





From the Honorary Treasurer: Dr MM Raraty.
41 Bridge Down, Bridge, Canterbury, CT4 5BA
Telephone (01227) 830508
Email: mmraraty@btinternet.com

Mr RD Neame
Court House
Bishopsbourne
Canterbury
CT4 5JB

24 January 2002

Dear Mr Neame,

Archaeological Investigations

Some eighteen months ago you very kindly gave us permission to undertake some exploratory work on an hexagonal feature in the field on 'star hill' that I had seen on an aerial photograph. We were unfortunately delayed by the foot and mouth disease restrictions for the whole of last year, as well, I have to say, as by a lack of funding for the project. I am now happy to record that both these problems have been resolved, and we hope to be able to make an investigation during the weekend of 4th-6th May this year. The work will be undertaken by a professional group - The Kent Archaeological Field School, who will be able to work entirely without the need for heavy machinery, and so will create minimal disturbance to the field and any animals in it. Any finds will of course be reported. I do hope you will be pleased that we are at last able to capitalise on your generosity, and offer you my very best wishes.

Yours sincerely,





41 Bridge Down
Bridge
Canterbury
Kent CT 4 5 BA
30 June 2000
Phone 830508

Dear Mr Neame,

Archaeology on Star Hill

You may recall that I approached you at about this time last year concerning a curious hexagonal cropmark on Star Hill, which showed up clearly on an aerial photograph. You subsequently kindly lent me a copy of a book by Francis Vine which mentions the feature, and a commentary on it by Matthew Bell in 1886.

I have recently been in touch with Mr Brian Philp, who is Director of the Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit, based in Dover, and he has expressed considerable interest in the site, speculating that it may be Tudor in origin, or perhaps associated with defences relating to the Spanish Armada. Clarity on these matters will however only be established by a site investigation. To this end we would need to employ an excavator to remove a shallow layer of soil in a line crossing part of the site, the precise location of which we have pinpointed with, I hope, some accuracy. Any such excavation would of course be reinstated, possibly on the same day, depending on what was found. To do this however we do obviously need your permission, and I hope your encouragement and support. You have in the past already shown great interest in what underlies your land in various locations. This particular site does seem to be of especial interest, and a closer inspection would seem to promise much.

I do hope you will feel able to give us permission to go ahead, and to support us in finding out more of the history of the area.

Yours sincerely,

MM Raraty

RD Neame, Esq.
Court House
Bishopsbourne
Canterbury
Kent CT4 5JB

41 Bridge Down
Bridge
Canterbury
Kent CT 4 5 BA
30 June 2000
Phone 830508

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Yours sincerely,

MM Raraty

RD Neame, Esq.
Court House
Bishopsbourne
Canterbury
Kent CT4 5JB

RD Neame Esq.
Court House
Bishopsbourne
Canterbury

16 July 1999

Dear Mr Neame,

I write to you in the hope that you may find the enclosed aerial photograph of interest, and that you may perhaps be able to shed some light on certain aspects of it. It has been kindly provided from the collections of the National Monuments Register in Swindon and although it is, I fear, a rather poor photocopy (I have now had sent to me a proper copy) you will be able to identify it as an image of the upper end of the field overlooking Bourne House, with the line of Bridge Hill cutting diagonally across it. My attention was drawn in particular to a curious feature in the upper corner of the field, which is a crop-mark in the form of a perfect hexagon of some size. Other marks (not very clear on this image) of circular form may well indicate some of the hundred or so tumuli which were recorded here in the 1770's. The hexagon is however hard to explain. Experts at Swindon who have examined the photograph describe it as "possibly a World War II military installation", namely an "Anti Aircraft Battery", though this is based on "uncertain evidence". In view of its apparent size, shape and location I find this hard to believe, and wonder if, with your knowledge of the area, you have any recollection of a structure in this position? My own view is that it dates from a much earlier period.

Incidentally, the circular form of "Old England's Hole" also shows up extremely well. I should very much like to have your view on this feature, and would be very happy to show you the original image, which as you see was taken in 1982.

Yours sincerely,

MM Raraty
41 Bridge Down, Bridge, CT4 5 BA

41 Bridge Down
Bridge
Canterbury
Kent CT4 5BA
01227 830 508
Email<mmr@cwcom.net>

18 July 2000

Dear Mr Philp,

Excavations at Bridge

Following on my letter to you of May 17th, and our subsequent telephone conversation, I am now pleased to say that we have obtained written permission of the landowner, Mr Richard Neame, to go ahead with 'further investigations'.

Mervyn Gulvin (whom I think you may know) advises me that we now need to know:

- How much a preliminary investigation might cost, in your estimation;
- Whether you can advise us on sources of funding;
- Whether you would supply the machinery, or whether we should take steps to do this;
- What starting date you might have in mind.
- Would it be useful to have a site meeting?
- What else should we do?

The field is currently sheep pasture.

Yours sincerely,

MM Raraty

41 Bridge Down
Bridge
Canterbury CT4 5 BA
Tel: 01227 830508
Email: mmr@cwcom.net

17 May 2000

Mr Brian Philp
Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit
Roman Painted House
New Street
Dover
Kent CT 17 9 AJ

Dear Mr Philp,

An intriguing feature in Bridge

My very brief conversation with you last Saturday in Faversham encourages me to think that you may find the following of interest. I enclose:

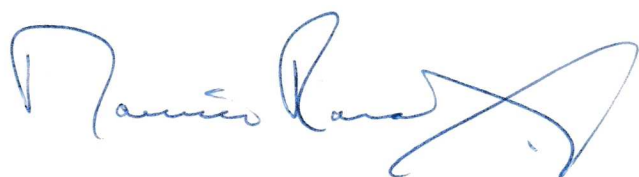
1. A copy of a photograph in the NMR collection at Swindon, taken on 2/2/1982, showing a portion of a field near Bridge, adjacent to the old A2 which runs diagonally across the picture. There is a known Anglo-saxon burial complex in the top corner of the field, but nearby there is the mark of a largish hexagonal structure. A comment held at Swindon suggests that it is possibly a WW11 military installation. It is not now visible on the ground, which is currently sheep pasture. In 1982 it appears to have been ploughed. Extrapolation from the dimensions of the nearby houses (of which mine is one) suggests that it is approx 36-37 metres maximum diameter, or 32 metres across the parallel sides of the inner hexagon. It is situated at what is to all intents and purposes the highest point of the hill.
2. A drawing of what I (perhaps fancifully) perceive to be its principal features - more clearly visible on the original.
3. A copy of pp 190-193 of a privately printed volume (1886) by FT Vine, then vicar of Patrixbourne, *Caesar in Kent*, in the possession of Richard Neame, Esq, current owner of the field. From this we see that it predates WW11, and was clearly visible on the ground.
4. This is confirmed by the extract from MS comments on the book made by Matthew Bell, Esq, the landowner in 1886. The tenor of Bell's remarks is largely to rubbish and disparage

Mr Vine's deductions about Caesar (which are indeed thoroughly imaginative). He does agree however about the reality of the hexagon.

I find it hard to suppose that a fir plantation should have deserved so perfect and elaborately designed an enclosure. The rounded corners I detect appear to be centred on the angles of the inner hexagon. I do not know the whereabouts of the second hexagon that is mentioned. The 1838 tithe map identifies 'Star Hill', but no woodland is marked.

I would be delighted to kindle your interest in this, and to know what you make of it, as well as to learn what possibility there might be of further investigation, supposing it to be of significance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Maurice Raraty', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the name.

Maurice M Raraty
Hon Treasurer, Bridge & District History Society

41 Bridge Down
Bridge
Canterbury
CT4 5BA

21 May 2002

Dear Paul,
Herewith some items you requested. I hope they are not too creased. It is nice to see the formal garden in the photo confirmed by the picture! I have yet to write to the NMR re Local History Packs, but I hope they will come up with something. I shall look forward to your programme for next year with interest.

Yours sincerely,

Maurice Raraty

KENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESCUE UNIT
(INCORPORATING THE S.E. LONDON ARCH.UNIT)

<i>East Kent Office:</i> Roman Painted House New Street, Dover Kent CT17 9AJ Tel: 01304 203279	<i>West Kent Office:</i> 5 Harvest Bank Road West Wickham Kent BR4 9DL Tel: 0181 462 4737
--	---

Director: BRIAN PHILP, ACIS, MBIM, MIFA, FSA

Field Officer:

CIB KENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESCUE UNIT

East Kent Office (Dover):
01304 203279

5 HARVEST BANK ROAD
WEST WICKHAM
KENT BR4 9DL

West Kent Office (Bromley):
0181 462 4737

REGISTERED CHARITY NO 273581

Dear Mr. Raraty,

20.7.00

Many thanks for your letter re. Bridge excavations. This site has no rescue priority and thus a full programme of work is not appropriate in terms of cost, time and effort. - However, we could justify one day trial to test the ditches. We could do the archaeology one day in August without charge. Could you get a machine for one day? No obvious sources of funding for such a project.

Best wishes,

Brian Philp

the stream where, after their twelve miles' night-march, they could obtain water for the horses. After the victory of the Roman army on Barham Downs, the greater portion of the left wing was no doubt quartered within the lines of one of the great camps on the downs; but an examination of the declivity between Barham Downs and the river opposite Charlton reveals the traces of three lines of earthworks, each of the length of about three furlongs. Probably Cæsar here quartered his cavalry, in consequence of the proximity to the river. These lines of fortification were perhaps originally thrown up in earlier British wars, but even if they were so, they would doubtless be used by the Romans as an outer line of defence for the camp. It may be noticed also that on the opposite hill, beyond the river, there is a double line of entrenchments, as if of an opposing army. These corresponding entrenchments on each side of the river extend, with greater or less prominence, as far as Kingston Church.

Before quitting Barham Downs and their neighbourhood, it will be well to notice one or

two other features, which are corroborative as to their having been the site of Cæsar's camp.

On the brow of the hill, in Bourne Park, there are what appear to be the remains of two outposts, 400 yards apart, surrounded each by a ditch. They are of the same dimensions, and form almost perfect hexagons, each side being about 50 feet in length. They are situated in commanding positions on a hill, called locally "Star Hill," and would afford excellent stations for the guards placed before the gates of the camp, whence they could view the position and movements of the enemy. They are known traditionally as "the Forts." They are now bare of trees, but have the appearance of having been planted at some comparatively recent period.¹

A deep depression a few yards distant from one

¹ I imagine that these outposts were at first thrown up for stations outside the camp formed by Cæsar after the taking of "the oppidum"; but that afterwards, when the camp was extended during Cæsar's absence at the coast, they, and the oppidum itself, were included within the lines of the encampment, the ground of Bourne Park having been cleared of trees by the Roman soldiers for the purpose of this extension of their camp.

MERVYN GULVIN

Dip. Arch.(Canterbury) R.I.B.A.

architect

92, High Street, Bridge, Canterbury, Kent, CT4 5LB

Tel: (01227)830881

Fax: (01227) 832111



MJG/mjg/gen

22nd January 2002

Dr P Wilkinson
School Farm Oast
Graveney Road
Faversham
Kent ME13 8UP

Dear Paul,

Bridge Hill, Bridge - Hexagon

Thank you for your note and detail enclosures. I have spoken to Maurice Raraty from Bridge History Society project group and we believe this would be an ideal site for the proposed survey.

The land owner is Richard Neame - who is currently quite ill - who gave us consent last year to go onto the land to explore the feature. This was not done due to foot and mouth. Maurice has written to Richard advising him that we intend to carryout an excavation on May 4,5 & 6 and that we will provide him with a record of what is found.

Do we need to meet to resolve logistics? If so please ring and I will set up a meeting.

Yours sincerely


Mervyn Gulvin.

c.c. Mr M Raraty



From the Honorary Treasurer: Dr MM Raraty.
41 Bridge Down, Bridge, Canterbury, CT4 5BA
Telephone (01227) 830508
Email: mmraraty@btinternet.com

Dr Paul Wilkinson
School Farm Oast
Graveney Road
Faversham
Kent ME13 8UP
29 January 2002

Dear Dr Wilkinson,

Digging in Bridge

Mervyn Gulvin gave me the news a day or two ago that he had persuaded you to engage in a trial dig at Bridge in May, and I gather you know the aerial photograph which reveals the presence of an hexagonal feature in what is (or was in the distant past) known as Star Hill. I look forward with great interest to what may be uncovered.

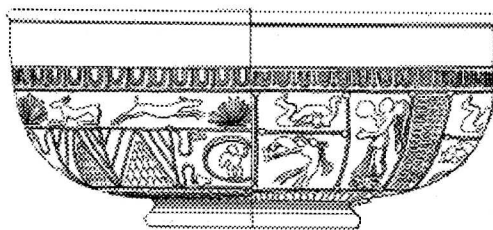
What you may not know unless you have seen the site is that it lies at virtually the highest point of the hill: a small tower of some 20 feet would give an uninterrupted view over some distance. In spite of the comment on the back of my photo (from Swindon) that it is probably a WWII structure, it is in fact mentioned in a book by the Vicar of Patrixbourne, privately printed in 1886, at which time it was therefore plainly visible on the ground. He also mentions another, similar, feature some 400 yards distant. I don't, though, know where that may be. He supposes, since that is the whole thrust of his argument, that it is a relic of the Roman invasions. The landowner of the time, Matthew Bell, while dismissing the Rev. Vine's claim as fanciful, confirms the existence of an enclosure, which he supposes was constructed merely to protect a small plantation of trees. His memory of the site at the time extended to about 40 years. I don't know the size of the trees he was thinking of, but that suggests to me that the site is likely to predate Napoleonic times. For who would trouble to build an enclosure for a coppice with such regular dimensions?

A little further down the hill, with still visible remains of an earth embankment, lies 'Old England's Hole', variously described as an old chalk quarry, or as the site of the Ancient Britons' last stand against Julius Caesar (it may of course be both, or neither). It is undoubtedly circular, has been much worked over, and is cut through by the Roman road to Dover.

I do hope at least some of this is new to you, and makes the project sufficiently intriguing.

Yours sincerely,

THE KENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SCHOOL



12th February 2002

Dear Dr Raraty,

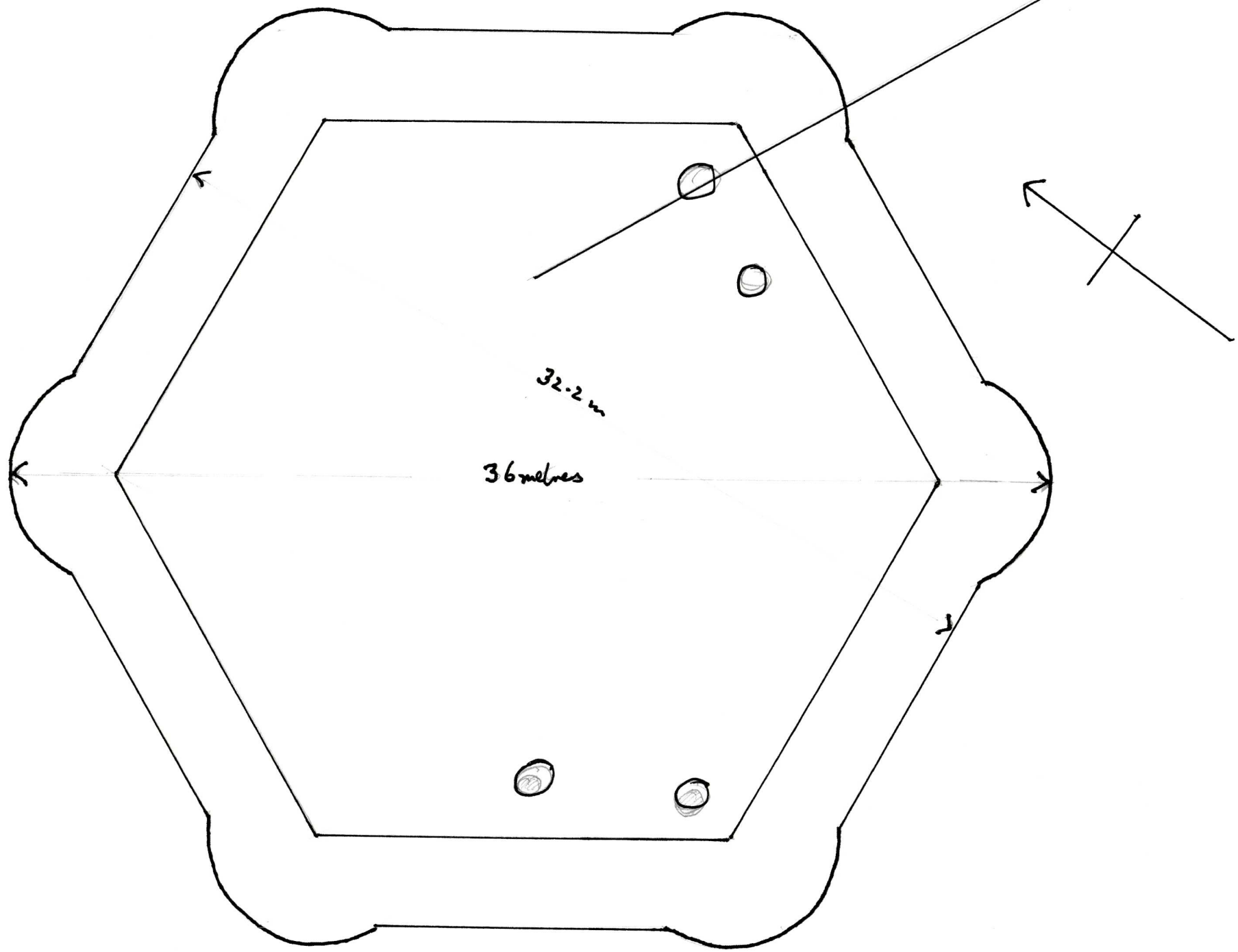
Thank you for sending me material on the the feature we are going to excavate at Bridge. I have ordered from English Heritage all the aerial photo's they have.

We are also investigating the area around Ickham and Wickenbreaux. Does this fall in your area or if not do you know someone there I could contact?

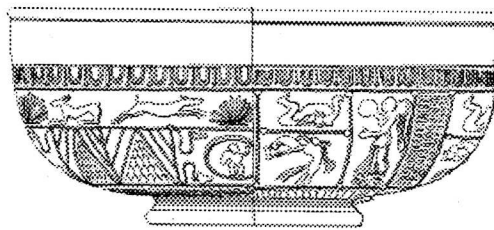
Yours sincerely,

Paul Wilkinson

Paul Wilkinson



THE KENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SCHOOL



20th January 2002

Mervyn Gulvin
92 High Street
Bridge

Dear Mervyn,

Please find enclosed our Field School brochure for this year. You will see that we on May 4th, 5th, 6th, we have a course 'Discovering Archaeological Sites' which would be ideal for evaluating and sectioning the earthwork discussed last week. If you are interested I can start research (and no doubt you can send me what you have) and plan it into our programme. I also enclose our house magazine which may be of interest to you.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Wilkinson

Part 1 : MONUMENT DETAILS

Unique Identifier: 465293 NMR Number: TR 15 SE 154 NBR Number:

Monument Name:

Summary : Hexagonal feature with dark centre seen on air photograph. Possibly aWorld War II military installation.

ADDRESSES

Primary Address

County KENT
District CANTERBURY
Parish/Non Parish (NPA) BRIDGE

GRID REFERENCES

Centre / Point TR 1861 5368 - Centre/Point

DATE AND CLASSIFICATION OF SITE

MODERN 1939 .. 1945

World War II

MONUMENT TYPE .. ANTI AIRCRAFT BATTERY
EVIDENCE .. UNCERTAIN EVIDENCE

DESCRIPTION

Hexagonal feature with dark centre, probable WW2 military installation. (1)

REFERENCES

Ref Title Compiler Surname
1 Aerial photograph reference number
CUCAP SU 1-4 (03-06-56) JE

ASSOCIATED PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS

Compiler JE, JE 09-APR-1987..09-APR-1987

Part 2 : RELATED ACTIVITIES AND ARCHIVE

Activity and Archive records linked to this monument are outlined below. Please contact the NMR (see covering letter) quoting the NMR Number of this monument record and the UIDs and titles of items of interest. Please note that the text of field observations is given in full in the description above.

RELATED ACTIVITY RECORDS (EXCAVATIONS etc.)

UID 1077099 RCHME: Kent Mapping Project Air Photograph Interpretation OCT-1986 ..OCT-1987

ASSOCIATED ARCHIVE MATERIAL

Collections

UID 1077575 RCHME: Kent Mapping Project, TR 15 SE



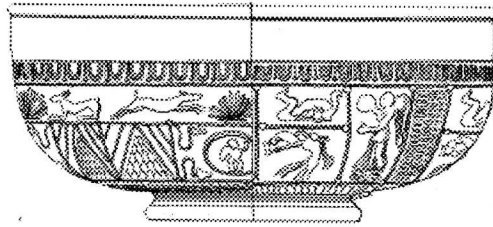
terraces succeeding one another" must have been wholly unnecessary.

With respect to the supposed traces of entrenchments in Bourne Park described on p. 191 I have carefully examined "the brow of the hill" in search of the "two parallel lines of escarpments with others at their extremities at right angles", and must candidly say I can find nothing resembling them---except 1st the traces of the ditches enclosing a strip of land(perhaps the first enclosed portion of the Park)on each side of the great double avenue which formerly extended from the Dover road to the foot of the hill, corresponding with the existing avenue at the back of the mansion---and 2ndly the banks and ditches of the "Paddocks" mentioned by Hasted, enclosed at a later period by a succeeding proprietor. Perhaps however the Author does not intend to refer to either of these. He says his "escarpments" are "not easily discerned"--"which argues their great antiquity",---possibly an antiquity of a far earlier period than either Britons or Romans. The two hexagonal enclosures,p191, surrounded by a bank, there is no "ditch", and supposed to be "outposts", are easily recognised: he says "they are known traditionally as The Forts": this is another instance of a tradition known to hardly anyone.I have never heard it mentioned.But, whatever else they may have been, they were certainly once plantations, as the trees(Scotch firs) still existed forty years ago in one of them, and a few stumps were visible in the other; the bank of the N.W. hexagon is still perfect, but after making ample allowance for the levelling effects of time and weather, it seems to me far too insignificant in its dimensions to have ever been the embankment of a Roman "outpost" while it is exactly what one might expect to find as a bank thrown up to assist in protecting a plantation made perhaps less than 100 years ago. "The deep depression a few yards distant", supposed to have been an "amphitheatre", I have been utterly unable to discover. Surely the Author

cannot have intended to refer to the old chalk pit just below adjoining the road which we partially filled up and planted some years ago! It is however the only "deep depression" I can find in that part of the Park. The spring, mentioned at page 193, possibly existed in Caesar's time: it has always been known as "The cold Bath", but the addition of "Roman's" must I think be due to the well known propensity of the Author, and his old friend.

In conclusion , we can readily agree with the Author that an important engagement between Caesar's army and the Britons may have taken place on the high plateau adjoining Barham Downs, the whole of which was probably open down land--that the Britons, being defeated, were driven across the stream in the valley, and took refuge in the extensive woods covering the summits of the hills beyond, of which Gorsley-Atchester, and The Covert etc are the existing remains, and in which their "Oppidum, fortified by nature and art" was situated, but we may be permitted to doubt the accuracy of the identification of particular localities such as "Old England's Hole" etc , which was no doubt prompted by the worthy gentleman whose researches and suggestions are admitted to have inspired the writer of the work, but whose intense enthusiasm, and vivid imagination, have perhaps sometimes impelled him to form rather too hasty conclusions. The "local traditions" our Author relies upon as corroborating his views can scarcely be said to have that general currency in the locality which would alone entitle them to the weight he apparently attaches to them.

THE KENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SCHOOL



31st January 2002

Dear Dr Raraty,

Thank you for your letter concerning our evaluation and excavation of the feature at Star Hill, Bridge.

I know of the aerial photo, but could you send me a photocopy of the one you have obtained from Swindon. I remember a couple of years ago coming across an 19th century book written by a clergyman on the Roman invasions. Could it be the same book you have? It did have a large map which showed two hexagonal features on the Downs. I need to obtain a copy of that map (and book). But it certainly isn't WW2, although it may be Napoleonic, but we shall see. I do need to have permission from the landowner and access for a tracked mini-digger. We of course will leave the site as we found it. I enclose a recent 'house magazine and look forward to hearing from you.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul Wilkinson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Paul Wilkinson



From the Honorary Treasurer: Dr MM Raraty.
41 Bridge Down, Bridge, Canterbury, CT4 5BA
Telephone (01227) 830508
Email: mmraraty@btinternet.com

Dr P Wilkinson
School Farm Oast
Graveney Road
Faversham
Kent ME13 8UP

6 February 2002

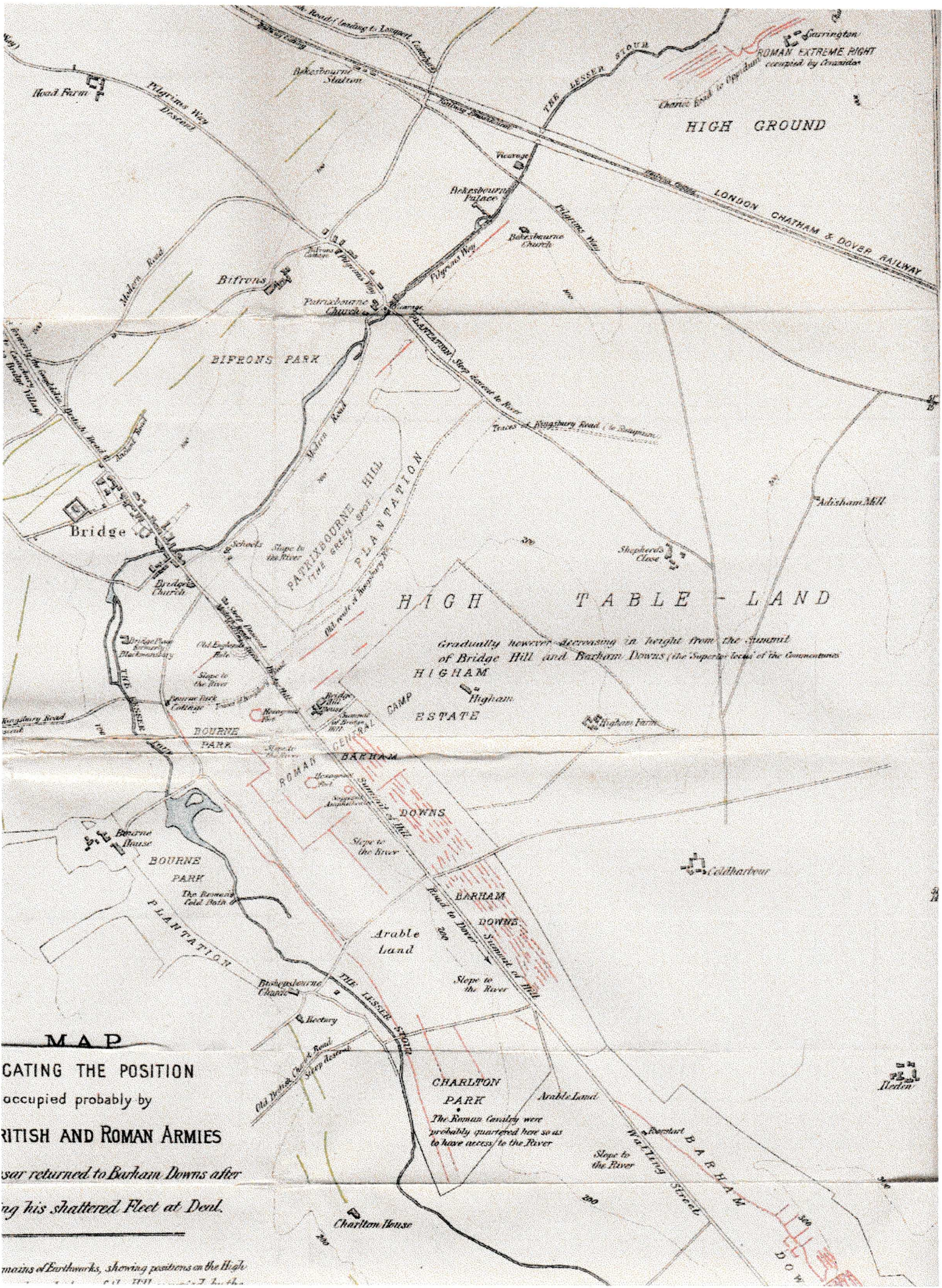
Dear Dr Wilkinson,

It was not until you wrote that I realised that there were two versions of FT Vine's book, *Caesar in Kent*. I had seen the first edition (1886), and it is only in the second edition (1887 - obviously a best-seller of the time) that there are two maps. I have now tracked down a copy of the latter (the Web is a wonderful thing) which I shall be happy to sell on to you at cost (!) I enclose a copy of part of the relevant map, together with a four-page extract from the book and a copy of the aerial photo (dated 5 February 1982). In addition I append part of Matthew Bell's dismissive commentary, which on re-reading certainly suggests however a greater antiquity than Napoleonic, and my own somewhat amateurish interpretation of what is to be seen on the photograph. The dimensions are based on a comparison with the size of my own house, which is in the same image.

This is about as far as I can go on background. We have (enthusiastic) written permission from the landowner (11 July 2000) though I have to say he is at present seriously ill, and I wonder if he will survive until May. I have informed him of what we intend to do.

Yours sincerely,

Cc Mervyn Gulvin



HIGH GROUND

LONDON CHATHAM & DOVER RAILWAY

HIGH TABLE - LAND

Gradually however decreasing in height from the summit of Bridge Hill and Bournemouth Downs (the superior localities of the Antonine's)

HIGHAM CAMP ESTATE

ROMAN BARHAM

BARHAM DOWNS

BARHAM DOWNS

CHARLTON PARK

The Roman Cavalry were probably quartered here so as to have access to the River

MAP

ILLUSTRATING THE POSITION

occupied probably by

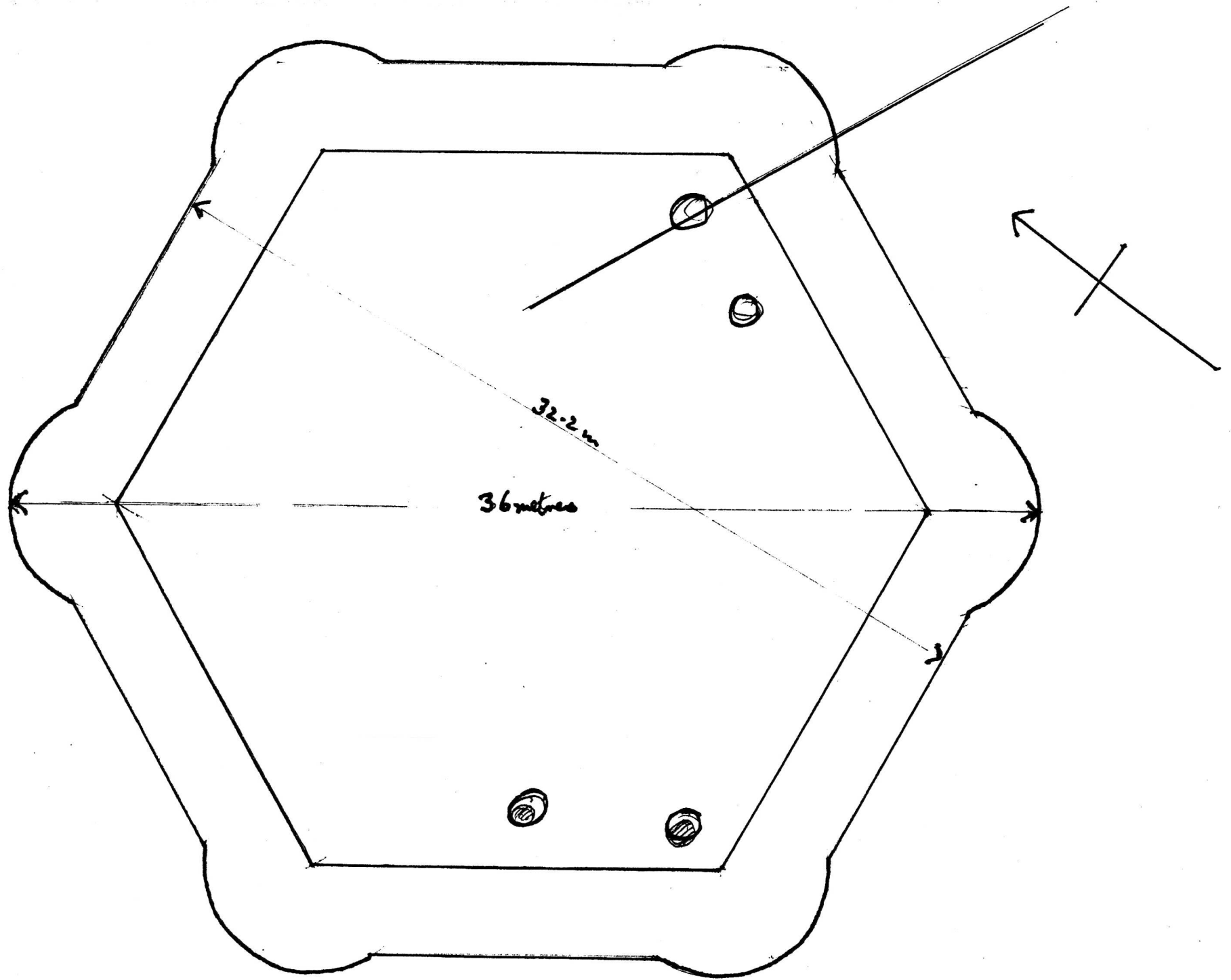
BRITISH AND ROMAN ARMIES

when Caesar returned to Bournemouth Downs after

losing his shattered Fleet at Deal.

remains of Earthworks, showing positions on the High





11th July 2000.

M.M. Raraty Esq.,
41 Bridge Down,
Bridge,
Canterbury CT4 5BA.

Dear Mr. Raraty,

Thank you for your letter of 30th June, the contents of which I found extremely interesting. I will, of course, be happy for the Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit to make further investigations and I will inform John Ash whose sheep are grazing in the park.

I look forward to hearing your plans and wish you every success in this interesting venture.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Neame

R. D. NEAME, COURT HOUSE, BISHOPSBOURNE, CANTERBURY, CT4 5JB
TELEPHONE: (01227) 830300

11th July 2000.

M.M. Raraty Esq.,
41 Bridge Down,
Bridge,
Canterbury CT4 5BA.

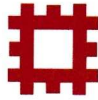
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I look forward to hearing your plans and wish you every success in this interesting venture.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Neame



ENGLISH HERITAGE

NATIONAL
MONUMENTS
RECORD

DESPATCH NOTE

OrderID: 2569 **Despatched:** 09 July 1999
EnquiryID: 3655 **Your Ref:**
Supplied to: Dr M M Raraty
41 Bridge Down
Bridge
Canterbury
Kent
CT4 5BA

Products/Services supplied:

QTY	Description
1	16x12 black and white print

An invoice for the above will follow.

The National Monuments Record is the public archive of English Heritage

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Telephone 01793 414700 Facsimile 01793 414707 World Wide Web <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk>

National Monuments Record enquiries: Telephone 01793 414600 Facsimile 01793 414606 E-mail info@rchme.co.uk



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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INVOICE

NAME AND ADDRESS

Dr M M Raraty
 41 Bridge Down
 Bridge
 Canterbury, Kent
 CT4 5BA

INVOICE No. 0010001581

INVOICE DATE 12/07/1999

ACCOUNT No. RAR/001

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT PRICE	NET AMOUNT	VAT CODE
Photographic 16x12 Black and White Print Order ID: 2569 Enquiry ID: 3655 Please telephone: 01793 414610 regarding queries, thank you.	1.00	20.00	20.00	3

VAT CODE	NET AMOUNT	VAT AMOUNT
3	20.00	3.50

TOTAL	£	p
NET	20.00	
VAT	3.50	
GROSS	23.50	

PAYMENT IS STRICTLY 30 DAYS FROM INVOICE DATE

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- 2) Please return the blue copy of the invoice with your remittance advice.
- 3) Cheques must be made payable in £ sterling to ENGLISH HERITAGE and sent to the above address.
- 4) Please quote invoice and account numbers in all correspondence.
- 5) VAT codes: 1 = exempt, 2 = domestic fuel and power, 3 and 5 = standard rated, 4 = zero rated, 9 = outside the scope.

'Before quitting Barham Downs and their neighbourhood, it will be well to notice one or two other features, which are corroborative as to their having been the site of Caesar's camp.

On the brow of the hill, in Bourne Park, there are what appears to be the remains of two outposts, 400 yards apart, surrounded each by a ditch. They are of the same dimensions, and form almost perfect hexagons, each side being about 50 feet in length. They are situated in commanding positions on a hill, called locally "Star Hill," and would afford excellent stations for the guards placed before the gates of the camp, whence they could view the position and movements of the enemy. They are known traditionally as "the Forts". They are now bare of trees, but have the appearance of having been planted at some comparatively recent period.

A deep depression a few yards distant from one of these may possibly have been one of those extemporized amphitheatres with which we know Caesar sought amusement for his soldiers, when not in actual combat...'

(FT Vine: Caesar in Kent, privately printed, 1886, pp 191/2, copy in possession of R Neame, esq., Bishopsbourne)

The 'deep depression' referred to above is not, it seems a reference to 'Old England's Hole', since Vine refers to that separately on pp 167-9 of his book.

See in reference to these comments the attached MS commentary by Matthew Bell of Bourne House (transcribed by Martin Vye). Mr Bell refers to a Scotch Fir plantation. 1838 tithe map identifies Star Hill, but no woodland is marked. 1801 map is too unclear to tell, 1764 map too unreliable.

The hexagons were evidently visible on the ground in 1886. They appear on no maps. I do not know where the second one may be, but the one in the photo is currently invisible to the amateur eye. The ground is covered in long dry grass at the moment. If mown and put to sheep it might show something. Photo was taken in February 1982.

As an enclosure to a plantation the hexagon is too regular: indeed it seems too mathematically precise altogether. The rounded corners I detect appear to be centred on the angles of the inner dark hexagon. It is situated on a high (but not the highest) part of the hill. A small tower (25ft or so) would give an uninterrupted 360 degree panorama, over the top of any trees. Wishful thinking?

The scale of the photo I have judged to be 5cm : 9m approx., which gives a maximum diameter to the feature of 36m.

4.50 m

7 m

1.4

11.00 + m

41 B.D.

9 m

