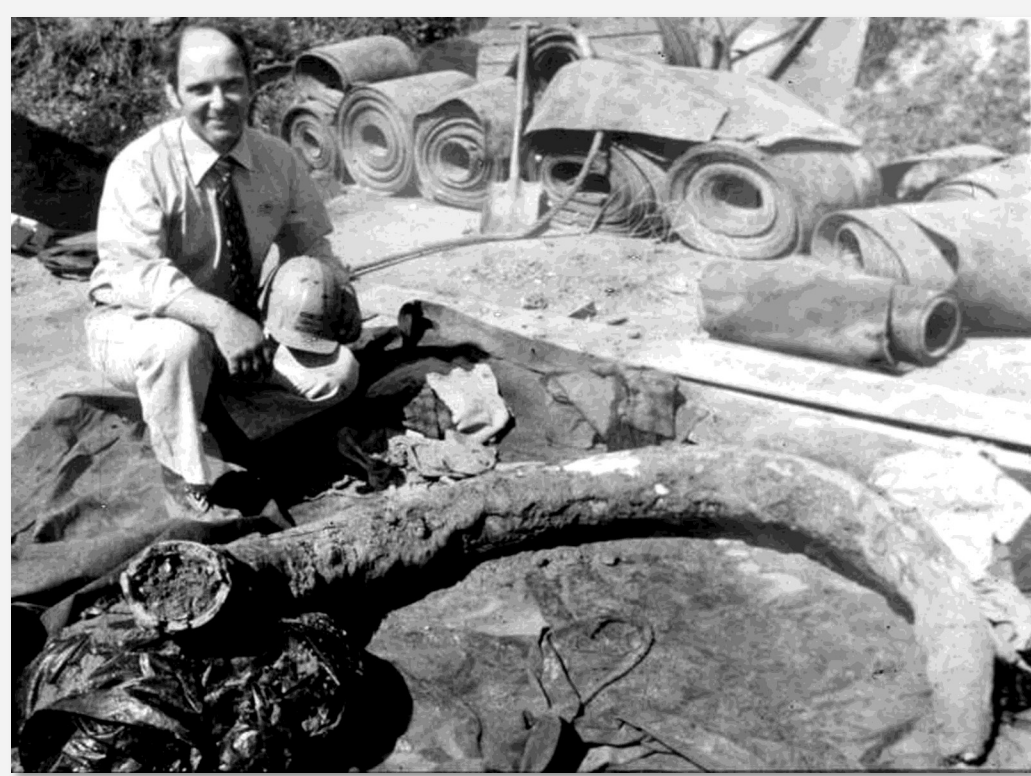


# Hidden Heritage

## Exploring Farnham's buried past



W F Rankine with excavated mammoth tusk from the Coxbridge pit  
© Farnham Herald



Mammoth tusk from Badshot Lea sandpit  
(Photo by D Graham)



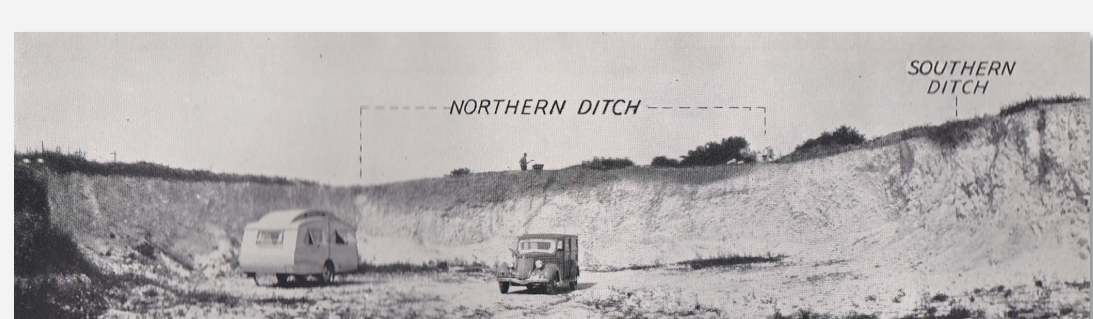
Flint scraper or knife from Bourne Woods  
(Photo D Graham)



1937 excavation of Mesolithic 'hut dwellings' at Bourne Mill Spring  
(Photo by C E Borelli)



Leaf arrowhead from Badshot Lea long barrow  
© SyAS



Excavation of southern ditch at Badshot Lea barrow during chalk-quarrying in the 1930s  
(Photo by A Keiller)



V Ambrus



Heathland barrow at Thursley Common, once assumed to have been a natural dune  
(Photo D Graham)

### Palaeolithic 450,000-8,300 BC

The Old Stone Age begins with the appearance of the first humans in Britain – at Boxgrove in West Sussex – about 450,000 BC, and ends with the retreat of the glaciers during the last Ice Age. During this vast period, *Homo heidelbergensis*, *Homo neanderthalensis* and *Homo sapiens* emerged, all of whom undertook hunting and scavenging for their subsistence. The main evidence we have of this period are the stone tools which were used, as well as occasional cave art as in Creswell Crags, Derbyshire.



Large flint axe from Farnham's gravel terraces around 400,000 years old, used for butchering  
© Surrey Archaeological Society (SyAS)

### Mesolithic 8,300-4,400 BC

The Middle Stone Age is characterized by nomadic groups in a landscape whose open tundra vegetation gradually shifted to covered woodland as a result of climatic warming and rising sea levels, eventually leading to the separation of Britain from the continent around 6,500 BC. The small groups of hunter-gatherers lived off what they could find or hunt from season to season – nuts, berries, fruit, wild cattle, deer, pig, fish and fowl) – with their flint tools and waste flakes indications of their movement and temporary occupation at sites.



V Ambrus



Mesolithic axe, scraper and blades from the Farnham Terraces (Photo by D Graham)

### Neolithic 4,000-2,500 BC

The New Stone Age is traditionally regarded as the era when farming was introduced to Britain, although the earliest agricultural economy was likely a mix of pastoralism, horticulture, hunting and gathering. The need to look after crops and livestock meant that more permanent settlement was needed, and with both fire and new types of stone tools – including polished axes – larger areas of forest were cleared. The period also saw the introduction of pottery and large ceremonial monuments, such as the long barrow at Badshot Lea.

### Bronze Age 2,500-700 BC

The early Bronze Age is closer to the Late Neolithic in many practices, although burials underneath earthen mounds – known as round barrows – are a feature which is prominent in the surrounding heathland. Although flintwork continued in use, the development of metalwork is most characteristic of the period, including occasional finds of bronze weapons and ornaments which would have been ritual in use. From about 1,500 BC, field systems and open settlements develop, and roundhouses become the main form of domestic building.



Barbed and tanged arrowhead found east of Frensham  
(Photo D Graham)



Socketed and palstave axe from the Crooksbury Hoard, found in 1857 © SyAS

### Iron Age 700 BC-AD 43

By the beginning of the Iron Age, farms, homesteads and round-houses were scattered across the landscape, and hillforts – such as at Caesar's Camp, Farnham – attested to elite control of the tribal territories. These centres served multiple functions, from marketing and exchange to livestock movement, and animal husbandry and agriculture were particularly important aspects of the period, with much of the forest cleared by the end of the Iron Age.



Gold stater of Atrebatic type (55-45 BC) found in northern Farnham  
(Photo D Graham)

Caesar's Camp rampart and ditch, which was excavated in 1970

