron Age site dig

GUILDFORD and District Chamber of Commerce has called upon its members to back Surrey Archaeological Society in its efforts to save what it can of the pillaged Iron Age site at Wanborough.

The chamber has circulated members asking them to contribute to the society's fund which will finance the proper excavation of what remains of the site.

The chamber reports in its latest bulletin that the site was first located by a metal detector user. They discovered a few Iron Age and Roman Republican coins reported this to Guildford Museum, and kept the site secret. But at an inquest the coins were

declared treasure trove and the site was revealed.

This led immediately to larger scale metal detecting by treasure hunters, with deep holes being dug into stratified levels. About 200 more coins were found and declared to the British Museum. Roman bronze artefacts were also discovered, some being seen by qualified people, but without the possibility of adequate recording, because it was not known exactly where they were found.

A further treasure trove inquest was held and was followed by continuous looting, often in the depths of night. It is estimated that over 2,000 ancient coins have been stolen in all.

Many of the coins have gone to Europe and the USA. Experts believe that the hoard may have been

Police expose gold coup

SURREY POLICE have exposed the great Goldfinger coup that turned a field of barley into a £3 million harvest of ancient coins. But 5000 of them are still missing with many traced to the continent and changing hands at up to £2000 each.

Police at Guildford and Farnham broke their silence this week after a four-month investigation that led them to auction sales and dealers in Belgium, Switzerland and Germany - all from a barley field at Wanborough, near Guildford.

The field in question was at Manor Farm, under the Hog's Back, and near the home of Lord Taylor of the Taylor Woodrow civil engineering giant. In April his farm manager, Mr. Derek Jones, told him that mysterious diggings had suddenly appeared in a corner of the field with the trenches getting deeper and

wider on every inspection.

Lord Taylor told him to engage a security watch in case vandals were at work. On Saturday, April 13, the guard saw ten people digging furiously in the dark but when police were called, six escaped with plunder - turned up with every shovelful - gold and silver coins dating to 140 BC.

Expecting another raid on the ancient hoard, 12 police officers surrounded the field at 1.20 am on Sunday where a new band of gold-diggers had arrived, filling their bags with coins buried more than 2000 years ago.

Then the police swooped, arrested four but lost track of the fifth who splashed his way out of the trap through a pond.

A police spokesman said: "Treasure-hunters with metal detectors discovered the Wanborough site last year, but no one realised how much was still buried there."

Europe

As the stolen coins - officially treasure trove and property of the crown - began to appear in Europe, Farnham officers followed their trail but recovered none.

But as a result of their enquiries abroad and at home, nine people have already been convicted of criminal offences including theft, attempted theft and handling stolen property.

And now another nine are alleged to be associated with the Wanborough dig and face similar charges.

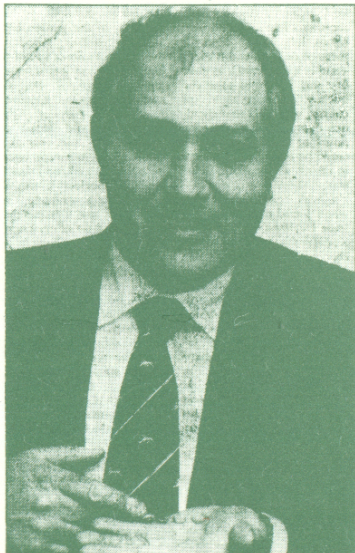
British Museum experts will still have a bonus from the police investigations in Britain - they hold 600 coins which have been identified as of the Atreates and Catuvellauni tribes, from the reigns of ancient British tribal kings, Tincomminius, Eppilius, Verica, Epaticus, and Caracatus.

From county police headquarters at Mount Browne in Guildford on Tuesday, a spokesman said: "It is known that upwards of 5000 gold and silver Celtic and early Roman coins have been removed from the site and sold throughout the antiques trade

at all levels.

"We warn that only 248 of them have so far been lawfully handed in and none of these have yet reached the market. Any coins apparently originating from the Wanborough site and offered for sale have been unlawfully obtained and are consequently liable to seizure as stolen property."

Now police believe that many of the Wanborough Goldfinders will be burned by exposing the enormous haul and starting a fall in the market prices.



Farnham P.C. Michael Tapp shows three of the Wanborough coins seized after the police swoop

Ancient coins hunt moves to Continent

by Geraldine Banks

of the Atreates and Catuvellauni tribes, from the reigns of ancient British tribal kings - Tincomminius, Eppilius, Verica, Epaticus and Caracatus.

Sgt. Bridgman says only 248 coins have been lawfully handed in and he is in possession of all of them. "It means anyone who has one of the coins has it illegally," he said.

Wealth

The wheat field on Wanborough Hill has now been stripped of all its ancient wealth, according to the police.

Historical greed

I FOUND my way to the now notorious archaeological site in Wanborough.

It is, however, in one of those odd parts of Surrey which immediately and dramatically give the lie to the

Raiders have dug down to a depth of four feet.

"At one stage they were digging up coins by the shovel full," said Sgt. Bridgman. "Now there is virtually nothing left."

The Coin Squad believe a number of criminal teams from all over the country have been involved in the theft and trading of the coins, mostly through the antique market.

"There are likely to be many more prosecutions in the future," said Sgt. Bridgman.

Lord Taylor was abroad on business and not available to comment on the problem this week.

cosy assumption that it's all stockbroker Tudor. Although you're only a brisk walking distance from the Hog's Back, and its madly racing traffic, the countryside is totally empty and a bit sinister.

Looking at the mayhem committed by the thieves one can understand the profound irritation of archaeologists.



Three of the tiny Wanborough coins compared with Britain's current pound coin. Though smaller, each one is worth 2000 times more.



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