

Reynolds Place Field (LF4), Horton Kirby

Introduction

The West Kent Archaeological Society had carried out a geophysical - resistivity survey 1/2/2015-19/4/2015. This followed an extensive metal detecting survey over a number of years starting on the 26/10/1985 and still ongoing to the present day. This survey has enabled 1298 coins and artefacts to be recorded. The majority of this metal detecting survey was carried out when the field was used for arable crops. The results of the metal detecting finds including many photographs are in a separate report. When this field was ploughed and cultivated annually it allowed for regular random field walking whilst metal detecting. This material will be recorded in a separate report.

The information gathered from the non invasive procedures above has led to the next logical step which is to investigate further by test pitting two particular areas of interest that are apparent from the resistivity survey. A scan of this which was used as a working sheet can be seen on page 2.

The field had for a number of years been used for sheep pasture but has more recently been used for an annual hay crop and is therefore now in a good condition for this further investigation. The two areas we looked at were:-

- 1) A raised, sub-rectangular possible building platform. This is immediately to the North West of Reynolds Place. Four test pits were planned here.
- 2) A possible track way immediately to the North East of the house. Initially a test pit here but expected to expand into a narrow trial trench across this possible feature.

This was to be carried out over the Easter period 2015, but due to poor weather conditions and then extensive growth of the grass for the hay crop it was only possible to complete the first three test pits. These are marked on the working sheet with test pit 1 in the resistivity grid 5, test pit 2 in grid 3 and test pit 3 in grid 7. Provisional test pits 4 position was planned in grid 9 and similarly test pit 5/possible trial trench in grid 27.

The results achieved are listed below in the form of a number of tables. There are two tables for each test pit with the immediate results shown first normally going down in 10cm layers to the undisturbed natural level. Then followed by the small finds made in each test pit also displayed going down in 10cm layers down to the natural.

Results

All three test pits contained a range of different finds from a number of time periods:- prehistoric, roman, medieval, post medieval and modern all mixed up in the plough soil and upper sub-soil level. This included a significant amount of ceramic building material as well as some evidence of settlement in the form of pottery sherds. However there was little activity below this sub soil level with no evidence of a building foundation in any of these three initial test pits.

Interpretation

Therefore we could conclude from these results so far that the material discovered had simply been spread over the field, into the plough soil and occasionally as deep as the sub-soil. There is no evidence to suggest that this spread is due to a different, now demolished, separate building or that the site was considerably larger prior to the extensive fire in the great storm of 1703. Instead, it is more likely that this spread results from the immediate position to the adjacent standing Reynolds Place or its predecessors.