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The Faversham Society  
Archaeological Research Group

Community  
Archaeology



## Excavation Report

**2 Swedish House, Throwley Road, Throwley, Faversham, Kent  
ME13 0PF**



<b>Project Code:</b>	THR24		
<b>Excavation Code(s):</b>	KP196	<b>Excavation Date(s):</b>	KP196: 25/05/24 (1-Day)
<b>NGR(s):</b>	TQ 99165 55734		
<b>Excavation Lead(s):</b>	KP196: Chris Wootton	<b>Site Lead(s):</b>	Chris Wootton
<b>Finds Processing Lead(s):</b>	NA (Finds processing carried out at Post-Ex)	<b>Report Writers:</b>	Mike Tillman Chris Wootton (Introduction)
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## 1. Introduction

Throwley is an English village south of Faversham in the Borough of Swale in Kent. The name is recorded in the Domesday Book as Trevelai, which corresponds with a Brittonic origin, where "trev" means a settlement or farmhouse and "elai" typically relates to a fast-moving river or stream (cf. Trelai (showing the loss of terminal "f") in Cardiff). In 2011 the parish had a population of 300.<sup>1</sup>

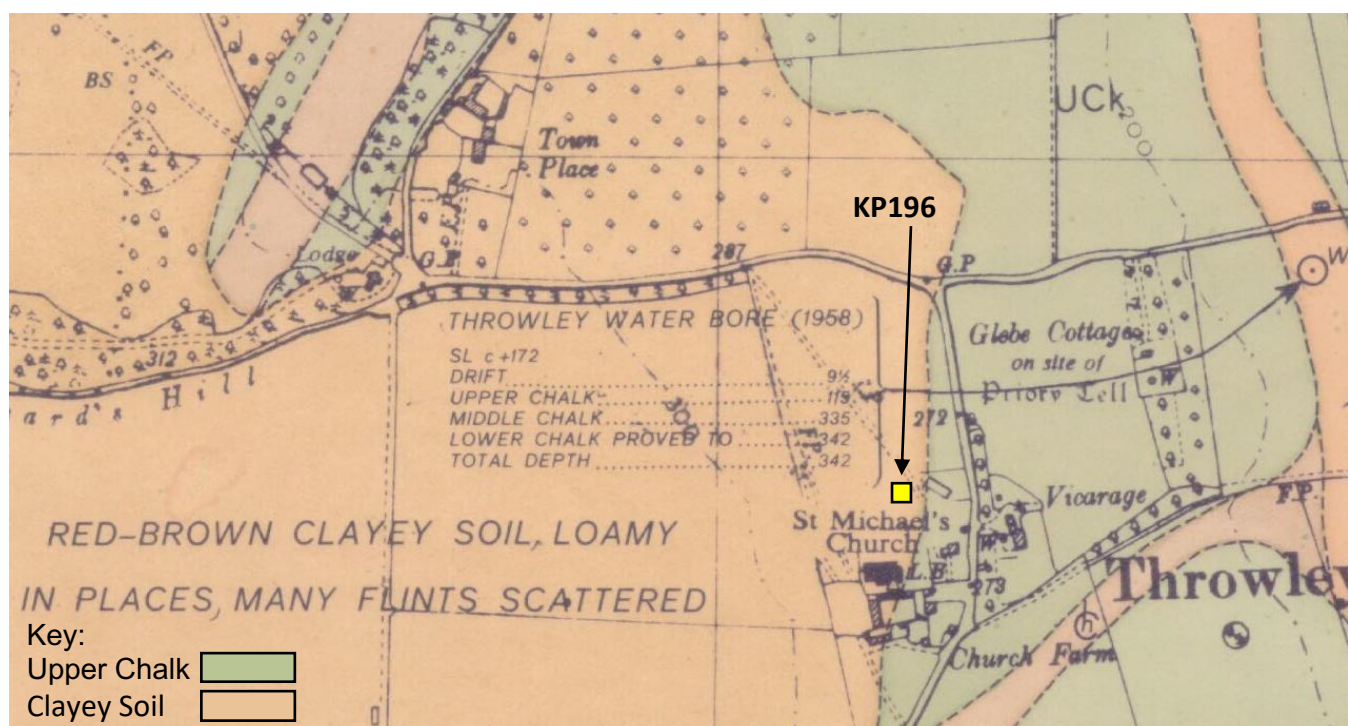
The population of around 130 households is scattered across several hamlets, the largest of which is Throwley Forstal.

In 2023 FSARG carried out an investigation into the Throwley area. Local knowledge had suggested that the lost medieval manor house of Throwley would have been located within a short distance from Throwley church. Sources were divided as to where the manor house was situated, indicating a location both north and south of the church. A written description of the manor house suggested a substantial dwelling which acted as a centre for farming, also containing ancillary agricultural services such as blacksmithing etc.

The area south of the church has been developed with farming and residential buildings and as such was unavailable for us to survey. The area north of the church is open land presently used as a paddock for horses. The use of aerial photographs from Google Earth suggested the possibility of a structure and / or development within the field and as such a decision was taken to investigate the field further.

It was decided to conduct a joint geo-resistivity and metal detecting survey in January 2024, followed by another survey and a small one-day excavation a few months later in May.

## 2. Summary of geography and geology



**Fig 1: Ordnance Survey, Geological Survey 1960.<sup>2</sup>**

Throwley lies on top of the Kent North Downs in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The landscape is mainly arable fields and woodland copses covering just over 5 square miles.

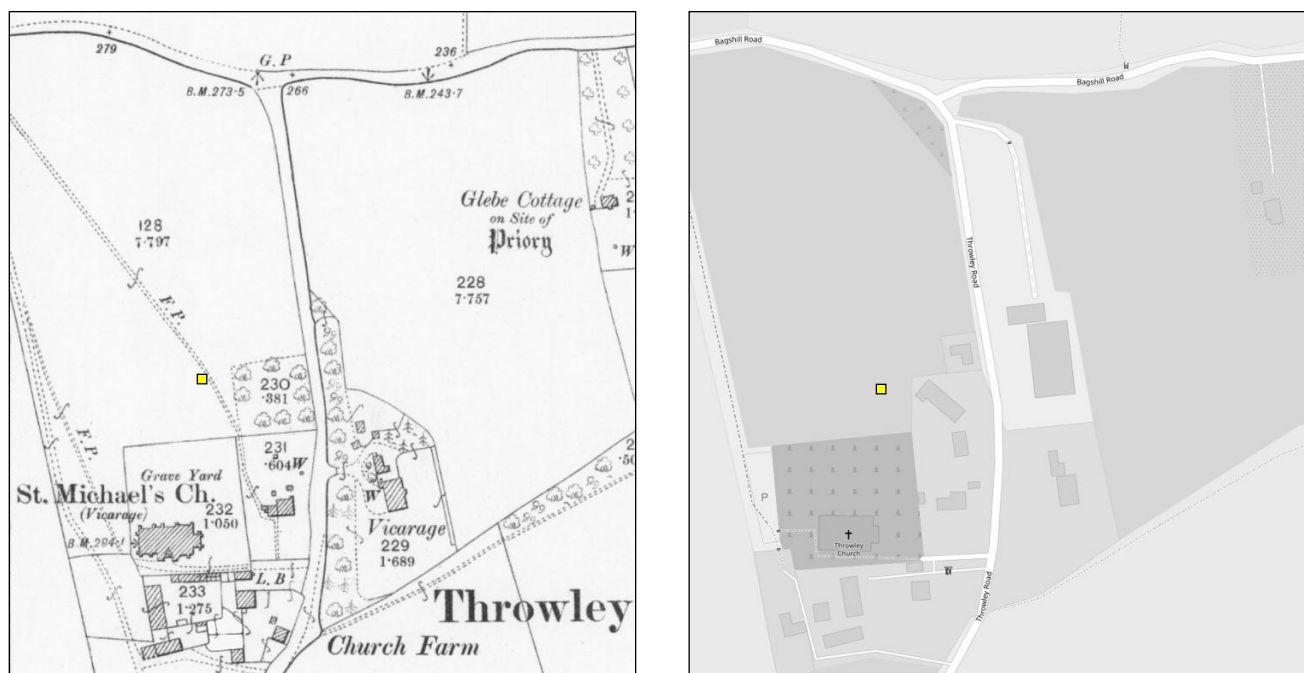
As can be seen from the geological survey in **Fig 1**, the area where the activity was carried out consists of clayey soil with a large quantity of scattered flints.

<sup>1</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Throwley>

<sup>2</sup> British Geological Survey © NERC



### 3. Summary of history and maps



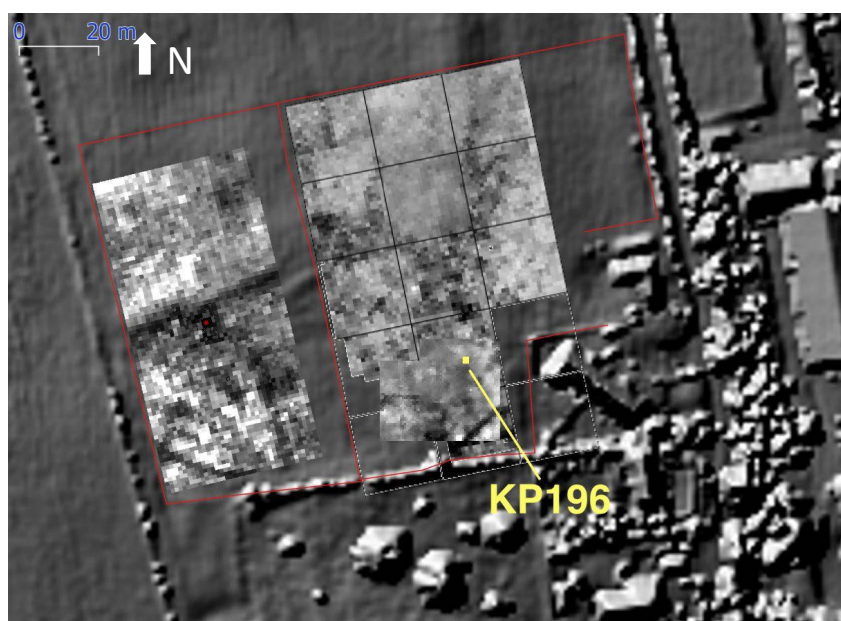
**Fig 2: (Left) 1897 map showing St Michael's church, and the location of the excavation.<sup>3</sup> (Right) Modern map of the same area.<sup>4</sup> The yellow square indicates the excavation location.**

At least from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the area has remained unchanged, being open fields.

### 4. Research questions

As described in the introduction, the project aim was to try to identify the location of an early manor house / estate believed to be situated somewhere near to the church.

### 5. Location of KP196



**Fig 3: The location of the excavation showing the geo-resistivity results overlaid on the LIDAR map.**

<sup>3</sup> Ordnance Survey OS 25 Inch 1897

<sup>4</sup> Open Street Map: [openstreetmap.org](https://openstreetmap.org)

The location of the pit was determined partly from the geo-resistivity results. Although there were no immediately obvious targets, it was decided that the pit should be positioned to take in a transition between a wet and dry area, since this may have indicated evidence of a ditch or structure.

## **6. Procedure**

A 0.75m by 0.75m area was pegged out using the planning square and the area delineated marked with string. The position was recorded by measuring to mapped corners of the field. The turf was carefully cut and set aside. The pit was then hand excavated using single contexts, each of which were fully recorded, and was excavated to the maximum depth of 0.5m. Due to strict time constraints, it was decided to sieve 25% of the excavated material. Finds were set aside from each context, and at the end of the excavation, the spoil was put back in, tamped down, watered and the turf replaced.

## **7. Excavation Results**

With the turf [01] removed, a firm, well sorted layer [02] of clayey silty soil extended to a maximum depth of 16cm. Contained in the soil were small quantities of brick and small flints.

Context [03] was made up of the same firm, clayey silty soil, but was poorly sorted with larger flints (including 2 worked flints), small quantities of brick, bone, metal (iron nails), slag, and a small number of pieces of pottery. The pottery dated from early medieval, through to post-medieval. Hand excavation stopped at 40cm depth, where a switch was made to the use of a spade and mattock. At a depth of 45cm there was a colour change to a more orange hue. This was defined as context [04], but there was no more time to excavate further so the pit was backfilled at this stage.

## **8. Interpretation**

Since this was a rural location, there was not the typical build-up of Victorian and later material found in urban areas, and hence the archaeology was very shallow. The odd pieces of pottery dated back to the early-medieval period (AD 1050-1225). However, these pieces were small and abraded indicating that they were almost certainly midden-scatter (discarded waste material). The 2 worked flints were flake tools, but the dating of them is inconclusive.

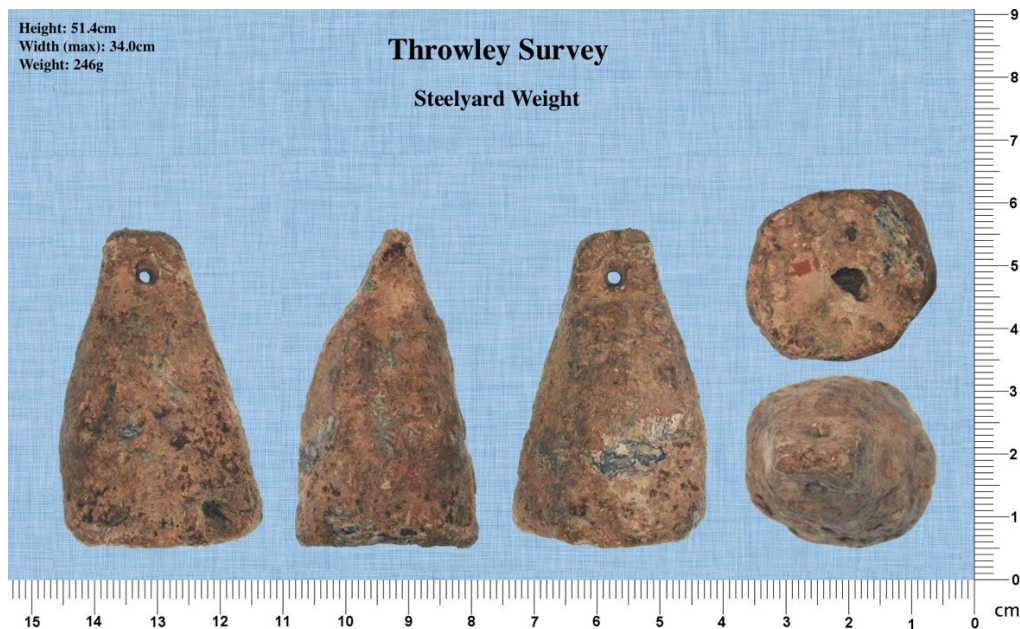
## **9. Summary**

This was a very small one-day excavation that unfortunately didn't indicate any evidence of an earlier building or estate. However, absence of evidence isn't evidence of absence, and we may have just been unlucky where we dug our pit. Further investigation of this area may hopefully reveal the whereabouts of the elusive Throwley medieval manor house.

## **10. Acknowledgements**

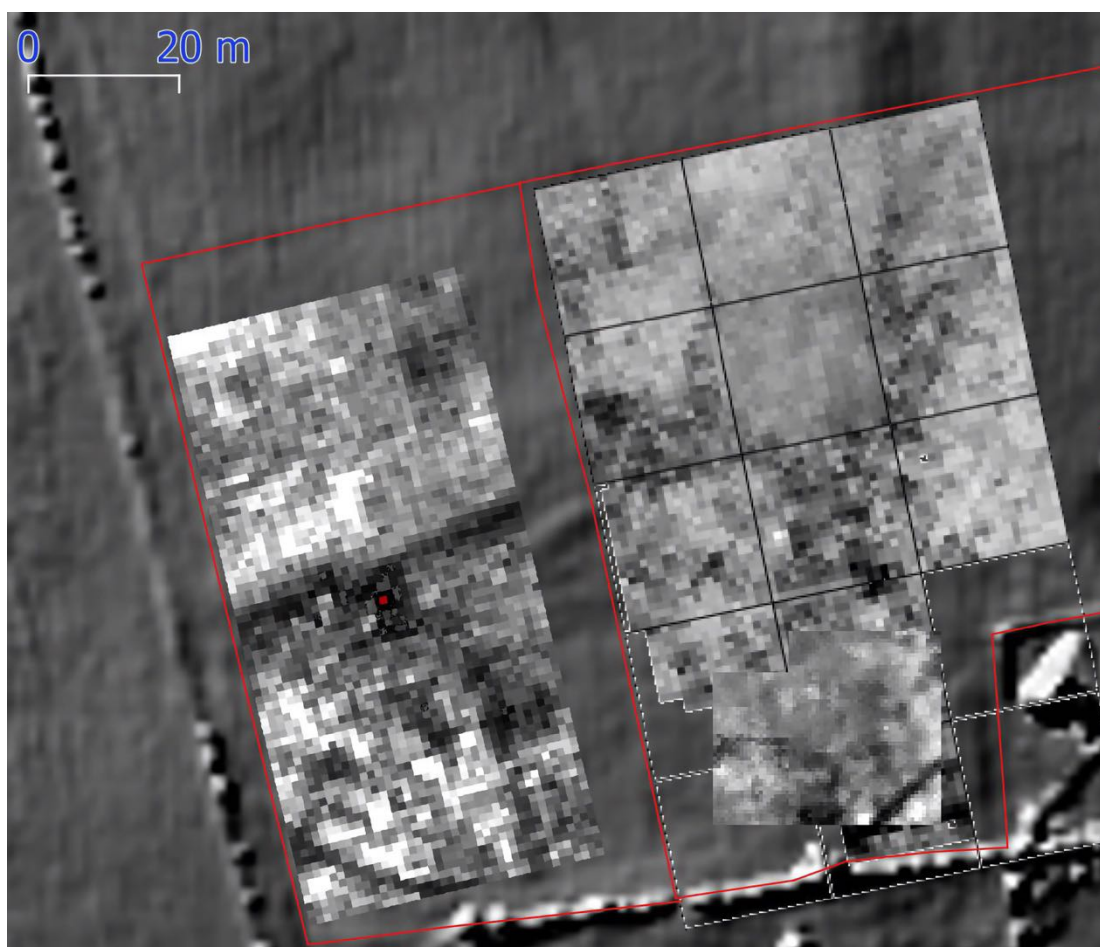
A big thanks to Sarah for allowing us to conduct a geo-resistivity and metal detecting survey, and for digging the one-day pit.

## Appendix 1 - Metal Detected Finds



The above photos show all the metal detected finds recovered during the survey. These consisted mainly of 20<sup>th</sup> century items. The only item of significant age is the steelyard weight. Because these weights were 'unofficial', attributing them to a specific date is very difficult. However, this style is typical of the Roman and Medieval period, with this one likely to be Medieval.

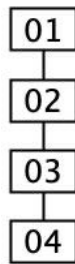
## Appendix 2 - Geo-resistivity Survey Results



The complete geo-resistivity results from the investigation area. Some of the dark features are a result of work carried out when an underground power cable was installed some years ago.

### Appendix 3 - Harris Matrix

#### Harris Matrix



This was contextually a very simple, straightforward excavation as can be seen from the Harris matrix.