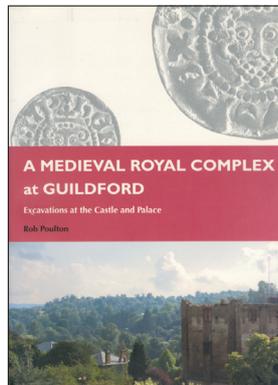


## A Medieval Royal Complex at Guildford: Excavations at the Castle and Palace



Rob Poulton

2005

Surrey Archaeological Society

155 pages plus introduction

79 illustrations (20 in colour),

index

£17.00 (£14.50 SyAS members)

reviewed by Stuart Brookes

As one of several castle research projects carried out during the 1990s, including those at Knarborough, Newark and Dolforwyn, the excavations by Surrey Archaeological Society and Surrey County Council at Guildford Castle sought to combine archaeological training and public outreach with specific academic questions. This handsome volume is proof of their success. Bringing together the results of the training excavation that took place in Castle

Cliffe gardens in 1990-4 as well as various interventions prompted by actual or proposed development of the castle site between 1972 and 2000, this report provides a valuable contribution to our understanding of a medieval castle and palace. Detailed and accurate analysis of the archaeological evidence is complemented by a reassessment of the substantial written sources for the castle as well as a number of specialist artefact reports. The central research questions are addressed throughout, but the author leaves substantive integration of these data to his praiseworthy last chapter. Here, analyses of the topographical development of the site from a small motte and bailey castle to an enlarged 13th century palace complex, as well as subsequent decline, are outlined in clear terms. Of particular note is the evidence gained from the recovered zooarchaeological material. Whilst the small finds, pottery and other artefacts are relatively plain, the animal and fish bones give evidence of more high-status living, including deer hunting.

Less successful is the contextualisation of Guildford in its wider setting. Beyond specific typological considerations, little attempt has been made to compare the castle's morphology with that of contemporary sites, nor is the social use of Guildford's architectural spaces described except in general functional terms. By avoiding these kinds of questions, Poulton has sidestepped one of the major themes of recent scholarship, namely the dichotomy of castle as fortress and castle as residence, despite good archaeological evidence in this instance for both functions.

It is in keeping with the thorough multi-disciplinary character of this research project that additional downloads from the archive are available *via* the Archaeology Data Service website. Taken together with the high quality figures, data, and discussion contained within this volume, this suite of publication must surely become a model for similar projects.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Robert Thompson adds to information on tokens

Although it does not affect the evidence of the tokens [found at the Old Castle Public House, Putney (Autumn 2007)], it may be worth pointing out that a better reference for note 8 than Michael Dickinson's valuable *Seventeenth-century Tokens of the British Isles and their values* (1986) is our joint *Norweb Tokens Part V* (1996), where specimens of all the private tokens are illustrated with technical details.<sup>1</sup>

On Plate 19 it may be seen that the so-called 'shuttles' on the tokens of John Feilder, Kingston upon Thames, have very pointed ends, and a rectangular piercing without suggestion of a bobbin. These objects were clearly of metal, and designed to be mounted on a haft. They can be identified as the heads of mill-picks for the dressing of millstones, which is supported by Jn Feilder's description in the *Free and Voluntary Present to Charles II as 'miller'*.<sup>2</sup>

Only in the mid-nineteenth century did millstone-dressing become a specialist trade. At other times it was the miller's own responsibility. In a mill working flat out the stones would need to be given a fine dressing every twelve days, and re-furrowed every six months or so. A well-dressed stone gave better control of both

quality and quantity of the output.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> British Academy, *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles*, 46: *The Norweb Collection, Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A.: Tokens of the British Isles 1575-1750, Part V: Staffordshire to Westmorland*, by R. H. Thompson and M. J. Dickinson (London: Spink, 1996)

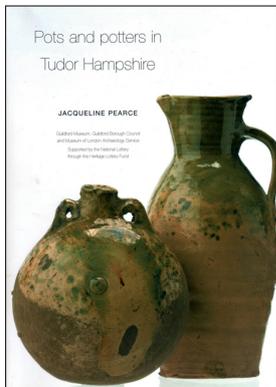
<sup>2</sup> *Free and Voluntary Present to Charles II 1661-2: calendar of the Surrey portion*, compiled from the originals at the Public Record Office by Cliff Webb (1982), p.36.

<sup>3</sup> K. Major, 'The tools of the millstone dresser', *TATHS Newsletter (Tool and Trades History Society)*, no. 8 (1985), 26-37.

### Brian Philp writes more on Roman roads

The article on Harvey Sheldon and the Roman "motorway" at Lefevre Road in your Summer issue (Vol. 11, no. 9) is most interesting. With metalling some 66 ft wide (say 20 m) and three carriageways, this rightly opens up a limited debate. Even this presumes that the narrow trench there did not cut the main axis diagonally and that the three carriageways were contemporary,

## Pots and potters in Tudor Hampshire



Jacqueline Pearce

2007

Guildford Borough Council

234 pp

125 figs, bibliography, index

£19.95

reviewed by Clive Orton

This welcome volume tells the remarkable story of a rural site which played a key role in the development of the ceramic industry in southern Britain, and in the supply of pottery to London. From the 14th century through to the 18th century, a corner of west Surrey and north-east Hampshire supplied a large proportion of London's pottery, starting and finishing with (very different) productions of mainly utilitarian 'kitchen' wares, separated by a period of intense innovation and diversification

from the late 15th to early 17th centuries. Kilns and waster pottery representing this period were excavated at Farnborough Hill in 1968–72 by Felix Holling, and an interim report was soon published. In this volume, Jacqui Pearce revisits the site with the aid of new documentary evidence, scientific analyses and recourse to material in the Museum of London's collections, much of it excavated since the 1970s.

The outcome is fascinating. As well as providing a detailed and quantified typology of the finds from the excavation, the author sets them in their context and discusses thoroughly the various influences that may have contributed to creative developments in this previously conservative industry, and indeed to the transition of the ceramic industry of southern Britain from 'medieval' to 'post-medieval'. Characteristic of this period is the appearance of a wide range of new forms, particularly of 'table' ware, together with new fabrics and improved glazing techniques.

The whole is excellently presented and illustrated (though I wish that the budget could have stretched to colour in places). There are some minor glitches: the Reading Beds do not appear on the geological map (Fig 6), and it would be useful to have a scale on each set of pottery illustrations in case they are photocopied or scanned. There may be some confusion over the capacity of the 'large' Cheam kiln (p. 38); the 600 pots quoted refer to the typical redware production of that kiln, not to the small whiteware jugs fired in the previous kiln. More use could perhaps have been made of the various quantified measures in answering questions about (for example) the proportions of handled vessels.

This is not the end of the story -- the book closes with suggestions for further research, which I sincerely hope will be taken up and acted upon by the next generation of archaeologists.

rather than replacements over decades.

Significantly, my teams have searched for and sectioned Roman roads in SE London more than 15 times over the past 30 years. The most relevant one here was at Poverest Road, Orpington (London Borough of Bromley) in 1988. There we excavated an area just west of the tiny Roman bath-house ahead of possible development.<sup>1</sup> We located two very well metallised surfaces, one above the other. The lower consisted of two parallel roads (hence dual-carriageway), separated by a ditch two metres wide. These sealed linear ditches, perhaps an earlier drove-way, and are unlikely to be earlier than the end of the 2nd century. The ditch silted and a thin layer of silt formed across both roads.

All were then sealed by the upper metallising, here single and 11 m in width. On the very firm surface of this we found 21 Roman coins, mostly dated AD 270–300. Once projected, this newly found east-west round resolved other matters. A large hoard of early-3rd-century *denarii*, found in 1934, can now be seen to come from the side of the road; the nearby Saxon cemetery had clearly been positioned on its south side, and the present boundary between St Mary Cray and Orpington follows the raised *agger*.

In addition, the Roman bath-house sits just 12 m off the road,

and a wide scatter of minor local sites, including two small cremation cemeteries and more metallising, can now be seen to focus on the new road where it crosses the adjacent north-south River Cray at Fordcroft. Collectively, these discoveries spread over 40 acres and while perhaps not continuous, still indicate a modest settlement here.

More widely, the projected line of the new road joins easily with the larger Roman settlements, at *Vagniacs* (Springhead) to the east and *Noviomagus* (recently identified at West Wickham) to the west. Both sites have produced spur roads that connect. It also passes close to two large Roman villas, at Darenth and Orpington. No doubt other roads still remain to be found and we are still looking!

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1. *The Roman Site at Fordcroft, Orpington* (1995), available from KARU, Roman Painted House, New Street, Dover CT17 9AJ (£4, plus £1 postage). See also K. Boyce 'The implications of isolated bath-houses in the Roman Cray Valley' *London Archaeol* II, no. 10 (2007) 260–264.