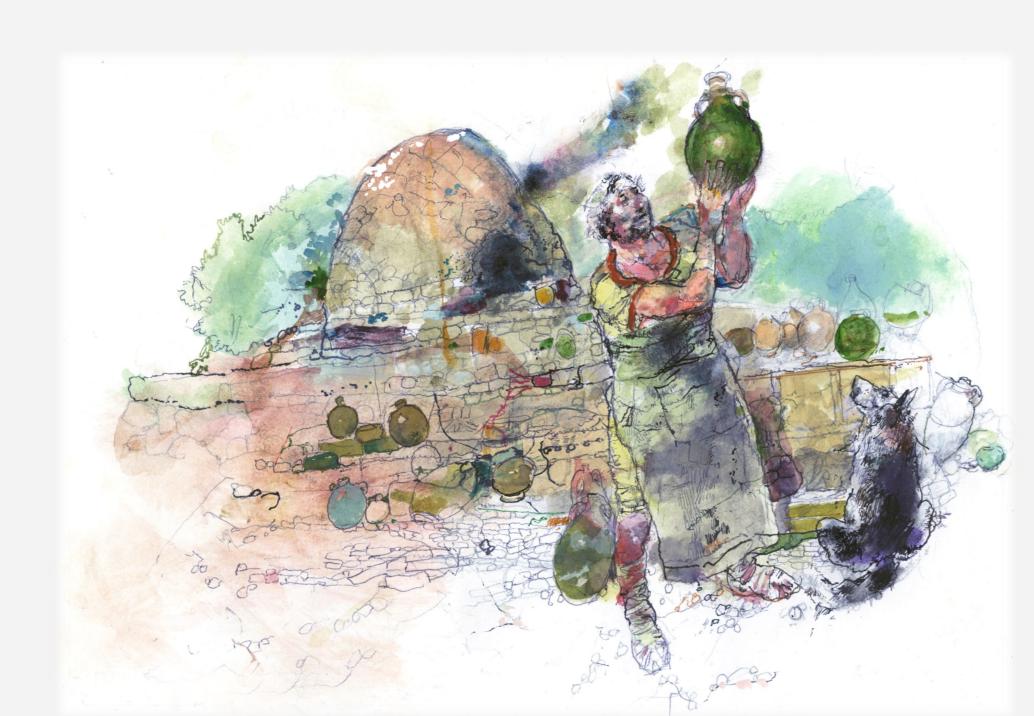


Hidden Heritage

Exploring Farnham's buried past



V Ambrus





Miniature pots and silver unit from the 1st-2nd century ritual site at Frensham Common, where further finds including a possible head-dress were uncovered (Photo by D Graham)





Bath building from the Six Bells Roman villa (Photo by A W G Lowther) and sample of painted plaster (Photo D Graham)

Roman AD 43-410

Although the Roman period is often equated with sophisticated villas, bustling towns and fortified frontiers, much of the countryside was likely unchanged from that in the preceding Iron Age. However, Surrey is crossed by a number of roads, including the east-west one which connected Winchester with London, passing through nearby Neatham and likely continuing north of Farnham towards the Hog's Back.

Pottery was a particular key industry in the area, and a major production centre at Alice Holt Forest manufactured coarse, grey pottery from the 1st to the 5th centuries, supplying London and beyond. Temples were also important features in the landscape, with many ritual sites developing from religious systems which existed before the arrival of the Roman gods.

Saxon

AD 410-1066

The transition between the end of the Roman era and the beginning

of the Saxon invasions is a particularly hazy period in history, but

less distorted. South-west Surrey fell into the kingdom of Wessex –

outside of the Danelaw, a battle with the Vikings is recorded near

area comes from placenames, including Farnham itself ('enclosure

local excavated sites of the period, with the exception of the Early

within the ferns'). The Saxon cemetery at Alton is one of the few

Saxon settlement at Firgrove, where a small number of sunken

featured buildings were discovered in the 1920s.

Farnham in 893. Much of the indication for Saxon occupation of the

more documentary evidence by the 7th century make the picture

whose capital was at Winchester – and though Hampshire was



Alice Holt kiln excavation from Country Market, Sleaford (Photo by D Graham)



Early Alice Holt jar from Snailslynch kiln © Surrey Archaeological Society (SyAS)



Excavation of well in Neatham (Photo D Graham)





Loom weight and Saxon sherd from Farnham © SyAS



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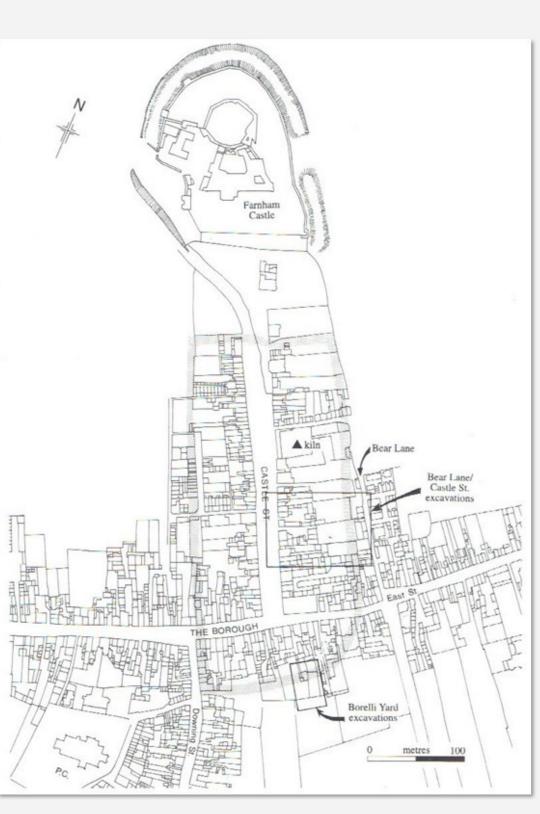


Saxon hut under excavation during gravel-digging at the Firgrove pit (Photo by E Borelli)





Floor and chalk footing of earlier – likely late Saxon – church in St Andrews' north © Surrey County Archaeological Unit



Plan of Farnham, showing inferred course of town ditch (Plan by D Graham)



Section of town ditch at Bear Lane (Photo D Graham)

Medieval AD 1066-1485

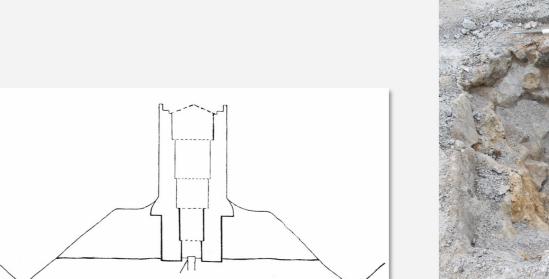
Following the invasion of William of Normandy in October 1066, the gradual takeover of territory by the Normans ensued, and the Domesday Book – completed in 1086 – was compiled to assess the taxable land, which included six mills in Farnham. One obvious change in the landscape was the rise in both castle and church building, as well as great abbeys and priories – such as Waverley – which were often pinnacles of architectural achievement. Market towns such as Guildford, Godlaming and Farnham also sprang up in the 12th and 13th centuries, while the countryside was equally productive with industries including glass-making, pottery and tile production.



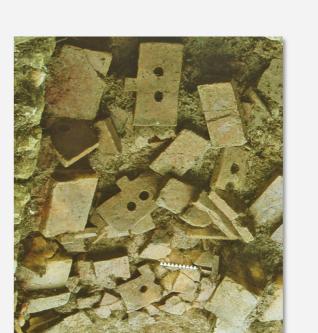
13th century encaustic tile

patterns from Waverley © SyAS

Waverley Abbey seal c.1310 © SyAS

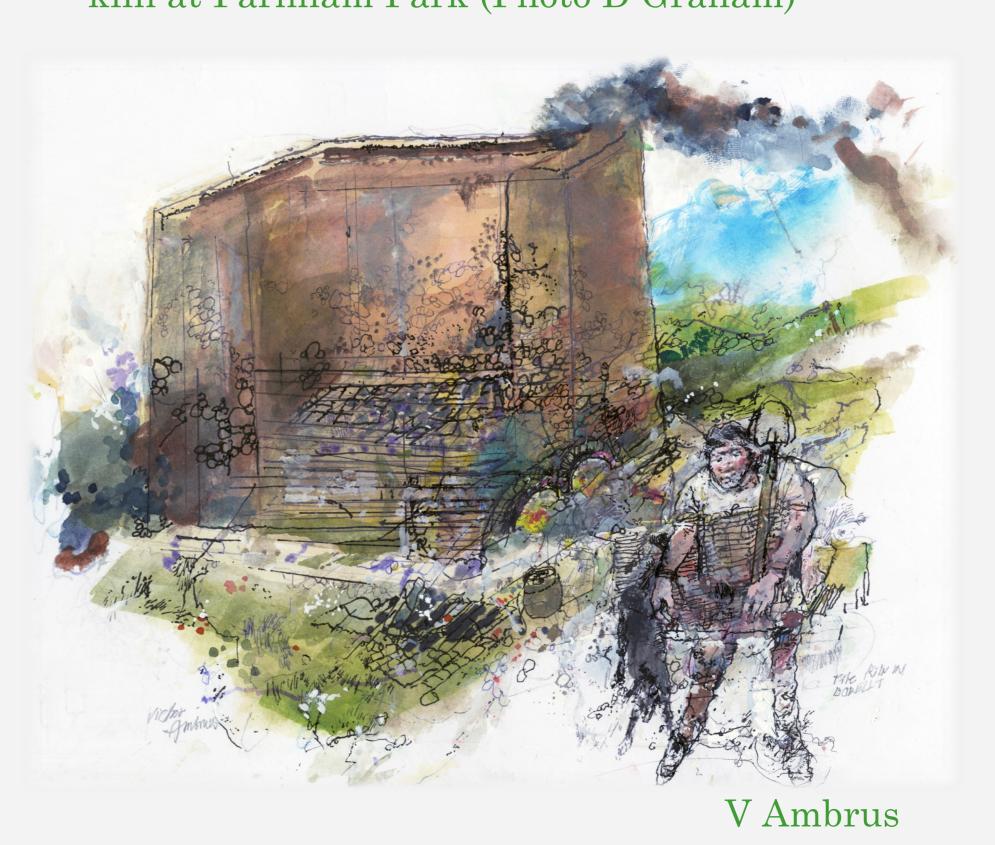


Reconstruction of Farnham Castle keep set within its mound and well shaft cut into the masonry foundations (Photo and section by M W Thompson)





Tiles from kiln at Borelli Yard and excavation of kiln at Farnham Park (Photo D Graham)







13th-14th century 'Surrey whiteware' from Farnham Castle keep excavations (Photo D Graham) and Badshot Lea moated manor (Photo by T Wilcock)

