

Place names in the area

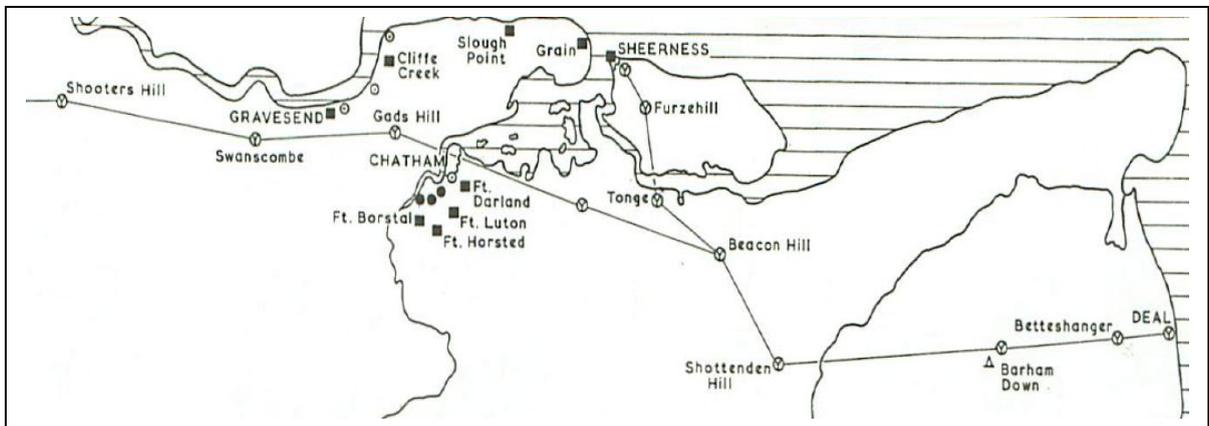
Place name evidence can often provide clues to the historic origins of an area indicating both landscape characteristics and an echo of the societies that were present.

Petrie suggested that the Perry element equated to Bury (from Perry Hill near Cooling) although research by Wallenburg (1934) suggest the name Perry Wood was derived from the Old English pitige “pear-tree”, peru “pear” and wudu “wood”. Wallenburg notes that Perywode is recorded in the Calendar of Inquisitions in 1485 which also records the parish name of Selling.

Selling is recorded as Setlinges in 1086 in the Domesday Book and Selling(e) and Sellyng(e) in 1087 and in 1206 in the Feet of Fines. Wallenburg states that the origin of Selling and Sellindge are no doubt identical from the Old English Sellingas “the comrades, companions”, originally those sharing the same Sele “hall, house, dwelling”. These, he states, compare with the Old English gesella “collection of buildings and handgesella “companion” and Old High German gisell(j)o “companion” etc.

Perhaps Petrie's derivation might be reconsidered in the context of the exploration of an enclosed earthwork on Shottenden Hill (Windmill Hill), it may reflect a similar derivation from the presence of a fortified hill top to that of Bigbury which is another earthwork complex located on the same range of hills further to the north east. Perhaps also the idea of the 'companions of the hall' that gave Selling its name to, were an echo or memory of the occupiers of the defensive earthwork located on the hill top.

Perry Wood Semaphore Stations



During the eighteenth century Britain was regularly at war with France. There were several threats of invasion with the most serious during the Napoleonic Wars. The French armies, led by the Emperor Napoleon, threatened to invade Britain. The defences of Kent and the Thames estuary were rebuilt and a line of small forts, known as Martello towers, were constructed around the coast.

One of the problems that faced the government was being able to pass messages between the coast, where the French might land, and London. The old fire beacons, first used during the time of the Armada in 1588 were not very accurate so a new system of semaphore signals was devised to pass messages from the coast to London. The first early warning system was made up of four fire beacons at Pluckley, Minster, Westwell and Lenham. The Kent beacons were described in the *Times* of 8 October 1803 as 'stakes of wood, and other materials, with a pole passing through them, in the top of which is a small white flag, to make their situation more visible ... means will be taken to make a great smoke, accompanied by fire'.

Lord Murray devised a system for the Admiralty that used rectangular framework towers with six large octagonal shutters on horizontal axes that flipped between horizontal and vertical positions and consisted of 6 shutters in two columns in a vertical frame 20 feet high. Each shutter could be either closed or open which gave 64 different combinations. The stations were staffed by four men. Two men, the 'glassmen', watched through telescopes for a signal from the stations on either side of them. When they saw the signal 'all shutters closed' or 123456, they would call the two 'ropemen' who would operate the station's shutters to send the message along the line. The signal stations were never intended to be permanent and were basically a hut with two rooms and a coal shed. The system worked well in good visibility and a message could be sent from Deal to London in less than five minutes. At night lights were used to transmit coded messages but the main drawback of the system was that it could only be used in good visibility.

The shutter stations were temporary wooden huts, and at the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars they were no longer necessary. In 1816 they were replaced by a simpler semaphore system. The need for semaphore stations ended when the telegraph system, based on the new railway network, was introduced in 1847. It is not known when the signal station at Perry Wood was demolished and replaced by the 'pulpit' that now occupies the site of the semaphore station. The semaphore station is marked on the Greenwood map of Kent printed in 1821.

Investigating the Census online

There are a wide range of free resources for investigating the census for Selling and the Perry Wood area. The list below provides a significant free teaching resource.

National Monuments Record

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/archives-and-collections/nmr/education/>

The National Monuments Record (NMR) provides online teaching and learning resources based on the photographs and records held in the English Heritage NMR Archive.

What was life like in Edwardian Britain

A selection of photographic images specially selected from the NMR collection taken between 1900 and 1914

The National Archives

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/default.htm>

The National Archives has a selection of activities that students can be used online. Everything on the list that follows is related to the census but not all refer to the 1911 census.

Being a Census Detective, including an activity on the 1911 census

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/lessons/census-detective.htm>

Investigate the Census in Chelsea in 1891

This activity involves the use of several different sources. It is a good starter to show how maps and photographs can be related to the census documents.

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/focuson/census/your/investigation.htm>

We Need Facts - Why the government held a census in 1971.

An introductory film that explains why the 1971 census was taken. A good starting point for discussion about the 2011 census.

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/focuson/film/film-archive/player.asp?catID=3&subCatID=1&filmID=2>

Using the Victorian Census and other sources.

How can we find out about the life of a Victorian child using family sources?

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/lessons/lesson50.htm>

How can I investigate the history of a family History?

This is a source that teachers might like to dip into. Family history can be a delicate matter for many children and the choice of setting work for children on family history should be carefully considered.

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/looking-for-person/recordscensus.htm?WT.lp=rg-3176>

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/default.htm>

British Film Institute

Screenonline is the British Film Institute's (BFI) FREE online guide to British film and television from the 1890s to the present day. Access to moving image material, including many full-length films and television programmes, is FREE to all users in UK schools, colleges and public libraries via the National Education Network. Discover an extensive range of tiles covering the period around 1911.

Do you fancy yourself as a filmmaker? Our exciting online editing tool allows you to create unique short films using a growing library of archive film, your own material, and music from a library of sound tracks. If you've ever wondered what it's like to edit your own film you'll love The Rushes Project. This new partnership between BFI Screenonline and Screen West Midlands (SWM) puts you in the editor's chair so you can cut and splice unedited footage. Explore the education zone: www.screenonline.org.uk/education and The Cutting Room: www.screenonline.org.uk/education/thecuttingroom