

working, and roof tiles stamped with the *CL.BR* signet of the British Fleet. The school requested that the site become a Scheduled Ancient Monument for its own protection - and it was so well 'protected' that no further excavation was ever permitted, so we have no real idea of the size of the site or whether it was a Fleet fort, a villa belonging to someone connected to the Fleet, or perhaps, buildings connected to the Fleet iron workings just over the Sussex border (at Beauport Park and Bardown, amongst other places).

The likelihood of it being a Fleet fort is remote, but it must be remembered that the small stream which runs through Cranbrook and which gives the place its name, was almost certainly much wider in Roman times and may have allowed transport to and fro between Cranbrook and the Sussex iron workings.

Another place which ought to have a Fleet fort, but doesn't, is Folkestone. It did have an aqueduct, a bathhouse and a luxurious villa roofed with tiles stamped with the Fleet signet, so where was the Fleet fort? William Lambarde may have given us the answer, back in 1570. He wrote about his travels around Kent and mentioned that Folkestone had suffered badly from erosion. Folkestone had lost, he wrote `... not only the Nunnery which stood 28 perches from the High Water mark (a rod, a pole or a perch are old measurements, all being 5.5 yards long, so about 150m), which is now almost swallowed up, but the Castle .... and four of those five parish churches be departed out of sight also'. More importantly, he adds, 'Only some broken walls in which are seen great bricks, the marks of British building do remain .. .' As the ancient Britons didn't normally go in for 'great bricks', Lambarde may well have seen the last vestiges of Folkestone's Roman walls.

There has long been controversy as to whether Faversham had a Legionary fort, but if any Fort ever existed, it is much more likely to have been a temporary Fleet structure, put up to guard the ships re-supplying the Legionaries marching on Colchester, up the Watling Street-to-be.

Chatham may well have had some Fleet presence, too. Back when Fort Amherst was being built, one of the militia officers supervising the workers was a young man named James Douglas, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, who found a number of interesting items just east of what is now Dock Road, including two buildings with a number of small rooms. Once his War was over (around 1783) he gave a talk to the Society, suggesting that the