

A note on the recent finds of Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman material and a site at Frensham Manor noted in an air photograph

Over the past few years a number of finds of archaeological interest have been made at Frensham Manor. The Manor (SU 839 405) lies on a ridge of Lower Greensand (Folkestone Beds), just to the north of and overlooking Frensham Great Pond. Despite being on the Greensand, the soil is reasonably fertile and is farmed, unlike the Common to the south.

In 1983 metal detector users located a number of bronze axes and metal fragments from a field at the top of the ridge above 'The Hanger' (fig 1). These were very briefly lent to Farnham Museum for drawing, but their present whereabouts are unknown. The finds consisted of a range of axe types of different dates. No 1 (see fig 2) is an early Bronze Age palstave axe showing traces of a proto-end stop. No 2 is of Middle Bronze Age date and has a more highly developed end stop. No 5 is the blade tip of a late Bronze Age socketed axe, the bulk of which was not recovered. Nos 3 and 4 are in all probability of modern date and not connected with the bronze axes. No 6 on the map (not illustrated) was a fragment of bronze slag of uncertain date. The presence of material of such differing dates within the Bronze Age is usually indicative of an occupation site rather than representing a scattered hoard. It is therefore possible that the hill-top was the site of a long-lived Bronze Age settlement. A resistivity survey showed that the hill-top has been extensively disturbed and this may in part relate to Bronze Age occupation. It is also interesting to note that the barrows on the King's Ridge (SU 853 407) overlook the site and may therefore be connected with it.

In 1982, metal detector users found a number of coins in another field close to the other discoveries (see fig 1). The finds, presumably a scattered hoard, consisted of a coin of Epaticcus and several of Roman Republican date (see separate note below). Unfortunately, yet again, the whereabouts of the coins are unknown as they have been retained by the detector users.

A field walking exercise in 1979 by members of the Farnham Museum Society, located a small Romano-British site in a ploughed field on the eastern spine of the ridge (see fig 1). This consisted of an extensive scatter of late 1st/2nd century AD pottery and roof tile, probably indicating the presence of a building.

More recently, in 1984, an infrared aerial photograph taken of the hill-top showed very clearly a section of double-ditched earthwork lying on the summit of the ridge (see fig 1). The ditches were visible around the entrance and along one side of the enclosure, but did not show for the complete circuit. It is estimated that the enclosed area is approximately 1.8ha. The earthwork itself is of a most unusual shape and is at present undated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to the various owners of Frensham Manor for permission to visit the site, to John Castle for the information on the metal detector finds and to Tony Merson whose report on the coins appears below. The axes were originally sketched by Anna Mercer and Nigel Thomas.

DAVID GRAHAM

Coins from Frensham Manor

- 1 Epaticcus, c AD 25-35
Obv Victory seated r
Rev Boar
Silver coin
Mack (1975) 263a (reading EPAT)

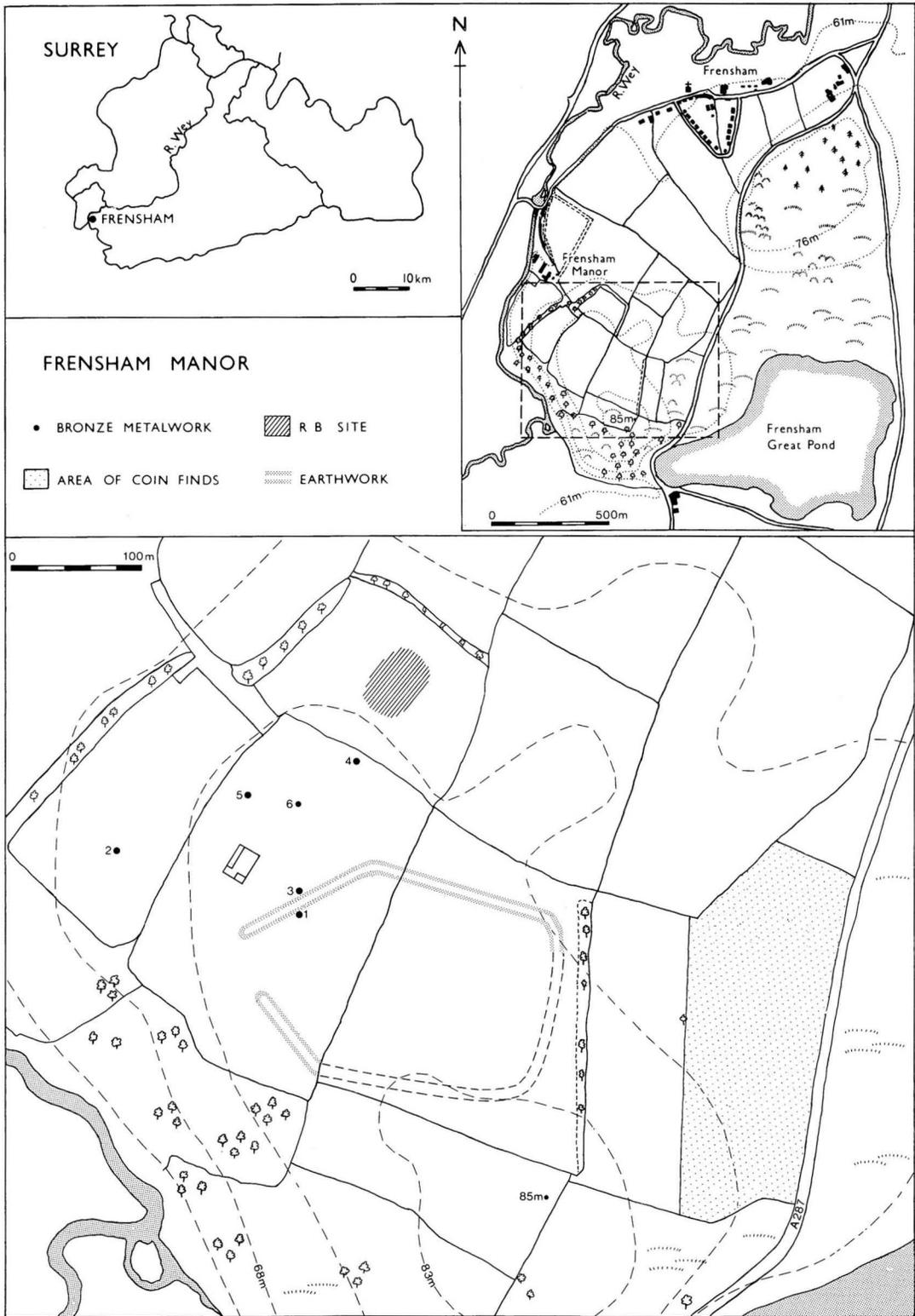


Fig 1. Frensham Manor, location map

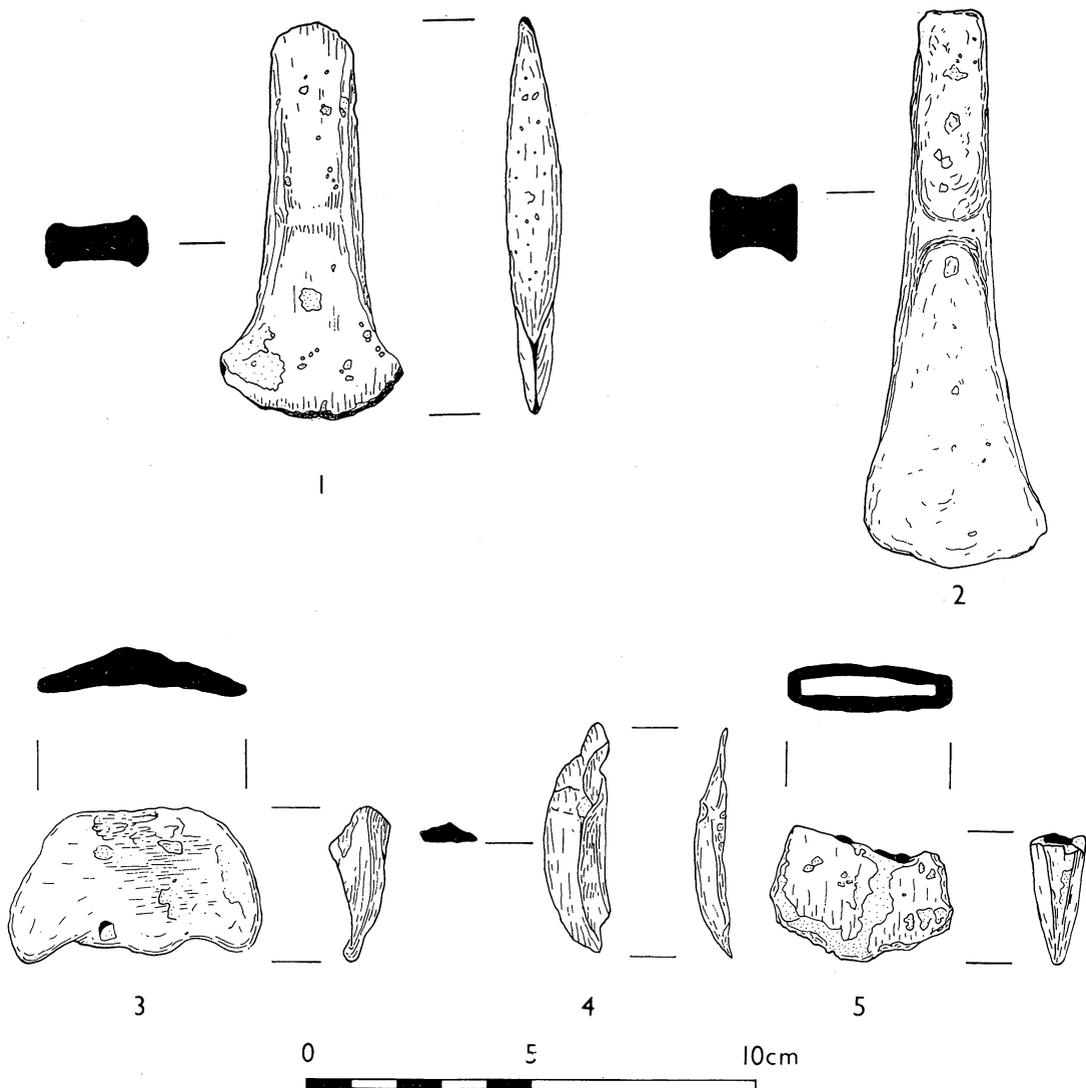


Fig 2. Frensham Manor, 1, 2 bronze axes; 3, 4 bronze fragments, probably modern; 5, blade tip from a bronze axe

- 2 L Antestius Gragulus, (c 135–126 BC)
 Obv Roma r, GRAG behind, * below chin
 Rev Jupiter in quadriga r, [L.]ANTES below, in ex ROMA
 Silver denarius, worn condition, found 2in down in ploughsoil
 Sear (RCV 1970) 163, Seaby (Silver 1967) Antestia 9
- 3 M Aemilius Scaurus and P Plautius Hypsaesus, (58 BC)
 Obv King Aretas kneeling beside camel r
 Rev Jupiter in quadriga l
 Silver denarius, worn condition – broken into three pieces
 Mattingly pl 19, 2, Sear (RCV 1970) 266, Seaby (Silver 1967) Aemilia 8, 8a, 9, 9a

- 4 Mn Cordius Rufus, (c 46 BC)
 Obv Dioscuri heads r
 Rev Venus Verticordia standing l
 Silver denarius, some wear
 Mattingly pl 13, 11, Sear (RCV 1970) 282 and pl 4, Seaby (Silver 1967) Cordia 1-2c
- 5 Silver fragment – probably part of worn Roman denarius of Republic or early Empire
- 6-8 Three bronze ‘coins’ – Roman? – Æ13, Æ17 and Æ21mm (last cast)
- 9 Bronze ‘coin’ – ?19th century concoction (note: this is an earlier find and possibly not from same field)
 Obv copy of rev of Philip of Macedon tetradrachm
 Rev copy of a copy of the same reverse (Bulgarian?)
 ie two reverses and in bronze, not silver

Note

The coins were examined in the summer of 1982. The present whereabouts of the first two and the last are unknown. The Epaticcus coin was photographed and weighed by the British Museum for their records and it was described as light and crystallised so that it could be expected to disintegrate before long. The other items are in the collection of a local metal detector enthusiast. It has been reported that further coins have since been found at Frensham Manor, and these are said to include both Roman coins and medieval silver coins. It may be possible to examine and publish these in due course.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Mack, R P, 1975 *The coinage of ancient Britain*, 3 edn
 Mattingly, H, 1960 *Roman coins from the earliest times to the fall of the Western Empire*, 2 edn
 Seaby, H A, 1967 *Roman silver coins, 1, The Republic to Augustus*, 2 edn
 Sear, D R, 1970 *Roman coins and their values*

R A MERSON