



THE 2015 DIG – TAYNE FIELD – THE FINAL DIG

Dr Gabor Thomas and his team from the University of Reading have undertaken archaeological excavations in the village of Lyminge, Kent, since 2007. In 2014 Dr Thomas excavated on Tayne Field, the third year of excavations on the site funded by the AHRC (Arts and Humanities Research Council). At the end of the dig in 2014 there had been a question on an area concerning a crater partly excavated but leaving the archaeologists with something of a puzzle. Dr Thomas and his team were able to return in 2015 to tie up these loose ends and attempted to answer the mystery.

Dr Alexander Knox reporting on the 2015 dig provided the following information on the Timber Hall:

“We found some really fantastic objects and archaeology, and had great fun with a really enthusiastic team all dedicated to helping get the work done in the limited time we had. The Timber Hall trench was particularly interesting. We wanted to open a small trench that would show us the exact length of the east-west oriented timber hall discovered in 2013 and excavated primarily in 2014.”

“We have now managed to confirm that we have the end wall of the hall, which is fantastic news. ... There is a heap of large flint nodules. This lies outside the external end wall, and the flints provide packing around a raking post to support the roof just like those we excavated on the long walls of the building in 2014....

“This hall measures around 23 metres long, and is the largest hall in our hall complex.”

With regard to the mystery of the crater, Dr Knox recorded:

“One of the major questions was the origins of the huge crater-like feature filled with Anglo-Saxon artefacts and the waste from industrial processes like iron smithing and smelting. ... we established that the midden pit was most likely a natural geological feature called a solution hollow or a doline reasonably early on – these are types of sinkholes common to chalk and limestone geology. Because of the slow silting up of the pit, there are flints within the lowest layers of the midden, so we also know that the pit was open in prehistory, most likely sometime in the Bronze Age.”

“Our final question was what on earth the flints ... in the lowest Anglo-Saxon layers were doing there. In 2014 we were able to open a 1 metre wide slot revealing a layer of what appears to be carefully laid flint nodules in the bottom of the midden.

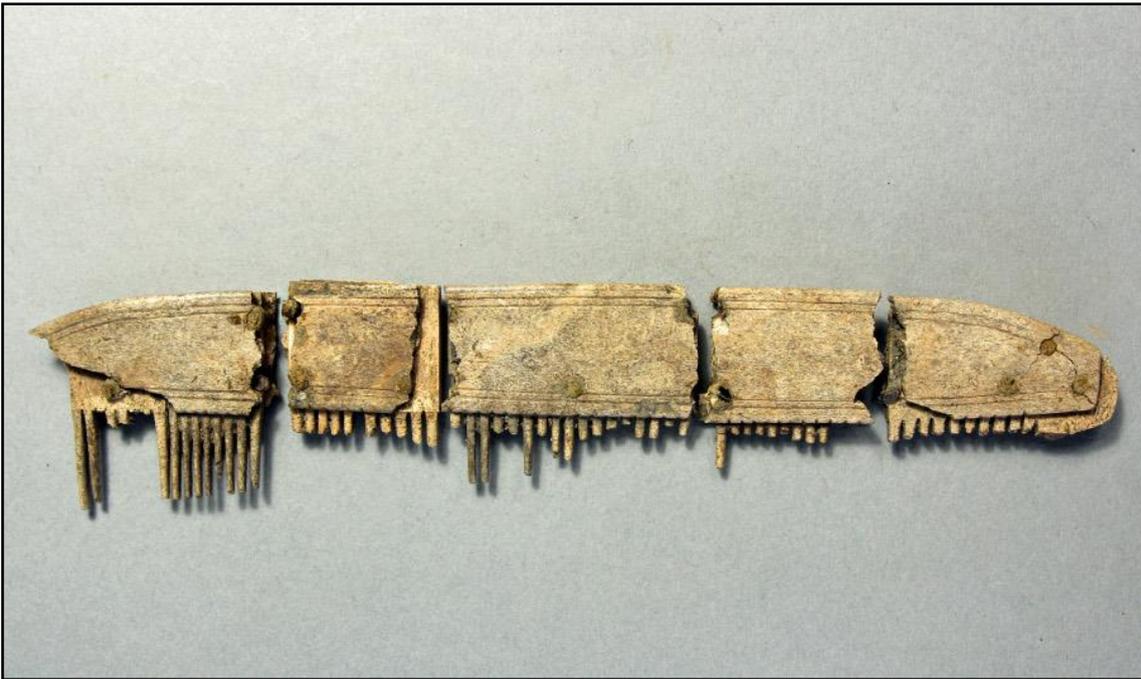
“... we returned [in 2015] to try and get an answer and on the very last day of digging we appear to have done just that. While the southerly north-south slot only revealed a gradual petering out of the flints, the northern 2 metres wide slot that was newly opened this season at last revealed a flint layer running all the way from the top to the bottom of the blob! Our team worked hard in the last days and even hours to fully reveal this flint ‘ramp’ or ‘pavement’.”

PHOTOGRAPHS OF SOME OF THE FINDS EXCAVATED DURING THE 2015 DIG

Some of the high quality copper alloy metalwork from this year's excavations. Clockwise from top: A Frankish style strap-end from a belt, a button brooch, a garnet-inlaid disc brooch, a small-long brooch and in the centre a brooch in the shape of an eagle or a hawk (a raptor). (Photo ©John Piddock)



A bone comb, complete, although in several pieces. (Photo © John Piddock)



A Spear head, with extensive corrosion, the first weapon to be excavated from the settlement at Lyminge. (Photo © John Piddock)



ⁱ Reading University website - <http://blogs.reading.ac.uk/lyminge>